

Cooperative method

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Type of method

Teaching and learning methods

Type of teaching-learning method

Type of work (with teacher control)

Short summary

Students work in heterogeneous groups of 4-6 people towards a common goal.

Description

For young pupils, the goals are not difficult to set and the focus is on mastering cooperative skills. However, for secondary school students, and especially for those in vocational education, the focus is on solving specific, real-life problems because - hopefully - group work is something they have already mastered.

The composition of the groups is heterogeneous, with well-defined roles within the group.

The division of labour allows students to perform different activities according to their abilities.

Tasks are discussed and students are as responsible for each other's learning outcomes as they are for their own.

The success of the group depends on the performance of each and every learner, so they are interested in helping each other. They work together towards a common goal.

"A harmonized activity that develops the intellectual, social and psychological skills of the learners. Learners' autonomy, independent learning, and cooperative learning play a major role in this process. The values of the method are: learning from each other, listening to each other, teaching each other, helping each other, the ability of and need for self-assessment and peer-assessment, and the need and ability to cooperate" (Bárdossy, 1999. pp. 20-21).

It develops the cooperative skills that are now essential in the labour market.

In its most sophisticated form, the composition of the group is consciously determined by the teacher, mixing "weaker" and "stronger" students:

- motivation can be increased,
- helpful explanations from the stronger ones - peer support - are sometimes more credible and effective than the teacher's explanations,
- can level out serious performance differences within the group.