GCS

Professional Development Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2 December, 2008

Guilford County Schools
STRIVING. ACHIEVING. EXCELLING.

GCS-PROFDEV: Proactive Practices for Today´s Classroom - 071122

This course will provide educators with specific information and techniques to assist in the creation of a more cohesive and manageable classroom. Explicit management strategies will focus upon building teacher skill sets in resolving classroom conflict, building relationships, and increasing student engagement.

http://www.solutionwhere.com/guilford/cw/showcourse.asp?1941

GCS-PROFDEV: Unique Strategies to Instruct & Motivate Elementary Boys - 070102

Based on brain function research, boys learn differently than girls and certain instructional strategies are more conducive to learning in males.

As a result of this course, participants will gain a practical understanding of the special issues of teaching boys and take home strategies for creating boy friendly classrooms.

http://www.solutionwhere.com/guilford/cw/showcourse.asp?1493

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.

Cooperative efforts result in participants striving for mutual benefit so that all group members:

- gain from each other's efforts. (Your success benefits me and my success benefits you.)
- recognize that all group members share a common fate. (We all sink or swim together here.)
- know that one's performance is mutually caused by oneself and one's team members. (We can not do it without you.)
- feel proud and jointly celebrate when a group member is recognized for achievement. (We all congratulate you on your accomplishment!).

Why use Cooperative Learning?

Elements of Cooperative Learning

Class Activities that use Cooperative Learning

Why use Cooperative Learning?

Research has shown that cooperative learning techniques:

- promote student learning and academic achievement
- increase student retention

- enhance student satisfaction with their learning experience
- help students develop skills in oral communication
- develop students' social skills
- promote student self-esteem
- help to promote positive race relations

5 Elements of Cooperative Learning

It is only under certain conditions that cooperative efforts may be expected to be more productive than competitive and individualistic efforts. Those conditions are:

1. Positive Interdependence
(sink or swim together)

- Each group member's efforts are required and indispensable for group success
- Each group member has a unique contribution to make to the joint effort because of his or her resources and/or role and task responsibilities

2. Face-to-Face Interaction
(promote each other's success)

- Orally explaining how to solve problems
- Teaching one's knowledge to other
- Checking for understanding
- Discussing concepts being learned
- Connecting present with past learning

3. Individual & Group Accountability
(no hitchhiking! no social loafing)

- Keeping the size of the group small. The smaller the size of the group, the greater the individual accountability may be.
- Giving an individual test to each student.
- Randomly examining students orally by calling on one student to present his or her group's work to the teacher (in the presence of the group) or to the entire class.
- Observing each group and recording the frequency with which each member-contributes to the group's work.
- Assigning one student in each group the role of checker. The checker asks other group members to explain the reasoning and rationale underlying group answers.
- Having students teach what they learned to someone else.

4. Interpersonal & Small-Group Skills

- Social skills must be taught:
  - Leadership
  - Decision-making
  - Trust-building
  - Communication
  - Conflict-management skills

5. Group Processing

- Group members discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships
- Describe what member actions are helpful and not helpful
- Make decisions about what behaviors to continue or change

GCS-PROFDEV: Foundations of Cooperative Learning

Participants will investigate diverse strategies of team building methods and activities to allow their students to be successful.

http://www.solutionwhere.com/guilford/cw/-showcourse.asp?1633

Other Resources

- Alternatives to Ability Grouping: Still Unanswered Questions- ERIC Document
- Children's Peer Relationships- ERIC Document
- Cooperative Education: Characteristics and Effectiveness- ERIC Document
- Cooperative Learning in Social Studies Education: What Does the Research Say?- ERIC Document
- Collaborative Learning in Community Colleges- ERIC Document
- Cooperative Learning: Increasing College Faculty Instructional Productivity- ERIC Document
- Cooperative Learning Strategies and Children- ERIC Document
- Cooperative Problem-Solving in the Classroom- ERIC Document
- Cross-Age and Peer Tutoring- ERIC Document
- Enhancing Student Thinking through Collaborative Learning- ERIC Document
- Learning To Learn: Preparing Teachers and Students for Problem-Based Learning- ERIC

Class Activities that use Cooperative Learning

Most of these structures are developed by Dr. Spencer Kagan and his associates at Kagan Publishing and Professional Development. For resources and professional development information on Kagan Structures, please visit: www.KaganOnline.com

1. Jigsaw - Groups with five students are set up. Each group member is assigned some unique material to learn and then to teach to his group members. To help in the learning students across the class working on the same sub-section get together to decide what is important and how to teach it. After practice in these "expert" groups the original groups reform and students teach each other. (Wood, p. 17) Tests or assessment follows.

2. Think-Pair-Share - Involves a three step cooperative structure. During the first step individuals think silently about a question posed by the instructor. Individuals pair up during the second step and exchange thoughts. In the third step, the pairs share their responses with other pairs, other teams, or the entire group.

3. Three-Step Interview (Kagan) - Each member of a team chooses another member to be a partner. During the first step individuals interview their partners by asking clarifying questions. During the second step partners reverse the roles. For the final step, members share their partner's response with the team.

4. RoundRobin Brainstorming (Kagan)- Class is divided into small groups (4 to 6) with one person appointed as the recorder. A question is posed with many answers and students are given time to think about answers. After the "think time," members of the team share responses with one another round robin style. The recorder writes down the answers of the group members. The person next to the recorder starts and each person in the group in order gives an answer until time is called.

Holocaust Teacher Workshops, 2008-2009

Focus: These one-day, multi-county workshops for public school teachers of social studies and English/Language Arts present Dr. Karl Schleunes, historian and Holocaust scholar, and Gizella Abramson, a Holocaust survivor of the Majdanek death camp who recounts her experiences in a concentration camp or Zohara Boyd, a survivor who "hid in plain sight" during the Holocaust . Participants receive a copy of *The Holocaust: a North Carolina Teacher's Resource*, a guide for teaching about the Holocaust at the middle and high school levels. This workshop is open to language arts and social studies teachers from all parts of the state teaching in middle schools or high schools and is particularly useful for teachers of World History or American History as well as teachers at the sixth-grade level teaching Eastern European history. It is also recommended for middle school language arts teachers teaching *Anne Frank's Diary* or high school English teachers studying Elie Wiesel's *Night* and other Holocaust literature at the upper grades. Substitute pay is provided for teachers attending, but space is limited and teachers are encouraged to make early contact with Linda Scher, Holocaust Teacher Workshop Coordinator. These workshops are free and open to teachers from all parts of the state in the 2008-2009 school year. Substitute pay will be provided for all public school teachers attending the workshops.

Newton, Catawba County	February 4
Durham, Durham County	February 18
Fayetteville, Cumberland County	February 23
Monroe, Union County	February 27
Greensboro, Guilford County	March 4
WRESA Enka, Buncombe County	March 25

For additional information and registration, e-mail Linda Scher at Brisket234@aol.com

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MORE READING COURSE OPPORTUNITIES

If your renewal cycle ends this year, June 30, 2009, and you have already completed Reading in the Content Areas, three ten-hour reading courses (one (1) CEU each) have been designed to assist you in meeting this requirement. Each of these courses is built on the RCA principles from the original course. For this reason RCA is a prerequisite for each of the new offerings.

In order to meet the individual needs of many of you, these sessions are being offered at varying times throughout the next few months. You can take just one, two, or all three of these, earning at least one and no more than three CEUs. The information offered in each of these courses makes them appropriate for all teachers.

These courses will be offered again beginning in February of 2009: (clicking on the link will take you immediately to the registration site):

READING COMPREHENSION WITH INTERACTIVE STRATEGIES

GCS-PROFDEV: Reading Comprehension with - Interactive Strategies

DOES VOCABULARY AFFECT ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT?

GCS-PROFDEV: Does Vocabulary Affect Academic - Development?

READING STRATEGIES FOR DEEPENING COMPREHENSION OF TEXT

GCS-PROFDEV: Reading Strategies for- Deepening Comprehension of Text