

Key questions we will explore

1. What is cooperative learning and where does it come from?
2. What activity types and strategies are used in cooperative learning?
3. What is differentiation (differentiated instruction) and where does it come from?
4. What different types of differentiation are there?
5. How can cooperative learning help with differentiation?

“It is not the similarity or dissimilarity of individuals that constitutes a group, but interdependence of fate.”
(Lewin, 1939).

“Differentiated instruction is a way of living in the classroom.”
(Betts, 1946)

“If you want to increase student academic achievement, give each student a friend.”
(Roseth, Fang, Johnson and Johnson, 2006)



Typical taxonomy of differentiation

(E.g. Anderson 2007 [not me]) Differentiate by:

1. **Content:** E.g. text type / exercise choice.
2. **Process:** E.g. work alone or in group / translator's optional.
3. **Product:** E.g. choice of assignments.
4. **Environment:** E.g. where student sits; use of headphones.

Also:

Tuition support: E.g. how to scaffold learning for individuals / how much support.

Differentiation through cooperative learning

Within group:

1. **Text / task choice:** E.g. In a jigsaw activity. Stronger ss. get more difficult text.
2. **Task completion:** E.g. Length of writing text. OR How many questions they answer: Q1-6 for everyone/ 7-10 for stronger ss.
3. **Role in group:** E.g. chairperson? secretary? timekeeper?
4. **Role in presentations:** E.g. preparation of slides? compere? who presents what?

Between groups:

1. **Speed of progress:** Faster groups get extension task.
2. **Feedback:** Which groups share findings (first). Group posters (extent).

Use of ability groupings to support differentiation

- **Home/base groups** are mixed-ability: Success is measured in home group performance:
 - Students know each other well (rapport, relaxation, awareness).
 - Peer-tutoring is often from stronger to weaker (but useful for both).
- **Expert groups** are (usually) same-ability: Students with higher levels of English sit together:
 - Their discussion can be more 'advanced'.
 - Teacher can select text / task is for each group.
 - Teacher can provide different group support / tutoring.
 - Teacher has back up task(s).



Personality groups?

Let students choose:

1. **Chatty:** let's talk about it all the way through.
2. **Pairs first:** I want to talk to a partner, then work in a group.
3. **Pensive:** I need time to think – I want to do it alone, make notes and then discuss.
4. **Research:** I want to be able to find out more, use a dictionary.



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