



# Cooperative Learning Grouping Methods



## Introduction

In today's society, many jobs and tasks are successfully performed as a result of collaboration between unique individuals. These individuals must possess character traits and skills that promote effective communication and creativity in order for them to make essential contributions on jobs. Students are often required to work in cooperative learning groups to build these traits and skills necessary for them to be successful in their future endeavors.

## Materials (per group)

- Small paper bag (Containing the following)
  - Group label
  - 4 Numbered chips (i.e. 1, 2, 3, and 4)
  - 4 Clothespins (i.e. blue, green, red, and yellow)

## Combinations for Grouping

- Learning Styles
- Multiple Intelligences
- Interests
- Skills
- Random

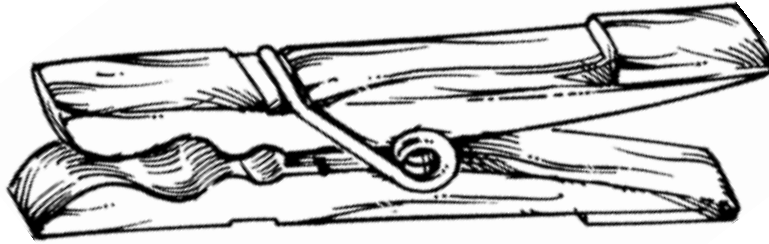
## Protocol

In this cooperative learning strategy, students are divided into small groups. There should be no more than four members in each group. When there is an odd number of students in a class, one or more groups will have three members. One member in a group of three will have two collaborative jobs. The combination of members assigned to a group may vary.

Once group members are assigned to a group by the facilitator, each member will pull a numbered chip from a bag. Each member will own his or her number for the entire time the group works on a particular assignment. This number should be recorded in black ink to ensure there will be no number swapping during the course of the assignment.

The facilitator will assign a specific color of clothespin for each collaborative job. Colored clothespins will be used by students in order for the teacher to readily identify the cooperative job of a particular group member. All members will have specific tasks to conduct to ensure that everyone is accountable for working collaboratively with his or her group. Students should wear their clothespins only on their collars for safety purposes. In the event that a student wears a t-shirt, a clothespin should be clipped onto fabric gathered near the neckline.

Group members should return their clothespins to the Human Resource person at the end of the activity and not wear them out of the lab or group area. The Human Resource person will place the four clothespins in the group's bag along with their group label and numbered chips.



## Collaborative Jobs

- Human Resource Person
  - Receives clothespins container to distribute correct color of clothespin to the proper group member
  - Make sure each person understands his or her job
  - Keeps everyone on task
  - Records all data
  - Returns clothespin container to the teacher with all of the content
- Communication Expert
  - The only person who can communicate with the teacher
  - May ask the teacher only three questions for the pair-share partners/group per class period
  - Reports problems the group may be experiencing or inappropriate behavior
  - Leads the group's oral presentation to the class
- Project Director
  - Reads the instructions to the group
  - Performs the detail work
- Material Manager
  - Keeps track of time for the group
  - Gathers the resources that are required for the activity
  - Cleans and/or organizes the resources and the lab station or group area
  - Returns resources to the appropriate places when the activity is completed
  - Discards wastes in appropriate places

