

**Teammates Consult**  
Structured Small Cooperative Learning  
December 15, 2006

*“Research indicates that cooperative learning structures promote higher achievement and greater retention than do individualistic learning experiences for all students.” (Stevens & Slavin)*

Teammates consult is a cooperative learning structure in which students actively work together to achieve shared learning goals. In this cooperative learning structure, each member of the group has an equal share of participation, responsibility and input. Students are responsible for their teammates' learning as well as their own, thus promoting an atmosphere of high expectations and peer support for academic achievement.

Teammates consult, as a cooperative learning structure,

- promotes the development of communication skills, positive interdependence, group processing, team building, and information sharing.
- develops students' social skills.
- causes students to think critically before they just “fill in the blanks.”

<b>PROCESS</b>
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The teacher selects or prepares a set of questions that the students are to answer collaboratively in their group. The complexity of the information and the level of understanding required by the question determine the level of difficulty of the task. At no time during this process are students both talking and writing.

<b>STEPS</b>
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1. Students work in teams of three or four.
2. All students receive their own copy of the task.
3. A cup is placed in the center of each team's work space. Students begin by placing their pencils/pens in the cup.
4. A student reads the first question.
5. With the pencils still in the cup, students take turns sharing their ideas and answers to the question. Students may use their text and notes, if the teacher desires. Students discuss the answers and then come to consensus on the answer to the question.
6. The student to the left of the reader checks to see that all the group members understand and agree with the consensus answer.
7. WHEN THERE IS GROUP AGREEMENT, all students remove their pencils/pens from the cup and write the answer to the question in their own words on their own paper.
8. When the students are finished recording their answers, the steps are repeated with the remaining questions. Now, the checker becomes the new reader and the person on the left becomes the new checker.

**Remember!** All pens/pencils are placed in the container while discussion is ongoing. This keeps students from jumping ahead of their teammates and helps ensure that all group members actively engage in the discussion of the correct answer.

The process and steps adapted from:  
Kagan, Spencer. Cooperative Learning Resources for Teachers  
Rutherford, Paula. Why I Didn't Learn This in College?