
3.3: Group Roles

Student Objective

Students will compare the various roles associated with collaboration.

Overview

The following activity affords students the opportunity to learn about each of the four roles associated with collaboration. Students will be assigned these roles throughout the year as they engage with various tasks.

Materials/Set-Up

- Handout:
 - 3.3a: Defining Group Roles
- Teacher Resource:
 - 3.3b: Table Tents for Collaborative Group Roles
- In advance of the activity, complete the following:
 - Print copies of the Table Tents for Collaborative Group Roles for each group on durable paper, such as cardstock.
 - Cut out each of the Table Tents for Collaborative Group Roles.
 - Ensure that each group is provided with a copy of each of the four roles.

Instructional Steps

1. Assign each student a role: facilitator, scribe, communications expert, or materials organization specialist (MOS).
2. Once each student has been assigned a role, ask them to take the corresponding table tent and stand it up in front of them.
3. In groups, provide time for students to discuss their current understanding of their assigned role.
4. Once students have shared, layer their understanding by providing them with additional information via Defining Group Roles.

→ Extension

- To integrate technology, have students use a digital calendar or spreadsheet to document the project tasks for each member, based on their assigned roles.

Defining Group Roles

Facilitator

Facilitators work to maintain focus and momentum throughout the task. They ensure that all voices are heard and considered, and encourage group members to keep the end product in mind. Facilitators serve as timekeepers and keep track of group progress toward stated goals. For students familiar with AVID tutorials, this role is similar to that of the tutor. This role is not “group leader.” Leadership is not a role that can be “assigned.”

Scribe

The scribe’s job is to take notes during group discussions, brainstorming, and planning meetings. Keeping a written log of communications, ideas, and research is critical to the collaborative effort. Students may need to refer back to prior meeting minutes to focus group efforts on achieving the final goal. The scribe also shares responsibility for overseeing any final written product.

Communications Expert

The communications expert represents the voice of each group. This student will lead efforts related to presenting information back to the class or larger community. This role is also tasked with communicating questions or concerns to the teacher. This person does not necessarily take on all of the presentation, just the leadership. In many group assignments, it would not make sense for a single person to present all of the findings—especially when the intent is that all students practice public speaking strategies.

Materials Organization Specialist (MOS)

The MOS role is essential to each group. This is not a glorified collector and returner of glue sticks, construction paper, and markers—although this is one of the tasks that the MOS oversees. The MOS is responsible for all group materials. Most importantly, this student is in charge of the effective utilization of non-human resources. The MOS ensures that all students are utilizing their notes to effectively contribute to the group discussion and encourages students to locate and share relevant resources. In addition, the MOS manages technology and coordinates group research.



Table Tents for Collaborative Group Roles

Directions: Print copies of the table tents for each group on durable paper (e.g., cardstock). Cut out the table tents and have each student stand up the table tent that describes his or her role. Students may refer to the table tents throughout the collaborative assignment.

<p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain group focus • Ensure that all ideas are heard • Keeps goals in mind • Track progress and monitor time <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Janie, we haven't heard from you yet. What do you think?" • "How are you progressing with your assigned task? When do you think it will be ready?" • "That's really funny, but let's stay focused on our goals." 	<p>Facilitator</p> <p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain group focus • Ensure that all ideas are heard • Keeps goals in mind • Track progress and monitor time <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Janie, we haven't heard from you yet. What do you think?" • "How are you progressing with your assigned task? When do you think it will be ready?" • "That's really funny, but let's stay focused on our goals."
<p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take all notes during group meetings • Keep a written log of communication • Take leadership for any written products <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "That was an awesome idea! Can you repeat what you said, so I can record it exactly as you said it?" • "Let's look at our meeting notes from yesterday before we get started." 	<p>Scribe</p> <p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take all notes during group meetings • Keep a written log of communication • Take leadership for any written products <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "That was an awesome idea! Can you repeat what you said, so I can record it exactly as you said it?" • "Let's look at our meeting notes from yesterday before we get started."

For a source upon which this was adapted, see the "Cooperative Group Role Cards" lesson, provided by ReadWriteThink.org, a website developed by the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Table Tents for Collaborative Group Roles

<p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead oral presentations • Represent the group during class discussions • Serve as a group representative when questions for the teacher arise <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How should we say this?” • “I don’t understand this section of the rubric. Can anyone explain it, or should I ask the teacher to clarify?” 	<p>Communications Expert</p> <p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead oral presentations • Represent the group during class discussions • Serve as a group representative when questions for the teacher arise <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How should we say this?” • “I don’t understand this section of the rubric. Can anyone explain it, or should I ask the teacher to clarify?”
<p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the group utilizes all necessary resources (e.g., notes, texts, Internet) to complete the task successfully • Compile the different contributions from each group member into one product (e.g., PowerPoint, poster board, website, brochure) • Gather and return necessary class supplies <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Where do you think your article fits best on our team website?” • “Let’s take out all of our notes on the topic and review before we start today.” 	<p>Materials Organization Specialist (MOS)</p> <p>Jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the group utilizes all necessary resources (e.g., notes, texts, Internet) to complete the task successfully • Compile the different contributions from each group member into one product (e.g., PowerPoint, poster board, website, brochure) • Gather and return necessary class supplies <p>What It Might Sound Like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Where do you think your article fits best on our team website?” • “Let’s take out all of our notes on the topic and review before we start today.”

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