



Working Together

This lesson is designed to increase students' ability to work effectively in teams.

Essential Question

How do we work together to create a fair and just classroom community where individual and collective learning is engaging, valued, and liberating for all?

Guiding Question

How can we work together effectively in teams to improve our learning?

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify attributes of a successful team.
- Students will learn tips for working together well.

Advance Preparation

- Prepare a bag of supplies (listed below) for each student team
- If using, post the signs (“Families,” “Businesses,” etc.) in the corners of the room
- Have white board or chart paper ready for use
- Prepare student handouts. (Note: Please reserve “Expert Tips” reading to distribute to students **after** they have completed the activity sheet.)

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 4.5 (adapt as needed)
- Timer and ruler
- One for each team: Plastic /paper bag of supplies (2 popsicle sticks, 4 paper clips, one rubber band, a three-inch piece of tape and 2 unsharpened pencils)
- White board or chart paper and marker
- (Optional) Signs bearing the words “Families,” “Businesses,” “Sports” and “Governments”

Student Materials

- Post Game Interview and Expert Tips readings
- Our Top 10 Tips for Working Together activity sheet
- Paper for Exit Ticket

Vocabulary

- Team

Do Now

3 min.

Slide 1: Students share with a partner three must-have qualities that they would look for in members of a team to organize a school event.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

6 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 sec.)
2. Longest object activity (slide 4): Give one bag of supplies to each student team of 3 or 4. Direct student teams to use the supplies provided to create the **longest** object possible. They have three minutes to work; you will let them know when time is up. Set the timer.

When the timer rings, have each group use a ruler to measure their team's product. Identify the winning team, and if possible, award a small prize. (Did any of the teams use the baggie itself to create a longer product?)

3. Ask the winning team what helped them win.
 - How did they work together as a team?
 - Did members get along and listen to each other?
 - Did every member participate? If so, how?
 - Is there anything they would change to work more efficiently next time?
4. Ask students what they think was the point of the activity. Tell students that the focus of today's lesson is teamwork. Briefly review the day's agenda (slide 5).

Activity 1: What Makes a Successful Team?

14 min.

5. Slide 6: Direct students to the Post-Game Interview handout. Have volunteers read the parts (Reporter #1, Reporter #2, and Coach) aloud as students follow along. **Student Reading**
6. Click and ask the class why they think the team won the game. Record responses on the board, chart paper or a google doc. (Students may also draw on their insights from the Do Now.) **Whole Class Discussion**
7. Make sure students understand the following points. Successful teams:
 - work together (cooperate)
 - respect each other
 - help each other

- know game rules
 - learn and practice the skills needed for their roles
 - believe in themselves and each other
 - listen to each other
8. Display slide 7. Ask students whether the words **team** and **group** on the board, chart paper or google doc and ask students whether the words mean the same thing, or is there a difference? (Aim for the response that, in addition to the behaviors previously discussed, a team has *common goals*. A group could be individuals acting as separate entities pursuing their own goals.)
9. Four Corners activity, slide 8 (optional): Call students' attention to the signs "Families," "Sports," "Businesses," and "Governments" in the four corners of the room. Ask the students to think about which of these they think is the best example of a team, and to move to the associated corner. Invite several students to explain their choices. (Omit this activity if you expect to be short on time.)

**Kinesthetic
Activity**

Activity 2: Making Group Decisions

20 min.

10. Slide 9: Students teams work with the following scenario: Pretend that your team has been given \$500 to spend. You must discuss and agree together on three ways you will spend the money.
- Brainstorm some ideas
 - Select your top three choices
 - Designate a spokesperson to report your decision to the class.
11. After students have had a few minutes to try to come to an agreement, have one member of each group report.
12. Ask students to reflect on this activity. Discuss the following questions as a class: What worked well in your group? What did your group have problems with? How did your group agree on its final choices?
13. Slide 10: Direct students to the "Our Top 10 Tips for Working Together" activity sheet. Based on their experience today and in the past, ask students to brainstorm with their teammates tips they have learned to successfully work together. (If it helps students to visualize an "audience" for this activity, tell them to pretend they are going to teach a younger class how to work together.) Have students list ideas under "What We Say" and "What We Do" on the activity sheet.

**Cooperative
Learning
Exercise**

**Whole Class
Discussion**

**Cooperative
Learning**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 14. After a few minutes, ask a member of each group to report. Create a class list on the board, chart paper or google doc and direct students to add the ideas to their own lists. | Whole
Class
Discussion |
| 15. Click and distribute the “Expert Tips for Working Together” reading. Students read the selection silently, then with a partner. Click to discuss the selection with the class, using the following questions as a guide. How many of the “expert” tips did we already have on our list? Are there any questions about any of the tips? | Partner
Reading

Whole
Class
Discussion |

Closure

2 min.

16. Exit ticket: Each student writes down one way that he/she would like to become a better team member.

Extensions

Manage time in class by extending or abbreviating whole class discussions.

If you wish to assign homework, have students write a journal entry describing a time that they were part of a team (any kind of team) that worked together effectively.

The Post-Game Interview

Read the following post-game interview. Can you identify the qualities that make for a successful team?



Reporter 1: Great game today, Coach. Can you comment on what worked for you?

Coach: (He laughs.) What worked? The players worked. The coaching staff worked. The hot dog vendors worked. In this organization, everyone plays an important part.

Reporter 2: But your quarterback deserves most of the credit on the field, right?

Coach: He had a really good day passing the ball. Also, the offensive line gave him a lot of time to make good decisions.

Reporter 1: Your defense is on its way to being one of the best ever. Any comment on that?

Coach: Our defensive coaches have studied our opponents each week. They spend hours reviewing game film. The players have bought into it, too. They think about the game more than last year. And right now, they believe in themselves. They know they can do it if they keep working hard.

Reporter 2: Are you thinking about the championship yet?

Coach: We've been thinking about it since training camp. But our focus is on our next game. But I'll tell you, I've never been so happy to coach a team. The players and coaches are motivated and know how to learn and improve every week.



Our Top 10 Tips for Working Together

Working with your teammates, identify ten **top tips** teams can use to help them **work together** to reach their goals.

What We Say

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What We Do

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



Expert Tips for Working Together

What We Say

- Say “OK” or answer when someone speaks to you.
- Use a calm, pleasant, indoor (quiet) voice.
- Don’t make fun of anyone’s ideas or tease. Don’t criticize them.
- If you hurt someone else’s feelings or do something wrong, say you are sorry.
- Use “I” statements (“I feel... I think... I don’t understand...”), rather than “you” or “those people” statements (“You don’t know... those people think that...”).
- Don’t be sarcastic or cut down someone else, even as a joke. You can be funny without putting others down!
- Paraphrase what the other person says or repeat back what you hear (“So, you think that....” or “What I hear you saying is that”).
- Ask people to explain something you don’t understand.
- Don’t always try to have the last word.

What We Do

- Pay attention when another group member speaks.
- Look at the person who is speaking. Try not to be distracted by other things, such as TV, cell phones, music, etc. This lets people know you are listening.
- Stay on task.
- Don’t interrupt the speaker.
- If you disagree, say why you feel differently about the idea but don’t criticize the other person.
- Don’t leave the room if you get frustrated or bored.
- Don’t take part in side conversations when a team member is talking.

