

Cooperation

Syllables

co•op•er•a•tion

Pronunciation

koh-op-uh-**rey**-shuh n

Definition

Work together to reach a goal.

(With everyone's cooperation, the job was done in half the time.)

Simply put: Get along to get it done.

Related Terms

Collaborate: A fancy word for working together.

Participate: Joining others to do something.

Fundamental Question:

When is cooperation a better choice than working alone?

Students will investigate the idea that cooperation is sometimes more efficient (not to mention more fun) than working alone.

Objectives

Each student will:

1. Practice cooperation skills including “listening” to nonverbal clues, sharing ideas, compromising, and including others in a group effort; and
2. Will participate in a cooperative effort to solve a problem.

Before you begin

- Print out one copy of *It's the Law* for each student; and
- Gather materials with which the students may construct posters.

Suggested Sidebars:

Speaking of Cooperation (Discussion Idea)

What are some activities best done cooperatively with other people?

What are some activities it's best to do by yourself?

Taking It to the Next Level

Help organize a study group (or other group) that will help you practice cooperation.

Cooperation

Procedure

1. Break the class into teams of five or six children. Tell them: “Without saying a word, organize yourselves in a line from the oldest child, on the left, to the youngest child, on the right. Cooperation is the key, but remember, absolutely no talking.” (At this point, your students will most likely be staring at you – and each other – in bewilderment. Give them time. Eventually, you will observe behaviors such as hand signals, children pointing to dates on the calendar [particularly when they realize that, being fairly close in age, specific dates of birth will matter], and writing notes on the board.
2. When all of the groups have finished, ask the students how their group solved the problem, what contributions individual group members made (reminding them that if anyone was not involved in – or left out of – the process, it was not really an example of cooperation), what was most difficult about the assignment, how cooperating with each other helped, and so forth.
3. **Follow-up:** Distribute the *It's the Law* sheets and review the directions with your students. After they have completed the page, allow them to make humorous posters announcing one of their “silly” laws and ask them to discuss one of their “sensible” laws in class.

Name _____

Reminder: Cooperation means to working together to reach a goal.

It's the Law

Laws and rules are made to keep us safe, but a few of our older laws sound just plain silly today. Did you know that some states had laws like:

- It is against the law to throw a ball at someone's head just for the fun of it?
- It is illegal to drive a car while you are wearing a blindfold?
- If you tie an elephant to a parking meter, you must put money in the meter just as you would for a car?
- It is illegal to rob a bank and then shoot at the bank teller with a water pistol?
- It is illegal to sing in a public while you're wearing a bathing suit?

Suggest two *sensible* new laws or classroom rules about cooperation.

1. _____

2. _____

Now suggest two *silly* laws or classroom rules about cooperation.

1. _____

2. _____

Today's Thought: *Let us be like the lines that lead to the center of a circle, uniting there, and not like the parallel lines that never join.* – **Chasidic Proverb**