Collaborative Learning Activities for English 0990

Ruth Silon, DEI Project Director
Valerie Fales
Marge Geiger
Athena Mericsko

Cuyahoga Community College, Developmental Education Initiative
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Dear English Colleagues,

Through the Developmental Education Initiative (DEI), we were able to pool our resources and put together a packet on Collaborative Learning exercises for English 0990. To do this, we looked at every objective of the course, including study skills and reading and writing instruction, and then attempted to create a collaborative learning exercise for that objective. Many of the exercises are ones that at least one of us has used in teaching 0990; however, others are new and untested. Some have been developed from reviewing multiple texts which contain ideas on collaboration.

All of us believe that a good collaborative experience is one which motivates students and makes them feel a strong connection to both their work and their classmates. More importantly, it moves learning from a teacher led, top down experience to a responsible student centered experience. In addition, from the perspective of English educators, collaborative learning gets students talking to each other about reading and writing, what is successful and what is not! Finally, the collaborative learning experience contributes to another equally important goal: socialization. All of the 28 exercises included in this packet attempt to foster these three ends: student engagement, language development, and socialization.

Also included in this packet are ideas for teaching social skills, forming groups, evaluating group dynamics, and evaluating group process and projects.

It is our hope that you will seriously take advantage of the packet and use as many collaborative exercises as you can! Further, if you create one of your own, please forward it to any one of us, so we can disseminate it to the rest of our department. At some point during this year, we will send out a survey asking you to let us know which exercises you tried and how the experience went for you and your students.

Until then we remain Collaboratively Yours,

*Ruth Silon, DEI Project Director
Valerie Fales
Marge Geiger
Athena Mericsko

P.S. Thanks to Lindsay Milam, Brenda Boshela, and Rhonda Stapleton for their contributions.
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*Unless noted, all of the exercises and suggestions were developed by CCC faculty via the Developmental Education Initiative.
Collaborative Learning Pedagogy – An Overview

Importance of Collaboration

Collaboration has become a very essential aspect of the learning experience in today’s classrooms, and if it hasn’t, it should. Much of what we value in literacy education supports the practice of collaboration. Much of the recent literature supports collaboration as not only a valid but a productive pedagogical tool.

1. Increases the success and retention of students.
2. Increases the chance of academic survival for many students.
3. Is an essential skill in the work environment.

Goals of Collaboration

1. Teach skills.
2. Teach process.
3. Instill confidence.
4. Teach students how to learn from each other and teach each other; they are simultaneously learners and teachers.

Advantages of Collaboration

1. It draws on greater knowledge.
2. It draws on greater skills.
3. It leads to higher achievement in general.
4. It engages the entire person because people have to read, write, speak, and listen as part of a collaborative group.
5. It allows people to share responsibility for a document; no one person has to shoulder all of the responsibility.
6. It can improve communication and socialization skills.
7. By encouraging students to share ideas and question each other, it leads to effective learning about writing.
8. Because the process necessitates consensus, students are forced to legitimize their arguments and choices to a greater extent than they would if they were doing an exercise or project alone.
9. It provides an early sense of how an audience will read a document. (Because different people in a group work on different facets of a document, everyone in the group is “audience” for some part of the document.

Disadvantages of Collaboration

1. It can take more time than individual writing.
2. It can lead to group think instead of everyone thinking clearly and critically on an individual basis.
3. It can lead to a disunified document.
4. It can lead to inequitable workloads.
5. It can lead to conflict.

**Getting Students to Work Collaboratively**

A. Students can work collaboratively on exercises or projects involving grammar, writing, reading, study skills or literature.

B. For writing, students can collaborate at every stage of the writing process: pre-writing, drafting, and revising. In fact, by actually writing together, not just brainstorming, students can learn a great deal, say many writing experts.

C. Start students out with something simple and increase the complexity as the term progresses.

D. Structure a solid collaborative group. (Steps 2-4 could be done by the group with aid from the instructor or by the group itself.)
   1. Define the assignment/topic clearly.
   2. Establish work procedures. (When, where, how long does the group meet? What procedures will the group follow during meetings? How often and how will members communicate outside of meetings? Will there be access to people and resources outside the group? How does the group resolve conflict?)
   3. Establish a work schedule.
   4. Create evaluation criteria.

E. Discuss with students the means by which they can head off or reduce conflict within the group.
   1. Attend all meetings on time and ready to work.
   2. Meet your individual deadlines.
   3. Improve your listening skills.
      - reduce distractions
      - face the speaker
      - maintain eye contact
      - set aside your preconceptions of what you think the speaker is going to say and mean
      - listen to the ideas
      - don’t interrupt
   4. State your views diplomatically.
   5. Avoid becoming emotionally attached to your own ideas.
   6. Be supportive, not critical. When you disagree, do it without being disagreeable.
7. Never attack a person when you are disagreeing with an idea.
8. Don't monopolize space or time.
9. Share your resources with other members of your group.
10. Help draw shy and quiet members into the group discussions and decisions.
11. Above all, approach collaboration with the belief that everyone in the group is an important person with ideas that deserve consideration and that everyone is equal in the group.

F. Prepare students for this type of activity by discussing collaboration with them.

G. Structure the group project clearly so that students fully understand the steps and the goal of the project.

H. Discuss any prefatory materials that students need with which to negotiate the project. For example, if the group is to do a collaborative persuasive essay, discuss the art of persuasive writing beforehand.

I. Give students the opportunity at every step of the way to ask questions to clarify the task.

J. Assign specific roles to students (chair, recorder, etc.)

K. Make sure that students know that their performance in the group is important, that they will be held accountable for the work they do.

L. Periodically, students should be given the opportunity to evaluate the function and productivity of the group they are in. This assessment is almost a must for any major collaborative project.

**Evaluate your Task**

1. Is the task clear?
2. Does it really promote collaborative work?
3. Is it more than busy work?
4. Does it promote group and individual growth?

**Suggestions for group self-assessment**

1. Decide what you want to know about the group and its work and what you want students to notice about it and compose your questions accordingly.
2. Make sure that students can somehow indicate the groups they belong to without giving away their individual identities.
   (Sample assessments are included at the end of this packet.)
Collaborative Learning Key Terms

Group Types

Think-Pair-Share: Students form dyads to process information and/or design something (like a set of questions) to present to a larger group. Often they review material by taking turns and giving feedback to each other.

Base Group: A group that meets regularly. This group is usually formed near the beginning of a semester. It can be formed randomly (i.e. via a value line or birthdates). This group can meet to review information at the beginning or end of a given class period, to help students who were absent, and so forth. Ideally there are 4 students in a base group.

Expert Group: This group is formed to work on one particular task so that the students will become “experts” on the task. So, for example, a class can have an expert group on commas, semi-colons, and topic sentences. Unlike the base group, the expert group is not a constant group throughout the semester, but is formed in conjunction with learning particular skills and then presenting them to the base groups or the entire class.

Jigsaw: This is the movement of individual students from one group to another. For example, students may move from their base group to an expert group and then back to their base group. An instance of this is included in this package in the Syllabus Jigsaw exercise.

Round Robin: Students in a given group participate, one at a time, moving from person to person in the group on a given topic. This is to ensure that each student has a chance to participate.

Group Roles

Facilitator: Keeps the group on task and makes sure that each member is doing his/her work and that all have the opportunity to participate equally.

Recorder: Records all group work, so there is a written record of what has been accomplished. The recorder always reads his/her notes to the group to make sure that they are accurate.

Reporter: Reports back to the class, serving as the group spokesperson. This person works closely with the recorder.

Timekeeper: Attends to time constraints in order to keep the group on task.

Observer: Silently pays attention to group dynamics and provides feedback to the group, the instructor and/or the facilitator as needed.

Wildcard: Assumes the role of any missing member when necessary.
Guidelines for preparing collaborative small-group tasks*

Mara Holt, Ohio U holt@ohio.edu Workshop at Cuyahoga Community College 19 February 2010

(At our workshop with Mara Holt, the following guidelines were presented for writing small-group collaborative tasks.)

1. Use the same general instructions to begin each instruction sheet.
2. Because arriving at consensus/dissensus can be time-consuming, make any text to be analyzed short—a page, paragraph, a few sentences, a clip (or assign a longer text to be read/viewed the night before).
3. Limit the number of questions. Often one is enough; 4-5 can be overwhelming.
4. Make the questions short, concrete, simple, and debatable (if goal is consensus).
5. Sequence questions carefully, from easier to more difficult—from impressionistic to analytic to broadly synthetic, for example.
6. Ask questions that require students to analyze passages concretely. Type out the text or reproduce the printed page, or refer to a page in a book that everyone has brought to class. Ask pointed questions about specific words and phrases, what they mean, their relation to others, their significance in the whole passage, etc.
7. Ask questions that require students both to offer broad generalizations about the topic and at the same time to root their general conclusions in particulars. For example, if an essay is under consideration, ask: "What is your evaluation of the paper? Make three points to support your opinion."

*These guidelines are modified from Peter Hawkes' work as used in K.A. Bruffee’s A Short Course in Writing, 3rd ed., Little, Brown, 1985, 10-11.

An example of a task, written by Mara Holt, that follows these guideline appears on the next page
Small Group Task: "The Meatrix" (a short film about meat consumption)

Read these instructions before you begin the exercise.
First introduce yourselves to each other. Next, please agree on one person to record the
views expressed in the group and the decisions the group makes collaboratively.
The recorder will speak for the group.

Together answer the following questions:

Try to come to dissensus (find as many divergent answers as possible) on #2.
Try to come to consensus on #4.

1. What are one or two words that stick out for you?
2. What cultural assumptions does this film address?
3. What persuasive strategies does it use?
4. Do you find it persuasive?

Review the recorder’s notes to make sure they express accurately what the group has
done and decided. If any member of the group dissents from the group’s answer to #4,
the recorder should present the dissenting view too.
Value Line (presented at the Lily Conference, 2009)

A quick and effective cooperative learning structure for assigning students to heterogeneous teams is the Value Line. In the traditional value line, students form a line based on how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement or proposition. For example, instructors might ask students to respond to one of the following propositions.

The plus/minus grading system should be allowed for all courses.
Business majors should be required to take language courses.
My primary reason for choosing my major was career enhancement.

Instructors ask students to respond to the statement using the following Lickert Scale

- 500—strongly agree
- 400—agree
- 300—Neutral
- 200—disagree
- 100—strongly disagree

Instructors then ask the students to sum the digits in their Social Security number and add it to their choice. So, for example, if a student chose 400 (agree) and his/her Social Security number sum was 47, the total would be 4447. Instructors next instruct the students to form a line in numerical order with the highest number to the left. Once that line is formed, the instructor asks the students to “count off” starting with number one until the student on the far right speaks the number that informs everyone how many people are present. Step 1 depicts the Value Line at this point.

![Value Line Diagram](image)

Step 1
Form a rank ordered line and number each person

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

The instructor next determines the midpoint of the line as shown in Step 2. Then students are assigned to groups of four by selecting a student from the beginning of the line, two from around the midpoint, and one student from the end of the line. The final heterogeneous grouping is depicted in Step 3.

![Value Line Diagram](image)

Step 2
Locate the midpoint of the line

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Midpoint

Step 3
Form heterogeneous groups of four by assigning one member from each end of the line and two from close to the middle.

Group 1

Group 2

Group 3

Group 4

Group 5
Troubleshooting Resources

Robert Weinberg provides this helpful sheet describing various kinds of problems students encounter while working in groups. Focusing on the problem “social loafing” (also called “free-riding”), Bob gives some strategies for circumventing these problems before they even start.

Group Problems and How to Solve Them

There has been a lot written about the use of groups to enhance learning. However, instructors have to be concerned about some of the potential problems that groups may experience in their classes so that they can either avoid or effectively deal with them.

A brief list of potential problems is first presented followed by a discussion of how one typical problem might be solved.

- **Social Loafing** – Reduction of individual effort when several people are involved in a group activity
- **Conformity** – Members tend to subscribe to common standards on what is acceptable and unacceptable (accept group decisions without question)
- **Groupthink** – A mode of thinking developed by cohesive groups to maintain unanimity (undervalue or don’t listen to others outside of the group)
- **Deindividuation** – Loss of personal identity and self-awareness resulting from group identity (can behave atypically to fit in with group norms)

Research has revealed that the most often stated problem by students working in groups (e.g., group project) is when one or more of the group members do not contribute in any substantial way to group outcomes (e.g., hand in a final paper). This makes students frustrated and mad since they feel penalized for the lack of effort or contribution of this member (or members) and feel their own grades will suffer. This lack of effort and involvement usually resulting in poor performance is known as social loafing.

The primary way (although there are several) of eliminating or reducing social loafing is through what is termed increased “identifiability.” This means that individual members are held accountable (i.e., become identifiable) for their actions within the group. In student groups, this can be done in several ways (and can depend on the assignment).

- Have each student hand in (and grade) his/her individual contributions to the paper.
- Have group members rate the quantity and quality of the contributions of all other group members multiple times.
- Have attendance at all meetings sent to you.
- An individual can be voted out of the group (e.g., majority vote) if s/he does not consistently attend meetings and contribute to the final project. In essence, that student’s name will NOT appear on the final project.
- Have expectations for each group (set by each group) set out early and clearly (e.g., meeting times, meeting format, timelines for products brought by group
members, penalties for missing meetings, what is expected that each group member brings to the meetings, etc.).

- Have students present orally (maybe just to you or the entire class) about the part that they contributed or were most involved with creating.
- Each student might log in his/her activities (e.g., self-monitoring sheet) relating to the group project to the instructor via Blackboard.

(Presented at the Lily Conference, 2009)
EXHIBIT 2.3
Sample Group Learning Contract

For the next several class periods, I will be participating in a group to learn:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

I am committed to participating effectively in this group learning activity and will strive to do the following. *Students supply their agreed-upon ground rules, such as:*

- ___ Come to class regularly and on time
- ___ Come prepared and ready to share in my group
- ___ Listen actively to what others have to contribute
- ___ Be supportive of the efforts and initiatives of others

If I do not follow the above rules, I will do the following to compensate. *Students supply their own ideas or penalties, such as:*

- ___ If I miss a class, I agree to ask a group member ahead of time to take notes for me. If it is an unintended absence, I will get the notes from a group member and make up any group work I missed.
- ___ If I am unable to prepare for a group assignment, I will make up for it and do an additional proportional share of the work on the next assignment.
- ___ If I notice or if someone points out that I am not listening, I will stop what I am doing and immediately give my full attention to whomever is speaking.
- ___ If someone notices that I am too critical or am otherwise unsupportive, I will make efforts to watch my words and interactions in the future.

Signed_________________________________________ Date_________________________

EXHIBIT 6.1
Sample Self-Evaluation Form

Name_________________________________________
Group Number or ID:___________________________
Project Title________________________________

Rate yourself on your performance on the project using the following scale:

5 = Always  4 = Frequently  3 = Sometimes  2 = Rarely  1 = Never

I was prepared to contribute to the group
I stayed on task
I listened to others
I participated in discussion
I encouraged others to participate

Overall I felt my performance in the group should be rated:
Collaborative Learning – Social Skills

"I will pay for the ability to deal with people than any other ability under the sun."

John D. Rockefeller

Creating Positive Interdependence: We Instead of Me
Positive interdependence means that members of the group understand that they are responsible for both their own and each other’s learning. The focus is on a joint performance. There is both group and individual accountability, so members promote each other’s success. Members are taught and expected to use good social skills.

Forces that Hinder Group Performance: lack of maturity, dominance, social loafing, free riding, motivational loss due to perceived inequity, group think, lack of sufficient heterogeneity, lack of teamwork skills, inappropriate group size.

What Helps to Structure Positive Interdependence: a clear measureable task, students understand that they each will achieve their learning goal only if all members attain their goal (i.e. A group score for a common paper/project), supplement with rewards for group success (bonus point, free time, celebrations).

Ideas to teach Social Skills
- Ask students to suggest the teamwork skills they need to work together more effectively.
- Set up a role playing example, showing a positive and a negative outcome.
- Demonstrate and model specific skills (verbal and nonverbal); explain what you are doing.
- Have students role play specific skills in groups.

A CL exercise on Social Skills

1. Consider how important it is to encourage participation from all group members. As a group, list at least 2 reasons why you want to encourage each member to have a say and do his or her part in a given product.
2. Now consider what obstacles might hinder a member’s participation. List at least 2 possibilities.
3. Given your thoughts on the questions above, find some solutions to encourage group participation. Make a chart with two columns. The title of one is “Looks Like.” Under this title give 4 examples of what can be done nonverbally to encourage participation. The title of the other column is “Sounds Like.” Here list 4 examples of what can be said to encourage participation.
4. Be ready to share your chart with the class.

Syllabus Jigsaw Collaborative Exercise

(Purpose: To encourage student engagement in the syllabus and course expectations; foster personal responsibility as well as interdependence.)

1. Conduct a brief overview of the syllabus with the students of the syllabus/assignment list. Point out all the key parts of the syllabus such as attendance policy, grading policy, class behavior, due dates, etc.

2. Place 4 students in “home” groups. Give a set of 4 colored index cards to each group (one for each student). On each card is an important aspect of the syllabus as stated above. So, for example, the blue card would say “attendance”; the green card says “grading policy” and so forth. The students should decide who in the group will take responsibility for fully understanding that part of the syllabus. Each student takes the card that designates his/her area.

3. Now students meet in their “expert” groups. So all the students with blue “attendance” cards are together. In the expert groups students discuss what is in the syllabus, what questions they might have for the teacher, and what exactly they will go over with their home group. (The teacher should move around the room in case the groups have questions.)

4. “Experts” return to the “home” group. Each person takes a turn going over his/her part of the syllabus.

The number of groups and the number of students in each group depends on what the teacher decides that the students should discuss. Perhaps the teacher only wants to cover the class behavior rules; then this exercise could be used to work only behavior.
Making the Most of Your Tri-C Experience: Scavenger Hunt!

Name

Directions: Form a group of 4-5 students and complete the task below. (You can give them a class period or 24 hours, whatever makes sense for your class.)

It is your job to find the following places and write down location (room numbers, if applicable), phone numbers, hours of operation, and collect signatures (for some of these places). Use the grid on the back of this sheet to fill in the information (no need to fill in information in blacked-out spaces).

2 computer labs around campus where you can work on assignments
Library Reference Desk
English tutoring
The Writing Center
Math tutoring
Library Circulation Desk
Key Career Center
Counseling
Bookstore
Convenience store (C3)
ATM
Java City
Wi-Fi Café
Vending Machines
Campus Police and Security Services
Student Support Services (S.S.S.)
Cafeteria
3 places on campus to study
My office (Your professor)

Once you have completed the grid, write down any questions you may have about any of these places. Next, explain what type of group process you decided to use to finish the task on time. (Did you divide the work; if so, how? Looking back do you think you could have used a different process? Did anyone take on a leadership role? Why?)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Hours Open</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer Lab #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Lab #2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Reference Desk</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Tutoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math Tutoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Writing Center</td>
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<td>Library Circ. Desk</td>
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<td>Key Career Center</td>
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<td>Counseling</td>
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<td>Bookstore</td>
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<td>Convenience Store (C3)</td>
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<td>ATM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Java City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wi-Fi Café</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vending Machines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Police and Security</td>
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<td>S. S. S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Spot #1</td>
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<td>Study Spot #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Spot #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor's Office</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HARD SELL ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY

Directions for students:

- Divide into small groups of 5-6. As a group, think critically about the unusual situation* that your group has been given and attempt to examine this situation from every possible angle. Using all the members of your group, brainstorm to think of at least 5 “pros” (selling points) & as least 5 cons (negative points) for your situation(s). Dare to be creative!

- Be sure to vote on one member of your group to be the note taker before you begin to list ideas. If you cannot pick a certain person, please default to the good old “rock, paper, scissors” approach.

- Your group has 15 minutes to complete this assignment. We may start presentations earlier if each group is done before the 15 mins. max.

- After you have compiled your “good” & “bad” lists, present the information to the rest of the class. When presenting, each member of your group must contribute to the presentation (whether that means verbally discussing, acting out a situation or writing on the board. The note taker for the group can decide to participate or not when presenting as a group.

- GOOD LUCK & HAVE FUN!

*Sample Unusual Situations:

Sell a freezer to an Eskimo.
Sell a story of Stephen King’s (a famous horror writer) to a children’s publishing house.
Sell a cell phone to an Amish person (they don’t use technology).
Sell a new line of jeans to a nudist colony.
Sell a vacation in Hawaii to someone who is afraid of flying.
Sell an expensive insurance policy to someone with a beater car.
Sell an ant farm to someone who is deathly afraid of bugs.
Sell a skin conditioning product line to a cowboy.
Sell a side of beef to a vegetarian.
Sell a pedicure to a pig farmer.
Sell a surfboard to someone living in North Dakota
Convince a Sumo wrestler to run a marathon.
Convince an 80 year old lady to join a soccer team.

(After the exercise is completed, hold a large group discuss with the students on why this was a valuable exercise. The discussion could include making connections, considering audience, different styles of arguing, etc.)
Writing and following instructions—the Diagram Exercise:

The following exercise can be used as an ice breaker or it can be used in connection with a number of different kinds of writing skills, the most obvious probably being process analysis. I use this exercise at the beginning of the semester as a way of getting students to devise their own list of “Characteristics of Good Writing” (a bit of inductive teaching).

1. Pair students.

2. Each student is to draw a diagram on a sheet of paper without letting the partner see it. (Students should not draw too complex a diagram or else the exercise will take forever!)

3. On another sheet of paper, the diagram artist is to now write instructions for the partner so that the partner can draw the diagram without having seen the diagram itself.

4. Partners exchange instructions and follow those to draw the diagram described by those instructions.

5. When the diagrams are finished, partners compare to see how close each one came to reproducing the diagram initially created by the other.

6. The instructor asks pairs who were successful and those who were unsuccessful to share their products with the class.

7. The instructor then asks students to tell what there was about the instructions that enabled them to successfully reproduce the diagram OR what was missing (what they would have liked having) that resulted in their not being able to reproduce the diagram. As students offer these, the instructor lists them on the board.

8. What the class ends up with, then, is a list of “characteristics of good writing” even before the instructor begins talking about good writing. It works! (Eg. I recall one student who said that he could have done better if he had known what an equilateral triangle was. Aha! So his partner had not considered his audience when he inserted that term in his directions.)
Time Management
(I have used the following exercise as both a time management and an icebreaker activity.)

Schedule Sandra’s Time – Group Activity

Form a group of 4-5 students and select a recorder who will record the group’s work and report to the class.

First, review all of Sandra’s activities listed below. Now, using the blank schedule provided, complete her time schedule focusing, most importantly, on when she can study.

Sandra attends CCC and takes 13 credits.

8:00 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. – Algebra (3 credits) MWF
9:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. – Language Fundamentals (6 credits) MWF
11:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. – Lifetime Fitness (1 credit) MW
1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. – Psychology (3 credits) MW

She has a part-time job from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (Monday through Friday).

Sandra has a 6-year-old daughter whom she has to get ready for school, prepare dinner for and wants to spend time with each day.

Sandra is married. Her husband works 4 nights a week – 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

Sandra wants to study at least 18 hours a week (hopefully 24 hours).

Sandra and her family attend church every Sunday morning.

Sandra likes to attend PTA meetings once a month on Thursday evenings.

In order to present your results to the whole class, check over the recorder’s work to make sure it reflects what the group has decided.

After you have completed the schedule, please answer the following questions.

1. What other concerns came up while you were creating Sandra’s schedule?
2. Why did you choose certain times for her to study?

Again, check over the recorder’s note to make sure they are complete and accurate.
## Time Schedule Sample

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### Class Schedule

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Total Study Time: 24 hrs.
Lecture Notes Practice

(Purpose: to promote interdependence, see different ways students take notes, experience the value of going over one’s notes with other students)

1. Teacher gives a lecture and students take notes any way they wish.
2. Teacher explains the Cornell Method.
3. The teacher asks the students to form groups of 3-4 students and provides them with the following handout (instructions).

1. Meet with your group to discuss important aspects of the lecture and make sure that everyone has the key ideas in his/her notes. Your goal is to ensure that all students understand the lecture.
2. Next, as a group, decide which are the key words that should go in the margin of the paper (Cornell Method); now write these words (marginal notes) on your papers. (This can be done using consensus or not.)
3. Choose a person who will report back to the whole class on the selected key words.

After the groups have completed their work, the teacher can conduct a debriefing about the notes and the lecture. What did you learn from discussing the notes in the group? Was there a part of the lecture that was difficult to follow? (This provides good feedback to the teacher as well.) What key words did you put in the margin? (Reporters give answers for the last question.)

A follow up exercise can be to have the groups meet one more time and create a study guide based on their notes in preparation for a quiz.
**Group Note Card Reviewing**

This activity is intended to help students review key terms & concepts in preparation for a major examination (ex. Midterm/Final).

1.) Students break off into small groups

2.) Each group will be assigned a specific amount of chapters to explore.

3.) Within those groups, students will look back over key terminology, concepts and important definitions featured in their assigned chapters. Together they will decide what terms, concepts and other information they need to study for a test.

4.) While using note cards, students will print a concept or term on one side of the card & then define or expand on the flip side of the card.

5.) Each student must complete a certain amount of note cards & must communicate with other members of his/her group to ensure that members are not repeating information.

6.) After a predetermined stopping point, students in the group will begin to “quiz” students each other in the group and later quiz others from groups who had different assigned chapters. (The students can get into various group formations to help each other study, once all the groups have completed their work.)
Collaboration—Vocabulary

(This exercise can be done with any reading selection. If the entire exercise, including the reading of the selection—is part of an in-class lesson, for obvious reasons, a shorter selection works well.)

1. While the selection is being read, have students mark any five words they don’t know.

2. Have each student write a meaning for the terms they have selected, using only context clues.

3. Group students—groups of two or three.

4. Have students analyze each other’s vocabulary choices and their suggested meanings.
   During this process, the group must debate the suggested meanings and come up with a group-accepted definition for each vocabulary word—still without aid of a dictionary.

5. Students now look up each term in the dictionary to see how close they came to a viable definition.

6. Students can share their vocabulary and their findings in whatever manner suits the class and the instructor.
Cooperative Learning (CL) Activity – Reading Strategy of Selective Underlining

Here is a 4-part cooperative learning lesson which includes:

- Vocabulary study on words associated with selective underlining
- Teacher modeling of selective underlining strategy
- Guided practice of selective underlining
- Optional summary writing activity for CL group OR for individual practice
- Sample articles

The CL group structure of Think-Pair-Share (T-P-S) and one other CL group (e.g. a Base Group) will be necessary for this lesson.

Part 1 - Introduction
Instructor introduce the concept of underlining text. (Note that “underlining” could also be “highlighting.”)

- Students, with a T-P-S partner, discuss what you know about underlining text. Guiding questions instructor may use to encourage student discussion:
  - Why underline?
  - When do you underline?
  - What do you underline?
  - How do you underline...do you prefer underlining or highlighting? Why?
  - Have you ever read something and underlined everything? Was that helpful?
  - Share and record responses on board, chart paper etc.
- Instructor, write the word “selective” on the board
- Instructor, hand out copies of Frayer Model vocabulary recording sheet
- Students write SELECTIVE in the WORD circle on Frayer Model (perhaps with the word “underlining” below the word SELECTIVE)
- Students engage in a T-P-S to arrive at definition for “selective”
- Students record their definition on Frayer Model sheet in their own words
- Instructor may choose to have a Frayer Model worksheet on the overhead and record TPS responses on a class copy
- With class input, determine root word of “selective” – “select”
- Instructor access www.dictionary.com and project for students
- Instructor look up “select”
  - Note part of speech (v) so it implies action, HOW we will do this
  - From Latin root meaning “to gather apart”
  - “To choose in preference to others”
  - “Choice, of special value”
  - “Exclusive, specially chosen”
- Students, with T-P-S partner, discuss implications of this portion of the definition to the activity of underlining text. How does “gathering apart, choose in preference, specially chosen” affect the way you view underlining text?
- Students begin recording aspects of the definition of “select” under Facts/Characteristics
- Instructor look up “selective” on www.dictionary.com and project for students
o Note part of speech (adj) so it implies a description of WHAT this activity will look like
o "Having the power to select
o "Especially fastidious" selection
  ▪ What? FASTIDIOUS? Look it up!
  ▪ “Excessively particular”
  ▪ “Critical”
  ▪ “Demanding”
  ▪ “Hard to please”

o Instructor with student input note some synonyms (explain what that means if necessary):
  discriminating (this may also need discussion (i.e. “discriminating taste” vs.
  “discrimination in the workplace”), particular, discerning

- Students, with T-P-S partner, discuss implications of this portion of the definition to the activity
  of underlining text
- Students record aspects of the definition of “selective” under Facts/Characteristics
- Student Share time. Instructor choose member of each T-P-S partnership to discuss the
  implications of these two words (definitions) on the reading strategy of selective underlining with
  the entire class
- Students continue working on Frayer Model with T-P-S partner. Guiding questions from
  instructor may be, “Based on the definitions and class discussions, if we plan to selectively
  underline (or highlight) our text, what would Examples of that look like and what would
  Nonexamples look like?”
  ▪ Examples may be:
    ▪ Single words underlined
    ▪ Important dates
    ▪ Vocabulary words
    ▪ Unknown words
    ▪ Key ideas
    ▪ Key names
    ▪ Key places
    ▪ Main idea or main subject
    ▪ Important character’s names or descriptions
  ▪ Nonexamples may be:
    ▪ Nothing underlined
    ▪ Entire sentences or paragraphs consistently underlined
    ▪ No additional annotation to accompany the underlining

- Student Share time. Instructor choose member of each T-P-S partnership to discuss findings with
  entire class. Examples/Nonexamples, implications, thoughts, questions…

**Part II – Modeling**

Note: If the instructor has a particular method of annotation that has been taught or would be helpful in
the course, model the method during this time.
- Instructor project a brief article on the overhead. You can choose something relevant to your
  course, to your assigned readings, etc. Some sample articles are included with this lesson.
- Have students rehearse/remind you of what it means to selectively underline.
- Instructor read the article aloud once making no notes on the page.
You are modeling fluent reading as well as the idea that it is best to read the material through once to get the gist, then re-read and underline.

If you choose, have student input as to why you might read then go back and underline.

- Instructor, go back, re-read article aloud, this time thinking aloud explaining your thought processes as you choose key words, phrases, dates, etc. to underline. Discuss your annotations aloud as you make note of them.
- Have students review with you the things you have chosen to mark. Ask students to help you verbally summarize the article using just the information that you have underlined as a guide.

**Part III - Guided Practice**

Instructor, assign students to another cooperative learning group (so they are not working with the same person they were in the T-P-S with). The group could be their base group. Share with students that it is their turn to practice selectively underlining (highlighting) text (include annotation if this is part of your curriculum) and that as a group, they need to agree on what should be underlined. You may also choose to complete a summary activity at the end of the reading. If so, also inform the groups that there will be a group summary activity at the end.

- Instructor pass out articles to the various groups
- Remind them to read the article through once. Have students take turns reading aloud in their CL group. Teacher can circulate listening to reading.
- On the students’ second pass through the article, instructor encourage group discussion about what should be underlined (highlighted) and why. Through discussion, members of the CL group should come to consensus as to what is underlined in their text.
- Provide each group with a “Sum It Up” sheet.
  - Instructor decision:
    - Have groups simply complete 1 “Sum It Up” sheet to turn in OR
    - Then have the group take the 20 words from the “Sum It Up” sheet and as a group write a summary (instructor specify summary length... 1 paragraph, 1 page, etc. OR

**Part IV - Individual Practice**

- Have each member of the group record the groups’ ideas on a Sum It Up sheet.
- Then individually, assign each member of the group the task of taking those 20 words and writing a summary of the article.
Fryer Model
Sum It Up Instructions

Get a "Sum It Up" sheet.

Read the entire selection (chapter, article, handout, primary source, etc.) and, as you read, list the main idea words on the "Sum It Up" sheet.

Write a summary of the selection using as many of the main idea words as possible. Put one word in each blank. Imagine you have only $2.00 and that each word you use is worth ten cents.

You'll "sum it up" in 20 words!
# Sum It Up

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<th>NAME</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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**TITLE of READING SELECTION**

1. Read the selection and underline the key words and main ideas. Write these in the blank area below where it says "Main Idea Words."
2. At the bottom of this sheet, write a one-sentence summary of the article, using as many main idea words as you can. Imagine you only have $2.00, and each word you use will cost you 10 cents. See if you can "sum it up" in twenty words.

Main Idea Words:

"Sum It Up" for $2.00

_____________  ______________  ______________  ______________  ______________  ______________

_____________  ______________  ______________  ______________  ______________  ______________

_____________  ______________  ______________  ______________  ______________  ______________

_____________  ______________  ______________  ______________

Adapted from Pat Widdowson
Sunny County (NC) Schools

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http://www.readingquest.org
Sample Articles
Coral Crisis

BY SUZANNE ZIMBLER

A large ship veered off course and slammed into a protected section of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef. Part of the fragile ecosystem is now damaged.

Imagine a beautiful underwater scene. Do you see schools of striped fish darting in and out of colorful rocklike formations? If so, then you are picturing a coral reef.

Though it is often mistaken for rock, coral is made up of tiny animals called coral polyps. Millions of the creatures stick together and form a hard outer shell. When coral die, their skeletons are left behind, and new coral build on top.

Over the years, the Great Barrier Reef, off Australia’s east coast, has grown to be 1,240 miles long. Made up of 2,900 connected reefs, the area is home to thousands of plant and animal species. Much of the reef system is protected, but conservationists have long worried that not enough was being done to safeguard the area. On April 3, their concerns came true.

A Ship That Strayed

Shen Neng I left Australia for China carrying 65,000 tons of coal. Five hours into its journey, the vessel strayed from its shipping lane. It plowed through a protected reef, destroying everything in its path.

The damage covers an area as large as five football fields. "It's a white, flat plane of sand and crushed coral rubble," says David Wachenfeld of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The crash also caused between two and four tons of fuel oil to seep into the water.

With more and more ships passing through the Great Barrier Reef, experts fear an even bigger accident is bound to happen. Tougher rules are expected to take effect in July 2011. For Richard Leck of the environmental group WWF-Australia, the changes cannot come soon enough. "Every time an incident like this happens," he says, "we hope that this isn't going to be the time when there is a massive oil spill."
All Steamed Up

BY CLAUDIA ATTICOT

A thick ash cloud rising from a volcano in Iceland drifted over much of Europe last week. It caused major delays for millions of air travelers. The canceled flights affected businesses around the world.

After nearly a week of being packed into airport waiting areas, sleeping on floors and crashing in hotels, passengers cheered last week as planes took off from airports in Europe. A volcanic eruption in Iceland—an island nation in the North Atlantic Ocean—had grounded flights and stranded about 7 million passengers. "Hope is high at the minute," said Phil Livingstone, a British student, who spent three nights sleeping in an airport in Seoul, South Korea.

The trouble started on April 14, after the Eyjafjallajokull (ay-ah-fyat-la-yuh-kut) volcano erupted for a second time in less than a month. The eruption caused a giant ash cloud that drifted over much of Europe, forcing officials to cancel more than 100,000 flights to and from 23 European countries.

Iceland’s spewing volcano had an effect on business around the globe. The disruption cost airlines an estimated $200 million a day. The United States lost at least $650 million in tourist income. Export and import companies from Asia to South America suffered, as well. Roses and carnations from Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Israel and Kenya could not be sent to foreign markets. Carmakers in Germany and Japan were forced to close temporarily because they couldn't get parts.

Putting Passengers' Safety First

Officials feared that powdery volcanic ash, made up of tiny pieces of rock, minerals and volcanic glass, would clog jet engines, causing them to shut down or, worse, crash the planes. In the three days following the eruption, the volcano sent up about 750 tons of ash every second. That’s enough to fill a baseball stadium every few seconds.

Some European airlines ran test flights without passengers to see how planes fared in the ash cloud. All reported no noticeable damage to the aircraft. But other airlines refused to take any chances. "It's best to put safety before schedule," says David Epstein from Qantas, Australia's largest airline. "Where there's any question of volcanic ash being in the air, we would prefer to take the safe approach," he said.
A Break in the Clouds

Geologists admit they cannot predict when the volcano will stop erupting. The ash cloud has dropped much lower in the sky, which makes it easier for rain and wind to blow it away.

By April 20, planes were flying into and out of Europe's major airports. But officials don't know when schedules will return to normal. "We cannot say what it will look like in the next few days," says Axel Raab, a spokesman for German air-traffic control. "If the volcano becomes active again, new closures might happen."
Collaboration—Summarizing

(This exercise can be done with any reading selection. If the entire exercise, including the reading of the selection—is part of an in-class lesson, for obvious reasons, a shorter selection works well. This collaborative exercise is intended to follow a lesson on defining summarizing, providing students with guidelines for summarizing, and giving them an example of a good summary for some selection they have already read.)

1. While the selection is being read, have students underline any sentence whose content they think is important to include in a summary.

2. Once the selection is read, place students in groups.

3. Provide students with an unmarked copy of the selection that was read.

4. From the two, three, or four student underlined versions of the selection (depending on how many students are in a group), students must decide which underlined ideas need to be retained for a viable summary. They then underline these collaborative choices on the unmarked copy of the selection.

5. A student speaker from each group presents the newly collaborated version of the underlined selection to the class, defending the group’s choice of what needs to be included in a good summary of that selection.

6. Students will then write the actual summary. This can be a group effort or an individual student assignment.
PASSAGE INVESTIGATION WITH DISCUSSION

Article Analysis Assignment

- Locate an article from a reputable source. This piece must deal with some aspect of education.
- Closely read the article.
- As you are reading the article think about & answer the following questions:
  1.) Identify topic & section that you retrieved the article from
  2.) Identify main idea(s)
  3.) What are the supporting details
  4.) If you were the author, what would you change or add. You need to comment on at least one aspect.
  5.) Is the article of interest to you, why or why not?

- This assignment must be typed (hand written responses will not be accepted). Be sure to type out both the questions & your answers. Make sure to proofread and edit your work before submitting to me. Before handing in, you must staple the article with your typed responses.

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!!

On the day the assignment is due –

1.) Students will be getting into groups with class peers who collected their articles from the same sections (of newspapers or internet areas).

2.) When in small groups, discuss with members if you found your article to be of interest or not & why so? Be sure that each student is taking notes during this step! Taking notes ensures that everyone will remember, in the future, what was discussed during this brainstorming session.

3.) After an appropriate amount of conversing time, each of the groups will present their findings to the rest of the class. Your aim in the group activity is to discover both comparison & contrast points within the assignments. When discussing your findings with the rest of the class, everyone within the group must share at least one finding with the rest of the class. REMEMBER, when presenting, your goal as a group is to educate the rest of the class. Consider yourselves to be teachers for this activity. Groups are free to use the dry erase board or class interaction to further elaborate on their points.
Discussing Literature
(The following activity could be used simply to generate discussion that is providing the opportunity for all students to talk. It could also be used by the teacher to find out where the students are confused and give them the opportunity to resolve that confusion in groups. Or, perhaps it could be used prior to writing a paper on literature.)

1. Pretend that you have a chance to meet with the author of _______ (a given piece of literature). To prepare for this interview, you need to create a set of questions that would help you better understand the selection you just read. Individually come up with 2 questions you would like to ask this author about the reading.

2. Once you are finished with your questions, form a group of 3-4 students. The group will determine who will be the facilitator, recorder, reporter, and observer. The facilitator’s role is to keep the group on track and make sure everyone has an equal turn, the recorder will take notes, the reporter will present the end product, and the observer will report on the group’s ability to work together.

3. In a round robin format, each student should read his/her questions. The rest of the group should consider and discuss these questions, putting themselves in the author’s shoes; in other words, what might the author say if he/she were here. The recorder should write down the responses. When you find that you disagree with each other about what the author might say, try to come to consensus, but if you can’t, just record the differences.

4. If you find that a particular question does not generate much discussion, just move to the next question.

5. Once you have discussed all the questions, select the two that generated the most discussion. Go over the recorder’s notes on these two, and prepare the reporter to make a presentation on the two questions and your responses. The observer will also report on the member’s interaction, for example when discussion went smoothly and when it did not and why.
GROUP EXPLORATION OF LITERATURE ELEMENTS

(The following activity could be used to discuss literature components among students within a small group. It could also be used to help students work together, combining their creative skills, in order to reach a presentation goal.)

1.) Divide students into small groups.
   Each small group will concentrate on analyzing a literary element for a chapter(s) of a novel that was assigned for the homework.
   Possible Elements: plot line, character motivation, setting, point of view, symbolism, motif, theme

2.) When students are gathered in the groups, their end goal is to educate the rest of the class on their group’s assigned element(s). They should first define the element, and then consider how this/these element(s) develop throughout their group’s assigned chapter(s).

3.) As they are brainstorming together, each group is preparing to create a handout/flyer for each element that will assist the rest of the class in learning their element(s) significance within the text.

4.) While in the groups, certain roles must be filled. These roles include a note taker for the initial brainstorming ideas, flyer designers, & presenters. While a student is fulfilling his/her assigned role, he/she can feel free to pitch in with other jobs, too.

5.) After an agreed upon stopping point, each group will illustrate their handout/flyer to the rest of the class by either constructing it on the board and/or using the Elmo overhead device.

6.) At the end of their presentation, students in the group must also ask if the rest of the class has any questions regarding the material.
Using Quotes

(The following exercise has been taken verbatim from Elizabeth F. Barkley’s Student Engagement Techniques, pp. 167-169. It can be used with both literature and nonfiction.)

Description and Purpose: Students select a slip of paper from a container filled with quotes from an assigned reading. They are given a few minutes to think about what they want to say in response to their quote, and then each student reads his/her quote and comments on it.

“Quotes” is an effective strategy for insuring equitable participation because it provides all students a platform by which to join the discussion. It also underscores the instructor’s commitment to the value of the assigned reading, addressing complaints that follow-up, in-class conversations do not draw explicitly enough on the text that students have been asked to spend time reading.

Step-by-Step Directions:

1. Select 5-6 different sentences or passages from a text.
2. Type and copy these to create multiple slips of paper each containing one quote, and put them into a container.
3. Each student draws one slip of paper.
4. Students take a few minutes to think about what they want to say in response to their quote.
5. In an order controlled by the students, the discussion continues with each student reading a quote and commenting on it, offering new insights or building upon or contradicting comments that have already been made.

Example in Literature: The first student to talk about a specific quote must provide, at a minimum, basic information about the quote (who said it and in what context). Other students build upon these comments, adding insights regarding the quote’s deeper meaning and relationship to the work’s (sic) themes. The teacher (sic) observes that the SET (Student Engagement Technique) helps ensure that students have done the reading and come to class prepared, that it gets discussion started quickly, and that the structure propels the discussion naturally as students must offer new and deeper insights as they build upon each other’s contributions.

Variation: Ask students to find their own relevant quotes from a text. Quotes can be statements that they especially liked or disliked, that best illustrated the major thesis, that they found most difficult to understand, and so forth.
What Makes A Good Essay?
English 0990/1010 Group Activity

(This is a first day activity. It fleshes out what they already know, and shows me and them what they consider important. We look for commonalities in the groups. Also, step 3 does not have to be done by the students; the teacher could write their answers on the board and make check marks when an idea appears more than once.)

Do you remember what makes a good essay? Do you know how to go about writing one? Let’s see what you know. You have 15 minutes to complete the following tasks.

Form a group of 4 students. Make sure that everyone in the group has a role. First, select a recorder who will write down the group’s responses. Next, select a person to pay attention to the time. Choose a third person whose responsibility is to keep the group on task. And finally, decide who will report back to the entire class.

1. Work together in a group to brainstorm on how to write a good essay. Try to come up with at least 10 points.

2. After you have your list, rewrite it to put your points in order (most important to least important).

3. Be prepared to share this with the class by sending someone to the board to write your ideas down.

(Note: if there are 5 people in a group, a group observer role can be added.)
Choosing the Best One
Another Collaborative Activity to Introduce the Essay

Directions: Form a group of 4 students. In the group, select a recorder, timekeeper, reporter, and group facilitator. Once the roles have been set, complete the following steps. You have 25 minutes to complete the entire task.

1. Each of you should read the enclosed 3 essays to yourself. As you are reading, consider what you like and dislike about the piece. (*Another approach is to have someone read each of the essays out loud.*)

2. The group should then discuss the merits and problems of each essay. What do you all think makes the essay successful? What do you see as something that could be improved upon? During this time the recorder writes down the pluses and minuses of each paper.

3. Now, come to consensus on which one is the best essay! Be very clear on the reason for your choice.

4. The recorder should read aloud his/her notes to make sure that they accurately reflect the reason for the group’s choice as well as the pros and cons of the other two essays.

(*I suggest that the instructor provide the students with three essays that are of about equal quality or else the students will have very little to discuss. Also, I generally use “B” essays versus top quality essays, as again I want the students to consider how to make any of them better. We have enclosed some sample essays that you may use.*)
Lois Lane

The Internet

In “Welcome to Cyberbia,” M. Kadi says that the internet will lead to more fragmentation in society because people just seek out others like themselves. But Kadi ignores the Internet’s uniquely anonymous form of interaction could actually build diversity into community by lowering the barriers of physical appearance in communication.

Anonymity on the Internet. It’s one of the best things about technology. No one knows your age or gender or race. Whether your fat or thin or neat or sloppy. What kind of clothes you wear. (Maybe your not wearing clothes at all.) People who know you personally don’t even know who you are with an invented screen name.

We can communicate freely without being prejudged because of our appearance. For example, I participate in a snowboarding forum that has mostly men. I didn’t realize what I was setting into when I used my full name as my screen name. Before long, I was often being shouted down with such insults as “What does a girl know?” and “Why don’t you go back to knitting?” Then a nice man I had been exchanging messages with wrote me a private e-mail, and he turned out to be a she! This woman had been wiser than me and hidden her gender with her screen name. She hadn’t received any of the hostile responses I had, just because no one knew she was a woman. As this example shows, posing as people different from who they really are can enable people to make themselves heard in situations where normally (in the real world) they would be shut out.

We cannot prejudge others because of their appearance. Often in face-to-face interaction we assume we know things about people just because of the way they look. Assumptions prevent people from discovering their shared interests and concerns, and this is particularly true where race is concerned. The anonymity of the Internet makes physical barriers irrelevant, and only people’s minds meet. Because of this, the Internet could create a world free of physical bias.

Logged on to the Internet we can become more tolerant of others. We can become a community.
The Internet: Fragmentation or Community?

We hear all sorts of predictions about how the Internet will enrich our individual lives and promote communication, tolerance, and thus community in our society. But are these promises realistic? In her essay “Welcome to Cyberbia,” M. Kadi argues that they are not. Instead, she maintains, the Internet will lead to more fragmentation, not community, because users merely seek out others with the same biases, concerns, and needs as their own. The point is an interesting one, but Kadi seems to overlook that the Internet’s uniquely anonymous form of interaction could actually build diversity into community by lowering the barriers of physical appearance in communication.

Writing on the Internet, we can be as anonymous as well like. Unless we tell them, the people we communicate with do not know our age or gender or race, whether we’re fat or thin or neat or sloppy, or what kind of clothes we wear (if we’re wearing clothes at all). Even people who know us personally don’t know who we are if we conceal our identities with invented screen names.

Because of this anonymity, we can communicate freely on the Internet without being prejudged because of our physical attributes. For example, a high school student can participate in a physics discussion group without fear of being dismissed by the group’s professional physicists just because of his or her age. Similarly, an adult man can chat about music with teenagers who might otherwise ignore or laugh at him. A woman I know posed as a man on a snowboarding forum and received none of the hostile responses—such as “What does a girl know?”—that I got when I innocently revealed my gender on the same forum.

Granted, concealing or altering identities on the Internet can be a problem, as when adults pose as children to seduce or harm them. These well-publicized occurrences say much about the need to monitor children’s use of the Internet and be cautious about meeting Internet correspondents. However, they do not undermine the value of being able to make ourselves heard in situations where normally (in the real world) we would be shut out.

The Internet’s anonymity has a flip side, too: just as we cannot be prejudged, so we cannot prejudge others because of their appearance. Often in face-to-face interaction, we assume we know things about people just because of the way they look. People with athletic builds must be unintelligent. Heavy people must be uninteresting. People in wheelchairs must be unapproachable or pathetic. Perhaps most significant, people of other races must have fixed and contrary views about all kinds of issues, from family values to crime to affirmative action. Assumptions like these prevent us from discovering the interests and concerns we share with people who merely look different. But with the anonymity of the Internet, such physical barriers to understanding are irrelevant.

A world without physical bias may be an unreachable ideal, but the more we communicate with just our minds, the more likely it is that our minds will find common ground. Logged on, we can become more accepted and more accepting, more tolerated and more tolerant. We can become a community.
Internet Paper

I think the Internet is great. No one has to no who you are. When you are talking to them. People can be anybody they want to be. Here are the reasons why I think the Internet is great. It lets me talk to people from everywhere. Cleveland is a dumb city and when I talk to people from other places I can find out about the world. The other day I was talking to this guy from Canada and he says that life up there is great. Another reason I think the Internet is great is because I can learn a lot it doesn’t matter what I’m thinking about, I can get knowledge right away. Another reasons why I think the Internet is great is because I can talk to my friends using email and I’m that way I can no what’s going on with my friends.

Using the Internet in school is good to. When the teacher gives me homework I can look stuff up online if I’m having problems. When I finish school I want to be a doctor and nowadays doctors have to use computers all the time with patients and keeping the medical files. I’m trying to learn all I can about the Internet so that Cleveland Clinic will hire me because I have good computer skills and can use the Internet good. Other jobs you have to use the Internet and computers to. Like the bank, teachers and even some restaurants the waiters have to put their orders up on the computer.

My little sister uses the computer to do homework now for school to. Some of her teachers make use the printer for typing and she has to learn how to type and use spellcheck. That means that the future generation will probably be using computers when they’re in preschool. That means that I will have to teach my kids how to learn and if I already know then I won’t look stupid trying to teach my kids.

Those are the reasons why I think the Internet is great.
Pre-Writing and Writing:

The "Post-it Note" Paragraph

(I use the following exercise to emphasize what the class has done so far with topic sentences and with details in writing. It gives students an opportunity to pre-write, as a group, and it provides an inductive way to teach them to organize details. Although "rudeness" is the topic for this paragraph, many topics will work.)

a. Group students (4 or 5 in each group).

b. Give each group a pack of 3 x 3 post-it notes.

c. Each student will take 5 post-it pieces and, without consulting each other, on each note jot down one specific example of rudeness.

d. Have each group go to an assigned portion of a wall in the classroom and put up all of the post-it sheets from their group.

e. Tell students to rearrange the post-it notes according to the order in which they would present each detail if they had to write a paragraph from what they brainstormed.

f. When students are satisfied with what they have, each group then explains to the class why they arranged their post-it notes the way they did. (Students know that anything that is a duplicate detail or that any detail that they don't want can be tacked to the side.) (The interesting aspect of this exercise is that invariably students have an understanding of order and they group details according to related details—a great way to begin to discuss paragraph order.)

g. The group now devises a topic sentence or a thesis statement that will encompass the headings and their associated examples.

h. Students now have raw material for a paragraph or an essay on rudeness. This writing can be done individually or in teams or groups.
Writing Thesis Statements (or topic sentences):

This exercise is intended for students once they have been exposed to the nature and function of the thesis statement or topic sentences and have had an opportunity to evaluate examples of these provided by the instructor. This exercise reinforces what the class has learned about thesis statements and/or topic sentences. It also gives students a chance to begin to devise their own in a group before they branch out individually.

1. Group students.

2. Provide the class with a list of three or four topics. These can be devised or chosen in any way that fits the instructor’s pedagogy and the dynamics of the class.

3. Each group then creates a thesis statement (or a topic sentence) for each topic.

4. A member of each group writes the statements on the board that his or her group has devised for each topic. (Since there will be three or four thesis statements times the number of groups, the amount of board space may determine into how many groups the class is split.)

5. The students review the thesis statements and then decide which of the statements, for each topic, are the “best,” supporting their choices with reasons: why that statement is better than the others for a specific topic.
Description: Focusing on Detail

(This exercise can be done with any objects that are fairly similar. It can be used as an icebreaker or when teaching the importance of using detail. I use rocks because I happen to have a collection of rocks, each with a hole worn through it. Depending on the object, a time limit can be set. About 10 minutes for the written description is usually plenty. Below are the directions for the teacher.)

Number post-it notes 1 though 8-12 and stick them face down on a table in the classroom. Place the 8-12 rocks, 1 each on top of a post-it.

Break students into groups of 3-4. Then have 1 person from each group, or the whole group, pick a rock from the table. They must remember the number of the rock. They can write the number down if they would like, but they cannot let any of the other groups see the number.

Each group must work quietly (so the other groups do not hear) to describe its rock in writing using the best comprehensive details possible. The goal is to be observant and clear in the description so that the rock can be identified from the written picture. (The description should preferably be written in a paragraph, but it could be a written list.)

Groups can put individual names on the paper or can be identified only as group 1, 2, 3, etc.

Descriptions are turned in to the instructor and rocks are replaced. Groups must make sure the rock is placed back on the correct post-it note. Then the instructor passes the descriptions back out to the groups making sure that no group gets its own description. Once again, observation and attention to detail become very important. Groups must read the descriptions and decide which rock their description best fits. Allow groups to surround the table and discuss the descriptions and examine the rocks. They must be sure to always put the rocks back down on the correct post-it.

When everyone is finished, have the groups take turns reading their descriptions and telling which rocks they think the descriptions fit. The group who wrote each description can then speak up and say whether the answer is right or wrong. It would be useful to ask the groups about the different types of description they had to use to really distinguish the particular rock.

(Students generally have a lot of fun with this assignment but quickly realize just how important detail is.)
DESCRIPTIVE INTERVIEW Process for Writing an Essay

(Below is a collaborative process used to help students gather information to write a description essay. The actual directions to students are presented.)

One of the next steps we will take in the writing process is gaining information through a formal interview which you will then set up in essay form. You will interview a classmate, find a focus, and bring this person to life on paper. Remember that when typing up the interview, your readers would also like to be able to see and hear the person you are interviewing.

You will do this assignment in groups of 3-4 people. This way before you begin interviewing, you can collaborate on the questions you will ask. Collaboration will be useful later during the interviews if the person doing the interviewing forgets to ask something, someone else in the group can chime in.

Be sure that each person in the group is interviewed and that each person in the group gets a chance to be the main person conducting an interview.

As the main interviewer, be prepared! Have your questions well thought out, typed (optional), and in front of you. Remember that the answers will often lead to other questions and that is great, but don't forget your focus either. Be flexible enough to take a curve and follow the conversation where it goes; be directed enough to bring it back on course. Be prepared to keep a reserved speaker talking and someone who is easily sidetracked on course. Other members of the group should listen carefully and help both the interviewer and interviewee stay on track. They will also provide observations at the end of the interview.

In addition, if you can, use a tape-recorder, but always ask the interviewee's permission first. With a recorder it is much easier to get quotations down correctly and to go back and review what you have heard. If you cannot or do not wish to use a tape-recorder, be sure to take excellent notes. Go slowly, and do not be afraid to ask the interviewee to repeat something, especially if you think you are going to quote it. Quotations must be accurate. Always get a phone number where your interviewee can be reached and make sure it will be alright for you to contact them later if you need to. Oftentimes when students begin typing interviews they find they are missing essential information.

We will take time in class for the interviews, but I have also set up a site on BlackBoard where you can contact each other, ask and respond to questions. However, this means you will have to be checking the site periodically. It might also be a good idea (or even a better idea) to exchange phone numbers and/or email addresses.
The Collaborative Essay

(I use this collaborative experience only after students have had an opportunity to work collaboratively on more short-term projects during the first nine or ten weeks of the semester. I customarily use it with a book they are reading such as The Color of Water.)

The collaborative essay is a 100-point essay, 80% of which is the grade for the essay itself and 20% of which is each student's grade for how well they functioned within their group. This means that not every student who worked on the same essay will necessarily receive the same number of points out of 100.

a. Before we begin reading and discussing our book, I create the collaborative essay groups. I alert the students to the fact that books, even if they are fiction, often deal with significant issues. We discuss that concept generally. I then announce that the collaborative essay will examine an issue (or issues) that are important to the book we are reading.

b. After each reading assignment, the entire class brainstorms with me issues that they see being dramatized in the various chapters of the book. For example, for The Color of Water, some of the issues are self-esteem, identity, rejection versus acceptance, bigotry. I list these on the board.

c. Students assemble in their groups and come up with at least two examples within the day's reading that demonstrate each brainstormed issue in operation in the pages read for that day. This procedure continues throughout the reading and discussion of the book. (I make a point of letting the students know that what we are doing here is group pre-writing.)

d. Once we finish the book, each group then has to devise an essay based on all of the brainstorming we have done as an entire class and that they have done within their individual groups. It is up to each group to decide exactly what they want for their essay topic and how they want to structure their essay. (I have had groups deal with four or five related issues; I have had groups deal with one issue, such as self-esteem, that is reflected in a number of characters.)

e. The group submits a rough draft.

f. The group then revises and submits a final copy. Along with this final copy, each student in the group gets to privately evaluate the other members of the group, and this is where the 20% for the project comes in.* (If there are four members in a group, each member gets three separate evaluation sheets in order to evaluate the other three members individually.)

*Please see sample evaluation sheets included in at the end of this packet that students could use to evaluate members of the group.
Collaborative Classification Essay – Group Process

(The following exercise has been used successfully in both 0990 and 1010. It takes place over a number of class periods and requires a good deal of cooperation. This rhetorical mode is well suited to a collaborative paper. The activity is done after students have read various examples and seem to have a clear understanding of classification. Note: the essay referenced below has been provided for you on the following page.)

Phase I – Prewriting

Meet with a group of no more than 4 students. Make a decision on what topic you would all like to write about (such as cashiers, babysitters, men, etc.). Once you decide on this large group, consider what could be the principle of classification and the subgroups. Decide which members of the group will be responsible for writing the section on a given subgroup. Check your plans over with me. Do not leave the room until I approve your plan!!

Phase II – Writing the Draft

Once your plan has been approved, you are free to go home and work on your section of the paper. When you write about your subgroup, make sure that you write two paragraphs. The first paragraph should introduce the subgroup as well as provide a general description of that group. The second paragraph should present and discuss a specific example (such as a person) from that group. (See “The Snowshovelers” as an example.) You are responsible for completing this assignment for the next class.

Remember, your group is counting on you.

Phase III – Postwriting

Now it is time to put your essay together. To do this, members need to work on and agree on the following:

1. An introduction that makes clear the large group, principle of classification and the subgroup.
2. An introduction that grabs the reader’s attention.
3. The subgroup sections as written by each member are acceptable to all standards (see checklist).
4. Necessary transitions to introduce each subgroup and/or to note specific examples.
5. A logical order of the subgroups.
6. A conclusion that brings a significant end to the paper (maybe it provides advice, makes predictions, points out exceptions and/or briefly notes other subgroups and/or relationships between the subgroups).

Note: the paper, when well constructed, appears as if it were written by one author!
The present weather conditions have brought out of their warm houses a group of persons to which I, unfortunately, belong: the snow shovellers. Although all within this group have the same task to perform, their approaches to the performance of the task differ. Three of the more interesting sub-groups are the jovial philosophers, the martyrs, and the fanatics.

The jovial philosophers view snowfall as an act of God, and they try to make the best of it. They appear soon after each snowfall ends. Cheerfully greeting their neighbors, they get down to work, which they seem to enjoy.

Typical of this type is my neighbor Steve. Bundled up and looking like a large bear, he whistles, sings, and hails his fellow workers with such profundities as "Wow! This sure is good exercise," or "Hey, you'll miss all this cool air when summer comes," or, best of all, "Ha-ha, this is fun, isn't it?" Steve derives great pleasure from both his work and his opportunity to perform before an audience, many of whom do not share his views.

The second group, the martyrs, are quite a different lot. The martyrs do not appear until the snow is at least twelve inches deep, packed down, and almost totally impassable. They grudgingly perform their jobs to an undercurrent of grunts and grumbles that are occasionally punctuated by a negative response to the philosophers questions. They seem to believe all this work is some undeserved punishment pronounced upon them by a perverse power.

The best example of this type is my neighbor Ron. Ron is always one of the last people to begin shoveling snow. Therefore, he always has the most difficult task. With ice-chipper and shovel, he hacks away at the glacial mass in his driveway, usually after his wife has gotten stuck on the ice pack and has forced him out. He hums rather than sings. The blues comprise his entire repertoire—tunes such as "Trouble in Mind" and "Hard Times." He answers the philosophers: "Yeah, but this good exercise can give you a heart attack," or "I wouldn't miss this even if I were a door-to-door salesman in hell." While I tend to sympathize with him, I do notice that he derives a certain masochistic satisfaction from his plight.

The third category of snow shovellers is the fanatics. At the drop of the first snowflake, they are out with shovel and broom, swinging viciously to left and right as if attacking a hated foe. These persons view the snowfall as a conspiracy directed at them by God, the government, Russian scientists, their neighbors, and especially by skiing enthusiasts with "Think Snow" bumper stickers on their cars. The scraping sounds of their shovels can be heard day or night as a barely adequate cover to the steady stream of curses that they heap upon the world in general.

I am most familiar with this grouping because it is the one to which I belong. Casting aside reason, I call forth a much stronger motivation than either good-natured acceptance or self-indulgent martyrdom. All the frustrations, hatreds, and disappointments of life are temporarily vented upon each and every hapless snowflake that dares to defile the passage from house to street. I neither sing nor converse with others and glare balefully at those who do. Because of the amount of energy employed, I, and those like me, usually do the best job. However, the true satisfaction always comes to me not, as with the others, in the doing. Oh no, the true reward comes in the early, before-going-to-work morning when I am proved to be the most rational of all in my outlook. We fanatics are right! The air is filled with the wails and moans of philosopher and martyr alike. You see, those conspirators that only we fanatics are aware of—skiers with their psychokinesis, God with His snowfall, and the government with its snowplows—have buried the best of all our efforts. We will all be performing again tonight.
Peer Review of an Essay

(This exercise can be used for a number of reasons. First, it is a way to talk with students about receiving and giving criticism. It is also valuable in learning about how getting and using feedback can help their writing. Finally, once again, it is a way for them to talk about writing, the process, what makes a paper successful and so forth. You can use this activity with sample papers (from previous classes) first, and then begin to use it for review with papers from students in the class.)

Now that you have formed your peer review group, please follow the steps below:

1. Select a recorder who will write down the group’s responses.

2. One person (not the recorder) should read the attached student paper out loud. As someone is reading, others in the group should read along silently and make notes.

3. Next, the group should discuss aspects of the paper that make it successful.

   (Recorder writes these down.)

4. Now, create a list of suggestions to the student writer that will help him or her improve the paper.

5. Once you are finished, go over the recorder’s notes to prepare for the group’s presentation to the writer. (The presentation should include both the positive aspects as well as the suggestions.) Decide which members of the group will make this presentation.

(This activity could pose potential problems for students. Some could get defensive, insulted or even belligerent. We recommend encouraging students to engage in these activities by telling them that it is another way to “ace” to essay. Most important is getting the writer to listen to the reviewers. Providing them with a feedback sheet could help with these issues. An example of this is on the following page. Finally, you may want to be very careful and intentional when you form groups for this activity, mixing strong and weak students together.)
Peer Comment and Writer Response Sheet

**Peer’s Response**
Please provide some helpful feedback for your fellow student. 
What do you like about the paper; what could use some improvement? 
Write your ideas down and take a few minutes to discuss them with him/her.

**Writer’s Response**
What did you get from consulting with your peer? Are you going to make any adjustments to your paper as a result of this consult?
Group Revision—Proofreading:

This exercise works best if students are given no prior warning that such an exercise is about to take place. It reinforces the importance of proofreading (no one would buy a brand new, fine running car that had a lot of dents). It also helps students take notice of the importance of having a “reader.” The exercise is intended for the day students bring in a final essay for submission and grading. And, yes, one of the goals of the exercise is to help students earn a better grade by giving them one last chance to correct errors in the paper.

1. In teams or in groups of three, students trade the final copies of their essays.

2. Each non-author proofs an essay for a stated number of surface errors (Spelling? Sentence errors? Verb errors?). When the reader finds an “error,” the reader underlines the error without indicating the exact nature of the error. When all students in the group have had the opportunity to proof each other’s papers, papers are returned to their owners.

3. Owners now have the opportunity to correct the indicated errors before submitting the paper for grading. If the owner disagrees that an underlined “error” is, indeed, an error, the owner, of course, has the right to disregard the underlining. (The proof readers are not always 100% correct.) After all, the exercise is intended as assistance; the buck stops with the paper’s author.
Peer Editing:

Adding Details

(This exercise is a non-threatening way to get students to add details to their writing. I preface the exercise with the fact that we are a curious bunch; we all want to know more. Therefore, instead of having a classmate tell the author of the paragraph that “there isn’t enough detail,” students say “I would like to know more about . . . .” It works!!)

a. Have students write a paragraph.

b. Create groups with three students in each group.

c. In round-robin fashion, each student reads the paragraph of the other two. As each student finishes reading a paragraph, below the paragraph the reader writes: “I would like to know more about . . . .” The reader must indicate two things said in the paragraph that he or she would like to know more about.

d. When the writers have their own paragraphs back, each writer revises the paragraph by supplying the details that the two peer editors asked for.

(When I first began this exercise, I thought that I would end up with a stack of totally disunified paragraphs. That has not happened. What I do end up with is a stack of paragraphs that are more substantial and concrete than the first drafts. I then expand this exercise to essay drafts.)
GRAMMAR—Collaborative/Inductive Learning – Round Robin Activity

Although the following collaborative exercise takes time, it encourages students to take charge of their own learning and to assume responsibility for sharing concepts correctly and clearly with each other. The following scenario deals with subject and verb agreement. However, the method can be used effectively with just about any grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, or stylistic issue.

1. Decide how many subject/verb agreement issues you would like your class to deal with and create an equivalent number of groups.

2. Give each group a set of sentences that correctly apply the agreement concept you have given the group and a set of sentences that incorrectly apply the agreement concept you have given them. Group A might deal with compound subjects, Group B with indefinite pronoun subjects, Group C with collective noun subjects, etc.

3. From the two sets of handouts it has received, each group needs to articulate the “rule” that is operative.

4. Each group selects one of its members to then move to the other groups in round robin fashion in order to take their specific agreement “rule” to the other groups and teach it to them.

5. Once each group has had the opportunity to learn the “rules” devised by all other groups, the instructor passes out a worksheet containing a mixture of sentences to see how much has been absorbed by the students via their classmates.
Comma Use

(This exercise as delineated below is an inductive way of getting students to improve their understanding of comma use. However, it is a collaborative method that can be applied to many different skills.)

a. Arrange students in groups.

b. Give each group a handout containing ten sentences, each correctly using commas according to a specific “rule.” For example, one group might receive a handout with ten sentences correctly using a comma after introductory sentence elements.

c. The group must phrase the comma rule according to what they see in their handout.

d. The group then teaches their comma rule to the rest of the class. As part of this mini lesson, the group has to create five new unpunctuated sentences for the class to punctuate.

e. Once each group has delivered its comma lesson and provided five new sentences, the instructor can create a new exercise sheet by mixing the sentences.
DAILY CLASS PARTICIPATION RUBRIC
(This form is designed to help students evaluate the overall effectiveness of members within a group. After a project is complete, members will consult the notes they have taken throughout the duration of the group's project and fill out this rubric for other students within the group. Upon completion, the instructor will collect all the rubrics, analyze them and speak with the whole group in order to issue feedback. Each student should remember to be fair and honest when completing these rubrics!)

NAME: ________________________ CLASS: ________________________

Grading for class participation is a two step process. Near the end of the semester I have you evaluate members of your group including yourself, and then I record my results. If there is a big difference in our results we will then sit down and discuss the results.
Directions: Using a pen or pencil place an X in the lower right hand corner of the box for each category that you believe represents a group member's participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in group activities</td>
<td>Always a volunteering willing participant; acts appropriately during role plays and group work activities. Responds frequently to questions; routinely offers a point of view. Student regularly voluntary participates. (20 pts)</td>
<td>Often a willing participant; acts appropriately during role plays and group work activities. Responds occasionally to questions; routinely offers a point of view. Student participates when called upon (10 pts)</td>
<td>Rarely a willing participant; occasionally acts inappropriate during role plays and group work activities. Rarely responds to questions; routinely offers a point of view (5 pts)</td>
<td>Never a willing participant; acts inappropriately during role plays and group work activities. Never able to respond to questions; never offers a point of view (0 pts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in group discussions</td>
<td>Always a volunteering willing participant; responds frequently to questions; routinely offers a point of view (20 pts)</td>
<td>Often a willing participant; responds occasionally to questions; occasionally offers a point of view (10 pts)</td>
<td>Rarely a willing participant; rarely able to respond to questions; rarely offers a point of view (5 pts)</td>
<td>Never a willing participant; never able to respond to questions; never offers a point of view (0 pts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness &amp; Professional Attitude and demeanor</td>
<td>Always demonstrates commitment with preparation. Always courteous using professional language (20 pts)</td>
<td>Usually demonstrates commitment with preparation. Usually courteous in class using professional language (10 pts)</td>
<td>Often unprepared; occasionally disruptive within the group. Language unprofessional (5 pts)</td>
<td>Rarely prepared; disruptive within the group. Uses unprofessional language. (0 pts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>Always on time for group meetings and stays during the entire session. (20 pts)</td>
<td>Rarely late for group meetings and stays during the entire session. (10 pts)</td>
<td>Arrives late or leaves early to and from meetings (5 pts)</td>
<td>Often arrives late or leaves early to and from meetings. (0 pts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of course readings in group discussions</td>
<td>Often cites from readings, homework and assignments to support points made to the group. (20 pts)</td>
<td>Occasionally cites from readings, homework and assignments to support points made to the group. (10 pts)</td>
<td>Rarely cites from readings, homework and assignments to support points made to the group. (5 pts)</td>
<td>Never cites from readings, homework and assignments to support points made to the group. (0 pts)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points: _______  Comments:
EVALUATION OF GROUP PARTNERS:

Your name ______________________________________

The name of the person you are evaluating _________________________

In the blank next to each criterion below, write one of the following grades: A (outstanding, almost perfect); B (very good, better than average); C (average—did the minimum of what was required but did not go above and beyond what was asked); D (did not do everything required of him or her as a group member)

_____ 1. Came to every group meeting and came on time.
_____ 2. Did his or her fair share of group tasks.
_____ 3. Came to every group meeting with assigned work completed.
_____ 4. Contributed meaningfully to group discussions.
_____ 5. Did not dominate group sessions but allowed and even encouraged everyone to have equal input.
_____ 6. Gave and accepted constructive criticism and feedback.

(The preceding list can be devised by the instructor. However, most of the time I ask each group to write a list of criteria they want to operate under for their specific group, and then it is these criteria on which they evaluate each other.)
Group-Work Evaluation Form--A

1. Overall, how effectively did your group work together on this assignment?  
   Poorly  Adequately  Well  Extremely Well

2. Out of the group members, how many participated actively most of the time? _________

3. Out of the group members, how many were fully prepared for the activity? _________

4. Give one specific example of something you learned from the group that you probably wouldn’t have learned working alone.

5. Give one specific example of something the other group members learned from you that they probably wouldn’t have learned otherwise.

6. Suggest one change the group could make to improve its performance.

Group-Work Evaluation Form—B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I’d rather write with a group than alone.</td>
<td>1   2   3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I got the chance to express my views in the group.  
   (etc.)

3. My ideas got into the paper we wrote.  
   (etc.)

4. I got along with everyone in my group.

5. People in my group listened to each other’s ideas.

6. We spent more time planning papers than I do when I write alone.

7. We spent more time revising papers than I do when I write alone.

8. We spent more time checking spelling and grammar than I do when I write alone.

9. Every member put the same amount of effort into writing the paper.
10. We wrote all parts of the paper together rather than dividing up the work.

11. Members of my group sometimes disagreed about what to say or how to say it.

12. One person in the group tended to be the leader.

13. I learned some new things about planning, organizing, and writing from my group.

14. I would like to write collaboratively again.

Group-Work Evaluation Form—C

Student Questionnaire:

1. How do you like working with a group? (Leave space after each question so that students have room to supply answers.)
2. What were you good at in your group?
3. What were you weak at in your group?
4. Do you find group work difficult? How?
5. Do you find group work interesting? How?
6. What have you learned from others in your group?
7. Do you think others in the group learned something from you? What?
8. Was there a consistent leader in your group?
9. Did you feel relied on or used in your group?
10. What made your group work well?
11. What caused your group to work poorly?
12. Do you think that collaboration is a good way to go for students?
Group Evaluation

Group evaluations are a subset of peer evaluations, and focus on group process. Evaluations of the group process by members can help identify conflicts early so that problems can be addressed and tensions ameliorated. It can also help students identify and then capitalize on their group’s strengths while minimizing disadvantages. Group evaluations, however, can open up doors for students to undermine the collaborative learning process. For example, students may try to get the instructor involved in conflict resolution instead of working to negotiate the conflicts themselves. Or they may use the activity as an opportunity to “bash” the group work process itself. If used for summative assessment purposes, students may choose to answer dishonestly in hopes of obtaining a more favorable grade. Providing structure to the evaluation can help deter unproductive negative responses to the process. Angelo and Cross (1993, p. 350) provide the sample form shown in Exhibit 6.3.

**EXHIBIT 6.3**

**Sample Group Evaluation Form**

1. Overall, how effectively did your group work together on this assignment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poorly</th>
<th>Adequately</th>
<th>Well</th>
<th>Extremely Well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. Out of the five group members, how many participated actively most of the time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three</th>
<th>Four</th>
<th>Five</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Out of the five group members, how many were fully prepared for the activity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three</th>
<th>Four</th>
<th>Five</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. Give one specific example of something you learned from the group that you probably wouldn’t have learned working alone.

5. Give one specific example of something the other group members learned from you that they probably wouldn’t have learned otherwise.

6. Suggest one change the group could make to improve its performance.
Selected Bibliography  Mara Holt, Ohio U holt@ohio.edu Workshop at Cuyahoga Community College 19 February 2010


Johnson, Roger T., and David W. Johnson. The Cooperative Learning Center at the University of Minnesota. http://www.co-operation.org/


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*(Reference list distributed at Lily Conference, 2009)*
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*Unless noted, all of the exercises and suggestions were developed by CCC faculty via
the Developmental Education Initiative.