

THE CO-OP STRATEGY

The Co-op strategy is a variation of the jigsaw and is effective when the materials are somewhat more extensive and complex in nature. This strategy helps to ensure that all groups receive the same interpretation of the information. During this activity, students will be required to change groups.

1. The material is divided into parts and numbered. If the small groups are composed of four members, then the material is divided into four equal parts.
2. The group members are numbered off and each one is assigned the section that corresponds to his/her number.
3. The group members each read and study their assigned materials.
4. The teacher signals the students to leave their "home" groups and move to their "expert" groups. All the #1's will now form an expert group, the #2's, the 3's, and the #4's. The expert groups are usually much larger than the home groups since most workshops consist of at least 5 or 6 small groups.
5. Students meet with their expert groups to design a teaching strategy for their assigned materials. This part of the activity may require up to 30 minutes, again depending upon the length and complexity of the materials. Students should be encouraged to use creative, interactive methods in their presentations and to limit their presentations to five minutes.
6. Students return to their home groups and teach their information to the rest of the group.
7. The teacher acts as timekeeper, signaling when it is time for #1 to begin, then #2, etc.
8. After all group members have finished, the teacher should provide some time for large group discussion in case some groups need clarification.

