
3.4: Collaborative Group Projects

Student Objective

Students will learn to structure discussion and document their goals, expectations, skills, and action plan for completion of large collaborative projects or assignments.

Overview

Collaborative Group Projects provides a template for collaborative groups to follow as they plan, analyze the task, discuss group expectations, and share skills and interests. The template will ultimately provide the groups with information needed to assign appropriate chunks of work, set a timeline for execution, define success, and map out future meeting dates.

Materials/Set-Up

- Handouts:
 - 3.4a: Collaborative Group Project Contract
 - 3.4b: Collaborative Group Project Contract – Think-Aloud
- In advance of the activity, complete the following:
 - Determine how many students will be in each group. The size of the groups will depend on the project. It is important to remember that collaborative effort requires diversity in team members, and heterogeneous groups are a way to accomplish this.

Instructional Steps

1. After reviewing directions for the collaborative group project, distribute one copy of the Collaborative Group Project Contract and Collaborative Group Project Contract – Think-Aloud to each group.
 - The Collaborative Group Project Contract is a document that holds the group and group members accountable, as it provides the final agreed upon information.
2. The Collaborative Group Project Contract – Think-Aloud affords the group the opportunity to calibrate their understanding of the task at hand and their role in the project, so all group members have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. This document is a workspace for group members, as they consider how they will complete the task before they sign the contract. Provide time for each group to discuss and make decisions about each item on the Collaborative Group Project Contract – Think-Aloud.
3. Each group will need to capture their final decisions on the Collaborative Group Project Contract.
4. Have each group member sign the Collaborative Group Project Contract before submitting it.

→ Extension

- To integrate technology:
 - Have students use a collaboration site, such as Google Docs, Edmodo, or TitanPad, to create their Collaborative Group Project Contract.
 - Use technology, such as Google Keep, Google Calendar, Wunderlist, Orchestra, Evernote, or 30 Boxes, to create group task lists and calendars.
 - Require students to contact each other periodically (via instant messaging, text messaging, etc.) and keep a communication log as evidence.

Collaborative Group Project Contract

Directions: Complete this contract before you begin working on your project.

Today's Date: _____ **Project Due Date:** _____

Goals: Read aloud the directions for the project. Circle all key terms and underline the main ideas. Next, discuss your goals for the project. What will your finished product look like? What is your target grade as a group? Describe in detail what success will look like at the end of the project.

Group Expectations: Discuss the group expectations for collaboration and write down your rules. Questions for discussion: What do we expect of each other during this project? What rules and procedures should be in place to help us accomplish our goal?

Skills, Interests, and Roles: Take time to discuss and list the skills (e.g., computer-related, research, writing, speaking, etc.) and interests of each team member. If your group will be using roles (e.g., facilitator, scribe, communications expert, materials organization specialist), record each team member's role, as well.

Team Member Name	Skills and Interests	Role

Action Plan: Review the rubric for the assignment, refer back to the skills and interests of all teammates, and use your planner/agenda as you complete this section. Now that you know what the end product will look like, break up the project into chunks. Decide which group members are responsible for each chunk and when these will be due. Be sure to include how you will review the work of each group member.

Actions	Team Member(s) Responsible	Due



Collaborative Group Project Contract

We share this common vision and have collaborated to set clear expectations and a plan for our group's success. We all agree to the rules, procedures, and action steps set forth in this document.

Name	Signature	Contact Information

Collaborative Group Project Contract – Think-Aloud

Directions: Complete this contract before you begin working on your project.

Today's Date: _____ **Project Due Date:** _____

<p>Goals: Read aloud the directions for the project. Circle all key terms and underline the main ideas. Next, discuss your goals for the project. What will your finished product look like? What is your target grade as a group? Describe in detail what success will look like at the end of the project.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the target audience for the project (e.g., students, teacher, principal, adults in the community, etc.)? • Describe the product that you will create. What will it look like? Are you creating a PowerPoint or a different multimedia presentation? Will you present this aloud? • What grade will you earn? Are all team members in agreement? If your goal is to earn an "A," do all team members have a clear idea of how you will earn that grade? 		
<p>Group Expectations: Discuss the group expectations for collaboration and write down your rules. Questions for discussion: What do we expect of each other during this project? What rules and procedures should be in place to help us accomplish our goal?</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm and list rules for collaboration. • How will you resolve any conflicts that arise? • How will you communicate with each other outside of class (e.g., text, email, Edmodo, etc.)? 		
<p>Skills, Interests, and Roles: Take time to discuss and list the skills (e.g., computer-related, research, writing, speaking, etc.) and interests of each team member. If your group will be using roles (e.g., facilitator, scribe, communications expert, materials organization specialist), record each team member's role, as well.</p>		
Team Member Name	Skills and Interests	Role
	What am I good at (e.g., writing, locating information online, keeping others focused and on-task, motivating others, creating multimedia presentations, public speaking, etc.)?	Which role is best for me, given my interests and skills?
<p>Action Plan: Review the rubric for the assignment, refer back to the skills and interests of all teammates, and use your planner/agenda as you complete this section. Now that you know what the end product will look like, break up the project into chunks. Decide which group members are responsible for each chunk and when these will be due. Be sure to include how you will review the work of each group member.</p>		
Actions	Team Member(s) Responsible	Due
What should we do first as a group?	All team members	Today?
How can we break the work into pieces?	Who will lead each chunk?	When must my part be completed so my team can review and put the pieces together?
How should we handle group review?	Entire group? Specific team members?	
How do we go about synthesizing (i.e., combining) all parts?	Team?	



Collaborative Group Project Contract – Think-Aloud

We share this common vision and have collaborated to set clear expectations and a plan for our group’s success. We all agree to the rules, procedures, and action steps set forth in this document.

Name	Signature	Contact Information