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ABSTRACT

Cooperative learning is a valuable strategy for teaching secondary school students, especially useful with students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds who are learning English as a Second Language. It offers a method for managing diversity, channeling peer influence into a positive force for improving school performance, and involving students in classroom communication and activity. Secondary students with limited English language skills have less time to acquire the English essential to academic success, and need a low-risk environment to practice English. Cooperative learning provides an appropriate method for these purposes, and in addition offers increased opportunities for student social development. Cooperative learning strategies can be used in a variety of ways and time periods. Team-building and oral language activities can be used to familiarize students with the approach and build language skills. Such collaborative activities include games for exchanging personal information, problem-solving exercises, brainstorming, group discussion, cooperative review of information, and story-sequencing. A sample unit for grade 10 world history, designed for a class consisting of native English-speakers, non-native fluent English-speakers, and limited-English-proficient students, illustrates the approach. The activity requires that small groups complete projects and share them with the rest of the class. (MSE)

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Cooperative Learning in the Secondary School

Maximizing Language Acquisition, Academic Achievement, and Social Development

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education

Program Information Guide Series

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by

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Introduction

The value of cooperative learning has been recognized throughout human history. Organizing individuals to work in support of one another and putting the interests of the group ahead of one's own are abilities that have characterized some of the most successful people of our time. Group learning, with its roots in ancient tribal customs, has traditionally been a part of educational practice. Its effectiveness has been documented through hundreds of research studies (Johnson & Johnson, 1986; Kagan, 1986; Slavin, 1988). Cooperative learning is now widely recognized as one of the most promising practices in the field of education. During much of its history, however, cooperative learning methodology was developed in settings where few, if any, of the students came from non-English language backgrounds. When many of the originators of cooperative learning emphasized the importance of heterogeneity in forming groups, it is doubtful that they envisioned a classroom where non-English speakers and native English speakers were members of the same group. Yet, such a classroom is becoming the rule rather than the exception (Olsen & Chen, 1988).

Cultural and linguistic diversity in the student population has profound implications for education. The learning climate of the classroom is affected by the nature of the interactions among students. In a culturally diverse classroom, students reflect a variety of attitudes toward and expectations of one another's abilities and styles of behavior. Without structures that promote positive interactions and strategies for improving relationships, students remain detached from one another, unable to benefit from the resources their peers represent. Teachers and students need strategies that manage cultural and linguistic diversity in positive ways, strategies that channel peer influence into a positive force for improving school performance. Further, to reach students from diverse cultural backgrounds, teachers need multiple alternatives to the prevalent pattern where teachers do most of the talking and directing in the classroom (see McGroarty, in press).

Cooperative Learning for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

This publication is about the potential of cooperative learning techniques for helping educators transform diversity into a vital resource for promoting secondary students' acquisition of challenging academic subjects. Assumptions underlying cooperative learning for secondary English language learners are briefly described, as well as what we know about how cooperative learning can be used to maximize the acquisition of a second language, of content, and of the development of interpersonal skills. Examples of cooperative structures and activities for students at the secondary level are presented, and a sample world history unit for Grade 10 is provided.

Cooperative learning has become popular for many reasons. It adds variety to the teacher's repertoire. It helps teachers manage large classes of students with diverse needs. It improves academic achievement and social development. It prepares students for increasingly interactive workplaces. However, one of its most powerful, long-lasting effects may be in making school a more humane place to be by giving students stable, supportive environments for learning. This guide is written with the hope that increasing numbers of students will experience the personal and academic growth that comes through learning, persevering, and maturing with others.

Cooperative Learning and Effective Instructional Practices

In this Program Information Guide, the term "students from diverse language backgrounds" refers to three categories of students. One group is *English-only (EO);* that is, they are students who have learned English as their primary language. Another group consists of *English language learners (ELL);* these students have a primary language other than English and are currently engaged in learning English. A third group is *English proficient (EP);* these students have a primary language other than English but are proficient in English.

When students from these categories are placed in the same secondary classroom, their linguistic and cultural diversity creates tremendous challenges for teachers. Effective responses to this diversity include strategies that link the students in mutually supportive ways and provide them with multiple, varied, and equal opportunities to acquire content and language. Learning cooperatively in teams where "all work for one" and "one works for all" gives students the emotional and academic support that helps them to persevere against the many obstacles they face in school. Not only do cooperative teams give students additional *motivation to stay in school* and improve academically, they also *help them learn* the skills that they will need for the increasingly interactive workplaces of the future.

This guide suggests many different ways to use cooperative teams in order to accelerate the learning of students from diverse language backgrounds. Teachers will find activities that can be used during a five-minute, fifty-minute, or five-week period of time. Students will benefit from participation in both short-term and long-term experiences in cooperative teams. However, being a member of a team that stays together over an extended period of time may provide students some of the greatest potential for language, academic, and social growth. For example, a cooperative team may stay intact for an entire academic year or even several successive years. D. W. Johnson has pointed out the many benefits of long-term participation in base groups. For more on the use of base groups in cooperative learning, see Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1988).

Perhaps the optimal cooperative environment is created by teachers who use a variety of teams for various purposes. For example, a student might be a member of several teams; one for short-term, intermittent purposes, such as planning an outing for the class; another for specific content areas like those in the sample unit in this guide; and still another as a home team or "base group" that meets on a regular basis to deal with members' personal and academic needs (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1988). In order to add stability and support to the students' school experience, the membership of the base group would remain constant for a semester, a year, or as long as is practical.

Long-term, consistent participation in the same team ensures that individual students will have peers who are concerned about their success in school. Sustained work in heterogeneous, cooperative teams helps students acquire the skills necessary for working effectively with people of different ethnic, racial, and linguistic backgrounds. When conflict arises among team members, students need to learn how to resolve it and grow from it, rather than trying to move to another team, get rid of the "problem" member, or pretend that the conflict is not there. Participation in a home team or base group enables secondary school students to view conflict as a positive force, moving the team members to a higher level of individual maturity and group cohesion.

Cooperative Learning in the Secondary School: Meeting Students' Needs

Secondary English language learners (Grades 7-12), especially recent immigrants, face major difficulties in acquiring English. They arrive in the United States at eleven to eighteen years of age with different levels of literacy, education, and language proficiency. The following is a description of some of the differences among ELL students and between ELL students and their native English-speaking peers.

Compared with elementary students, *secondary ELL students have fewer years to acquire the English language essential to success* in their required subjects. The demands of the curriculum and the short time available for learning English put secondary ELL students significantly behind their native English-speaking peers in academic achievement (Collier, 1987; Minicucci & Olsen, 1992). Recent statistics show that the middle school is the beginning of a high rate of dropouts (Minicucci, 1985; Olsen & Chen, 1988). Despite these obstacles, research tells us that secondary students do have some advantages in acquiring English. Cummins (1981) states:

> Older learners who are more cognitively mature and whose L1 (native language) proficiency is better developed would acquire cognitively demanding aspects of L2 (second language) proficiency more rapidly than younger learners. The only area where research suggests older learners may not have an advantage is pronunciation, which, significantly, appears to be one of the least cognitively demanding aspects of both L1 and L2 proficiency. (p. 29)

Many secondary students arrive better able to comprehend and speak English than read and write it. Others may be able to understand the written word but have little or no ability to comprehend oral English. Finally, secondary students enter U.S. schools with varying levels of education in their native language. Some arrive with no prior education; others arrive with levels of education equal or superior to those of native English speakers. *Research shows that students with strong academic and linguistic skills in their first or native language will acquire a second language more easily than those with weaker skills* (Cummins, 1981).

Maximizing Language Acquisition

Why should middle and high school teachers use cooperative learning in their classrooms? *Secondary students need the maximum amount of time possible for comprehending and using the English language in a low-risk environment in order to approach the language proficiency level of their peers.* Cooperative learning provides the structure for this to happen. Teachers should consider the question, "What is the best use of my students' time?" With approximately thirty students in a classroom who can interact and negotiate meaning, a teacher needs to take advantage of this environment for language acquisition. Reading and writing answers to questions can be done at home, thereby providing more time in the classroom for interactive, cooperative structures in which students are learning from each other.

In cooperative teams, students with lower levels of proficiency can interact with students with higher levels in order to negotiate the meaning of content. Preliterate students can begin to build a strong foundation in oral proficiency as they acquire literacy skills. All students can

receive maximum practice in language and interpersonal skills necessary for participation in higher education or the job market.

Maximizing Content Learning

Secondary school students face demanding academic tasks. These students must make acceptable scores on English language proficiency tests. They also take a number of standardized English language tests in reading, mathematics, and science. In order to graduate, they must earn the required number of high school credits. Each of these tasks requires a thorough knowledge of English. Unfortunately, many students lack the English language and test-taking skills required to do well on these tasks.

Secondary students' daily schedules also present a major challenge. Students take from five to seven classes a day, many of which may be taught entirely in English. Trying to make sense of academic subjects taught in a language other than one's own is exhausting for just a few minutes, let alone for five or six hours of instruction. In addition, subjects such as physical science, chemistry, world cultures, economics, algebra, and geometry require high levels of academic language. Most secondary level programs do not provide ELL students with access to these courses in their primary language, so they must obtain this subject matter through specialized, content-based English instruction (also referred to as **sheltered**) or through instruction aimed at EO students in mainstream settings. Added to these demands is the high reading level of most secondary texts and materials.

Preliterate students have an exceedingly difficult time being successful with the typical middle and high school course offerings. Their problems multiply greatly in content courses that rely on academic language proficiency in English. Meeting graduation requirements during the normal high school time frame is a nearly impossible task for the preliterate student.

ELL students who enter school for the first time in this country at the high school level with hopes of going directly to a college or university upon graduation face even more significant problems. These students must take classes designated for college credit, many of which may be beyond their language ability. They may be able to handle the content in their primary language, but not in English. Educators need to respond to these problems by using the best instructional strategies, such as cooperative learning, to provide all students access to academic subjects required for graduation.

Maximizing Social Development

The social development needs of ELL students entering the secondary school are different from those of elementary children. By middle and high school, student peer groups are well-defined. ELL students find it exceedingly difficult to be accepted into these well-established groups. Research shows that children frequently choose friends from within their own ethnic group. Furthermore, friends are often selected from within these groups based on their length of residence in the United States. At the secondary level, these friendship patterns often result in conflict within and between ethnic groups (see Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986). ELL students encounter additional problems when dealing with a new culture and peer expectations. Pressures among adolescents related to drugs, sex, and gang violence present ELL students with

al difficulties. These issues may push children into further isolation from the mainstream
ɜ school.

Another adjustment for many secondary ELL students is that of handling academic
rements at school while being responsible for a job or family obligations and demands.
e commitments give students little time to complete school-related tasks. Older immigrant
ren have often endured years of trauma in their lives. Since children typically learn English
ocial skills faster than their parents, they often become intermediaries between their par-
and society, a difficult role to play.

In response to these social development needs, cooperative learning offers the secondary
ɜnt numerous benefits. Cooperative structures give ELL students the chance to develop
ive, productive relationships with both majority and minority students. Through coopera-
learning, students serve as teachers of other students or as experts on certain topics. Coop-
ve teams may offer some students the academic support that will help them find success.
lack of stimulating classes, the lack of interested, caring adults, and peer pressures are
ɔns given by many students for dropping out of school. Cooperative learning may lead to
friendships and support, thereby preventing students from dropping out and instead moti-
ıg them to succeed academically and socially.

Cooperative learning cannot solve all of the problems discussed above. It does, however,
teachers ways to respond to students who represent a wide range of abilities. It provides a
ɜture for providing content support for students from many different language backgrounds.
ves students opportunities to learn from one another rather than receive information from
eacher or text alone. Appropriate cooperative tasks stimulate students to higher levels of
cing, preparing them for academic learning and testing. The cooperative structures/activities
sample unit in this guide are helpful for improving instruction where there is a *high degree*
ɜversity in students' needs. These activities are designed to help English language learners
ɜlop the language and academic skills they will need *in order to participate effectively in*
ɜnstream settings.

Cooperative Structures and Activities

Cooperative learning strategies may be used in a variety of ways, such as a five-minute team builder to introduce a lesson, a short activity to evaluate the students' understanding, a series of brief, cooperative activities to teach content, or a full unit of instruction based on cooperative structures.

The following cooperative structures and activities show how a teacher can use one activity or a series of activities to build awareness among students for the need to work as a team and to develop English language skills. The teambuilding and oral language activities are designed to familiarize students with cooperative learning strategies *in English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual classrooms.* The sample unit for Grade 10 describes a cooperative learning structure, **Co-Op Co-Op,** that can be used with ELL learners *in mainstream settings.*

The activities described below are not interdependent; teachers may choose to try one or more of them. Once familiar with them, the teacher may want to use several activities together, or try a full unit of structures and activities such as the one provided in this publication. Teachers should be familiar with cooperative learning techniques and be able to explain each activity in order to ensure its success. An overview of the cooperative learning structures used in this publication is provided in the Appendix on pages 27–28.

Teambuilding and Oral Language Activities

The following cooperative structures and activities were designed for teaching teambuilding and English language skills to English language learners. However, *they could be easily modified for a variety of content areas.* Structures are content-free ways of organizing social interaction in the classroom and typically involve a series of steps. Activities are almost always based on a specific content-bound objective and are not applicable to a wide range of academic content. By contrast, structures may be used repeatedly with almost any subject matter, at a wide range of grade levels, and at various points in a lesson. Different structures are used to accomplish distinct objectives, such as teambuilding (getting students acquainted and building mutual support within teams), classbuilding (creating a positive classroom climate), communication builders (learning how to communicate effectively), content mastery (acquiring basic skills), and concept development (acquiring higher order thinking skills) (Kagan, 1990). Among the most well-known structures are **Jigsaw, Student-Teams Achievement-Divisions (STAD), Think-Pair-Share,** and **Group Investigation** (Kagan, in press). For more information on cooperative structures, see Kagan, 1990.

The structures and activities that follow may be adapted for ELL students at beginning, intermediate, or advanced English language proficiency levels. They may be used alone during an ESL lesson or in conjunction with other cooperative learning activities. Teachers may have to try each activity several times and various activities over a period of time before students are able to work together effectively. These activities may also be adapted for use in mainstream classrooms to facilitate teambuilding in heterogeneous groups and to familiarize ELL students with cooperative learning processes.

Instructional Setting

Students: ELL (multiple languages), beginning, intermediate, or advanced
Grade level: 7-12
Delivery mode: English
Group size: Four students per group, heterogeneous by English language proficiency
Content area: English language development
Lesson objective: Students will use oral language to complete tasks. They will develop social skills for teamwork as they improve comprehension and oral production skills.

Activity 1. Personalized Name Tags/Interview

a. Each student receives a blank name tag to be completed as directed by the teacher.

b. Students have five minutes to fill in their name tags with the information listed below. (The teacher can choose information appropriate to the class or the lesson.)

NAME TAG

1. First name, last name
2. Three hobbies, interests; career goal
3. Three favorite foods; two favorite classes

c. Student #1 uses the completed name tag to introduce himself or herself to Student #2 while Student #3 does the same with Student #4. Reverse the procedure, #2 to #1 and #4 to #3. Allow one minute for each introduction. Time it carefully.

d. Student #1 introduces Student #2 to the whole team using his or her name tag. Student #2 introduces Student #1 to the whole team. Student #3 introduces Student #4 and Student #4 introduces Student #3. Again, provide one minute for each introduction.

Activity 2. Commonalities

a. The teacher assigns roles to each team member (e.g., writer, reporter, facilitator, and time keeper).

b. Team members have five minutes to discuss things that they all have in common, such as family members, pets, interests, travel, and so on.

c. Teams discuss their commonalities and choose the five most interesting ones. The writer lists the team's five commonalities on a sheet of paper.

d. Teams share the things they have in common with other teams or with the whole class.

e. The teacher posts commonalities on bulletin boards with each team's name so that others may read them later.

Activity 3. Picture Differences

a. Students form two pairs within each team. One of the four members is assigned to be the writer.

b. One pair receives a picture similar to a picture held by the other pair, except that there are from five to twenty differences between the pictures. Pictures are available commercially, for example, see Olsen, 1984. Teachers can make their own pictures by taking two copies of any picture and covering five to twenty items from one picture with liquid paper ("white-out").

c. Each pair discusses its picture without letting the other pair see it.

d. Pairs talk to each other to find the differences between their pictures. Pairs may not look at each other's picture. The writer in each group notes the differences.

e. Teams can compare lists or share with the whole class.

Activity 4. Crossword Partners

This is designed as an enrichment activity for reinforcing vocabulary. Teachers may use commercially produced puzzles or make their own based on previously introduced vocabulary.

a. Students form pairs within their team of four.

b. One pair gets a crossword puzzle with the words going down filled in; the other pair gets a puzzle with the words going across filled in. Partners review the words in their puzzle and make sure they understand them.

c. Each pair gives clues, never the actual word, to the other pair to help them fill in the missing words. Students fill in the words as they are identified.

Activity 5. Draw a Picture

a. Students form pairs within their teams.

b. One pair gets a simple picture of anything and the other pair gets a blank sheet of paper.

c. The pair with the picture must describe what it sees while the other pair draws the picture based on the first pair's oral description. The pair with the picture cannot watch or correct the drawing of the pair without the picture.

d. When the drawing is complete, the two pairs compare it to the actual picture, discussing similarities and differences.

e. Pictures may be posted on the bulletin board.

Activity 6. Problem Solving

a. Students brainstorm activities they could do on a Saturday night. This might be done as a webbing activity. In a webbing activity, the central idea takes the form of a web with lines representing related ideas emanating from it and from each other.

b. Each team compares its list of activities with other teams or with the entire class.

c. The teacher announces that each team has $100.00 to spend on a Saturday night. Team members must decide what they will do together to spend the money. Team members discuss their ideas and the writer lists planned activities and the cost of each.

d. The reporter on each team shares the decisions of its team with the rest of the class. This may be done simultaneously by having the reporters list projected budgets on the chalkboard.

e. Team activities can be posted on bulletin boards.

Any type of problem-solving activity can be used. Other examples could be allocating $25.00 for a team to go to the store to buy food to make a special dinner for the team, creating a list of the five occupations that would be most necessary to start a new world on a new planet, or listing the five most important characteristics of a good friend.

Activity 7. Partners

a. Students form two pairs within their team of four.

b. Each pair receives a different short story. Stories may be taken from ESL texts or rewritten from mainstream textbooks. They should contain up to 250 words and be of high interest.

c. Each pair reads its story and quietly discusses the content. The teacher may have pairs take notes on the story.

d. The teacher collects the stories after approximately five minutes.

e. After reading its story, one pair tells its story to the other pair. The second pair tells its story to the first pair.

f. Each pair then tells the other pair's story in order to check for full comprehension of both stories.

g. The teacher gives a quiz that students take individually. The quiz can be multiple choice, short answer, true/false, or essay, depending on the level of the students and the instructional objective. Each student receives a grade for reading comprehension. If each team member gets a minimum of 80 percent correct, all team members may be given additional points for contributing to the success of fellow team members.

Developing English Language Skills

The purpose of the following activities is to show how a variety of cooperative structures and activities can be used together to facilitate ELL students' English language development. Each collaborative activity is based on the use of a fable and focuses on a different language skill, such as listening, speaking, reading, or writing. The activities below follow a sequence, but teachers may select one or more of them, depending on the ability of the students and the instructional objectives. The fable in this activity could be used in its original form or it could be rewritten in modified form for English language learners (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

The following is a simplified version of the Aesop's fable.

The Fox and The Crow

Once upon a time there was a crow who found a large piece of tasty cheese. He quickly put it in his mouth and flew up into a tree. A hungry fox walked under the tree and suddenly saw the crow and the cheese. She carefully planned what to say. "O Crow," she said, "you are a really fine bird! What beautiful feathers and eyes you have! It is too bad that you cannot sing."

The crow was so happy to hear such nice things about himself. He was happier that he could show the fox that he could also sing beautifully. But as he opened his mouth to sing, the cheese dropped to the ground in front of the fox. The fox quickly ate the cheese with great enjoyment.

MORAL: He who listens to flattery forgets everything else.

Instructional Setting

Students: ELL (multiple languages), intermediate or advanced
Grade level: 7-12
Delivery mode: English
Group size: Four students per group, heterogeneous by English language proficiency
Content: English language development
Lesson objective: Students will comprehend the meaning and message of the fable while developing the English language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Activity 1. Brainstorming

a. Assign tasks for each member in a team of four (e.g., writer, reporter, facilitator, and time-keeper).

b. After making sure that all students know what a fox and a crow are, give each team a Venn diagram with "fox" labeled on one side and "crow" on the other (see Figure 2).

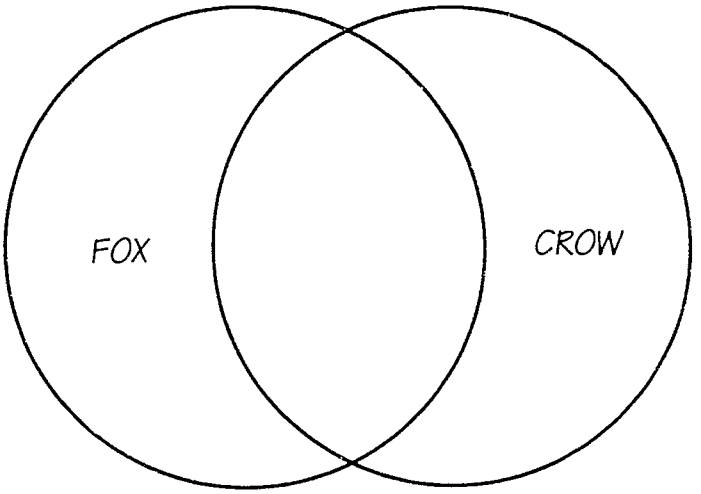
c. Each team has five minutes to identify at least five things that foxes have that crows don't or that foxes can do that crows can't, five things that crows have that foxes don't or that crows can do that foxes can't, and five things that they have in common. Elements common to both animals are written in the middle space of the Venn diagram; unique elements for the fox are written in the left space and for the crow in the right space. Each student contributes responses as the writer fills in the Venn diagram.

d. Two teams join, with reporters from both teams sharing their diagrams. Team members can add new items as they go or delete incorrect items.

e. Diagrams with team names can be placed on bulletin boards.

Figure 2

Example of Venn Diagram



Before doing the following activities, the teacher should first read the fable, "The Fox and the Crow" to the class, using a variety of visuals to make the content understandable. The teacher may read it twice. Students can listen and take notes (words, phrases, sentences) to help them recall the details later.

Activity 2. Group Discussion

a. Ask teams to generate questions they can ask other teams about the fable. Assign roles as above. Each writer records the questions.

b. Ask each team to select its best question and one team member to share it with another team.

c. Call on team representatives to share their best question with the whole class.

d. Follow this activity with either **Cooperative Review, Numbered Heads Together,** or **Send-a-Problem.** Each of these requires students to answer questions about the fable and is described below.

Activity 3. Cooperative Review

a. A student from one team (e.g., Team 1) asks a question from its list and calls on another team (e.g., Team 3) to answer the question.

b. Team 3 discusses the answer briefly, making sure all members agree, and then the team reporter gives an answer. Team 1 judges whether the answer is correct. If incorrect, or if another team wants to add to the answer, Team 1 calls on another team.

c. Team 3 asks a question and the review continues.

The teacher may want to add a competitive dimension among teams by giving points. For example, if the question is appropriate, Team 1 gets one point. If the response to the question is correct, Team 3 gets a point. If the answer is incorrect, Team 1 gets a point and calls on another team to answer.

Activity 4. Numbered Heads Together

a. Ask students in each team to number off (e.g., #1, #2, #3, #4). If a team has five members, two students can have the same number and work together.

b. The teacher poses a question about the fable. Questions for this structure should be high-consensus and short-answer. Questions may be generated by the teacher or borrowed from the teams' question pool generated above.

c. The teacher gives each team time to discuss the answer. The teacher may structure the discussion by creating steps such as: (1) each member closes his/her eyes and thinks of an answer; (2) they open their eyes, put their "heads together," and share answers with their team members; (3) team members agree on the best answer; and (4) they make sure that all members know the answer.

d. The teacher calls a number at random (e.g., #3) to answer the question. Call on the first #3 who raises his/her hand. When calling on a number, such as "#2," participation can be increased by having all #2s work together. For example, #2s from each team might come to the chalkboard and write the answer simultaneously. Or each team might have a slate on which #2 could write the answer and then hold it up.

Activity 5. Send-a-problem

a. Each student writes a question on one side of a piece of paper and the answer on the other side. Questions should be recall level and short-answer, true-false, or multiple choice.

b. One student on each team collects the questions/answers from each member and passes them to another team.

c. Students form pairs within each team. Each pair takes two questions. Questions might include: "Why did the crow drop the cheese?" and "What did the fox say to the crow?" Student #1 asks #2 two questions; Student #3 asks #4 the other two questions. Student #2 then asks #1; Student #4 asks #3. The two pairs then exchange questions and repeat the process. Each student answers as best he or she can, and students can discuss the correctness of each response in their pairs.

d. After responding to all four questions, the teams exchange their questions with another team. They continue this process until all teams have responded to all questions.

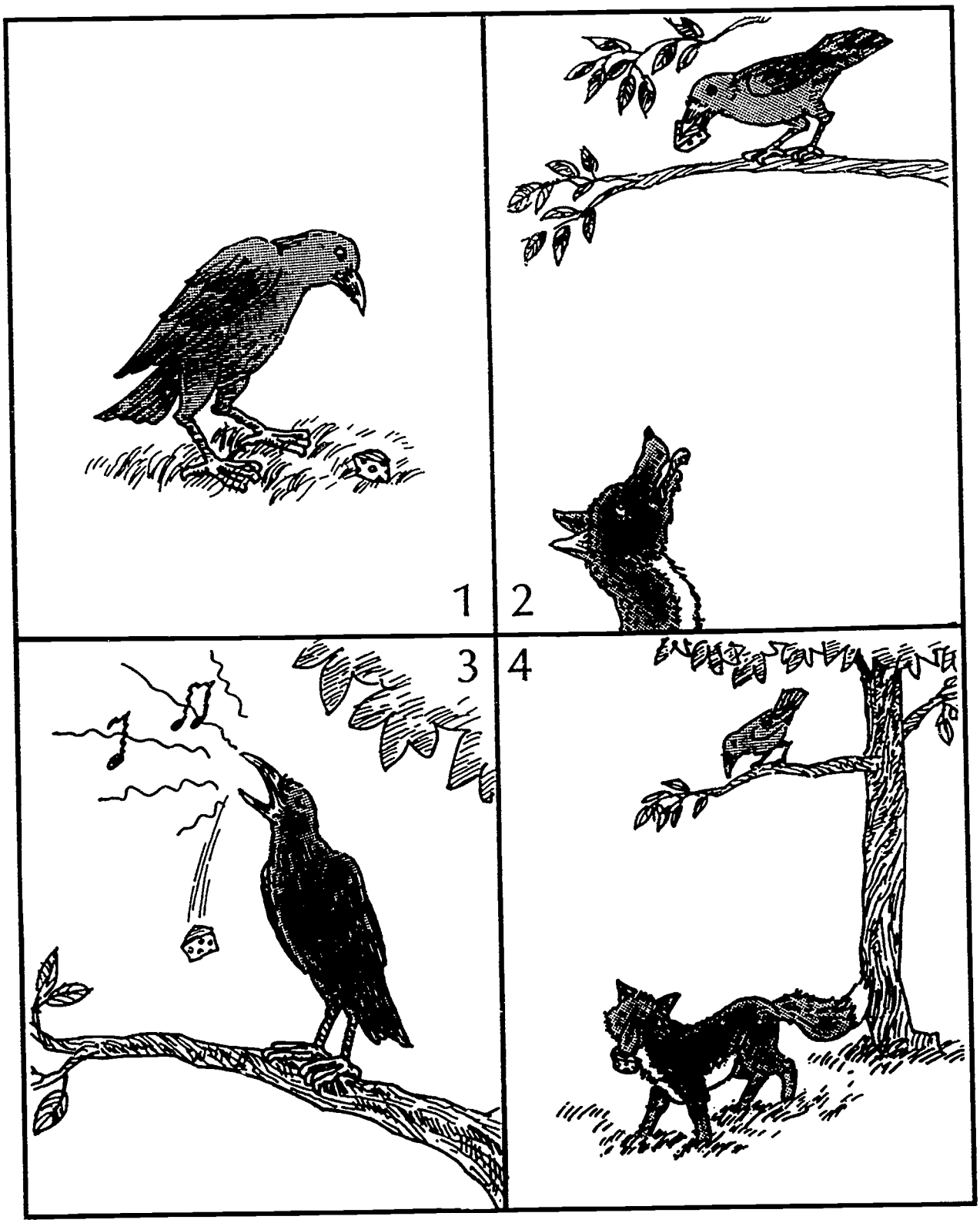
Activity 6. Sequencing the Story

a. Teams are given a series of pictures that represent the fable (see the sample pictures of "The Fox and the Crow" in Figure 3).

b. Each student takes one of the pictures and gives a one- or two-sentence description of it based on the story heard previously.

c. Each student tells his/her picture description to other team members. Team members seat themselves according to the proper place of the picture they hold within the story sequence. After agreeing on the sequence, team members retell the story in the proper order.

Figure 3



Paul Lee, Graphic Artist, California Department of Education.

Activity 7. Strip Story

a. The teacher writes one sentence describing each of the story's four pictures on a strip of paper. Make one packet of strips containing the four sentences for each team.

b. Hand out one packet of strips to each team.

c. Each student on the team randomly takes a strip and spends two or three minutes memorizing it or at least its main idea. Team members make sure each student can read his/her strip and recite it correctly.

d. Students on the team seat themselves in order of the place of their story strip in the story sequence. They can practice retelling the story in its proper sequence.

e. Team members return the strips to the facilitator.

f. Each team may perform the story for another team or for the whole class. Teams may dramatize their performance with actions, extended dialogues, and the use of props.

Activity 8. Group Discussion

a. Assign roles to team members. Ask teams to use **Brainstorming** to generate the possible moral of the story.

b. Each team reaches consensus on the moral.

c. The recorder on each team writes the moral on a piece of paper and passes it to other teams. Recorders may also simultaneously write their team's moral on the chalkboard.

d. The teacher leads a class discussion on each of the morals presented, noting similarities, differences, underlying meanings, and so forth.

Sample Unit for Grade 10: History-Social Science

This unit is designed for a tenth-grade world history class consisting of ELL (multiple languages), EP, and EO students. However, it can also be modified for use at the middle school level. *The unit is designed with the assumption that ELL students have been placed in a mainstream classroom based on the results of appropriate assessment procedures.* The assessment results have indicated that these students' English language proficiency is sufficient to participate effectively (i.e., intermediate level) in a mainstream classroom. *Another assumption is that the students have been working in cooperative groups for several months. It is, however, the first time that the class has used* **Co-Op Co-Op,** *a cooperative learning structure designed for use over several instructional periods.* Co-Op Co-Op is particularly useful for creating conditions which stimulate the students to make key decisions regarding the content and structure of learning tasks. According to Kagan (1990):

> Co-Op Co-Op. . . is structured to maximize the opportunity for small groups of students to work together to further their own understanding and development—usually, but not always, in the form of producing a group product—and then to share this product or experience with the whole class so that the other class members also may profit. (p. 14:2)

Rationale for Lesson Organization

This unit uses an integrated approach to the teaching of history and social science. Based on California's *History-Social Science Framework* (1988), it integrates the rise of imperialism and colonialism, a key world history concept for the tenth grade, with social and language skills. This unit is not a series of detailed lesson plans for several instructional periods. Rather, the teacher is provided general guidelines to follow using Co-Op Co-Op to study colonialism in depth over several instructional periods. The unit is divided into three phases. Depending on the design of the course, the teacher could use some of the activities for a few days or over several weeks. Before beginning the Co-Op Co-Op activities, some classes may need background information on colonialism and the geography of the countries to be studied.

Considerations for Meeting the Needs of ELL Students

In addition to objectives for world history, the unit identifies related language outcomes. This is to help teachers provide ELL and other students the language they need to participate in the activities. Co-Op Co-Op has built-in opportunities for students to help each other within and among teams in the class; this will assist the teacher in monitoring the performance of the ELL students. Co-Op Co-Op also gives students choices for the content they want to study and the group tasks for which they are responsible. This should increase the probability that the tasks will be motivating and suited to students' abilities. Co-Op Co-Op is designed to foster students' self-direction and independence in learning. However, the teacher may need to modify some of the activities in this unit to provide more guidance, depending on the students' needs. For

example, worksheets with questions to answer, in English or the students' native language, will facilitate group participation for students whose English language skills are limited.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective implementation of Co-Op Co-Op and other cooperative learning methods depends on the teacher's carefully supporting students and giving them feedback on their progress in meeting academic, language, and social objectives. Compared to other cooperative structures, in Co-Op Co-Op the students are given a great deal of responsibility for their learning; they choose their topics of study and the method of presenting their research and give feedback to their peers.

The teacher needs to establish and reinforce cooperative norms so that students know that it is all right to help each other. They need to know when they are supposed to work alone or be in their groups. They also need to know what they are expected to produce and how they will be evaluated. In order to accomplish these ends, teambuilding activities should be incorporated regularly into the lessons. In Co-Op Co-Op students should receive positive, supportive feedback from the teacher as well as their peers. Peer feedback focuses on learning outcomes or on what students did to help each other learn about colonialism.

Steps of Co-Op Co-Op

An overview of the steps to Co-Op Co-Op is provided below. A more detailed description of the rationale and steps to Co-Op Co-Op can be found in Kagan, 1990. The Co-Op Co-Op structure and the phases used to organize this unit are related to **Group Investigation,** a cooperative learning method developed by Sharan and Sharan (see Sharan et al., 1980). Co-Op Co-Op consists of *ten steps:*

1. a whole-class discussion dealing with students' interests and needs relative to the lesson topic;
2. the formation of heterogeneous teams (teacher-assigned or student-selected);
3. teambuilding and cooperative skill development;
4. the selection of each team's topic;
5. the selection of mini-topics by individual team members;
6. mini-topic research and preparation of mini-topic presentations to fellow team members;
7. the presentation of mini-topics;
8. the preparation of team presentations to the whole class;
9. team presentations to the whole class; and
10. feedback to teams and individual team members.

The three phases of this unit are divided as follows: Phase I, introduction to colonialism (Steps 1-5 above); Phase II, studying about countries in colonialism (Steps 6-7 above): and Phase III, sharing with others (Steps 8-10 above). The specific elements of each phase are described below.

Phase I: Introduction to colonialism

- The teacher forms teams and facilitates teambuilding.
- The teacher introduces and illustrates key concepts related to colonialism.
- The students choose their preferred research strategies (mini-topics).

Phase II: Studying about countries in colonialism

- Partner teams choose two countries involved in a colonial relationship.
- Partner teams conduct research on mini-topics.
- Students present mini-topics to team members.

Phase III: Sharing with others

- Partner teams design and prepare presentations to the whole class.
- Teams make presentations to the whole class (benchmark product).
- The students and teacher give feedback to team members and teams.

PHASE I

During Phase I, students learn about the dynamics of colonialism through a case study of the relationship between Great Britain and India. They also learn about strategies they may use to research topics for their Co-Op Co-Op assignment. Phase I can take approximately *four instructional periods* and addresses academic, language, and social objectives as indicated below.

Phase I Objectives

Academic

- Describe the key concepts of colonialism.
- Apply knowledge of colonialism to the past and present relationship between Great Britain and India.
- Identify alternative approaches to conducting research.

Language

- Identify and practice aural/oral language needed for group tasks.
- Write lists and take notes.

Social

- Listen actively to others.
- Take roles needed for group tasks.
- Give and receive help in the group.

Students form four-member, heterogeneous teams according to English language proficiency. Where possible, a bilingual facilitator (a student who is proficient in both English and the ELL students' native language) is a member of those teams with ELL students. Where a bilingual facilitator is not available, ELL students are paired with students who are responsible for helping them. Except when temporarily grouped homogeneously (i.e., all ELL students), students remain in these groups throughout the lesson. It is important in Co-Op Co-Op to work from class-level to team-level to individual activities so that students see how class needs are met by teams and how teams support the needs of individuals.

This lesson assumes that students have had previous experience in using various resources (e.g., encyclopedias, newspapers, the library) to find new information. If this is not the case, the teacher may need to give students some background experience or information before continuing with the activities in this unit. Phase I has *five steps,* and these are described below.

Step 1

The teacher explains to the whole class that the topic of study will be colonialism, past and present. Ask students to use the **Roundrobin** structure (see the Appendix for a brief description of each structure introduced in this unit) to share words they associate with the word *colonialism.* Have one member of each team share the team's responses with a neighboring team.

Step 2

Students form dyads on each team and use **Three-Step Interview** to determine what they already know about the two countries. One dyad takes India, the other Great Britain. The dyads share with team members, and the teams share with the rest of the class.

The teacher uses direct instruction to provide background information on the colonial process, with Great Britain and India as examples. The teacher also lays the groundwork for later student research by modeling various strategies used to prepare lessons (e.g., reading textbooks, consulting encyclopedias, interviewing colleagues, watching films, reading novels, newspapers, news magazines, and so on). The teacher models for later activities by focusing on key concepts of colonialism (e.g., geography, reasons for colonialism, positive and negative effects of colonialism, and current effects of the colonial process).

Step 3

To see colonialism from each country's point of view, the teacher uses **Corners**, asking students to choose which country they would have liked to have lived in during the colonial period. Label one corner of the room "Great Britain" and another corner "India." Ask students to imagine themselves as twenty-five-year-olds living during the colonial period. Then ask students which country they would have liked to have lived in during that period. Students first write their choice on a slip of paper, then move to the appropriate corner. After moving to their corner, students form dyads and share reasons for choosing the country they did. Individual students then go to the opposite corner, form a new dyad and use **Paraphrase Passport** to exchange reasons for their choices.

Step 4

Based on the case study of Great Britain and India, the teacher explains that in a few days teams will research the colonial relationship between two other countries of their choice. Possible countries for research will be discussed in Phase II. Team presentations will be on these two countries. Individual students' mini-topics will be developed from the research that each student chooses to employ. To prepare for their research, students on each team use **Group Discussion** to list various research strategies (e.g., interview, encyclopedia, computer, library, and newspapers). The recorder lists the proposed strategies on a sheet of paper.

Teams use **Roundtable** to identify each team member's preferred research strategy. Team members pass the sheet with the proposed research strategies around the group, and students write their names next to their favorite strategy. Teams then agree on the research strategy(ies) that each member may employ. For example, Student #1 might conduct an interview, Student #2 use an encyclopedia, Student #3 refer to the course text, and Student #4 use newspapers and magazines. Students may use more than one strategy. Students will use these strategies for "mini-topic" research in Phase II. Depending on the specific topic they choose, they may need to change their strategy(ies).

The teacher should observe ELL students to determine if they are following the assignment and selecting a research strategy that is appropriate for their language level. The bilingual facilitator should be supporting these students in the group. Encourage students to review materials and conduct research in their native language if possible.

Step 5

The teacher asks teams to use **Group Processing** to discuss how well they worked together. They might think about or write answers to the following questions, then discuss their answers with their teammates: "How did I participate?" "How did I share?" "How did I listen?" "How did I help?" "How did I receive help?" Encourage students to resolve any conflicts within their teams before bringing them to the teacher.

PHASE II

In Phase II, teams select their countries and conduct research for their "mini-topics." Mini-topics are sub-topics of a larger topic. Mini-topics will be presented to team members. Phase II can cover *several instructional periods*. Objectives for Phase II include those listed on page 20.

Students remain in their teams. If absences and attrition have resulted in the loss of bilingual facilitators or partners for any ELL students, the teacher should consult with each team to determine if and how the issue should be resolved. Ask teams to decide on roles for each member that they think will facilitate their interaction (e.g., active listener, mediator, encourager, and checker). Based on each team's selection of roles, the teacher highlights appropriate language skills required to fulfill each role. This provides important support to all students, especially those who are in the process of learning English. Phase II has *nine steps;* these are described on pages 20-22.

Phase II Objectives

Academic

- Apply research strategies to a particular assignment.
- Analyze key concepts of colonialism related to a particular pair of countries.

Language

- Learn the language needed for presenting to team members.
- Learn the language associated with team roles.
- Organize and prepare mini-topics.

Social

- Negotiate opposing positions.
- Actively listen to the ideas of others.
- Help team members in preparing mini-topics.

Step 1

The teacher lists on the chalkboard several pairs of countries that have been or are presently in a colonial relationship (e.g., France and Vietnam, Japan and Korea, the United States and Puerto Rico, the United States and the Philippines, Portugal and Brazil, Spain and Mexico, Italy and Ethiopia, the Netherlands and Indonesia, the Soviet Union and Hungary, and China and Tibet).

Step 2

Use **Spend-a-Buck** to select a limited number of country pairs for the class to study. Each team discusses the pair it wants. Team representatives use Spend-a-Buck to vote on the countries listed on the chalkboard; each team has four votes. Since "partner teams" will be used (see below), the list of country pairs should number about five. This would allow for ten teams of four to form five partner teams to study five country pairs. If representatives vote on too few country pairs, the teacher can ask teams to come up with ways to resolve the problem. If there is an odd number of teams, one team could be asked to divide one pair of countries between two dyads on the team.

Step 3

The teacher asks each team to find a partner team and form a group of eight. Partner teams must agree on (a) one pair of countries that they will study and (b) the country that each team will research. For example, Teams #1 and #2 might take the United States and Puerto Rico. Members of Team #1 conduct mini-topic research on the United States and Team #2 members do their research on Puerto Rico. After conducting their research, Teams #1 and #2 co-present on the colonial relationship between the two countries.

Step 4

Partner teams report to the whole class on their decisions. If more than one partner team has chosen the same country pair, the teacher asks teams to resolve the overlap. The teacher should be prepared to suggest additional teambuilding activities in order to support the teams in resolving conflicts.

Step 5

After consensus is reached on the countries selected by the paired partner teams, each team does mini-topic research on its country. The teacher reminds students to concentrate their research on the *key concepts* related to colonialism, such as:

a) demographic/social aspects (e.g., location, population, religions, values, and politics);
b) reasons for colonization (e.g., the need for resources, war, and political conflict);
c) positive and negative effects of colonization; and
d) the current effects of the colonial process.

The teacher can provide additional guidance, if necessary, for mini-topic research by having team members design advanced organizers (i.e., lists of questions to answer based on the key concepts indicated above).

The teacher should observe team activities to determine if ELL students are receiving adequate support. After mini-topics are selected, ELL students from the same language group may be paired or grouped together so that they can help each other in their native language in preparing advanced organizers, designing research strategies, identifying resources, and developing a better understanding of key concepts. ELL students from different language backgrounds may be grouped together and helped directly by the teacher or peer tutors.

Step 6

After completing their research, individual students prepare oral presentations of their mini-topics for team members. ELL students may return to a homogeneous group to give or receive help with their presentations.

Step 7

Students form the same partner teams as when they chose the country pairs. Individual students make their mini-topic presentations to partner team members. ELL students may make their presentations with the assistance of a bilingual facilitator. Students assume the roles they selected earlier so that interaction is improved.

Step 8

Students use **Group Processing** to discuss how well they worked as a team in completing and presenting their mini-topics. Remind students to focus on positive feedback that identifies what team members did to help each other learn more about their pair of countries.

Step 9

Individuals turn in their mini-topic reports to the teacher for review and evaluation. Individual students and the teacher negotiate on the format of the report so that it is appropriate to the student's level. For example, students with good writing skills in English may turn in written reports; ELL students may submit outlines with notes, tapes of interviews, and lists of reading materials. The teacher evaluates how well the reports reflect the key concepts related to colonialism.

PHASE III

In Phase III, partner teams present a synthesis of their mini-topic research to the whole class. The team presentation is what has been called the *benchmark product* for the unit; it is the culmination of the students' understanding of concepts that were presented and recycled in the previous lessons. Phase III covers approximately *five instructional periods* and addresses the objectives listed below.

Phase III Objectives
Academic
• Organize and synthesize information into a coherent whole. • Explain the concept of colonialism and historical and contemporary issues related to it. • Give feedback on presentations.
Language
• Use language appropriate for large-group presentations.
Social
• Negotiate opposing positions. • Give evaluative feedback.

Phase III consists of *six steps;* these are described on pages 23-24.

Step 1

The whole class uses **Brainstorming** to generate key questions that students may have about colonialism. This gives teams ideas for planning their presentations to meet the needs of their peers (e.g., the definition of colonialism, causes of colonialism, effects of the colonial relationship on persons living in the colonies, and the current effects of colonialism on the countries). Brainstorming may also be used with the class to come up with a variety of modes that teams could use for their presentations, such as debate, displays, demonstrations, skits, and team-led discussions.

Brainstorming is particularly effective when participants (a) refrain from evaluating each other's responses, (b) accept all ideas, no matter what one may think of them, and (c) build on each other's ideas. It may be helpful to assign individual students to monitor how well each of these criteria is followed during the Brainstorming activity.

Step 2

Partner teams select the content and the mode for their presentation. The content should integrate material from their mini-topics and respond to the issues generated earlier by the class. Individual students should take responsibility for each part of the presentation. Students should be discouraged from presenting their individual mini-topics. The team presentation should be a synthesis of what members have learned from their own work and from each other, with each team member having a unique role. The class should use a variety of modes in their presentations. If several teams choose the same mode, teams should resolve the overlap.

The teacher should check to see that each team's mode of presentation makes appropriate adaptations, if necessary, for ELL students. These students may be given the option to use visual aids, demonstrations, and drama techniques that do not depend heavily on oral language proficiency in English. Further, if ELL students are having other difficulties, the teacher may wish to use homogeneous ELL groups or pairs, as in Phase II, to give additional assistance.

Step 3

The partner teams prepare their presentations. The teacher encourages team members to help each other prepare for the presentation. Positive interdependence between partner teams is developed, since the success of the presentation is linked to the two teams working together.

Step 4

The partner teams present to the whole class. The teams have full use of the classroom and its facilities for making their presentations. Encourage teams to involve members of the class in a question/answer session for part of the presentation. Encourage members of the class to use effective listening and participation skills to help the partner teams.

Step 5

Following each presentation, class members give positive feedback on how the partner teams helped the class improve its understanding of colonialism. Use the academic objectives for each phase to help guide this discussion. Both the teacher and the students can draw attention to strategies that may be useful to other teams. For more formal feedback, the teacher may have individual partner team members comment on each other's contribution to the team effort. For more structure, the teacher could ask team members to comment on the social skills that were emphasized throughout the unit. For example, team members could express what they appreciated about each member's contributions during the unit. For more on group and individual feedback processes and materials, see Kagan, 1990.

Step 6

If the teacher plans to form new teams for the next unit, it is suggested that each team be given an opportunity to complete any unfinished business and end the experience on a positive note. The following is an adaptation of a procedure for ending groups suggested by Johnson and Johnson (1987). Ask teams to discuss such questions as:

a) Are there any unresolved issues? Does anything need to be discussed further?

b) What are some of our most successful accomplishments? How has each of us changed?

c) What feelings do we have about our group's breaking up?

d) Tell each team member something that you appreciated about his/her participation on the team.

Conclusion

Students in American classrooms are becoming increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. In addition, secondary school students have distinct educational needs from those of elementary school students. Students who are in the process of acquiring English as their second language face the challenge of succeeding in demanding academic subjects in classrooms designed for native speakers of English. In addition, secondary school students have only a short time in which to meet the English language proficiency and academic goals needed to graduate from high school. Some of these needs can be met by cooperative learning structures and activities used in the content areas. These structures and activities can help maximize the rate at which secondary students acquire the English language, content area knowledge, and interpersonal skills needed for success in school. When we combine what we know about cooperative learning structures with what we know about what works for language minority students, we can more effectively meet the needs of these students.

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Appendix

Overview of Selected Cooperative Learning Structures

Structure	Brief Description	Functions (Academic & Social)
	TEAMBUILDING	
Roundrobin	Each student in turn shares something with his or her teammates.	Expressing ideas and opinions, creating stories. Equal participation, getting acquainted with teammates.
	CLASSBUILDING	
Corners	Each student moves to a corner of the room representing a teacher-determined alternative. Students discuss within corners, then listen to and paraphrase ideas from other corners.	Seeing alternative hypotheses, values, problem-solving aproaches. Knowing and respecting different points of view, meeting classmates.
	COMMUNICATION BUILDING	
Paraphrase Passport	Students correctly paraphrase the person who has just spoken and then contribute their own ideas.	Checking comprehension. Giving feedback. Sharing ideas.
Spend-a-Buck	Each student is given four quarters to spend any way he or she wishes on the items to be decided. The team tallies the results to determine its decision.	Decision making. Consensus building. Conflict resolution.
Group Processing	Students evaluate their ability to work together as a group and each member's participation, with an aim to improving how the group works together.	Communication skills. Role-taking ability.
	MASTERY	
Numbered Heads Together	The teacher asks a question; students consult to make sure everyone knows the answer. Then one student is called upon to answer.	Review, checking for knowledge, comprehension.
Send-a-Problem	Each student writes a review problem on a flash card and asks teammates to answer or solve it. Review questions are passed to another group.	Review, checking for comprehension.
Cooperative Review	Students engage in a variety of games to review the week's material.	Review, checking for comprehension.
	CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT	
Three-Step Interview	Students interview each other in pairs, first one way, then the other. Students share with the group information they learned in the interview.	Sharing personal information such as hypotheses, reactions to a poem, conclusions from a unit. Participation, listening.
Brain-storming	Students encourage each other to generate ideas regarding a particular topic or problem and build upon each other's ideas.	Generating and relating ideas. Participation, involvement.
Group Discussion	The teacher asks a low-consensus question. Students talk it over in groups and share their ideas.	Sharing ideas. Reaching group consensus.

continues on next page

Overview of Selected Cooperative Learning Structures

continued

Structure	Brief Description	Functions (Academic & Social)
	MULTIFUNCTIONAL	
Roundtable	Students pass a paper and pencil around the group. Each student in turn writes an answer. In Simultaneous Roundtable, more than one pencil and paper are used at once.	Assessing prior knowledge, practicing skills, recalling information, creating cooperative art. Teambuilding, participation of all.
Partners	Students work in pairs to create or master content. They consult with partners from other teams. They then share their products or understanding with the other partner pair in their team.	Mastery and presentation of new material, concept development. Presentation and communication skills.
Co-Op Co-Op	Students work in groups to produce a particular group product to share with the whole class; each student makes a particular contribution to the group.	Learning and sharing complex material, often with multiple sources. Evaluation, application, analysis, synthesis. Conflict resolution, presentation skills. Planning, group decision making.
Group Investigation	Students identify a topic and organize into research groups to plan learning tasks or sub-topics for investigation. Individual students gather and evaluate data and synthesize findings in a group report.	Application, analysis, inference, synthesis, evaluation. Planning, group decision making.

Adapted and expanded by L. V. Pierce from Kagan (in press) and Kagan (1990).

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