

# Teamwork

## Syllables

team•work

## Pronunciation

teem-wurk

## Definition

Cooperative effort put forth by a team.

*(Teamwork means acting together with members of a group to achieve a common goal.)*

**Simply put:** “All for one and one for all!”

## Related Terms

Collaboration: Working together with one or more people in an effort to accomplish a task.

Joint Effort: Collaboration.

## Fundamental Question:

**Does being a team player mean giving up my individuality?**

**Students will investigate the idea that** if an effort (like a project or a game) requires a team, then the team as a unit should take credit for the successes and responsibility for failures.

## Objectives

Each student will:

1. Examine the benefits of working collaboratively as a team;
2. Participate in a team experience; and
3. Evaluate the team’s level of success and the impact the strengths and weaknesses of the members had on that success.

## Before you begin

- Develop a different “Team Task” index card for each group of four to five children. No two tasks should be alike but should all take approximately the same amount of time to complete. Making non-bake treats, constructing a specific building with Legos, and sorting art supplies and the like would all be appropriate;
- Gather all of the supplies needed to complete each activity and place them randomly on the same table; and
- Print out one copy of *Book It* for every three students.

## Suggested Sidebars:

### Speaking of Teamwork (Discussion Idea)

What problems might a very independent person have as a team member? What could be done to assist both the person and the team to assure a positive, collaborative experience?

### Taking It to the Next Level

Arrange for your class to observe teamwork in action. This could take the form of attending a ball game, sitting in on a faculty meeting, seeing how the lunchroom workers synchronize their duties, or something else along those lines. Afterward, discuss what the class observed and what conclusions they drew.

# Teamwork

## Procedure

1. Divide the class into teams of four or five. Have one child (designated by the team, not the teacher) from each group draw at random a “Team Task” index card from a small bag, box, or hat.
2. Say: “Each group has received a different task card. You will find the items you need to complete your task located on the back table. Only one member of each team may get the team’s supplies. The team must then decide upon a place to work and carry out the task. I will not be giving any more instructions for this activity and I will not explain the ones already given. For instance, I will not be telling you which team member should gather the supplies. Okay. Let’s get to work.” (Note: Please feel free to set a specific time limit.)
3. When the tasks are all complete, ask: “What was your team’s goal and what did you do to reach that goal? How did you set up (arrange) your team? (That is, who did what?) Was it the sort of task that could have been done alone? Explain. If not, what were the benefits of working together? (Responses might include things like: We saved time by dividing up jobs; We were able to brainstorm many different ideas; We had fun; and so forth.)
4. **Follow-up a:** Challenge the students to join a team of social-action volunteers. Provide information about local opportunities such as working at a soup kitchen with their families or serving on the school’s student council.
5. **Follow-up b:** Divide the class again, this time into groups of three. Distribute one copy of *Book It* to each group.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder:** Teamwork is cooperative effort put forth by a team.

## Book It

Your group has been assigned to the textbook adoption committee for your class. What would be the characteristics of appropriate books for your class? Have someone in your group record your detailed responses below.

*Example:* Should have colorful illustrations, help you think in new or unusual ways, ask for creative responses, include humor ...

---

---

---

---

On the following lines, critique two of the textbooks now in your classroom. Base your evaluation on the criteria your group developed above.

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Combine your group with another group. Compare and contrast the criteria for textbook adoption established by your groups.

Today's Thought: *Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.* – **Ryunosuke Satoro, Author/Poet**