

These Lesson Plans are a culmination of school-wide activities and classroom activities, ranging from grades K-12.

Lesson Plan

Cooperative Learning Projects

Submitted by Sue; Ithaca, MI

Grade Level: Early elementary

Time Frame: 6 Projects for various months of the academic year.

Subject: Varies, but many project involve books and crafts.

When doing cooperative learning...

- The children may only use the supplies given to them in the basket.
- The children must cooperate with each other with no help from adults.
- Typically 4-6 children in a group.
- The children must sign the cooperation form to say if they did or did not cooperate.
- The children must begin each project with a "hands together cheer" (go team, let's go, let's cooperate, etc) and conclude their project with a "thank you cheer" (way to go, thank you, etc.)
- At the conclusion of the project, each group gets their picture taken holding their product.
- Once in a while, I videotape the groups working to capture their "nice talk" and cooperation!

September Project:

1. Read Swimmy, by Leo Lionni.
2. Discuss the cooperation needed for the fish to solve a problem.
3. Brainstorm what cooperation is (write on chart paper and post in the room for the year).
4. Children work in groups to make their own "swimmy"...
 - provide each group with large fish shape out of white paper, 1 fishshape sponge, plate with red paint, fishshape out of black paper, glue stick.
 - Children cooperate to stamp the red fish swimming in one direction to cover the paper. Then put the black fish-eye on.

October Project:

1. Read Cuckoo, by Lois Ehlert.
2. Discuss how you can't tell what someone is like by just looking at the outside. What counts is the kind things they do and their character!
3. Children work together to make a Cuckoo Bird...
 - Using Lois Ehlert's bird as a model, trace the basic shapes on tagboard for the Children to cut out.
 - provide each group with scissors, paper fasteners, pattern block stickers, bird parts on tagboard, hole puncher.
 - The children cut out bird parts, punch holes (mark it for them with a dot), assemble the bird using paper fasteners, use the pattern block stickers to decorate it (making it symmetrical!!)

November Project:

1. Read Turkey's Gift To The People, by Ani Rucki.
2. Discuss how the animals cooperated to solve the problem and helped save each other.
3. Children work together to make a turkey...
 - Provide each group with big feather shapes traced on different colored paper in graduated sizes, wiggly eyes, body shape (circle) traced on brown paper, head and neck shape traced on brown paper, 2 long strips of brown paper for legs, scissors, glue, real feathers, orange piece of paper for them to design a beak and feet, rectangle piece of red paper for them to design a waddle.
 - Children cut out all shapes, accordion fold the leg strips, assemble the turkey putting large feather shape in back and graduated sizes getting smaller on top, then body and neck and head. Add eyes, waddle, beak and feathers.

December Project:

1. Read The Monster In The Cave, by Nicholas Heller.
2. Discuss the concept of GIVING without expecting something in return. Also, giving something you CAN'T BUY - a visit to a lonely person, a hug, a smile, a job like shoveling snow without accepting payment, etc.
3. Discuss how it would feel if you were alone in the hospital at Christmas time. "Let's do something to cheer up the patients and staff at the hospital! We will give them our "special" cooperation project this month!"
4. Children work together to make quilted wall hangings (each year we do something different to add to the hospital's collection of decorations). We have made Santas, Snowmen, Angels, Gingerbread boys.

- Trace the pieces needed for the character on material (it is good if you can use different types of fabric so some are more difficult to cut than others).
- Provide the children with traced shapes, scissors, tacky glue, piece of batting large enough to fit the assemble character, and embellishing needed.
- The children cut out pieces and secure them on the batting with glue.
- Finish by embellishing with final details.

** I usually find a parent that enjoys sewing, to sew around the edges of each character.

** BEST PART!! Go to the hospital to present them to staff and patients!!

NO JANUARY PROJECT

February Project:

1. To change things up, put the kids in NEW cooperation teams.
2. Read One Zillion Valentines, by Frank Modell.
3. Discuss the spirit of GIVING and SHARING not only on Valentine's Day, but all year long!
4. Children work together to make special secret valentines to deliver to staff in the school (art teacher, gym teacher, secretary, principal, custodians, etc.) The best part is SECRETLY delivering these special valentines! The cooperation partners knock on the door and quickly leave the valentine on the door handle and return to our classroom!
 - Provide the children (working in partners) with a large heart shape, label with name of person we want to deliver to, a label that reads "Happy Valentine's Day! From Your Friends!", glue stick, embellishing (glitter, heart stickers, heart shapes of different colors, doilies, valentine stampers, etc.)
 - The children cooperate to decorate their valentine and SECRETLY deliver it when they finish! Remind the children not to RUN away from the door, just walk quickly.

March Project:

1. March is Reading month and VERY busy!!!
2. We cooperate as a class to publish a hardcover book the children may purchase as a keepsake of their Kindergarten year.
3. We have done this for 3 years now ... Publishing books based on the songs, 'What A Wonderful World', "I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing", "The Peace Song", this year ... "Tomorrow" from the musical "Annie".

* More information is available at Studenttreasures 1-800-867-2292