

COOPERATION & TEAMWORK

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Students will demonstrate cooperative behavior in groups.
- Students will use effective communication skills.
- Students will interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, communicate meaning, and develop logical interpretations through collaborative conversations.
- Students will build upon the ideas of others to clearly express their own views while respecting diverse perspectives.

Objectives

Students will be able to state why working with others can make a task easier.

Students will value skills that are needed to be a good teammate.

Students will be able to list jobs that require people to work as a team.

Materials Needed

- Board or chart paper and markers (“We Do”)

Starter (10 minutes)

Ask students if they have heard of Aesop’s fables. Tell them that a fable is a story that teaches some type of moral, or lesson, in life. Explain that you are going to read a short fable to them, and they will need to guess what the lesson or moral is. Read the following fable:

“A Lion used to prowl about a field in which Four Oxen used to dwell. Many a time he tried to attack them; but whenever he came near, they turned their tails to one another, so that whichever way he approached them he was met by the horns of one of them. At last, however, they fell a-quarreling among themselves, and each went off to pasture alone in a separate corner of the field. Then the Lion attacked them one by one and soon made an end of all four.”

Ask if anyone knows what the lesson in this fable is and discuss. After the class discussion, tell students that today they will learn about cooperation, working together as a team in order to achieve something bigger and better. In the case of the Oxen in the fable, they could only survive against the Lion if they stood united. Because they argued and refused to get along, they each were picked off one by one by the Lion.

Teacher Presented Knowledge/I Do (10 minutes)

Lead a class discussion about behaviors that promote teamwork and cooperation. Ask the students, “What activities do you and your classmates do that require teamwork and cooperation?” (*Examples may include team sports, clubs, study groups, class projects.*) Record students’ responses on a chart or a board. Then ask students, “What jobs do you think require good teamwork and cooperation?” Record these responses on a chart or a board as well.

Guided Student Practice/We Do (20 minutes)

As a class, come up with important skills to remember when working as a team so that the team can be successful and write them on a chart or board. (*For example, “When we work with others, it is really important that we are good listeners.”*)

Student Independent Practice/You Do (20 minutes)

Tell students that they are going to get the opportunity to practice their teamwork skills. Divide the class into pairs and tell students that they will be drawing an elephant together. However, they cannot speak to their partner, and both partners must hold the pencil while drawing. (*One can hold the pencil at the top, and the other can hold it at the bottom.*) Partners will be given two minutes to draw their elephant. Once the timer has started, monitor the pairs, making note of the pairs who use the teamwork skills that were reviewed earlier. Have students share their drawings.

Closure *(10 minutes)*

Have students reflect on the previous activity. Ask the following questions to spark discussion, “What skills did you and your partner have to use to get the task completed? What were some problems that came up in your pairs, and what did you do to work through them?” Then, remind students that it’s not always easy working together in teams. However, sometimes in life, it is most beneficial for people to work in teams in order to accomplish a common goal. It is important to always remember to treat all team members with respect.

Student Assessment

1. Why is being able to work together with others an important skill to have?
2. Do you think when you are older you will have to work together with others to get a job done?
3. What would you do if someone in your group is letting everyone else do all the work?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Art Extension

Have students work in small groups to design a poster that represents teamwork or cooperation.

Culture Extension

Remind students that an important part of effective teamwork is knowing the strengths of all members involved with the group, as well as your own personal strengths. Invite students to participate in a “strengths interview” exercise, where they interview a peer to determine three to five of their strengths.

Drama Extension

Have students perform short role-plays that show the power of teamwork.

ELA Extension

No Talking, by Andrew Clements, is a great chapter book about the common rivalry between girls and boys in elementary school. Girls and boys eventually learn to work together toward a common goal. This book can be used as an extension for a readaloud over the course of a month, guided reading groups, or assigned chapter book readings.

Physical Education Extension

Have students work together as one large group on the following teamwork activity. Participants (students and teacher) stand in a circle. Start with the ball of yarn and hold on to one end of the yarn while tossing the ball of yarn to a student across the circle. One by one, the ball of yarn is thrown to each student until each student is holding on to a piece of the yarn so that it makes a huge web. Then, challenge the students to work together to untangle the yarn by stepping over, under, and through the web so that in the end, the entire class is standing, still holding their piece of the yarn in a circle. Remind students that the point of the lesson was to learn what teamwork looks like and why teamwork is important to achieve a goal. Even if the students were not able to complete the task in the activity, they should evaluate whether they used proper cooperation and teamwork skills

Social Studies Extension

As homework, students can research a current community problem that takes teamwork to solve and share their findings with the class.