“Can we switch seats?”

Investigating Collaborative Learning in a 6th Grade Classroom

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2010 - 2011 Mount Nittany Middle School Intern
Sixth Grade

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Background Information

Description of the Teaching Context

For the 2010-2011 school year, I have worked as an intern in a sixth grade classroom at the State College Area School District. The school is comprised of students, grades six through eight, with two different teams per grade. Each team is comprised of 4-6 teachers, depending on the grade, and the students stay in homeroom for Reading and Writing, as well as Science. The students go to the adjacent classroom for Social Studies, and all of the students go to different teachers on the their team for Math. In addition, there are three students in this class who attend Advanced Seventh Grade Math.

In this class, there are twelve girls and thirteen boys. Most of the students are reading at a sixth grade reading level with two students above grade level and four students below grade level. There are four students who could be categorized as being gifted or talented and attend Learning Enrichment almost every day, though none of them have had formal testing. One student has been identified with having Asperger’s Syndrome and has a full-time paraprofessional to assist him all day. There is one student who exhibits mental retardation, hearing impairment, vision impairment, and health impairment. This student uses a wheelchair for mobility, uses a hearing system, wears lenses that only partially correct her vision, and attends Life Skills for the majority of the day. At all times, a sign language interpreter/paraprofessional and a full-time nurse assist her in her daily school routines.

Another student has a hearing impairment and wears hearing aids that she often forgets to use and needs to be reminded to do. Two students attend Learning Support for Math, and two students go to Instructional Support for Writing. This sixth grade class is comprised of students from five different elementary schools. Five students attended Houserville Elementary; eight
students attended Boalsburg Elementary; seven students attended Ferguson Township Elementary; four students attended Easterly Parkway Elementary, and one student attended Radio Park Elementary School. Though students often interact with the students with whom they went to elementary school, and they are beginning to branch out socially with students from other elementary schools. The students work a lot in groups during Social Studies, Science, Math, and Reading. In Math, the students work in pairs to complete daily investigations and connections based on the unit. In Social Studies, students work together to research and prepare presentations in small groups. Students have been placed in two different Book Club groups based on interest and reading level. For Science, the students work with the four other students that they sit with in groups. Because of all these different group interactions, I am interested in the benefits of different forms of collaborative learning in the sixth grade classroom setting. (See Appendix A for Inquiry Brief.)

In November, I created Book Club groups for the students after doing it with my mentor once before in the school year. I quickly became aware that there are a number of factors to consider when putting students into groups, such as gender balance, book choice, and students who would work well together. A lot of time and effort went into planning groups for the students’ reading groups, and since they work in different types of groups for other subjects, I was curious about the rationale for each group type. From there, I decided I wanted to investigate the factors that go into grouping students.

**Wonderings and Questions**

*Main Questions*

- What are the best approaches to grouping students in a sixth grade setting?
Sub Questions

- Is allowing students to select their own group members a productive strategy?
- Are students more productive when working with similar genders or different genders?
- How does frequently changing groups make a difference in the students’ productivity in completing a given task?

Data Collection

I collected a variety of data in this inquiry in order to observe the effects of grouping in a sixth grade classroom setting. Though I was initially unsure of an intervention, I collected data before, during, and after the later-determined intervention. The purpose of collecting the data was to analyze the data and determine the best approaches to collaborative learning in a sixth grade setting.

Before

Before introducing the inquiry to my students, I observed them working in groups during Social Studies and Science classes. Both classes meet during the morning, so this was a consistent time to collect baseline data. My intention for writing basic interventions was to discover a specific aspect of grouping that I’d like to analyze. (See Appendix C for Before Social Studies Observations on February 18 & Appendix C for Before Science Observations on February 28.)

Next, I conducted an anecdotal record of time on task for the students working on a group-writing project during Science. I designated a specific behavior as on task and gave students a check mark for on task and an x for not on task every five minutes out of 6 instances.
This allowed me to notice that some of my students were not always on task with groups of three. *(See Appendix E for Before- Science Time on Task on March 2.)*

In order to gather my students’ thoughts on working in groups and begin some baseline data, I conducted a survey with my students to gain insights to their thoughts on grouping and working with other students. The survey was created through Google Form and sent to the students via e-mail. Out of the 25 students in the class, 23 students answered the questions asked in the survey. *(See Appendix F for Survey #1 & Results.)* I asked students if they enjoy working in groups and what they do and don’t like best about working in groups. They were also asked about their feelings working with a partner. I asked the students if they enjoy working with a partner that is the same or different gender, as well as whether they believe they are more productive with either gender. In addition, I asked students if they enjoy working with a friend, as well as whether they feel they are productive when working with a friend. I noticed the biggest discrepancy in students’ responses to whether they enjoy working with a partner of the same gender or different gender versus productivity in working with a student of similar or different gender. This led my intervention to become an investigation of students’ productivity in working with similar and different genders during partner work in the classroom.

*During*

To kick off my gender comparison of partner work in a sixth grade setting, I decided to remain consistent and observe students during Science class. Initially, I assigned students with same gender partners for a Science experiment, *(See Appendix G for Same Gender Partners.)* and then conducted a *time on task* anecdotal record observation during the same period. I designated a specific behavior for time on task and gave students a yes or no mark every five minutes on four designated instances. *(See Appendix H for Same Gender Time on Task.)*
To counter the same gender investigation, I then observed students’ work in different gender partners during the next Science period. Different gender partners were assigned to 20 students. One student works with a paraprofessional, so he worked alone with her. Then, there was one group of three, due to the boy-girl ratio in our classroom, consisting of two boys and one girl. (See Appendix I for Different Gender Partners.) In the same class period, I conducted a time on task in the same fashion as I conducted the Same Gender time on task. There were five designated instances to observe whether students were collaboratively working toward a common goal of conducting an experiment in Science. (See Appendix J for Different Gender Time on Task.)

Then, I put my students into subgroups based on the responses from my first survey. There were four groups: A - Boys who believe they are most productive working with a Girl Partner (6 boys), B – Girls who believe they are most productive working with a Boy Partner (3 Girls), C – Boys who believe they are most productive working with a Boy Partner (7 boys), and D – Girls who believe they are most productive working with a Girl Partner (7 girls). (See Appendix K for Student Subgroups.) After classifying students of their particular belief, I chose to interview one student from each group. In order to make the interview selection unbiased, I put student names in a hat for each group and picked one name. I asked students questions about why the said they are most productive working with that particular gender and what works best and worst about working with both genders. I also asked them about that particular gender as being a friend. One of the students that I interviewed gave many responses to questions with “I don’t know,” so there were two students interviewed in that subgroup in order to try and obtain more information. (See Appendix L for Student Interviews.) Lastly, I asked the student interviewee if he or she feels that there are more boys or girls in this class that
he or she works best with? I asked them to answer yes or no to each student in the class on a class checklist. (See Appendix M for Student Checklists.)

Based on the interviews, I learned that students have not worked with all of the students in their class yet. This surprised me since I thought that since we change seats so often and offer so many opportunities to work in groups that they would have worked with everyone by March. Because of this, I decided to ask the entire class, whom they have not worked with yet, in a Google Form survey. In this survey, I also asked the students if they prefer the frequent switching of groups. That was based on a response from one student in his interview and casual conversation with my students. (See Appendix N for Survey #2 & Results.)

After

Every time that I assigned my student to work in partners, I noticed that they were not thrilled about being assigned who to work with. They groaned when I told them I had chosen their partners for them. This led me to read about eleven and twelve year olds in the classroom setting from the book, Yardsticks, by Chip Wood. From my reading, I discovered that there is a certain element of student choice necessary for this age group and that the teacher should welcome suggestions from these students. As I was telling the student which students to work with, I felt that they were not particularly motivated because they did not select their partners. Then, I remembered a conversation with my mentor about how she likes to allow the students to select their own seats in the classroom. Of course, she and I monitor their decisions, but we allow them to make the decisions for themselves, allowing them to take responsibility for themselves in school.

After collecting data on the same and different gender partners, I collected post data on the students’ time on task working in partners where the students selected their own partners.
My mentor and I collected observations of the students’ time on task by working with partners they selected. In addition, they were asked to work with someone they have never worked with before. Then, I collected the number of instances that the students were on task and calculated the percentage of time each student was on task. To compare this data with the Before Time on Task Percentages, I placed the percentages on the same spreadsheet as the Percentage of Time on Task of During the Inquiry Process. (See Appendix O for Percentage of Time on Task – Before, During, After.)

My next move in collecting data was to use the results from Survey #2 to monitor the students’ new seat choices. I read through each of my students’ responses and looked for patterns. We asked the students to sit with someone they have never sat next to and to make sure that each person is sitting with someone new in their seats for the month of April. I plan to conduct time on task observations during Science experiments to report their productivity in new groups and selecting their own seats.

**Data Analysis**

*Steps Taken to Analyze the Data*

As I began to collect data, I learned that my methods of data collection were not the most effective in answering the questions posed in my wonderings. Because of that, I was constantly trying to re-phrase my wonderings, according to the data that I was collecting. I struggled with focusing on either the students’ most productive group setting or what group setting they enjoyed the most. Then, I realized that I was investigating both and trying to improve the classroom setting with both focuses in mind.

In my data collection, I first started by compiling the data from the student checklists in my five interviews. I wanted to see if there was a trend in who students work with. I entered all
of their data into a spreadsheet, and then tallied up the number of yes and no responses to “Are you productive when working with this student?”

Another step in my data analysis was with the Time on Task Observations. I counted the number of instances that each individual student was on task and off task, then calculated a percentage of time based on the amount of instances in that period. I then combined the three percentages from Time on Task Observations: Before, Same Gender, and Different Gender, and After into one spreadsheet to compare one another. *(See Appendix O for Total Percentage of Time on Task.)* If there was an increase in the percentage from the Before Data to the After Data, I highlighted the box yellow to note the increase. Seventeen students had an increase in percentage of *time on task* out of a class of twenty-five students. Some students could not be counted in the increase with the opportunity of being in the classroom on that day. Some students were absent when I collected the after data, and some were absent for the before data, which limited my ability to analyze the two. Even with those exceptions, the increase was something that stood out to me as substantial evidence.

Fortunately, I did not have to decide how to compile my survey data. I went right into analyzing my student responses. Google Form allows the survey creator to view the data responses in a Summary Form with pie graphs and percentages of how many students picked each response.

Lastly, I re-read the responses to my surveys and interviews to see if there was a common theme among students. I highlighted content specific responses by different colors to code the responses into categories. This was done to see if there was any sort of commonality in how students feel about collaborative learning in the sixth grade classroom. I found that most students enjoy working in groups, but the gender that the students enjoy working with or
feel that they are productive in working with varies. Students enjoy working with friends, but students vary on whether they feel they are productive in working with a friend.

**Explanation of Findings**

*Claim #1: Sixth Grade students are more productive when given the opportunity to select their own new partners.*

When placing the Before, During, and After Time on Task Percentages next to one another, I noticed that 17 students had an increase in their total percent of time on task from the Before to the After Data during a Science partner activity. In the Baseline Data, the students were randomly assigned partners using the Popsicle sticks with student names. In the After Data, the students were allowed to select their own partners with the only teacher direction of a student they have never worked with before. This leads me to the claim that students are more on task and also more productive when they select their own partners. Not only did they select their own partners, but also the partners were new to work with, which enhanced their productivity in working collaboratively.

The student interviews collectively gave the response of “it depends,” when I asked about certain components that factor into gender grouping. This led me to claim that each student works differently with different types of students. The inconsistency in student responses was evidence that all partner selection is situational, and not one pair’s productivity can be classified with one specific component to lead to more on task behavior. The one piece of evidence that stood out remained that students had not worked with every student in their class yet. This means that the students still had the opportunity to work with new group members, with a higher student enjoyment of frequently changing.
Claim #2: Sixth Grade students enjoy changing group members frequently.

When the students responded to Survey #2, more than half of the students that participated in the survey said that they like sitting with new students every month. The word “like” in the question with a yes answer is my evidence of students who enjoy switching seats. Once a month is determined as frequent in my opinion for every four weeks or nine to ten times throughout the school year. Twelve of twenty students gave specific reasons for why they like to sit with new students, and all are evidence that students like new group members for different reasons. However, the frequent change in members is still prevalent.

Students selected new groups to sit in for the month of April and voiced appreciation in the new group members and seat location. Every student sat with at least one group member, according to the information provided in Survey #2. Students provided data of who they had not worked with yet to keep track of students selecting their new group members. This vocal gratitude of new seats and members allows me to believe that this particular class of students values the frequency of changing groups.

Claim #3: The gender of the students does not make a difference in whether the students are more productive in a collaborative learning setting.

Based on the interviews with five students, I found no commonalities in the answers students gave for working with students of common or different gender. At least two students voiced “it depends” during their interview when I asked about working with a particular gender. This response leads me to believe that gender does not play a factor in grouping students.
While there are many other factors to be considered in grouping students, gender is not one of them.

In pairing students with common gender and different gender partners, I saw no noticeable common increase or decrease in their percentage of time on task. This lack of trend in quantitative data is also evidence to believe that gender does not classify students as more productive in working together. As students work with other students, the gender combination of the students is not one of the components that determine the amount of work they accomplish together.

**Reflection and Implications for Future Practice**

As a teacher, I would assume that a productive group encompasses students with a hard work ethic to keep off-task students on task during group work. However, the students look forward to changing their seats each month and ask on the first day of each month when they get to change seats. I’ve realized that students of eleven and twelve years old appreciate the frequency in working with new students. They like working with new faces for various reasons, but regardless, the new members are what they enjoy about working collaboratively.

I’ve also learned that it’s not necessary to control and assign student groups. It’s important to allow students a choice with whom they work, making them responsible for the amount they accomplish, rather than the teacher. As students work with other students of their choosing, they will typically pick students that work well with them. All students work differently, in pace especially, and being able to find a person of similar work habits allows students to work comfortably.
I still believe that gender in groups needs to be even, but I have now learned that it plays no difference in the productivity of the students. I like to make sure the number of boys and girls is balanced because I think it is important for students to interact with each gender and also, for one gender to not dominate another. However, these are social aspects of my beliefs on grouping students, rather than evidence that students are productive together. Students’ ability to remain productive in a group setting is not determined by the gender make up of the group, but I still believe it is important for students to work with a balanced number of each gender.

I hope to continue analyzing student grouping in my future classroom. This study was conducted in one sixth grade classroom with only 25 students, rather than a variety of students in multiple classrooms. I would like to investigate whether these findings are consistent with other sixth grade classrooms, as well as other grade levels. In addition, I’d like to investigate grouping across additional subjects. This study focused primarily during Science, but I would also like to investigate Math, Reading, and Social Studies.

Appendix A

Inquiry Brief

Elizabeth Hartigan
Inquiry Brief Final
March 2, 2011

Context

For the 2010-2011 school year, I have worked as an intern in a sixth grade classroom at Mount Nittany Middle School. The school is comprised of students, grades six through eight, with two different teams per grade. Each team is comprised of 4-6 teachers, depending on the grade. This sixth grade classroom is on the Blue Team and the students stay in homeroom for
Reading and Writing, as well as Science. The students go to the adjacent classroom for Social Studies, and they all go to different teachers on the Blue Team for Math. In addition, there are three students in this class who attend Advanced Seventh Grade Math.

In this class, there are twelve girls and thirteen boys. Most of the students are reading at a sixth grade reading level with two students above grade level and four students below grade level. There are four students who could be categorized as being gifted or talented and attend Learning Enrichment almost every day, though none of them have had formal testing. One student has been identified with having Asperger’s Syndrome and has a full-time paraprofessional to assist him all day. There is one student who exhibits mental retardation, hearing impairment, vision impairment, and health impairment. This student uses a wheelchair for mobility, uses a hearing system, wears lenses that only partially correct her vision, and attends Life Skills for the majority of the day. At all times, a sign language interpreter/paraprofessional and a full-time nurse assist her in her daily school routines.

Another student has a hearing impairment and wears hearing aids that she often forgets to use and needs to be reminded to do. Two students attend Learning Support for Math, and two students go to Instructional Support for Writing. This sixth grade class is comprised of students from five different elementary schools. Five students attended Houserville Elementary; eight students attended Boalsburg Elementary; seven students attended Ferguson Township Elementary; four students attended Easterly Parkway Elementary, and one student attended Radio Park Elementary School. Though students often interact with the students with whom they went to elementary school with, they are beginning to branch out socially with students from other elementary schools. The students work a lot in groups during Social Studies, Science, Math, and Reading. In Math, the students work in pairs to complete daily
investigations and connections based on the unit. In Social Studies, students work together to research and prepare presentations in small groups. Students have been placed in two different Book Club groups based on interest and reading level. For Science, the students work with the four other students that they sit with in groups. Because of all these different group interactions, I am interested in the benefits of different forms of collaborative learning in the sixth grade classroom setting.

**Rationale**

From the beginning of the school year, I noticed that students were working in groups quite often in the sixth grade classroom setting. Their group dynamics, particularly performance, time on task, and behavior, would be affected by who they were working with. Students who tend to be off task would sit next to a student that is always off task, and sometimes it would make a difference in their time on task but sometimes it would not. I’ve noticed that students enjoy working together, whether it be in pairs or in groups. I’m curious about the effects of grouping students in order to maximize their time on task in the classroom.

Since the work in groups is so often on collaborative projects and spend a lot of time doing so, I would like to investigate the effects of what produces the maximum number of students on task.

Earlier in the school year, I created Book Club groups for Reading - once with my mentor teacher and once on my own. Both processes were extremely difficult because there were so many factors to contribute into the planning process. We had to consider which students got along or worked well together according to our standard. Other considerations included making groups gender balanced, giving the students books to read that they said they were interested in, and giving the students books that would challenge them and be appropriate
for their reading level. In addition, we tried to assure that there would be leader, a student who is enthusiastic about learning with a high frequency of time on task, in each group to make sure the group was always using time productively and efficiently.

This year has also driven my curiosity in student pairings. Whenever we pair students in Math, I wonder which groups are working the most effectively. I tend to assume that a pair of boys will often distract one another and not do their work, but sometimes I am proved wrong. Then, the opposite can happen for a pair of girls. Quite often, my assumptions are situational and determined by the students’ behaviors on a case-by-case basis. However, I’m interested in the effects produced by in pairing students of similar and different gender.

Pairs also interest me in terms of achievement. I paired students together in Science based on their scores from a Vocabulary Quiz on our Mixtures & Solutions unit. After grading the quizzes, I noticed that there was a wide range of scores. Since the quiz was matching, some students were able to answer every question correctly, but a few students answered zero questions correctly. I decided to pair the students based on their quiz scores. I put the quizzes in order from lowest score to highest score, then took the top paper and bottom paper and paired them. Eventually, I paired students that had similar scores but tried to match quizzes that had different answers incorrect. During the next Science class, I returned the students’ quizzes and allowed them to work in their assigned pairs to make corrections. They were instructed to work together and talk through their mistakes. After that, they created questions based on the content of the entire unit for our final assessment of the unit, a Jeopardy Game. All of this happened in the context of an hour and twenty minutes in which the students worked efficiently and cooperatively.

**Main Wondering**
What are the effects of grouping students with different approaches in a sixth grade classroom?
**Sub-Questions**

- What are the effects of grouping students with equal balance in gender?
- What are the effects of pairing students of similar gender? Of different gender?
- What are the effects of pairing students of different achievement scores? Of similar achievement scores?
- What are the effects of pairing a student who has a high percentage of time on task with a student who has a low percentage of time on task?
- What are the effects of grouping multiple students of varying percentages of time on task?

**Timeline**

**Week of February 21:**
Wednesday - Tech Training

- Record Observations of students working in pairs in Social Studies & Math
- Reflection - Inquiry Update

**Week of February 28:**
Monday - Field Trip to Eisenhower
Friday - Anticipated Absence

- Survey students to gather their thoughts on working in groups and pairs
- Record Systematic Observations (Students’ Time on Task) working in pairs during Social Studies, Math & Science
- Final Inquiry Brief & Annotated Bibliography Due

**Week of March 7:**
Out of the Classroom All Week for Spring Break

- Look over data to decide if a new systematic observation focus is necessary

**Week of March 14:**
PSSA’s - 16, 17, 18 (Wednesday - Friday)

- Record Systematic Observations (Students’ Time on Task / something else) working in pairs during Social Studies, Math & Science
- Interview & Record students of varying time on task percentages - at least 4
- Reflection - Inquiry Update

**Week of March 21:**

- Analyze data from interviews to select an intervention
- Implement intervention based on student interviews and survey responses
• Record Observations of students working in pairs and groups
• Collect student samples from pairings / groups if pertains to intervention / new focus topic of systematic observation
• Reflection - Inquiry Update

Week of March 28:
Monday - PSU Career Fair

• More data collection from intervention
• Analyze data from the week prior
• Follow-up same interviewees as before - Interview & Record again
• Survey entire class based on results
• Collect student samples from pairings / groups if pertains to intervention / new focus topic of systematic observation
• Collect student samples from pairings
• Reflection - Inquiry Update

Week of April 4:
Wednesday - Records Day
Friday - Inquiry Rough Draft Paper due to PDA

• Write Inquiry Rough Draft
• Beginning of the week - Survey entire class based on results
• Continue to Record Observations of students working in pairs and groups
• Continue to Collect student samples from pairings / groups if pertains to intervention / new focus topic of systematic observation
• Reflection - Inquiry Update

Week of April 11:

• Prepare for Inquiry Presentation

Week of April 18:
Friday - No School

• Prepare for Inquiry Presentation

Week of April 25:
Wednesday - Practice Presentation
Saturday - Inquiry Conference

• Prepare for Inquiry Presentation
Data Collection Ideas

Observations

I will collect observations to pinpoint behaviors that lead to effective cooperative learning groups. As I record observations, I will look at the relationships within each group and match that with the students’ feelings on the group’s progress. For systematic observations, I will select areas of focus based on what I think would best benefit my students based on their results from the surveys and the interviews.

Surveys

In order to facilitate my intervention, I would like to gather some baseline data on how the students feel about working in groups. They are the ones that this intervention and inquiry overall should benefit, so I believe that their feelings should be considered first and foremost before any other evidence can be collected. My hope is that this baseline data will guide me to select areas of focus for systematic observations in the classroom. When conducting the survey again, I will look to the entire class for answers on the effectiveness of the intervention that I plan to implement. Even though I plan to interview the same students twice, I may choose to interview additional students based on the responses to the survey after the intervention.

Student Work Samples

Before pairing students as part of my intervention (TBD), I will collect student samples as the result of working in pairs and in groups. I will then compare this information to student work during the intervention as well as after the intervention. Student work samples will be the result or assessment as evidence of the successful or unsuccessful collaborative learning. I will collect samples of student work from all of the subject areas that I observe. When I observe Social Studies, I will collect evidence of student work in that subject, scan them, and return
them to the students as soon as possible. Maximizing the number of subjects where I obtain student work samples will help to broaden the results of my data.

*Interviews*

After the survey, I will be able to gain insights to which students are benefiting from the collaborative learning and which are not. I will then determine selected students to interview and ask more detailed questions about working with their peers. My plan is to interview equal genders and evenly distributed time on task for students. Ideally, this will lead me to more specifics in how to implement an intervention that will have a positive effect on my students in collaborative learning experiences. As I plan to use another survey to collect data, I may choose to interview more students than the initial students from before. This will only be necessary if I find that I have follow-up questions for students who provide interesting feedback from their feelings on the intervention based on their survey results.

*Reflections*

This study is also intended to benefit the teacher and her study in working with children, instructing them, teaching them on a daily basis. I will write weekly reflections as part of my Weekly Inquiry Update to check in with how I am feeling with the current status of the inquiry process. This will allow me to benefit the shoes of the teacher and other teachers in the sixth grade setting.

**Appendix B**

*Annotated Bibliography*

This resource outlines the process of Teacher Inquiry with where to begin and where to find wondering. It then elaborates on developing research and incorporating inquiry into teaching. This text allowed me to select methods of data collection to guide my wondering during this inquiry. I used this resource as the driving force behind my data collection and selecting appropriate forms of data collection for the questions I sought answers to. In creating my own surveys, interview questions, and collection of observations, I referred to this text for it’s great examples of data collection.


This resource includes a chapter entitled *How Can I Help My Students Learn?* I read about the benefits of cooperative learning and a suggested layout for how to form groups. The section on cooperative learning mentioned other considerations in grouping and compared cooperative learning for traditional learning. This text allowed me to consider the logic behind my topic of study, where cooperative learning is more prominent for sixth grade students. In addition, this text provided me with the knowledge that grouping is a strategy included in the top qualities of an effective teacher. This convinced me to select this topic as one to study for my inquiry, by learning that it is important for a teacher to investigate what works for students in the classroom.


This resource focuses primarily with sixth grade students of mixed sexes and mixed ability with cooperative tasks. The article focuses on the definition of cooperative learning as students work together to achieve a common goal. Key features of the research study include the comparison of classroom teachers using cooperative learning and those that do not and the comparison of the performance of students in cooperative learning. Data was analyzed in the terms of student performance scores, and results varied depending on the condition of each pair that was studied.


This resource provided me with criteria that make up group work in the classroom. I referred to methods for checking my own beliefs and practices on cooperative learning in the
current classroom setting. This resource stated that students must evaluate one another on their contribution to long-term group projects. I need to assess my teaching constantly, and students need to constantly assess their contributions to the group task they are working towards. While this was not a focus of my study, the idea of students assessing their contributions to the collaborative process was considered among my areas of interest in which to remain within grouping.

Nath, L. R., & Ross, S. M. (2001). The Influence of a Peer-Tutoring Training Model for Implementing Cooperative Groupings with Elementary Students. This resource presents a research study that investigated the effects of collaboration skills with cooperative learning. The purpose of this study was based on prior research indicating teachers not promoting collaborative skills in the classroom. However, it examines the techniques needed to promote meaningful communication and collaboration for students in an elementary setting. In the beginning of my research, I sought resources to guide my thinking and narrow my topic. This was one of the topics I considered, communication with group members, but based on observation; I decided that communication was not a factor in grouping for my students.

This resource presents a research study that investigated the effects of collaboration skills with cooperative learning. The purpose of this study was based on prior research indicating teachers not promoting collaborative skills in the classroom. However, it examines the techniques needed to promote meaningful communication and collaboration for students in an elementary setting. In the beginning of my research, I sought resources to guide my thinking and narrow my topic. This was one of the topics I considered, communication with group members, but based on observation; I decided that communication was not a factor in grouping for my students.


O’Donnell’s information about collaborative learning presents ideas for the classroom teacher to consider when planning with different group dynamics in mind. This resource presents information about collaborative learning in dyads and groups and what techniques work well for certain activities. Overall, it addresses the use of collaborative and cooperative
learning for student interaction to improve student academic progress. This connected my logic between studying partner interaction and linking it to playing a role in group dynamics.


This resource looks at the effects of cooperative learning on both males and females compared to individualistic learning. The study compared cooperative conditions within the classroom such as participation, leadership, achievement, and status. Though there were no significant differences between conditions for certain criteria, there was lots of data collected along the way that varied by gender. Results showed little differences at the end but the variation during the study is what makes this a valuable resource.


This resource is a foundation for teaching and putting theory behind teaching into practice. One chapter is entitled Student-Centered and Constructivist Approaches to Instruction. Within this chapter is a section asking, “How is cooperative learning used in Instruction?” This information provides a lot of broad information concerning the research behind Cooperative learning in the classroom. These studies are current and up to date, which makes them relevant to this study in my present classroom setting. I learned many of these strategies in my undergraduate studies and am now applying them into my student teaching practicum. As they are the baseline of my knowledge with cooperative learning, they have guided my thinking on student collaboration for success.


This resource provides three contexts with grouping in a middle school classroom. The two that I am most interested in are school administrators separating students by high and low ability groups for the entire school and the teachers grouping students into divisions within the classroom by ability level. This study provides a nice representation of data with desired and less desired outcomes. It also provides implications for how this study can improve a teacher’s instruction.

This resource was used to help relate to the students. *Yardsticks* supplies the reader with typical personality traits of students at that specific age by subject and aspect of the classroom setting. I used this to discover that the teacher at the sixth grade level within reason should implement student suggestions and choices. I learned a lot about the students I was studying and the logic behind their daily habits that often confuse me are actually typical for their age group.

**Appendix C**

*Before Social Studies Observations*

Before 2/18/11 - Friday  
1st period - 8:54 AM  
Social Studies  
Observations:

- Group 7 & 1 working on the carpet
- All other groups seated at the desks
- Scribes:
  - 1 – [#20]
  - 2 – [#6]
  - 3 – [#18]
  - 4 – [#21]
  - 5- [#16] & [#11]
  - 6 – [#7] & [#8]
  - 7 – [#19]
- Group 1 - Only scribe is looking at list of questions. Other two students are looking at resources. They are very spread out on the floor in a straight line.
- Group 2 is working in a straight line in three desks. All three are looking at the paper of questions.
- Group 3 is working at a table with the scribe and one student on one side of the table and another student on the other side facing in. They are all using resources to search for answers - evidence of their heads being down looking at the book or packet.
- Group 4 had one member move to another group and look at the book they were using. After telling him to return to his own group, he returned and asked me a question then sat back down in his seat. Group 4 is sitting at the corner of a table. One student is sitting on the short width end of the table, and then the Scribe is perpendicular to her. The other member is sitting to the left of the scribe.
- Group 5 has 4 members. They are sitting in desks with two boys on one side and across from them are the other members, one girl and one boy. All four are facing in the middle as one-student scribes. None of them are using a textbook or a packet to search for answers. However, they are all looking in towards the questions and talking together.
- Group 6 is working at the end of a table. One student is sitting along the short width of a table. That is the student scribing. Sitting perpendicular to him on each side are his other members. One student has his dead down on top of his arms on the table. The other student is looking in resources to find answers. The other student is sitting up with his hand behind his ear and his elbow
- Group 7 was laying on he ground and all laying facing in to one another.
Appendix D

Before Science Observations
Science
Observations of Triads
2/28/11

Group 1: [#21], [#22], [#3] - all boys
Group 2: [#8], [#17], [#20] - 2 girls, 1 boy
Group 3: [#18], [#9] (ab), [#19] - all girls
Group 4: [#23], [#13], [#16] - 1 girl, 2 boys
Group 5: [#12], [#7], [#5] - 1 girl, 2 boys
Group 6: [#24], [#2], [#10] (ab) - 2 girls, 1 boy
Group 7: [#4], [#25], [#6] - 1 girl, 2 boys
Group 8: [#11], [#1], [#15] - 1 girl, 2 boys

Groups are completely random
Students are brainstorming ideas for a persuasive essay about the Big Trade - trading the sun or not - a lesson in Light & Sound

Group 3 finished list of reasons first - missing one member - all girls

Group 5 is doing a lot of staring off, not looking at each other or discussing

Group 1 & 7 are working at the same table

Group 6 is on the couch - not talking or discussing - only a few reasons - prompted by teacher for additional reasons

Group 8 working on the carpet - boys on bean bag chairs and girl sitting on carpet

2 member of group 5 has a headache, moves to the futon to lay down, group members follow him and ask him to continue working - needs to be prompted to return to his seat by the teacher.
Appendix E

Before – Science Time on Task

Appendix F

Survey #1 & Results

Survey #1 about Working in Groups and with Partners

Week of February 21, 2011
Your username (emh25@scasd.org) will be recorded when you submit this form. Not emh25? Sign out
* Required

Please write your name below. * Example: Elizabeth Hartigan

Do you enjoy working in groups? *

  • HTMLDirect ☐ Yes
What do you like best about working in groups? *

What do you like least about working in groups? *

Do you enjoy working with a partner? *

- HTMLDirect  Yes
- HTMLDirect  No

When working with a partner, do you prefer working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender? * Example: If you are a girl, do you prefer to work with other girls or boys? If you are a boy, do you prefer to work with other boys or girls?

- HTMLDirect  Same Gender
- HTMLDirect  Different Gender

When working with a partner, do you think you are more productive when working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender? * Example: If you are a girl, do you think you are more productive when working with other girls or boys? If you are a boy, do you think you are more productive when working with other boys or girls?

- HTMLDirect  Same Gender
- HTMLDirect  Different Gender

When working with a partner, do you think it is better to work with someone you consider a good friend or someone else? *

- HTMLDirect  Better to work with a friend
- HTMLDirect  Better to work with someone else

Why is it better to work with a friend or someone else? * Answer based on the response you clicked in the previous question.
What do you like best about working in partners? *

What do you like least about working in partners? *

Is there anything else that you can say about working in groups or in pairs that would be beneficial?
# Survey #1 about Working in Groups and with Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timestamp</th>
<th>Please write your name below.</th>
<th>Do you enjoy working in groups?</th>
<th>What do you like best about working in groups?</th>
<th>What do you like least about working in groups?</th>
<th>Do you enjoy working with a partner?</th>
<th>When working with a partner, do you prefer working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender?</th>
<th>When working with a partner, do you think it is better to work with someone you consider a friend or someone else?</th>
<th>Why is it better to work with a friend or someone else?</th>
<th>What do you like best about working in partners?</th>
<th>What do you like least about working in partners?</th>
<th>Is there anything else that you can say about working in groups or in pairs that would be beneficial?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:54:12</td>
<td>23 Yes</td>
<td>well I can talk to friends and it gives me a chance to work with all of my classmates</td>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend because we know a lot about each other and that its fun to mess around some times</td>
<td>Well I like working with a friend because we can think of ideas together instead of being stuck on one thing by myself</td>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>that everyone is okay with everyone in the group.</td>
<td>I like working in groups and pairs and think we should do it more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:55:01</td>
<td>1 Yes</td>
<td>Having more than one opinion.</td>
<td>Conflicts between people.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>With a friend you are a little bit easier with the person.</td>
<td>Having someone else's opinion.</td>
<td>When they work ahead.</td>
<td>I like working in groups and pairs and think we should do it more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:55:50</td>
<td>6 Yes</td>
<td>I like that you can work faster.</td>
<td>I don't like it because you sometimes don't agree</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>I like working with a friend because you usually agree on things and you know a lot about them.</td>
<td>I like that you can work fast.</td>
<td>I don't like it when we disagree</td>
<td>I like working in groups and pairs and think we should do it more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:56:12</td>
<td>12 Yes</td>
<td>Seeing everyone's opinions is my favorite part of working in groups.</td>
<td>Sometimes I end up doing all the work.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>I think its better to work with a friend because I'm sorta shy among people I don't know well.</td>
<td>I love seeing what my partners ideas are.</td>
<td>Sometimes I do all the work.</td>
<td>I like working in groups and pairs and think we should do it more often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:57:03</td>
<td>21 Yes</td>
<td>I like how you can work together to come up with answers.</td>
<td>If the person who you are paired with does not do any of the work.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Its better to work with a friend because when you work with a friend the questions come to you much quicker!</td>
<td>That there are only two answers that can come up and it's easier to pick the right one when there are only two of you!</td>
<td>Again if your partner does not do any work!</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:58:32</td>
<td>7 Yes</td>
<td>I like working with other people because you talk and work together and when your alone it's very quiet and you only have your own opinion to work with.</td>
<td>When people don't participate as much as others and don't do a big thing in the project or slide we are working on.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>If you work with a friend they are easier to talk to and you get along better, if your with someone else you don't talk and get along well.</td>
<td>Your with a friend or someone you know and it's easier to work and you can explain your thinking to other people.</td>
<td>When people don't participate with me, only other pairs.</td>
<td>You may either get someone that is not helpful or is mean. You can work on communication skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:58:56</td>
<td>22 Yes</td>
<td>You get other opinions and help.</td>
<td>You may have to work with someone that is not very nice.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>When you work with a friend you might be able to relate to one another.</td>
<td>You do not have to do things alone and you can get more work done.</td>
<td>You may either get someone that is not helpful or is mean.</td>
<td>You can work on communication skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:58:59</td>
<td>4 Yes</td>
<td>What I like about working in groups, is that I get to discuss my answers with the group.</td>
<td>What I don't like about working in groups is that I get really distracted easily because of all the people talking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Its better to work with a friend because I'm not nervous or anything.</td>
<td>What I like about working in partners is that I can discuss my answers with him/her.</td>
<td>Is that I can get distracted easily.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timestamp</td>
<td>Please write your name below.</td>
<td>Do you enjoy working in groups?</td>
<td>What do you like best about working in groups?</td>
<td>What do you like least about working in groups?</td>
<td>Do you enjoy working with a partner?</td>
<td>What do you think is better to work with a partner, do you prefer working with someone who is the same gender or different gender?</td>
<td>When working with a partner, do you think you are more productive when working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender?</td>
<td>When working with a partner, do you consider a good friend or someone else?</td>
<td>Why is it better to work with a friend or someone else?</td>
<td>What do you like best about working in partners?</td>
<td>What do you like least about working in partners?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:59:20</td>
<td>25 No</td>
<td>I like best the way that multiple tasks can be completed at once.</td>
<td>The sometimes off-task personalities of group members. Ex. Fooling around, typing non-related things. NOTE: Although my dislike is clear, I do enjoy a little fun on projects, just not too much.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>When I work with a friend I personally get more work done than working with someone that isn’t a friend participating on the project to get an equal share done, and getting it done quicker.</td>
<td>You have someone to check over your work and give you tips.</td>
<td>You can’t always do what you want to do.</td>
<td>Partners do not always pay attention, and there is a chance of misunderstanding me (or fooling around). Ex. If I chose to write about a cat but my partner rants on and on about dogs on his part, we may have a problem. NOTE: As stated earlier, fun is allowed, just not on a mass scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 13:59:38</td>
<td>24 Yes</td>
<td>You have a higher chance of getting answer right.</td>
<td>some of the group members don’t participate as much as the other members do.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>I think it’s better to work with a friend because friends listen to you and care about what you are saying. Not that other people don’t, I just think friends are more considerate about what you think.</td>
<td>You get more say in what you are doing than when you work in a group.</td>
<td>You can’t always do what you want to do.</td>
<td>Partners easily can communicate and work separately to get more done in less time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:00:08</td>
<td>13 No</td>
<td>I get things done a lot faster.</td>
<td>You don’t get to do exactly what you want to do all the time when you are working on a project. It mostly depends on who you work with.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>I get more say in what you are doing than when you work in a group.</td>
<td>You can’t always do what you want to do.</td>
<td>I think you get work done faster, and I think it’s good to know how to work with people you don’t like because in life you’re not going to always going to work with people you like.</td>
<td>It would be best to pair us up with different people to make sure we meet more people and make sure we do not get too well along with the people we always work with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:00:15</td>
<td>16 Yes</td>
<td>I like how each of us have different ideas about that subject and I am always interested on how it will turn out + I love to argue and prove my idea if I believe in it the thriff</td>
<td>Sometimes the people in my group are lazy and I sometimes do all the work + it takes forever if w do not agree.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with someone else</td>
<td>You get along better</td>
<td>You can get more say in what you are doing than when you work in a group.</td>
<td>You can’t always do what you want to do.</td>
<td>Sometimes you can get along to well and you get barely any work done while you are chatting or drifting off of the subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:00:38</td>
<td>11 Yes</td>
<td>The project will be better because there is more work, effort, and knowledge being put in the project.</td>
<td>It can be very distracting, and you have the temptation to socialize with friends instead of work.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with someone else</td>
<td>You get along better</td>
<td>You can get more say in what you are doing than when you work in a group.</td>
<td>With partners, there is only one person you’re working with, so if you disagree, there’s no majority, it would take a long time to talk it out, and find out who is correct.</td>
<td>It would be best to pair us up with different people to make sure we meet more people and make sure we do not get too well along with the people we always work with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timestamp</td>
<td>Please write your name below.</td>
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<td>Do you enjoy working with a partner?</td>
<td>Why is it better to work with a friend or someone else?</td>
<td>What do you like best about working in partners?</td>
<td>What do you like least about working in groups or in pairs that would be beneficial?</td>
<td>Is there anything else that you can say about working in groups and with partners?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:01:17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>I get to know people better, I don't have to do ALL of the work, and I get to know how other people like to work on and do their projects.</td>
<td>I don't like how some people participate very little or not at all.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Sometimes, I don't know how to answer a problem or how we should put together a project, but if there is more people in a group, them we can think of some ways. If there are only two people, there won't be as much disagreeing.</td>
<td>Sometimes you and your partner don't agree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:01:25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>I get to know people better, I don't have to do ALL of the work, and I get to know how other people like to work on and do their projects.</td>
<td>I don't like how some people participate very little or not at all.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Well, a lot of people say its worst to work with a friend because then you'll talk a lot, but most of my friends are pretty productive too and we both know how to talk and work at the same time without not doing the work. But for me it doesn't matter which gender I work with, I work well with both, because I have friends/don't have friends in both genders.</td>
<td>Well when you're with a partner, depending on who your partner is, you can talk but still work. But I'd way rather work in groups, especially in math, because I'm good at math, but I'm better with a partner to give me a second opinion, and keep me focused.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:01:46</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>When you work in a group, you have more ideas. Also, everyone in the group can help one another.</td>
<td>I do not like how people sometimes fight because they have different thoughts.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>I think it is better to work with a friend because I know that person better. I am a little shy if I work with someone i do not know as well. (Like my first two weeks of math in the advanced class.)</td>
<td>I like to have someone to work with than being alone because we can check our answers with one another. I also like how it is not a big group of 3 to 6 people, it is mostly the same as a group. I do not like how my partner and I sometimes fight because we have different thoughts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:02:16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>I get things done faster, and if I'm stumped on something I can ask my partner/group members to help me out.</td>
<td>Sometimes I'll get distracted depending on who my partner is.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with someone else</td>
<td>I think that if I'm working with a really good friend sometimes we won't be able to work very well like we'll sometimes talk about sports or something, but sometimes I work really well with friends.</td>
<td>I like working with partners because if they're better at something in a certain subject and you're better than them in something else in that subject, you can help each other.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey #1 about Working in Groups and with Partners
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timestamp</th>
<th>Please write your name below.</th>
<th>Do you enjoy working in groups?</th>
<th>What do you like best about working in groups?</th>
<th>What do you like least about working in groups?</th>
<th>Do you enjoy working with a partner?</th>
<th>When working with a partner, do you think you are more productive when working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender?</th>
<th>When working with a partner, do you consider a good friend or someone else?</th>
<th>Why is it better to work with a friend or someone else?</th>
<th>What do you like best about working in partners?</th>
<th>What do you like least about working in partners?</th>
<th>Is there anything else that you can say about working in groups or in pairs that would be beneficial?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:02:46</td>
<td>20 Yes</td>
<td>I like working in groups because all our creative ideas are put in to one big group project. I like for our big role in science. Taylor is awesome at interesting vocabs. I always do what he's supposed to do, and he gives us a laugh when we need one. I'm good at many others too! I think our project will turn out to be a big success.</td>
<td>What I don't like about working in groups is that someone is always bound to get stuck doing all the work while the others get off. I'm not going to naming names, but I have done that before and I don't like it.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with someone else</td>
<td>That you don't have to worry about more than one person doing their share of the work, you just have to worry about yours and one other person when you have to worry about anywhere from three to six people.</td>
<td>Well sometimes they want to do all the work themselves and not letting you work on the project with them. Or it could be the reverse they want you to do all the work and take credit for what you did.</td>
<td>That you don't have to worry about working in groups and with partners is the fact that were doing it together.</td>
<td>I'd say it would be nice to choose our partners because we can get a better idea on who we're working with.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:03:07</td>
<td>2 Yes</td>
<td>It's just having plain old fun. I get to know them and their talents, and, it's just plain fun. I get to hear everyone's opinion, talk and see my friends.</td>
<td>Sometimes, the assignments may be boring.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with someone else</td>
<td>It is NOT good to work with a friend because you always get caught socializing and not doing as much as work as your supposed to. Of course I'd always prefer to work with a friend (that's me) but I tend to chat so it would be hard to focus.</td>
<td>What I like about working with partners is the fact that were doing it together.</td>
<td>Getting stuck doing all the work :-(</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:03:11</td>
<td>3 Yes</td>
<td>It's just having plain old fun. I get to know them and their talents, and, it's just plain fun. I get to hear everyone's opinion, talk and see my friends.</td>
<td>Sometimes, the assignments may be boring.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Because the relationships really pay off. You really get time to have fun with them, and you already know that you are going to work with them for future projects to come.</td>
<td>I get the job done more quickly when I'm with a partner. What I don't know my partner might know.</td>
<td>I really don't know.</td>
<td>You always get the job done more quickly. Plus, if there are difficult spots, you've got a partner to help you overcome those challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/2011 14:04:59</td>
<td>10 Yes</td>
<td>It's just having plain old fun. I get to know them and their talents, and, it's just plain fun. I get to hear everyone's opinion, talk and see my friends.</td>
<td>Sometimes, the assignments may be boring.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with someone else</td>
<td>Because I don't get as distracted, it is easy to talk with them</td>
<td>Sometimes people try to distract me, sometimes I don't understand</td>
<td>What I don't know my partner might know.</td>
<td>You always get the job done more quickly. Plus, if there are difficult spots, you've got a partner to help you overcome those challenges.</td>
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<td>14 No</td>
<td>It's just having plain old fun. I get to know them and their talents, and, it's just plain fun. I get to hear everyone's opinion, talk and see my friends.</td>
<td>Sometimes, the assignments may be boring.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Different Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Working with a friend helps me to cooperate better with the person. When I want to cooperate, I get more done.</td>
<td>There is still more than one person to think of ideas with but the trying to get more than two people to work together factor goes away.</td>
<td>Not always getting to do what I would have originally chosen to do.</td>
<td>More than one person working on a project is usually good for ideas.</td>
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<td>More people for thinking of ideas</td>
<td>If the people aren't right for you, it can be a real disaster.</td>
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<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Same Gender</td>
<td>Better to work with a friend</td>
<td>Working with a friend helps me to cooperate better with the person. When I want to cooperate, I get more done.</td>
<td>There is still more than one person to think of ideas with but the trying to get more than two people to work together factor goes away.</td>
<td>Not always getting to do what I would have originally chosen to do.</td>
<td>More than one person working on a project is usually good for ideas.</td>
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</table>
Do you enjoy working in groups?

Yes 19  83%
No   4   17%

What do you like best about working in groups?

well I can talk to friends and it gives me a chance to work with all of my class mates  Having more than one opinion.  I like that you can work faster.  Seeing everyone's opinions is my favorite part of working in groups.  I like how you can work together to come up with answers.  I like working with other people because you talk and work together and when your alone it's very quiet and you only have your own opinion to work with.  You get other opinions and help.  What I like about working in groups, is that I get to discos my answers with the group.  I like best the way that multiple tasks can be ... 

What do you like least about working in groups?

nothing  Conflicts between people.  I don't like it because you sometimes don't agree  Sometimes i end up doing all the work.  If the person who you are paired with does not do any of the work.  When people don't participate as much as others and don't do a big thing in the project or slide we are working on.  You may have to work with someone that is not very nice.  What I don't like about working in groups is that I get really distracted easily because of all the people talking  The sometimes off-task personalities of group members. Ex. Fooling around, typing non-related things. NOTE: Although my di ...
Do you enjoy working with a partner?

- Yes: 21 (91%)
- No: 2 (9%)

When working with a partner, do you prefer working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender?

- Same Gender: 20 (87%)
- Different Gender: 3 (13%)

When working with a partner, do you think you are more productive when working with someone who is the same gender as you or different gender?

- Same Gender: 14 (61%)
- Different Gender: 9 (39%)

When working with a partner, do you think it is better to work with someone you consider a good friend or someone else?
Why is it better to work with a friend or someone else?
well i prefer working with a friend because we know a lot about each other and that its fun to mess around some times With a friend you are a little bit easier with the person. I like working with a friend because you usually agree on things and you know a lot about them. I think its better to work with a friend because im sortta shy among people i dont know well. And if im shy i will not give them as many ideas. Its better to work with a friend because when you work with a friend the questions come to you much quicker! If you work with a friend they are easier to talk to and you get along b ...

What do you like best about working in partners?
well i like to work with partners because we can think of ideas together instead of being stuck on one thing by myself Having someone else's opinion. I like that you can work fast I love seeing what my partners ideas are. That there are only two answers that can come up and it's easier to pick the right one when there are only two of you! Your with a friend or someone you know and it's easier to work and you can explain your thinking to other people. You do not have to do things alone and you can get more work done. What I like about working in partners is that I can discos my answer ...

What do you like least about working in partners?
nothing When they work ahead. I don't like it when we disagree Sometimes i do all the work. Again if your partner does not do any work! When people don't participate with me, only other pairs. You may either get someone that is not helpful or is mean. Is that I can get distracted easy. Partners do not always pay attention, and there is a chance of misunderstanding me (or fooling around). Ex. If I chose to write about a cat but my partner rants on and on about dogs on his part, we may have a problem. NOTE: As stated earlier, fun is allowed, just not on a mass scale. You can't always do what y ...

Is there anything else that you can say about working in groups or in pairs that would be beneficial?
That everyone is okay with everyone in the group. I like working in groups and pairs and think we should do it more often No You can work on cummunication skills. no Not especially, no. I like to be in groups then by myself. I think you get work done faster, and I think it's good to know how to
work with people you don't like because in life you're not going to always going to work with people you like. It would be best to pair us up with different people to make sure we meet more people and make sure we do not get too well along with the people we always work with. It doesn't matter which...
Appendix G

**Same Gender Partners**

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<th>Girls</th>
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Appendix H

**Same Gender Time on Task**

Appendix I

**Different Gender Partners**

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<td>#3</td>
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Appendix J

Different Gender Time on Task

Appendix K

Student Subgroups
Students to Interview:
A - Boy who believes he’s more productive when working a girl partner
B - Girl who believes she’s more productive when working with a boy partner
C - Boy who believes he’s more productive when working with a boy partner
D - Girl who believes she’s more productive when working with a girl partner

Appendix L

Student Interviews

Student A
In the survey, you said that you believe you are more productive when working with a partner of a different gender (girl). Can you explain why?
Well, with boys, it’s more easy to goof off cause then you can talk about the same stuff. Girls, they kind of keep you on topic more.

Why do you think a girl keeps you on topic more than a boy?
I don’t really know. Just all the girls I work with, they don’t goof off.
What do you think works best about working with a girl?
They definitely show leadership.

What do you think works least about working with a girl?
Sometimes they don’t understand what you’re talking about.

So, boy issues?
Yeah

What do you think works best about working with a boy?
With a boy, it’s easier cause you can talk a little more freely?

A boy knows more of what you’re talking about?
Yeah.

What do you think works least about working with a boy?
You can get off topic real easily cause you can start talking about something else.

Do you think that you are more productive when working with a friend?
Depends on who the friend is. Some friends you can talk and do your work all at the same time. But others, they want to just talk and not really do the work.

If you’re working with a friend, is it usually a girl or is it usually a boy?
It’s usually a boy.

But if it’s a boy that you’re not friends with, then are you more productive?
Not really.

But if it’s a boy you are friends with, are you more productive?
It’s usually the same, maybe a little more productive.

In this class, are there more boys or girls that you feel you work better with?
(Give student a class list and mark yes or know that they feel productive working with each student.)
Pretty much the same

Results of class list:
Student A believes he is more productive working with a girl. His survey/checklist said he is productive working with 8 boys and 10 girls in his homeroom.

Student B
In the survey, you said that you believe you are more productive when working with a partner of a different gender (boy). Can you explain why?
Cause when I’m with the girls, they always get sidetracked by talking to other girls and talking about stuff that I don’t really care about. Like they’ll talk about their nails and stuff instead of doing what they’re supposed to be doing. When it’s with a guy, they just wanna get it done and go on and do whatever else they wanna do instead of talking about their hair and their nails?
What do you think works best about working with a boy?
My mom says I’m tomboy so I sort of act like a boy and all my friends are mostly guys. So, it’s sort of fun working with them.

What do you think works least about working with a boy?
Sometimes they don’t understand what you’re saying or they just don’t want to work and they’ll sit there and complain the whole time.

What do you think works best about working with a girl?
That they’re really productive and get this done and they just don’t sit there and complain about what they’re wearing.

But you said you work better with a boy? But you think girls are more productive?
Well if they want to be.

But generally, you think girls are more productive than boys?
Yeah, definitely.

But for you, you think you are more productive when you work with a boy.
Yeah.

What do you think is the worst thing least about working with a girl?
Cause they act really rude and don’t focus. It depends on what mood they are in and if they just don’t focus and pretend not to care, then once the project is done that I’ve done all this work for, they say they took all the credit, which makes me really mad.

Do you think that you are more productive when working with a friend?
It depends if they’re my really close friends or not. If they’re my really close friends, some of the time, they understand what I’m thinking so were both on the same page and we both know what we’re doing. But other times, I don’t get any work done cause we’re always talking.

Is that friend usually a boy?
Yeah.

Is it ever a girl?
Well, [#15]. Besides [#15], not really.

So [#15] is the only girl you’re productive with?
Yeah.

Otherwise, it’s a boy?
Yeah.

In this class, are there more boys or girls that you feel you work better with?
(Give student a class list and mark yes or know that they feel productive working with each student.)

Results of class list:
Student B believes she is more productive working with a boy. Her survey/checklist said she is productive working with 8 boys and 7 girls in her homeroom.

**Student C-1**
In the survey, you said that you believe you are more productive when working with a partner of the same gender (boy). Can you explain why?
Just because.. I don’t know.

Is there a reason why you’re more productive when working with a boy than a girl?
No. Not really.

Is there a reason you said that?
No, not really.

What do you think works best about working with a boy?
I don’t know. I guess you can just talk.

What do you think works least about working with a boy?
I don’t know.

What do you think works best about working with a girl?
I don’t know.

You can’t think of anything?
No.

Do you think that you are more productive when working with a friend?
Yeah.

Any reason why?
No.

Do you think you’re productive when you don’t work with a friend?
No.

Are you friends that you are productive with, are they usually boys?
Yeah.

In this class, are there more boys or girls that you feel you work better with? (Give student a class list and mark yes or know that they feel productive working with each student.)
Boys.

What do you think productive means?
You get a lot of work done.

[Student C-1], can you explain why you put sometimes for [#1]?
I don’t know. Like sometimes I do, sometimes I don’t.
Does it depend on the activity you’re working on?
Not really.

Can you explain a time that you have been productive with [#1] and a time you haven’t?
He did his work and I did mine. Then another time when we worked, he distracted me, then I distracted him.

So he distracted you first?
Yeah

Results of class list:
Student C-1 believes he is more productive working with a boy. His survey/checklist said he is productive working with 10 boys and 7 girls in his homeroom.

Student C-2
In the survey, you said that you believe you are more productive, meaning you get more work done, when working with a partner of the same gender (boy). Can you explain why?
I don’t know. Well, I would’ve said.. I forget, did it have the..?

It didn’t have the option of both, but if it did..
I can work well with anybody. I like working with people who are equally as smart as I am.

Meaning you don’t like working with somebody who is more or less smart as you?
I don’t mind it, but when I do, I don’t seem to get as much work done.

So you like having someone on the same...
..page as me.

..the same pace as you?
Yeah. It doesn’t really matter. I can work with anyone.

Is there is someone at a higher or lower pace that you don’t enjoy working with?
I don’t know. I’m not sure. I’m just saying of people, not my best friend, obviously, because we would just be talking the whole time, somebody I know that works well and doesn’t talk the whole time, I’d rather work with.

What do you think works best about working with a boy?
I can’t really think of anything.

What do you think works best about working with a girl?
I don’t know.

Do you think that you are more productive when working with a friend?
Well, probably not. It depends on who that friend is, but not as much because we end up talking a lot.
What about a friend that is your best friend?
Well, last year, I worked with him and we did really good because we wanted to get done. It depends, sometimes yes and sometimes no.

What about an ok friend, someone you get along with? You think you’re usually productive?
Yeah.

Is that friend that you’re productive with usually a boy?
He’s a boy, yeah.

In this class, are there more boys or girls that you feel you work better with?
(Give student a class list and mark yes or know that they feel productive working with each student.)
Um. I don’t really know. I could probably work well with anybody. I’ve worked with almost everybody, so I haven’t had a problem with anybody.

The kids that are in my math class in our homeroom, I’ve worked with all of them.

Results of class list:
Student C-2 believes he is more productive working with a boy. His survey/checklist said he is productive working with 9 boys and 7 girls in his homeroom.

Student D
In the survey, you said that you believe you are more productive when working with a partner of the same gender (girl). Can you explain why?
Well, a lot of the time when I try to work with a boy, it doesn’t work out so well. The times I’ve tried to do that, we’ve had a hard time working together. We’ve had separate ideas and it hasn’t worked out as well.

So you think you’re ideas conflict and that’s why you’re not productive?
Mmhmm.

But you think your ideas match up a little bit better when you’re with a girl?
Yes, more of the time.

What do you think works best about working with a girl? So what’s the best thing about working with a girl as a partner? You can’t think of anything in particular?
No.

Is there anything you don’t like about working with a girl?
It depends on the person.

What do you think works best about working with a boy?
It depends on the person.

Do you think that you are more productive when working with a friend?
It’s easier to compromise with ideas when I’m with a friend because..
...they understand you and know where you're coming from?
Yeah, mhm. But then sometimes when I work with a friend, I tend to get a little carried away.

Meaning you get off task?
Yeah.

So is it better to work with someone that's not a friend?
Um, sometimes it is. It depends on the project and the person.

Is that friend usually a girl?
Usually.

But there are some boys that you would consider a friend and can be productive in working with?
Yes, they're not necessarily in my same grade, but yes.

In this class, are there more boys or girls that you feel you work better with?
(Give student a class list and mark yes or know that they feel productive working with each student.)
Probably girls.

Results of class list:
Student D believes she is more productive working with a girl. Her survey/checklist said she is productive working with 4 boys and 8 girls in her homeroom.
Appendix M

Student Checklists

Class Lists - Boys/Girls - Inquiry

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<th>Student A</th>
<th>Student B</th>
<th>Student C-1</th>
<th>Student C-2</th>
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Total Y | 10        | 15        | 17        | 10        | 12        |
Total N | 5         | 7         | 0         | 1         | 5         |
Total Boy, Yes | 8        | 9         | 10        | 6         | 4         |
Total Girl, Yes | 12        | 7         | 7         | 6         | 6         |

Appendix N

Survey #2 & Results

Survey #2

April 8, 2011
Your username (emh25@scasd.org) will be recorded when you submit this form. Not emh25? Sign out
* Required

Please write your first name. *

Identify the students in your class that you have never worked with. *

- HTMLDirect 1
- HTMLDirect 2
- HTMLDirect 3
- HTMLDirect 4
If there is a reason why you have not worked with this person, please explain.

Do you like sitting with new students every month? * Do you get tired of the same group members and like to switch often or do you like working with certain students? Please explain.
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<th>Timestamp</th>
<th>Please write your first name.</th>
<th>Identify the students in your class that you have never worked with.</th>
<th>If there is a reason why you have not worked with this person, please explain.</th>
<th>Do you like sitting with new students every month?</th>
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<td>I prefer to change the groups and work with different people because after awhile they can get on you nerves and then it changes the way you look at the person and reconsider them which I don't like.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>3, 4, 10, 14, 24</td>
<td>Maybe it's because we've never gotten our sticks pulled to be partners, or maybe I just haven't been at their table.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:03:15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5, 6, 11, 12, 15, 20, 24</td>
<td>I like to sit with new students every month because I like to get to know each other better.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:03:30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4, 8, 14, 18</td>
<td>Yes, I do like switching seats every month because you can learn what their ideas are.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:04:08</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13, 14, 20</td>
<td>I like to switch seats then I can see every ones different personality. I like to not be with the same people because you know them and they could get on my nerves. For the past few projects in social studies i have been with the same couple people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:04:10</td>
<td>10, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25</td>
<td>The teacher has never put us both into a group before.</td>
<td>Kinda, but I like it when I sit with my friends, and I don't like it when I don't but I get VERY mad when I end up with people who are either VERY distracting or I don't get along with.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timestamp</td>
<td>Please write your first name.</td>
<td>Identify the students in your class that you have never worked with.</td>
<td>If there is a reason why you have not worked with this person, please explain.</td>
<td>Do you like sitting with new students every month?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:04:37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3, 6, 9, 12, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24</td>
<td>I have not worked with this person because I have never sit with some of them and I never got partnered or got in a group with them.</td>
<td>Unless I do not work well with them or they annoy me then I am fine with sitting with that person again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:05:57</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>I do they are easy to work and if they are kind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:06:49</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I love sitting with new students every month. It is not that I get tired of my old group members it is just that I liked to switch things up a bit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:07:17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4/14/2025</td>
<td></td>
<td>I find that sitting with new students can:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A.) Be a disaster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B.) Be wonderful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If the people I sit with are destructive and energetic, then yes, group work can be quite harrowing, but if my group members are calm, then I would prefer that.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I find that 22, 8, 21, etc. are fun to sit with and still know limits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:09:23</td>
<td>3, 4, 8, 10, 14, 15, 11, 18, 20, 22, 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>I like to switch often. I like to switch because I don't like it when you have to work with the same people again and again and again... I also like it when I work with friends though. When I work with my friends, school doesn't seem boring.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:10:20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Most likely because we are such good friend that were put in a group together.</td>
<td>Ya, I like sitting with the people I sit with but I've sat next to 5 three times in a row and 7 twice in a row. In some ways I like sitting next to some people again but others no and yes i do like sitting next to different people every month.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 12:10:52</td>
<td>6, 7, 8, 15, 19, 22, 24</td>
<td>There is not a really a reason why I have worked with these people.</td>
<td>Yes. I like sitting with different people every month. Sitting with them for the whole month helps me get to know them better. And if I sit with the same people over and over again, it gets really boring.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timestamp</td>
<td>Please write your first name.</td>
<td>Identify the students in your class that you have never worked with.</td>
<td>If there is a reason why you have not worked with this person, please explain.</td>
<td>Do you like sitting with new students every month?</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/2011 13:59:49</td>
<td>9, 8, 11, 14, 20</td>
<td>No reasons.</td>
<td>I do like to switch groups of students because even if I really like the kids I'm working with, it gets a little boring working with the same people all the time. :)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identify the students in your class that you have never worked with. No responses yet for this question.

If there is a reason why you have not worked with this person, please explain.

- no. I have never been in their group or been partnered with them.
- Maybe it's because we've never gotten our sticks pulled to be partners, or maybe I just haven't been at their table. The teacher has never put us both into a group before.
- I have not worked with this person because I have never sit with some of them and I never got partnered or got in a group with them. Most likely because we are such good friend that were put in a group together. There is not a really a reason why I have worked with these people. No reasons.

Do you like sitting with new students every month?

- I kinda do. Some times but it is nice to have one person you know so you do not feel left out.
- I like sitting with old friends or new friends this year. I don't like meeting new people very well. Yes I do. I like sitting with new people each month because i get bored of working with the same people all the time. Yes. Usually after months, I get tired of my seatmates and want to move somewhere else. I prefer to change the groups and work with different people because after awhile they can get on you nerves and then it changes the way you look at the person and reconsider them which I don't like.
### Appendix O

**Percentage of Time on Task – Before, During, After**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class List</th>
<th>Percentage Time on Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ab</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Increase in TOT % from before to after*