Collaborative Group Work

In Collaborative Group Work, students engage in learning by constructing group solutions, texts, experiments, or works of art. Effective group work is well planned and strategic. Students are grouped intentionally, with each student held accountable for contributing to the group work. Activities are designed so that students with diverse skill levels are supported as well as challenged by their peers. They are planned around meaningful tasks in the subject area that are conceptually rich, engaging, and have multiple entry points for all students.

# HABITS OF MIND

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| **Initiating**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Initiating to Developing**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Developing**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Developing to Demonstrating**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Demonstrating**  *(Student Characteristics)* |
| * Students are reluctant to participate in collaborative group work projects * Students are used to working independently * Students are unsure about the purpose of collaborative group work * Students cannot explain WHY they are participating in collaborative group work * Students believe that working with others hurts their own learning * Students are hesitant to help others in the group | * Assess students’ prior knowledge about working in groups. * Address their common misconceptions about Collaborative Group Work—what “collaborative” means and what it doesn’t mean. * Assign pairs to complete a short task that requires interdependence, then give questions to assess each student’s participation. * Model and enforce showing respect and creating a culture of inclusion during Collaborative Group Work. | * Students have had some positive experiences with collaborative group work * Students being to work collaboratively by asking for group members’ help * Students begin to see that group work is helpful * Students can explain how working in groups helps them learn content | * Model with students how to effectively ask for and provide constructive feedback. * In groups, give students a task and ask them to design a way to do Collaborative Group Work to complete it. * Have students assess their ability to do Collaborative Group Work effectively; what expectations, strengths, and challenges they bring to the work. * Encourage students to take the stance of problem solvers when confronting difficulties in Collaborative Group Work. | * Students actively participate throughout the activity * Students encourage all members to participate and share ideas * Students provide constructive feedback throughout the activity * Students see themselves as responsible for ensuring all members learn the lesson’s objectives * Students know and can articulate why collaborative group work helps deepen their learning |

# LESSON DESIGN

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| **Initiating**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Initiating to Developing**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Developing**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Developing to Demonstrating**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Demonstrating**  *(Student Characteristics)* |
| * Students try to make sense of the group task by asking the teacher questions. * Students are slow to start from either confusion or lack of knowledge about how to collaborate | * Start with pairs and triads. * Explicitly define the goals of Collaborative Group Work and how it is critical to student learning. * Embed Collaborative Group Work throughout every lesson, using the same strategy for several days until mastery is reached. * Model and explicitly define the roles of every group member. | * Students understand their role and the roles of other students within the group. * Students can work collaboratively without much prompting by the teacher. | * Introduce new protocols and Collaborative group work strategies slowly and systematically and require mastery of each. * Keep feedback direct and non-evaluative. Ask questions and give them time and encouragement to struggle to find the answer or solution. * Design more complex projects that require more opportunities to provide feedback and actively participate * Raise expectations of individual and group work and provide exemplar models against which students can assess their own work. | * Students help direct the group in setting goals. * Students can explain their individual contributions and those of other students in their own words. |

# LESSON ATTAINMENT

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| **Initiating**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Initiating to Developing**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Developing**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Developing to Demonstrating**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Demonstrating**  *(Student Characteristics)* |
| * Students are unsure of why they are doing group work or how it fits into their larger grade. * Students choose the members of their group based on comfort or proximity. * Students are not clear that Collaborative Group Work is being used to help them learn the day’s objectives. * Students BEGIN to use Writing to Learn as a tool to document their Collaborative Group Work. | * Assign meaningful tasks to students that directly connect to big ideas and essential questions of the lesson. * Create tasks that draw upon critical and creative thinking as well as the strengths of diverse learners. * Check for all students’ understanding of the goals of the assignment, their roles within it, and how success will be measured for individuals and the group. * Build scaffolds into Collaborative Group Work to support students as they complete tasks (e.g. other CIF strategies) * Intentionally assign groups based on mixed abilities and interests. | * Students understand the objectives of the group task and understand how they are to be evaluated. * Students begin to work collaboratively with students they may not have worked with before. * Students expect to be held accountable for demonstrating what they are learning and how they are learning it. * Students BEGIN to use Writing to Learn as a tool to document their Collaborative Group Work. | * Continue to group intentionally based on data yet provide opportunities for variety in groups. * Introduce rubrics to assess Collaborative Group Work as well as content knowledge. * Provide more mechanisms such as Writing to Learn and Questioning for reflection and self-assessment on students’ Collaborative Group Work and their mastery of the lesson’s learning goals and objectives. | * Students are familiar with rubrics and can assess themselves. * Students are clear about the goals and objectives of the assignment. * Students can draw upon prior knowledge to complete the task. * Students thoroughly complete assigned tasks. * Students can work with any student in the class as assigned by the teacher. * Students REGULARLY use Writing to Learn to document and support their learning in Collaborative Group Work |

# Classroom Management

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| **Initiating**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Initiating to Developing**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Developing**  *(Student Characteristics)* | **Developing to Demonstrating**  *(Teacher Behavior)* | **Demonstrating**  *(Student Characteristics)* |
| * Students try to make sense of the group task by asking the teacher questions. * Students are slow to start from either confusion or lack of knowledge about how to collaborate | * Start with pairs and triads. * Explicitly define the goals of Collaborative Group Work and how it is critical to student learning. * Embed Collaborative Group Work throughout every lesson, using the same strategy for several days until mastery is reached. * Model and explicitly define the roles of every group member. | * Students understand their role and the roles of other students within the group. * Students can work collaboratively without much prompting by the teacher. | * Introduce new protocols and Collaborative group work strategies slowly and systematically and require mastery of each. * Keep feedback direct and non-evaluative. Ask questions and give them time and encouragement to struggle to find the answer or solution. * Design more complex projects that require more opportunities to provide feedback and actively participate * Raise expectations of individual and group work and provide exemplar models against which students can assess their own work. | * Students help direct the group in setting goals. * Students can explain their individual contributions and those of other students in their own words. |