

# Literacy Cooperative Learning Strategies

## Write Around

Teacher starts a sentence and each student takes turns writing a sentence. They pass their paper to the right, read the one they received, and add a sentence to that one. After a few rounds, stories or summaries begin. Give students time to add a conclusion and/or edit their favorite one to share with the class.

## How to Use

1. Students are placed in groups with 3 – 4 students and the teacher give each group a topic or idea.
2. Students then take turns writing their response to the question or idea on a piece of paper.
3. After time is up (given by the teacher) the teachers have students pass the paper to the next group.
4. Then this group reads over what the other group wrote and add to it or explain more.
5. The process repeats.

## When to Use

- Allows all students to demonstrate their contribution and knowledge regarding the topic.
- Use during ELAR or writing journals.
- When teaching students about writing a short story and how to be creative.
- Students can use this when learning to review and edit rough drafts for their peers.
- Creative writing or summarization

## Variations

- Another way to do this is put students' different groups and have them create multiple stories using the same first sentence given by the teacher.
- For younger grade levels K-2 you can start a drawing and have each student add a drawing.
- Another alteration for grade PK, Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade is to have students talk using sentences.

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## Clock Partners

Clock Partners is a method for assigning students to work together. This structure saves instructional time and provides for organized progress within the classroom.

## How to Use

1. Teacher distribute the "[My Clock Partners](#)" graphic. A clock with lines pointed to different time slots on the clock.
2. She then tells them to go around the room and ask classmates to sign up for a time on the clock.
3. Upon completion each student should have 12 different partners that line up to each hour on the clock.
4. When the teacher wants to add differences to partner work, she calls out, "Find your 12:00 appointment," students travel through the classroom until they find their assigned partner.

## **When to Use**

- This could be used before putting them in groups to complete an assignment.
- Before you start on a group project this could be used to promote teamwork.
- Use during peer editing an essay, paper or report to get different views from partners.
- A lesson on trusting and working with everyone.
- Reading journals and promoting conversations.

## **Variations**

- The teacher could add additional spots to sign up for slots for extra points of views.
- Could use as a “life-line” when taking a quiz.
- K-2 students can use digital clocks.

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## **Communal Teaching**

Communal teaching uses assigned roles to help with vocabulary comprehension. Reading material needs to be at learning level of all students in the group. Each role is described and modeled for every student. Roles include predictor, clarifier, summarizer and questioner for the teaching roles. Communal teaching encourages independent usage of comprehension within a cooperative framework.

## **How to Use**

1. The teacher assigns each group an instructional-level passage to read.
2. The students read the first part.
3. The summarizer restates the part in his or her own words.
4. The questioner creates questions for their group.
5. The clarifier focuses on any misunderstandings about the comprehension of the vocabulary.
6. The predictor makes predictions about the next part.
7. Roles are rotated with each student taking a part in each role.

## **When to Use**

- Introduce new vocabulary before a unit to test their knowledge.
- Write test questions that will be on the next unit test.
- Use to assess their knowledge before they start a new chapter.
- This could be used as preparing for a book report after reading a book.
- Use in science or social studies when learning a new concept.

## **Variations**

- The teacher can intentionally assign the reader role, so that readers will have an instructionally appropriate section to read.
  - A struggling reader may read a section of comfortable text, using high-frequency words or a smaller part of the text.
  - Have students read silently and then discuss the part.
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## **Tea Party**

Multiple discussions going on simultaneously with each student speaking to different students every few minutes to understand a different viewpoint.

### **How to Use**

1. Line students up in two lines facing each other.
2. Give the class a question.
3. Have students facing each other in the lines discuss the question for a minute or two.
4. Then give another question.
5. New partners are given by having one line move to the right.

### **When to Use**

- To open communication with students and hear different viewpoints.
- Use at the beginning of the school year to get to know each other.
- Use in Spelling to test each other's skills for spelling words of the week.
- Have students quiz each other with questions before a test.

### **Variations**

- This activity can also be done in circles, one circle moves to the right when it is time to get new partners.
- Instead of questions do a spelling or vocabulary bee.

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## **Cooperative Learning Roles**

Cooperative learning roles are meant to increase engagement and participation for everyone in the team. Examples of roles include reporter, recorder, timekeeper, leader, and encourager.

### **How to Use**

1. Each team member performs a specific role to make effective use of the team's time collectively.
2. Roles are taught directly to students, and suitable tasks are modeled to help with social skill development.
3. The students then communicate with questions like, "What did you mean by \_\_\_\_?" or "That makes me think of \_\_\_\_?"
4. Roles are rotated to encourage leadership and teamwork skills.

### **When to Use**

- Use this when teaching elements of drama by creating a skit.
- Prepare the questions for the reporter that will be on a unit test.
- Check their understanding before you start a new unit in science or social studies.
- Use this at the beginning of the week to promote and encourage subject content about feelings and emotions.
- Have skits ready for the students about anti-bullying by having the reporter discuss bullying incidents and what students should or should not do.

## **Variations**

- The teacher can purposely assign the roles to match students' strengths.
  - Have students rehearse with each other in their group then present in front of the class.
  - Record the learning strategy so the students can see and hear themselves on tape.
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## **Jigsaw**

Students are split and put into groups depending on language levels. Different group members will meet separately with other groups. At the end students end with their original group to collaborate their findings into one answer.

## **How to Use**

1. Split your ELL students into groups, with each group containing members of various levels and abilities.
2. Have members of each group who are of the same level meet separately to work on part of the group's task.
3. When they are finished working separately, team members go back to their groups and work together to gather all their knowledge together into one cohesive group answer.

## **When to Use**

- Use to assess their knowledge before they start a new chapter.
- This could be used as preparing for a book report after reading a book.
- Introduce new vocabulary before a unit to test their knowledge.
- Write test questions that will be on the next unit test.

## **Variations**

- Have the students focus on vocabulary and reviewing vocab understanding in detail.