

## Effective Study Teams

Effective study teams are teams of students who can communicate well, ask good questions, see things in multiple ways, think mathematically, present their thinking both orally and in writing and do all this as a team of individuals. We will look at the why, when, how, and what's of using teams along with specific strategies to help your teams become more effective teams.

Materials: Handouts—attachments, Lesson 12.2.1, overheads, sort cards, post its, fortune cookie

### Agenda

Sort ---as they come in

**Team Roles Sort:** each person gets a team role card and has to find their teammates by color and shape

Introductions (10 mins)

Introduction of yourself and your experience using teams

Brief overview of objects: **Overhead: Why, When, How, and What's of teams?** See attached

**Icebreaker:** have teachers introduce themselves in their teams and brainstorm a list of questions they have about using teams, they should put each question on a separate post it and then you can collect and collate onto a class chart of questions while they are doing the next task.

Setting Up Team Expectations (10 mins)

**Think-Ink-Pair-Share:** What should be our classroom expectations for working in teams? For the share part create a class overhead or poster. Explain how you would use this process to come to a consensus on a final set of class rules. Sample expectations: Stay together as a team, ask each other before asking the teacher...

Math Classroom Example (20 mins)

Do LESSON 12.2.1 from AC

Use **Team Roles** and **Teammates Consult**, after they have been working for 10 mins you could do a **Swap Meet**. Also keep notes for a **Participation Quiz** while participants are working on the problem. Share the participation quiz notes on the overhead and debrief what

happened in teams and the strategies that were used. **Note** that you would not use all these strategies in the same lesson.

Closure example (5 mins)

**Reciprocal Teaching:** Have participants "teach" each other about the 4 strategies that were used in the last problem (team roles, teammates consult, swap meet, and participation quiz). Each person should pick two of the strategies to "teach" to their partner.

Effective Teams (5-10 mins)

**Dyad:** What does an effective team look, sound and feel like? Use different partners than the reciprocal teaching.

Checking for Understanding (15-20 mins)

**Fortune Cookie:** Why should we use teams in the classroom, When should we use teams, How should we use teams (nuts and bolts), How should we manage teams, and What are the challenges of using teams? **Have a recorder and have different teams respond to different ones.**

Closure (5-10 mins)

**Whiparound:** One thing I learned about using study teams that I can use in my own classroom is...

Question/Answer -address any questions on the post it's that have not yet been answered.

## **Study Team Strategies:**

### **Think-Ink-Pair-Share**

First think to yourself, then write down your thoughts, then pair and discuss, then share as a class

*Create a list of team expectations for our class.*

### **Team Roles**

Team Roles are assigned: Resource Manager, Facilitator, Recorder/Reporter, and Task Manager

### **Teammates Consult**

Pencils in the middle

Teams read and discuss problem, answer questions

When everyone is ready call the teacher over

### **Swap Meet**

One person from each team rotates to another team for a couple minutes to see what strategies they have been using and then returns to his or her own team and shares

### **Participation Quiz**

Teacher takes notes on what is said

Teacher and students evaluate class discourse

Could be used as quiz points or just for feedback

## **Reciprocal Teaching**

Person A picks 2 of the strategies below to "teach" to Person B as if Person B was absent for the lesson, then Person B has the remaining 2 strategies below to "teach" to Person A as if Person A was absent for the lesson

*Team Roles, Teammates Consult, Swap Meet and the Participation Quiz.*

## **Dyad**

Pairs—Each person has equal time to talk

The listener may not interrupt

*How does an effective team look, feel and sound?*

## **Fortune Cookie**

Team members take turns choosing their fortune from an envelope. Then they read and respond and pass on for the other teammates to respond. Continue with the next fortune and so on until time is up.

Recorder/reporter take notes

## **Whiparound**

*One thing I learned about using teams that I can apply in my own classroom is...*

## Using Study Teams in the Math Classroom

1. Why should we use teams in our classes?
2. When should we use teams?
3. How do teams work (nuts and bolts)?
4. How should teams be assessed?
5. How should we manage teams?
6. What are the challenges of using teams?
7. What does an effective team look sound and feel like?

# The Why, When, How, and What of Using Teams In The Mathematics Classroom

From: Tracy Frank [frank@cpm.org](mailto:frank@cpm.org)

## Why do you use teams?

I use teams so I can do more in-depth mathematics in my classroom and so I am responding to 6-8 teams of collective thought instead of 25-30 individual thoughts. I use teams because many students need to discuss in order to learn and *all* students will gain a deeper understanding from the conversation. I use teams because it allows me to create an environment of high expectations and high time on task. I use teams because many students don't feel comfortable taking risks in a whole class setting. I use teams because not all students have the same background and in teams they can have resources for areas where they may be lacking. In teams all students can share something at different points and thus allowing the problem to be seen in multiple ways. Also students can validate each other, encourage each other, and learn valuable social skills when working in teams.

## When do you use teams?

I use teams everyday. My students are always in their teams unless they need to move out for individual testing. A typical lesson in my classroom starts with a list of questions for the day. Then teams will explore problems focused on the questions and last I check in with the teams and with the whole class to confirm and evaluate understanding. I use teams when I have challenging problems that may be overwhelming for students to approach on their own.

## How do you use teams?

- \*4 per team is ideal
- \*partners are a good way to start
- \*switch every few weeks (at least every chapter)
- \*random, selective random, or teacher selected (not student selected)
- \*always do an icebreaker to start off a new team
- \*if I assign new teams and a student asks to be switched because of personal differences I challenge them to give it a week

## How do you assess teams?

Each student is given an individual grade for each assignment and shows his/her own work. Each student is given a daily class work grade that is a function of the level he or she met the objective for the day. Sometimes I give a team test, which is basically just a test where students can discuss the mathematics, but are still graded individually. Team test problems can be more challenging problems

because together they can solve them. I still use Individual Tests and hold student accountable to individual mastery of each of the concepts in the course.

### **How do you manage teams and respond to discipline issues?**

I spend a lot of time at the beginning of the year on team expectations. I have students brainstorm and then come to consensus on a list of acceptable team behaviors, like:

- No talking outside your team
- Conversation should be related to the problem
- Respect each others input
- Helping does not mean giving answers
- Clear off your work area
- Work together—don't work ahead or leave anyone behind
- Ask each other before asking the teacher

I use team roles which give the students the responsibility of managing their own and their team behaviors. I use study team strategies to help facilitate discussion. As a class we discuss positive team behaviors and areas for improvement. I hold all students accountable for doing the math and for being able to answer questions at any point. My goal is to empower my students by letting them know my belief that they can accomplish the task given to them. If a student's behavior needs my attention then I speak with the student one on one. I record the behavior and let them know that I expect change. If a behavior continues then one natural consequence that may occur is the loss of the privilege to work in a team.

### **What are the challenges of using teams in the classroom?**

- \*Circulation
- \*Feeling like you need to get everyone's attention at once
- \*Getting students to see the value of each other
- \*Students may have relied too much on the teacher in the past
- \*Asking good questions to make students think
- \*Having high expectations all the time (Accountability)