Cooperative Education and Life Skills for the Elementary Classroom

An Honors Project (ID 499)

by

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November 1990

May 1990
What is cooperative education?

Cooperative education refers to the practice of having children work together in groups to complete classroom tasks such as problem solving, reports, etc... The term cooperative education refers to a method of classroom management and is not intended to fully replace teacher-directed learning. In a cooperative learning classroom, the students learn the benefits of working together and sharing ideas, information, and learning strategies. Students grow to understand that while each is accountable for his/her own work, cooperating with others is a more efficient way to get things finished as well as a wonderful method of learning new things. In addition to the benefits already mentioned, students in a cooperative learning environment also learn interpersonal and group skills which they will use for the rest of their lives.

Dianne Augustine, Kristen Gruber, and Lynda Hanson, a group of elementary teachers, attended workshops on cooperative learning and have successfully incorporated it into their own classrooms. In an article they wrote for Educational Leadership, they state:

"If other educators believe as we do that higher achievement, increased acceptance of differences, improved attitudes toward school, and enhanced self-esteem are valuable goals for all children, then we all need to promote the continued use of cooperative education."1

Other educators echo this sentiment, and research continues to support cooperative education. In a handout used by Dr. Susan Page for
teacher-training workshops, she lists several benefits gained by students in cooperative learning classrooms. Included in her list is higher self-esteem, more effective interpersonal skills, positive behavior toward one another, positive feelings about school, and the ability to better function in society.2

Dennis Adams, in an article for Teaching K-8, states that by working together in groups, children "learn how to take different points of view into account."3 When children begin to realize that there are many sides to every problem, they become less egocentric in both their learning and their resolution of conflict. Teachers may use this to their advantage by having the children work together in groups to enhance learning and to solve conflicts in the classroom.

The benefits of cooperative education are easily seen, and support readily found. However, because cooperative learning is a method of classroom organization and management, attention must be paid to how a cooperative education program is established and carried on in the classroom.
How is a cooperative learning classroom established?

Cooperative learning is not necessarily difficult to establish in a classroom, but it should be introduced gradually and with much evaluation, both on the part of the teacher and the students. This method of classroom management gives the students more responsibility in completing their work and calls for them to work in groups. Dr. Susan Page suggests the following steps when implementing a cooperative learning situation in the classroom:

1. Make up the groups yourself.
2. Seat students close to their group members.
3. Start out with small groups.
4. Integrate group work into your existing curriculum.
5. Assign each student a job or role.
6. Make expectations of group behavior clear.
7. Observe and question while students are working.
8. After each session have each group answer two questions:
   What did we do well today in working together? What could we do even better tomorrow?4

Numerous methods of having students work together, choose partners, etc... exist, and each teacher must evaluate and adapt these methods for his/her own use. Several recommend methods for using cooperative learning are attached to this report, also accompanying this information is a file containing articles, suggestions, and resources for teachers. In addition, the file contains classroom activities, bulletin
boards, and displays that promote cooperative learning and help enable children to gain as much from the cooperative learning situation as possible.
Footnotes


2 *Literature and Cooperative Learning--A Perfect Match!*, Page, Susan E.


4 *Literature and Cooperative Learning--A Perfect Match!*, Page, Susan E.
Sources

The Affirmation of Self, Morris, Jimmy Oliver, TEACHING K-8: August/September 1990.


Involving Students in Cooperative Learning, Adams, Dennis N., TEACHING K-8: April 1990.

Literature and Cooperative Learning--A Perfect Match!, Page, Susan E.


Soothing the Sting of Rejection, Campbell, Joan Daniels, LEARNING ’90: September 1990.

Time for a Change?, O’Neal, Judy, TEACHING K-8: March 1990.


*All 1989 and 1990 issues of the following magazines were also used for lesson ideas, strategies, etc... The material found in these magazines was general and most were non-specific.

TEACHING K-8
LEARNING ’90
"Clock partners"

This is a method used for children to choose partners for cooperative learning situations. It allows the teacher to have a good deal of control over which children are partners at a given time, but the children are completely responsible for choosing their partners.

Each child is given a large clock face with the numbers printed on it. They must find someone to be their partner for each hour on the clock. They may not repeat any child as a partner and the arrangement is reciprocal (if Sue is John's one-o-clock, then John is Sue's one-o-clock). If one child asks another to be his/her partner for a given hour and that child has that hour open, he/she may not refuse.

Once the children have filled in their clocks, the teacher may ask them at various times during the day to meet with their Two-o-clock partners (for example). Because he/she can see which children are paired at different hours on the clocks, he/she can control which children are paired for certain activities by calling out an hour in which the children he/she wishes to be together are paired.

This method also forces the children to be paired with children they may not have formerly associated with, those of different ability levels, etc... However, the children still feel in control because they did pick with whom they would be paired.

Group Discussion

Steps in the Process:
1. The teacher asks a low-consensus question.
2. Students talk it over in groups.

Three-Step Interview

Steps in the Process:
1. Students form two pairs within their teams of four and conduct a one-way interview in pairs.
2. Students reverse roles: interviewers become the interviewees.
3. Students roundrobin: each student takes a turn sharing information learned in the interview.

Characteristics:
- Unequal participation
- Not all participate
- No individual accountability
- 1/4 of class talking at a time

- Equal participation
- All participate
- Individual accountability
- 1/2 of class talking at a time

Fig. 2. Numbered Heads Together

1. The teacher has students number off within groups, so that each student has a number: 1, 2, 3, or 4.
2. The teacher asks a question.
3. The teacher tells the students to "put their heads together" to make sure that everyone on the team knows the answer.
4. The teacher calls a number (1, 2, 3, or 4), and students with that number can raise their hands to respond.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Functions: Academic &amp; Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teambuilding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundrobin</td>
<td>Each student in turn shares something with his or her teammates.</td>
<td>Expressing ideas and opinions, creation of stories. Equal participation, getting acquainted with teammates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classbuilding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Corners</td>
<td>Each student moves to a corner of the room representing a teacher-determined alternative. Students discuss within corners, then listen to and paraphrase ideas from other corners.</td>
<td>Seeing alternative hypotheses, values; problem-solving approaches. Knowing and respecting different points of view, meeting classmates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Building</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Match Mine</td>
<td>Students attempt to match the arrangement of objects on a grid of another student using oral communication only.</td>
<td>Vocabulary development. Communication skills, role-taking ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mastery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbered Heads Together</td>
<td>The teacher asks a question, students consult to make sure everyone knows the answer, then one student is called upon to answer.</td>
<td>Review, checking for knowledge, comprehension. Tutoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color-Coded Co-op Cards</td>
<td>Students memorize facts using a flash card game. The game is structured so that there is a maximum probability of success at each step, moving from short-term to long-term memory. Scoring is based on improvement.</td>
<td>Memorizing facts. Helping, praising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pairs Check</td>
<td>Students work in pairs within groups of four. Within pairs students alternate—one solves a problem while the other coaches. After every two problems the pair checks to see if they have the same answers as the other pair.</td>
<td>Practicing skills. Helping, praising.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Concept Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Three-Step Interview</td>
<td>Students interview each other in pairs, first one way, then the other. Students each share with the group information they learned in the interview.</td>
<td>Sharing personal information such as hypotheses, reactions to a poem, conclusions from a unit. Participation, listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think-Pair-Share</td>
<td>Students think to themselves on a topic provided by the teacher; they pair up with another student to discuss it; they then share their thoughts with the class.</td>
<td>Generating and revising hypotheses, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, application. Participation, involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Word-Webbing</td>
<td>Students write simultaneously on a piece of chart paper, drawing main concepts, supporting elements, and bridges representing the relation of ideas in a concept.</td>
<td>Analysis of concepts into components, understanding multiple relations among ideas, differentiating concepts. Role-taking.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Multifunctional</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Roundtable</td>
<td>Each student in turn writes one answer at a paper and a pencil are passed around the group. With Simultaneous Roundtable more than one pencil and paper are used at once.</td>
<td>Assessing prior knowledge, practicing skills, recalling information, creating cooperative art. Team-building, participation at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside-Outside Circle</td>
<td>Students stand in pairs in two concentric circles. The inside circle faces out; the outside circle faces in. Students use flash cards or respond to teacher questions as they rotate to each new partner.</td>
<td>Checking for understanding, reviewing, processing, helping. Tutoring, sharing, meeting classmates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Students work in pairs to create or master content. They consult with partners from other teams. They then share their products or understanding with the other partner pair in their team.</td>
<td>Mastery and presentation of new material, concept development. Presentation and communication skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
<td>Each student on the team becomes an &quot;expert&quot; on one topic by working with members from other teams assigned the corresponding expert topic. Upon returning to their teams, each one in turn teaches the group; and students are all assessed on all aspects of the topic.</td>
<td>Acquisition and presentation of new material, review, informed debate. Interdependence, status equalization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op Co-op</td>
<td>Students work in groups to produce a particular group product to share with the whole class; each student makes a particular contribution to the group.</td>
<td>Learning and sharing complex material, often with multiple sources; evaluation; application; analysis; synthesis. Conflict resolution, presentation skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESEARCH SUGGESTS...

1. Students achieve more in cooperative interaction.

2. Students feel more positively about school, subject areas and teachers.

3. Students are more positive about each other.

4. Students are more effective interpersonally.

5. Students have higher self esteem.

6. It prepares students to function in society.

THE TEACHERS ROLE IN COOPERATIVE LEARNING

1. Clearly specify the objectives for the lesson.

2. Make decisions about placing students in learning groups.

3. Explain the task, goal structure and learning activity to the students.

4. Monitor the effectiveness of the cooperative learning groups.

5. Evaluate students' achievement and participation in the group.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GETTING STARTED

1. Make up the groups yourself.

2. Seat students close to their group members.

3. Start out with small groups.

4. Integrate group work into your existing curriculum.

5. Assign each student a job or role.

6. Make expectations of group behavior clear.

7. Observe and question while students are working.

8. After each session have each group answer two questions: What did we do well today in working together? What could we do even better tomorrow?

Susan E. Page
Concerns About Cooperative Learning

1. Loss of Control
   - time limits
   - roles
   - student accountability

2. Not All Students Will Contribute
   - structure task
   - student accountability
   - peer pressure
   - lose privilege

3. Parents Will Object
   - grades will be higher
   - balance with individual
   - prepare ahead of time

4. How to Get Started
   - use with existing curriculum
   - start with pairs
   - assign roles
   - use written response
   - keep time limit short
POSSIBLE ROLES

Reader - reads the group's materials out loud.

Writer - carefully records the best answers of the group.

Reporter - shares the ideas of the group with the other members of the class.

Noise Monitor - uses a non-verbal signal to remind group members to quiet down.

Materials Handler - gets any materials or equipment needed by the group.

Encourager - watches to make certain everyone is participating and helps students change their behavior if needed.

Checker - checks on the comprehension of the group by asking group members to explain or summarize.

Praiser - helps members feel positive about their contributions to the group.

Prober - in a positive way, keeps the group from superficial answers by not allowing the members to agree too quickly.

Energizer - energizes the group when it starts to lag.

Summarizer - summarizes the materials so group members can check it again.

Asker For Help

Time Keeper

Question Askers

Susan E. Page
COOPERATIVE STARTERS

Think-Pair-Share
By Frank Lyman, Howard County Public Schools Staff Development Center.

1. Students listen while the teacher poses a question.
2. Students are given time to think of a response.
3. Students then pair with a neighbor to discuss their responses.
4. Finally, students are invited to share their responses with the whole group.

Reading Groups
Students read material together and answer the questions. Roles might include reader, recorder and checker.

Worksheet Checkmates
Two students work together to complete worksheets. One student reads, then suggests an answer; the writer either agrees or comes up with another answer. When both students understand and agree on an answer, the writer can write it.

Homework Checkers
Have pairs or small groups of students compare homework answers, discuss any they have not answered similarly, then change their papers as needed and add the reason they changed an answer. The group members make certain their answers agree and staple the papers together. The teacher grades one paper from each group and gives group members that grade.

OTHER POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATIVE LEARNING

1. Construct a crossword puzzle over lesson vocabulary.
2. Use vocabulary to write sentences or a story.
3. Follow directions to make something. Origami is a good source. If the students have difficulty in working cooperatively, cut the numbered steps apart and distribute one to each member of the group.
4. Following reading, allow students to work together discussing the key points of the selection and generate discussion questions.
5. Students may enjoy cooperative reading. They reread selected parts of a story to each other or take turns sharing a new library book to compile a list of recommended readings.

Recycle learning centers. Many of your learning centers from previous years can easily be adapted to cooperative learning stations.

Susan E. Page
OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

Before Reading
1. Brainstorm
   • knowledge of genre
   • knowledge of theme
   • knowledge of topic
   • personal experience

2. Preview and Predict
   • characters
   • setting
   • problem
   • from literature read previously

While Reading
1. Cooperative Reading
2. Monitor Predictions
3. Notes and Quotes
   • character traits
   • vocabulary
   • quotations
   • insights
   • information

After Reading
1. Roundtable Discussion
2. Write
3. Construct/Create
4. Research
5. Compare/Contrast
   • to other literature
   • to real life

Susan E. Page
Cooperative Spelling Groups

Here is a procedure we recommend for using cooperative groups to teach spelling.

First, in order to collect data on individual spelling abilities, teach spelling in a traditional individualistic setting for three or four weeks. Then form heterogeneous triads including one high-, one average-, and one low-scoring speller. Triads then work together to study spelling for the rest of the year in the following fashion:

Day 1 – Pretest. As teams sit together to take the pretest, they reach consensus on how to spell each word. Teams self-correct their pretests and note any troublesome words.

Day 2 – Spelling games and activities. Teams choose from a variety of activities to study the unit words. For example, if teams “jigsaw” the words (Aronson et al. 1978), they divide word cards for the spelling unit equally among team members. Each student is responsible for studying his or her words and devising a strategy to teach the others how to remember those words.

Any spelling games or activities are appropriate—as long as the students perceive a group goal. Everyone must learn to spell all the words, and everyone must understand that she or he will be held individually accountable on the test.

Day 3 – Practice test. Teams spend 5 minutes coaching each other in preparation for the test. Students take the practice test individually. After the test, teams reconvene (without pencils) to compare test papers. Teams tutor teammates who have misspelled words, then celebrate accurate papers.

Day 4 – Study or free day. If all team members within a team have accurate practice tests, that team earns free time. If any team member(s) misspelled a word, the entire team uses this time to tutor the student(s).

Day 5 – Final test. Teams spend 5 minutes coaching members who misspelled words on the practice test. These students retake the test individually. After the test, the entire team reconvenes (without pencils) to check test papers and praise each other’s work.

Teams in which every member masters his or her required number of words receive a reward. If one team member fails to reach mastery, the team does not earn the reward. This reward system promotes positive interdependence: a feeling of “we’re in this together, sink or swim” (Johnson et al. 1988). The combination of peer pressure and peer support creates an environment where students feel accountable to each other for learning spelling. In this motivated atmosphere, individual spelling scores have always improved in our classes—in some cases increasing from 40 percent accuracy to 100 percent accuracy.

—Dianne K. Augustine, Kristin D. Gruber, and Lynda R. Hanson
Cooperative Education: File Contents

Due to the nature of the file, some explanation of how it is organized is necessary. The file consists of three different sets of folders: blue folders containing activities, lessons, books, etc... for classroom use; yellow folders containing ideas for bulletin boards and classroom displays; red folders containing resources, articles, and suggestions for teachers. Within the different sections of files exist the following subheadings: accepting individual differences, cooperation, friendship, resolving conflict, responsibility, self-concept, and a section for miscellaneous topics.

In the following pages, the contents of the files will be described. Because of the nature of the contents, some of the items may be grouped together on the descriptions. In addition, the bulletin board ideas, because they are best described by one's being able to see them, have been included in the descriptions as sketches.
Lessons, activities, etc...

Accepting individual differences

The purpose of this section is to get children to realize that every human being is different, but also like others in many ways. Through the activities in this section, it is hoped that the students will become more accepting of those who are different from themselves.

THE LINDA BROWN STORY--This lesson allows students to explore what it was like for black children to be excluded from certain schools and what happened when schools became desegregated. The lesson includes discussion and may be adapted to include role-playing as well.

WHO ARE WE?--In this lesson, the students make a bulletin board display showing the many diverse groups within the class, such as boys, girls, Africans, Hispanics, ages, only child, oldest, youngest, etc... Through this lesson, the students will realize that the class is composed of a very diverse group of people.

LABELS--During this activity, students become aware of labels, how labels could hurt people, why people use labels, and ways to stop labeling.

ALIKE AND DIFFERENT--Student will participate in a “mystery” of sorts--their job is to find how seemingly different objects(and people!) are alike. Through this, they will appreciate the fact that all things are alike and different in same way.

FINGERPRINTS--This set of activities challenges students to find
another person who has the same fingerprints as they do. Through this lesson, the children realize that each person is unique, no matter how much he/she may be like another.
Cooperation

The purpose of the items in this section is to help children learn ways in which to work together.

CAN WE HELP?--Students learn that people within a community must work together to get things accomplished. The students choose to volunteer as a class to do something useful in the community. They plan, carry out, and evaluate the operation (under teacher guidance).

COOPERATIVE LOGIC PROBLEMS--Through this activity, students learn that working together to solve a problem is much more efficient than working alone. Each child in a group is given one clue to help solve the problem. The students may not show anyone else their clue, but may tell them about it. The students are also forced to come up with an effective strategy to solve the problems presented.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT...--Students work in groups of two to research a mutually interesting topic. Each group is responsible for choosing a topic, stating what they already know, deciding what they want to find out, finding the information, and sharing it with the class. The report format is provided for the children, and provisions have been made so that both must do some work. In addition, the students are provided with a step-by-step checklist to record their progress.

COOPERATION COMPANY--Students are divided into groups where they must form a company. They must assign "jobs" and come up with a name and logo. The companies may then try to "earn money" by completing problems given by the teacher. The problems vary in worth according to difficulty. At the end of a specified amount of time, the companies will see who earned the most money. After this, the teacher may reassign groups and start again. This activity would be great as an on-going process for rainy days, substitute days, etc.

COOPERATION APPRECIATION--This "award" may be placed where students and teacher alike can use it to show someone how much help is appreciated or instances of cooperation noticed.
Friendship

The activities in this part of the file are intended to encourage children to think about what a friend is and how friendships are formed. They also promote friendly behavior toward those who may not be friends.

FRIENDSHIP--TYPES, REASONS, AND BEING FRIENDLY--This lesson is actually a set of activities intended to take place over a period of time and may be repeated as needed. The teacher reads several books about friends to the class. The ones included here are Best Friends for Frances by Russell Hoban, A Worm's Tale by Barbro Lindgren, and The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein. After the books are read, the students are involved in many peer discussions and a couple of writing activities. A bulletin board to go with this lesson will be described later. It is hoped that the increased awareness of friends and how they are chosen, what makes a good friend, etc., will encourage friendships and friendly behavior among students.

**The teacher will want to add other books or stories of her own or those that the students write, tell, or bring in.
Resolving conflict

This section is intended to help children realize that conflicts may be resolved in a calm manner where each person has a chance to express him-/herself and where different solutions are tested (or at least considered).

ROLE-PLAYING--As in the friendship file, the activities here are lumped together and are intended to be adapted and used over a long period of time. Children are given situations involving conflict by the teacher, and use role-playing, with or without puppets/props. The students try several solutions suggested by the class, and each is evaluated carefully. Dolls and puppets may also be used for individuals or small groups to try solutions to problems. This type of activity could also be used to solve appropriate classroom conflicts that inevitably arise. Through this process, it is hoped that children will learn to listen to all sides of a problem and consider more than one solution. Once they are used to the process, incidence of classroom conflict may decrease.
Responsibility

The activities listed here are intended to help students develop responsibility and take on more responsibility in their learning.

**DAILY GOALS**--This form will help children keep track of individual progress of work completed during the day. Each child will be given a laminated form which contains six blanks. Each day, they will use markers provided by the teacher to copy the day's goals from the "goals bulletin board". As the child completes items on the list, he/she may check them off. As everyone in the child's group (seating arrangement) completes the item, all group members may check off the item on the group space provided. In addition, the bulletin board (seen later in these descriptions) will keep track of progress for the whole class. This helps the students assume more of the responsibility in meeting each day's goals, and helps the teacher to see which students have completed which items.

**WE DID IT ALL**--This is a take-home form that the students complete at the end of each week. It contains spaces for the children to write seven things they did during the week. They take the form home to share with parents, brothers and sisters, etc... This will help promote student pride in the work they do and also serves to keep families aware of classroom activities.

**REMINDERS**--Students often forget things such as homework assignments, special days, etc... These forms will be made available to students who may have work to complete at home. They may copy the assignment(s) they need to complete onto the paper so that they, as well as parents, remember what the child is to do. In addition, if all the students need to remember to do something, bring something, or be aware of a special event, each of them will receive of the papers to take home.

**CONTRACTS**--Some students have trouble in certain subjects or need
some motivation for completing their work. The teacher may choose to set up a contract with these students. The student and teacher meet and define the problem, set a course of action, and decide how they will know when the contract has been fulfilled. For example, a student having trouble in spelling may make a contract to get a certain number of words correct on the test. He/she then decides (with teacher guidance) how to achieve the goal. They also decide how the contract will be fulfilled and what will happen after it has been fulfilled. This technique has proven quite effective in many classrooms and gives the student more control over the pace of his/her progress.

**RULE-MAKING**--This activity helps students realize what makes rules necessary, how to determine if a rule is good or bad, and how rules are made and enforced. The teacher leads the students in discussions about rules, and also has them meet in small groups to come up with ideas of their own. In addition, each group is responsible for making one rule to be presented to the class for discussion and voting. Through this process, a set of classroom rules is created. The children then evaluate their rules, make changes as necessary, and decide what should happen if the rules are not followed. This whole process is carefully guided and monitored by the teacher, and gives the students some practice in responsibility. In addition, students are more likely to follow rules they helped to create. This activity may be used along with the lessons **RULES, RULES, RULES, and RULES, RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES**. These lessons help students identify why rules are needed and allows them to discover the differences between rules, rights, and responsibilities.

**RESPONSIBILITY**--The “lesson” presented here may or may not be used as a lesson by the teacher. He/she may choose to instead present the ideas illustrated here during other activities. The lesson gives guidelines for helping students grasp the concept of responsibility.

**JOBS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**--During this activity, students identify jobs and responsibilities they have, both at home and at school. It helps them to see that everyone has some type of responsibility, and that people may share some of the same responsibilities.

**ATTENTION!**--These two papers, one stating “My Works Done!” and the other “Quiet--Kid Working!”, will be laminated and each student will
receive a set. When the child is working, he/she may display the appropriate sign so that others know not to disturb him/her. Likewise, the student who is finished with his/her work may display the other sign, letting others know that he/she is available for alternate activities.

AWARDS--These awards are for teacher or student use and may given to those who have done a good job in meeting responsibilities. The awards promote student motivation to meet responsibility.
Self-concept

The activities described here are intended to improve student self-concept and increase student self-awareness.

**WHO AM I?**--This activity helps students become aware of how they are involved in class activities as an individual and how they contribute to class groups. Each student lists groups to which they belong and compare them with another who is in different groups than he/she is. The student pairs then decide how they contribute to their groups and how those groups would be different if they were not a part of the groups. The teacher should guide the listing of groups to assure that each student is in at least one group.

**PUZZLE COLLAGES**--During this activity, the students and teacher learn about each other and see how many diverse people are needed to make up a group. The teacher gives everyone, him-/herself included, a giant paper puzzle piece. Magazines, scissors, and glue are provided, and everyone creates a collage of words and pictures that describe themselves. When the collages are completed, the puzzle is assembled and put on the wall. Each person takes a turn to describe the collage he/she made. This activity helps students (and teacher) realize who they are and helps the class get acquainted.

**WEEK BY WEEK**--This calendar, created and published by *Learning 90* in their July/August issue, suggests a set of activities for each week of the school year. The activities are intended to boost self-esteem, and are based on people such as Mark Spitz, Rosa Parks, etc... who have overcome obstacles to achieve success. The activities are wide-ranging and include things such as “good job” bulletin boards, “wanted for goodness” awards, discussions, etc...

**GETTING TO KNOW ME**--This set of activities helps students get to know themselves by completing several “creative worksheets”. In the first lesson, the students answer such questions about themselves such as where they would like to visit, what book they wish they had written, etc... They next complete a set of self-portraits and list of accomplishments,
goals, and what they have done that makes them proud. The students move on to an activity where they use a circle, one side illuminated by the sun and one darkened by lack of sun, to show their good and bad sides. Finally, the students fill in a chart, choosing the plant, animal, color, food, and gem or mineral that best describes them. At this time, the students get a chance to introduce themselves to small groups of which they are a part. If time allows, the teacher may decide to have the students introduce themselves to the whole class.

**A BOOK ABOUT ME**--At different times through the year, the teacher will distribute sheets of paper with topics printed at the top. The topics include “The Best Thing That Ever Happened To Me...”, “I Was Afraid When...”, etc. The students will write about themselves, using the topics as guides. The teacher may want to coordinate the writings with other topics covered, and should lead discussions before and after the students do the writing. The teacher then collects the papers, saving them until all topics have been covered, at which time the students will compile their papers into books about themselves, complete with self-portraits as covers. The books may be kept in the classroom library if the students wish to do so, but should eventually be sent home so the students may share them with their families.

**FAMILY PRIDE**--Student self-concept can also be fostered through the development of family pride. This set of activities has students study the meaning of symbols used on family shields. The students evaluate their own families and design shields based on characteristics of their families.

**I'M IN A MOOD**--Each student in the room will have access to signs reading, “Today is NOT my day!” and “Catch me now--I'm in a good mood!” If a student is having a particularly bad day, he/she may want others to know so that they can steer clear. In addition, the student who is having a wonderful day or has good news to share may also want others to know.(The teacher is not exempt form using these signs!)

**AWARDS**--These awards are pick-me-ups and let students know that someone thinks they're wonderful!
Miscellaneous

The items listed here are those that did not fit into a specific category, but were relevant to this file.

MANNERS--This item suggests that teachers might promote the proper use of manners in the classroom by having the students role-play different situations or by using puppets to illustrate proper manners. It also reminds the teacher that the best way to get students to use good manners is for him/her to model them!

BEING NOSEY--This lesson uses the book Nosey Mrs. Rat to get students to discuss reasons people are nosy, whether or not being nosy is good, and what to do if someone is being nosy.

DEALING WITH FEARS--All children are afraid of something, and in this lesson, the teacher uses the story Lola Koala and the Ten Times Worse Than Anything to start a discussion on fears and how to deal with them. The students break up into groups to discuss their own fears and how they might deal with them, and are encouraged to write or draw about their fears.

SPEAK UP!--The book The McGoony's Have a Party is very funny, but here it is used to get students to think about what could happen when people do not speak clearly or listen to one another. After small group discussion, they write their own stories about what happened when people forgot to speak clearly or listen.

LYING--During this lesson, the teacher reads Charlotte Cheetham: Master of Disaster. Using it as a spring board, the students meet in groups and then as a class to discuss different types of lies, why people lie, and if lies are always bad or sometimes acceptable.

SOMETHING GOOD--This activity is used to get students to find
something good about seemingly bad situations. They are given a set of “bad” things by the teacher, and work in pairs to find good sides to the situations. The teacher may promote this practice by encouraging students to use it in their own lives, but should discuss with students whether it applies to things such as child abuse, drugs, etc...

**CONNECTING WITH SENIOR CITIZENS**--The lessons here are to be used to give students a feeling of what it might be like to be a senior citizen and discover what senior citizens have to offer them and vice versa.
Bulletin boards and displays

The files in this section are arranged as in the activities files. Because of their nature, however, they will not be described in the same manner. The sketches of the boards have been xeroxed, with explanations included where necessary.

All of the bulletin boards may be used as springboards for discussion, and many may be created by the students.
Accepting individual differences

All Children

SMILE

in the same language.
The whole is equal to the sum of its parts.
The following are examples of displays created by children, and that is how this display is intended to be created. The finished products are to be displayed in the hall for others to see.

**Student Artists Celebrate A World of Difference.**

Artwork on human relations themes by students in the greater Boston area and Albany, New York. Winners of art contests were chosen to illustrate calendars.

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**Be My Friend**

Frank J. Nash
Grade 1
Lincoln Street School

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**Prejudice an Obstacle We All Must Overcome.**

Michael Quick, Grade 10, Bristol Plymouth Technical High School

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**Together We Can Make a World of Difference.**

Cathy Freer
Grade 11
Mt. Pleasant High School

---

**Edward Snide**

Grade 10
Albany High School

---

**Tisia Lewandowski**

Grade 2
Roosevelt School

---

**Prejudice Shouldn't Be Learned at Any Age.**

Heidi Getchell, Grade 12, Triton Regional High School

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**Morgan Williams**

Grade 1
Shaker Road Elementary

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*Education and Society, Winter 1989*
TABLE THE LABELS

Christopher Robinson, Grade 2, Kingston Elementary School

Differences Are OK

Prudence LaRosa
Grade 7
Healy School

IT CAN BE DONE...
BUT IT'S UP TO US

Dan Healy
Grade 9
Albany High School

FRIENDS

Angela Chionchio
Grade 9
Doherty Memorial High School

Kerrin Carter
Grade 5
Dighton Elementary School

Milton Becker
Grade 6
Fonda-Fultonville Central School

Stacey Lee Okerlund
Grade 11
Doherty Memorial High School

Craig Williams
Grade 8
Koda Jr. High School

Educaiton and Society, Winter 1989
Cooperation

Instead of using the term sports, the teacher may want to change the title to read "Four Ingredients for Teamwork" or something of the sort.
MANY WORK
SO ALL CAN LIVE
Friendship

SHARE WITH OTHERS

TIMES TO SHARE WITH OTHERS

SINGING

GAMES

STORIES
HOW DO YOU CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS?
EVERYBODY NEEDS A FRIEND

Make a new friend today.
Resolving conflict

Listening - the best way to end a fight!!

Getting mad gets you nowhere...

Getting together gets you anywhere!
Responsibility

OWNING A PET IS A RESPONSIBILITY
This display is to be accompanied by a list of classroom chores to be done by students. The name of the child assigned to each task will be posted as well and will change through the year.

Each day, the teacher will write the goals for the day on the balloons and post them around the room. As each goal is accomplished during the day, that balloon will be moved to the clown. The main goal of each day is for the clown to have all the balloons before the day ends.
This display will point to a list of things the students need to remember to do. The list may include homework or merely remind them of a special event or day.
Self-concept

This display is intended to be ongoing, and gives the students an opportunity to display some of their best work. Student papers deemed terrific for each student will be placed on the board for all to see.
Be Yourself

WHAT DO YOU SEE?
Self control leads to self respect.

- Control your tongue
- Control your temper
- Control your actions
Salute to Reading Stars

This is a very simple board to make, but it makes special students really feel positive about themselves. The purpose of this fun bulletin board is to recognize special students who do not always excel. On cut-out stars add photos of students putting forth an extra effort to be better readers. As the year progresses, change the title to salute whatever group you wish to recognize.

HELEN TRAINOR

LD Stars

This display gives even the most battered ego a boost. The central part consists of school photos, snapshots, and newspaper clippings of former and current Learning Disabled students. Children learn about well-known people who had learning difficulties, such as Thomas Edison, Nelson Rockefeller, Cher, Bruce Jenner, and others. Each student does a short report on one of these and finds pictures of these famous people. They arrange their reports and photos around the central part of the bulletin board.

ROBERTA LING

Bear Hugs

With all the current enthusiasm about bears, use that symbol to recognize students of the month. Create a hall bulletin board with a bear for each grade or section. Each week or month, place names and pictures of each grade’s special student in the bears’ arms. For a classroom board, devote a corner to one bear who hugs a special student each week.

PATTI VALLADOLID

BEAR HUGS FOR

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH
WHO???

Who???
This bulletin board features a rhyming couplet describing a positive trait of each child in the room. The class-created couplets are printed on long strips of white paper, together with photos of the recipients. Mounted on larger pieces of bright paper, the couplets are placed informally on the board. A sample couplet is: Who??/?Is our expert at guide-word skills?/She knows high comes between hiccup and hills.

CAROLGENE WOLF

Someone Special/Getting to Know...

Someone Special/Getting to Know...
These boards recognize a different student each week. Names may be written on slips of paper and drawn to see who has which week. A large silhouette or name card is the focus of the boards. That child brings family pictures, pictures of favorite foods, ribbons and trophies won, certificates, favorite stuffed animals, parts of a hobby collection, and other memorabilia to display and share.

HANNA GLEIBERMAN, BARBARA KRAATZ, BETTY W. HENDRIX
**Self-Concepts**

**NEWS FLASH**

**Something to Smile about**
Use this idea two or more times a year. Early in the year students create self-portraits. They place them on large colored paper with corners pinched to make a frame. Around the portraits they paste words cut from magazines and newspapers that they feel describe themselves. Repeat the project later in the year, with new nouns and adjectives. It will be interesting to compare the portraits and word choices.

ELSIE ONYCHUK

**Here We Are**
Each month have primary children draw self-portraits, always using the same size paper. Write names and dates on each picture. Put the new pictures on top of the old ones. Parents, school staff, and the children themselves will enjoy looking at and comparing pictures. At the end of the year staple all portraits together and send them home as a record of the child’s growth. A special bonus is that this is a great way to store the pictures.

HARRIET HUTCHINSON

**News Flash**
All children have something they can do well. Have them involve their athletic or cooking abilities, for example, to create personal news stories of some incredible or fantastic accomplishment. Stories, with black-and-white self-portraits, are glued on the front page of a local paper and the front pages displayed on the bulletin board.

MARGEE PFEIFER
Our Hall of Fame

On large sheets of pastel paper, each student writes his or her name vertically, using bold black letters. After a discussion of words that describe people, kids select words to describe themselves that begin with the letters in their names and write these beside the letters. Mounted on the board with the title, "Our Hall of Fame," the board is a good way for children to think seriously about themselves.

GAIL BOUTILIER

Guess What's on Our Minds

Precede this board with a class discussion on how students feel about a subject or event, about problems and solutions, about hobbies, wishes, dreams for the future. From magazines, they collect pictures and words relating to their ideas. As they do that, you sketch silhouettes. Tape large white paper to a wall. Have a child stand in profile in front of the paper with the overhead projector shining on him or her. Sketch the silhouette in pencil. Children trace their outlines with crayon, cut them out, and fill the areas with the collected words and pictures. Place silhouettes on colored paper; arrange in a pleasing display.

ROSEMARY ISSA GERMANOS
**Self-Concepts**

**WE'RE ALL A FAMILY UNDER ONE SKY!**

**We’re All a Family Under One Sky**
Use this board to emphasize friendship with children of other grades, races, faiths, and ages. Enlarge the figure at the left and cut one for each child. If paper is folded accordion-style, many can be cut at a time. This board shows the friendship of kindergartners with fifth grade reading buddies. Each kindergartner and his or her buddy is colored, cut out, and the two (or more) dolls are tied together with yarn after punching holes in the hands so they clasp hands.

GINGER MCINTOSH

**First Families**
Everyone has a story to tell—especially a first grader—about his or her family. Have children write paragraphs about their families. Those here are put into a computer and printed on printouts. The printouts are illustrated with crayons or markers. It is not necessary to use computer printouts; any kind of paper will work. Family pictures from home add interest. Using the pattern above, kids cut strips of hand-holding children for a border. Stories, photos, and border are mounted on dark blue background.

SIDNEY A. FRYE
Swinging Along
Children need to realize how they are different and at the same time alike. After talking about differences and likenesses, they draw pictures of themselves with upraised arms. Their pictures show them wearing the same clothes they have on that day. Pictures are cut out and glued to a strip of brown paper for a swingboard. Two pieces of yarn are glued to the bottom of the swing and the other ends to a part of a letter in the title.

KAREN SCHEERMESSE

People Are Like Jack O'Lanterns...

No Two Are the Same!

People Are Like Jack O'Lanterns
The title says it all. Use it in primary grades to stress how we are all individuals and how, as humans, we are alike and yet different. Distribute orange paper on which children draw and cut out pumpkin shapes. Youngsters add features and display the shapes on the board. Have a class discussion on Jack O'Lantern characteristics: They all have the same color, same number of eyes, a nose, and so on, yet each is very unique and different. Variations of this idea are prevalent: flowers, houses, dogs, or anything else with which students are familiar. Help children recognize the same things among themselves, and they will begin to recognize how special they all are.

PERRY STIO
**Free Knowledge**

Students will appreciate the humor in this board, yet at the same time realize its significance. Create a large silhouette of a child and inside the brain area put cut-paper gears meshed together. To make the activity more fun, make silhouettes of each of the students in your class, using the light from the overhead, and change weekly. Around the head add the days of the school week and facsimiles of textbooks or any other relevant items. Each morning, ask kids if they have their own containers for the day's free knowledge. LOIS PALAGI

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**Leaves are Falling...**

Create a large cut-paper tree from brown paper. Stuff slightly with newspaper and staple along edges. Place on side of board. Students cut out colored leaves. Brainstorm for ideas on ways to maintain a good school attitude. Write a few ideas on some of the leaves and add to the board. Have blank leaves for students to write their own suggestions. Each morning talk about some of the leaves. PAULA J. FAUSTINI

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**Special Stuff**

This permanent kindergarten board holds all the things children bring proudly to school—pictures, practice papers, homemade notes. Accept and recognize all efforts. Clear it off each month and start over.

MERIDYTH DUKE
These athletes have struggled to become the best in their fields. No matter what the odds, they believed in themselves.

How do you get to be your best? You want to. That's the dream. You find ways around obstacles. That's the determination. You practice and practice. That's the hard work. When your hard work pays off, you take pride in your achievement.

That's self-esteem.

"Don't ask what he can't do; just sit back and watch what he can do." (Angels catcher Rick Turner)

"If you want something bad enough, if you put your mind to it, there's nothing you can't do in this world."

"See the possibilities, not the obstacles."

"Everyone is raw material. I want to be a good statement of possibilities."

"A shootout—you may be history. A home run—you can make history. Even if you strike out, you at least get another chance."

"Don't ask what he can't do; just sit back and watch what he can do." (Angels catcher Rick Turner)

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"Everyone is raw material. I want to be a good statement of possibilities."

"A shootout—you may be history. A home run—you can make history. Even if you strike out, you at least get another chance."

Learning Poster
You’re Never Too Old (Or Too Young)

Rachel Carson publishes Silent Spring when she’s 55. The book warns that using pesticides on crops is deadly. Angry chemical companies say pesticides are safe.

Al Oerter, who turned out to be her best pal, and she became zoology buddies.

Anna Mary Robertson, known as Grandma Moses. Born in 1860, she started painting when she was 78. She sold 100,000 paintings in her lifetime.

Nolan Ryan didn’t retire until he was 47. He started painting when he was 68. He’s the all-time great league leader in no-hitters and career strikeouts. Nolan’s no slouch. He’s always pitching in their spare time.

Laura Ingalls Wilder, author. Born in 1867, she died in 1957. Instead of retiring when most people do, Laura Ingalls Wilder began a new career. She started writing down her memories of growing up in the wild frontier. People loved her stories. Years later, they were turned into a television show, "Little House on the Prairie."

At age 65, Olympic track star Al Oerter hurled the discus 240 feet in an official competition. His throw would have set a world record.

At age 62, Nolan Ryan became the oldest pitcher ever to strike out more than 200 batters in a single baseball season. He was also the only pitcher to strike out more than 2,000 batters in each league.

At age 65, Laura Ingalls Wilder publishes The Little House in the Big Woods, the first of her many books. She writes her stories by hand on lined paper. Soon, she’ll answer letters from young readers the same way.
Is it ever right to lie?

Remember the golden rule

DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE OTHERS DO UNTO YOU.

SHARE  LEND A HAND  DO NOT BULLY  WELCOME NEWCOMERS

DO NOT RIDICULE
**These are not Crosswords**

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**Good Citizens**

- Helping Others
- Taking Turns
- Listening To Others

**Set Good Examples**
I lose well.
WIN GRACEFULLY

LOSE WELL WIN GRACEFULLY

TRY A VOLUNTEER JOB

AT HOME

AT SCHOOL
NURSERY SCHOOL
AROUND YOUR TOWN
Nothing to buy....Nothing to make.

PRAISE

LOVE

SMILES

ENCOURAGEMENT

KINDNESS

The best to give

DO YOU LISTEN?
Break the ties that bind.

Help improve your surroundings.
Choose do more.

Time to you're going to need don't.

You think wake up.

Walk lazy.

Words can be a downfall.
WHAT'S A FAMILY?

For most people, holidays are a time to be with family. But this year, Aaron, in the red striped shirt, will spend the holiday with his friend Jamar, and Jamar's family. All this got Aaron thinking:

What's a family exactly? Must it always have a father and mother? Could it have a stepfather, half-sister, grandparents, or cousins? What about pets? Can a close friend feel like a brother?

Write a story describing one of the families in these Park View Apartments. Now, draw a 6 x 6-inch picture of your holiday family. Take turns displaying it in this room.
This year, give
the greatest gift of all
A Little Bit of Yourself

Maria's List
• Mom—babysit
  Carmelita for an hour
• Dad—sweep out
  his car
• Carmelita—read
  her a story
• José—let him pick TV
  shows next Saturday
• Uncle Arturo—bake
  his favorite cookies
• My friend Felicia—
  empty her lunch tray
  for a week
• Mrs. Washington—
  clean off her desk
  after school
• Max—take him on
  a long walk
Articles and sources for teachers

Accepting individual differences


Soothing the Sting of Rejection, Campbell, Joan Daniels, LEARNING ‘90: September 1990.

Cooperation

Bibliography on cooperative learning, compiled by Dr. Susan Page.


*Literature and Cooperative Learning--A Perfect Match!,* Page, Susan E.


*You Can Choose,* a brochure through which teachers may order a video entitled "Cooperation".
Friendship


*The Human Race Club*, film series on friendship offered by KNOWLEDGE UNLIMITED.

Resolving conflict

Brochure from CHILDREN' CREATIVE RESPONSE TO CONFLICT; may send for books or sign up for workshops.
Responsibility

You Can Choose!, a brochure through which a video entitled "Being Responsible" can be ordered.
Self-concept

The Affirmation of Self, Morris, Jimmy Oliver, TEACHING K-8: August/September 1990.

Catalog, HODGES BADGE CO., through which buttons, ribbons, etc. may be ordered.


Praise Your Child, lists 110 ways to say "good Job".

The Power of Choice, LIVE WIRE VIDEO PUBLISHERS, through which a video entitled "Self-esteem" may be ordered.


Tell Me, How An I To Touch You?, Lantrip, Cheryl Cheatham.

Very Good, Broman, Betty and Shipley, Sara, lists 68 ways to say "very good".
Miscellaneous

Calendar of special days, weeks, and months relevant to this file.