

3.1: Creating a Collaboration Social Contract

Student Objective

Students will deepen their ability to utilize collaborative skills as they hold themselves and their peers accountable.

Overview

This activity will allow students to develop a set of collaboration norms regarding class interactions. By creating a collaboration social contract, students are more apt to take responsibility and hold their peers accountable, without making redirection of behavior or words personal.

Materials/Set-Up

- Chart paper
- Markers

Instructional Steps

1. At the outset of the school year, create groups of three or four students. Give groups time to brainstorm what their understanding/definition of collaborative work is and have them discuss expectations for collaborative work.
2. After the allotted time elapses, have each group share their brainstorming ideas with the class as one student captures each group's thoughts on chart paper for all to see.
3. Once each group has shared, determine if there are any patterns to what students are saying and compile these understandings/definitions and expectations on another piece of chart paper so students can see how all of the ideas are being honored and pared down based on commonalities.
4. Once the students' shared information has been compiled and codified, formulate it into a collaboration social contract.
 - This contract can be separate from the general social contract of the class or attached to it as an addendum.
5. The collaboration social contract should be posted in the classroom and referenced often throughout the year, drawing students' attention to the verbiage of the collaboration social contract in order to coach them.

→ Extension

- To increase rigor, after recording all standards and expectations, challenge the groups to turn the list of norms into an acronym or acrostic by reframing or restating the norms as necessary. Have groups present these to the larger group, and then vote for the best one as a class.
- To integrate technology, use a collaborative document-creation tool, such as Google Docs, to compile group suggestions into a collaboration social contract. Students can use the comments feature to fine-tune the proposed suggestions.

