Building self-esteem in the adolescent student through cooperative learning

Leo Benjamin Guild

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BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM
IN THE ADOLESCENT STUDENT
THROUGH COOPERATIVE LEARNING

by

Leo Benjamin Guild

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Introduction

Today's adolescents are coming to school with more complex psychological problems than ever before. Gibbs writes, "As many as 7.5 million children - 12% of those below the age of 18 - suffer from some sort of psychological illness" (p. 53, 1990). Poverty, violence, and drugs have taken their toll on our present generation of adolescents' physical and psychological health. Many of these children do not have the ability to assert themselves in the face of social and peer pressure. They are unable to develop the independent survival skills necessary to achieve mature adulthood.

At one time, children were able to find a psychological anchor in societal institutions. The churches, schools, and neighborhoods that provided emotional stability in the past by transmitting shared traditions and values have weakened along with the breakdown of the family unit. One primary manifestation of this disorder phenomenon is that many of these children come to school with very low self-esteem.
Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to provide supportive research which indicates the need for educators to develop appropriate teaching strategies which will enhance self-esteem in the adolescent. In addition, this paper demonstrated a means to achieve the desired results through a cooperative learning model.

Scope and Limitations

This research examined the self-esteem of adolescents who attend large urban middle schools. Other considerations were the role of academic achievement and cooperative learning. The parameters of this paper were dictated by current research available. The researcher attempted to keep the research within the last decade. However, some earlier research was added to gain a historical perspective.

Definitions

Academic achievement: the progress a student makes in the school on academic material.

Adolescence: the time of development from puberty to maturity. This is a time when the individual confronts many challenges due to biological, physiological and emotional changes.

Casual relationship: a relationship between two things which show cause and effect.
Collaborative problem solving: one cooperative learning technique in which the students are given the choice of the material they want to investigate. The students are responsible for every step of the problem solving.

Collaborative task completion: a cooperative learning technique by which students work on a task in a cooperative manner until the task is complete.

Computer assisted instruction (CAI): use of computers to present a program, or otherwise facilitate or evaluate learning.

Cooperative learning: a set of instructional methods by which students are placed in small heterogeneous groups working together on a shared task or project. Each member is responsible for his own learning as well as that of other members of the group.

Correlation: a descriptive statistic that expresses the degree of relationship between two sets of scores.

Delinquent behavior: a legal concept generally applied to persons under 16 or 18 years of age who exhibit behavior that is punishable by law.

Expert groups: a cooperative learning technique by which each student becomes an expert on a topic and is responsible to teach that topic to the other members of the group.

Extrinsic: a reward or motivation that is external to the self.

Heterogeneous group: a group of students who represent a wide range of abilities, interest, and/or backgrounds.

Higher order skills: academic skills that require logical, more abstract
thinking.

**Intrinsic**: a reward or motivation that is internal to the self.

**Jigsaw**: a cooperative learning method whereby a teacher provides a small group of students with information on a particular topic. Each member develops expertise in one area and is responsible to teach this material to his peers.

**Jigsaw II**: a cooperative learning method whereby students are placed into an expert group. Each member reads all the required material from a resource (textbook) on the particular topic. Students are rewarded on the basis of individual and group performance.

**Mainstream**: any learning environment in which regular education students are educated with regular education students.

**Motivation**: the tendency toward goal-seeking behavior which results from inner conditions such as physiological or psychological need.

**Paired reading**: the act of putting two students together, of differing abilities, to read with and to one another.

**Peer tutoring**: an instructional approach by which students of the same age teach one another.

**Positive behavior**: behavior that does not interfere with learning.

**Problem solving**: "the identification and application of knowledge and skills that result in goal attainment" (Biehler and Snowman, 1990, p. 446).

**Pro-social behavior**: behavior that involves understanding the needs and feelings of others, getting along with others, or functioning well in group situations.
Put Downs: negative phrases or words to describe an individual.
Put Ups: positive phrases or words to describe an individual.
Self-concept: "the mental image one has of oneself" (Webster, 1974, p. 1048).
Self-directing: an individual's behavior directed by intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation.
Self-efficacy: the expectation of successfully obtaining valued outcomes through personal effort.
Self-esteem: the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy (Cooperamith, 1967).
Social interaction: how an individual or groups of individuals interact with each other in a social situation.
Social skills: a wide range of skills related to personal and social behavior and interaction
Strategy: a method or plan utilized to reach a goal.
Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD): a cooperative learning method where students work in their small groups to drill and tutor each other and prepare to compete against other groups.
T chart: a chart which is used in cooperative learning, giving positive and negative adjectives (Put-ups and Put-downs).
Team learning: an essential component of (STAD), and also a reference to competition among groups.
Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT): similar to STAD except in the method of competition among teams and the resulting accountability to teams. Students of comparable ability from different teams compete face to face in tournaments.

Traditional grouping: grouping students according to ability, rather than for peer tutoring or a cooperative learning technique.

Summary

Self-esteem has been explored by many educators. Self-esteem has been found to be a vital trait to ensure success or failure in life. The amount of self-esteem an individual possesses is directly related to the amount of motivation and achievement he attains. A child’s self-esteem is developed through interaction with his parents, family members, friends and teachers. The child’s perception of himself plays a major factor in his ability to achieve.

Today’s children deal with many pressures that were not present in past generations. Advances in technology and the media have a great influence on how a child deals with these pressures. The strength of an individual’s self-esteem is a crucial element of his personality. The teacher’s role is to help each student increase his self-esteem in order to function more successfully in school and in society.

The purpose of this paper was to review the literature dealing with ways in which to help improve a child’s self-esteem. The literature was reviewed in order to examine both quantitative and qualitative studies for
successful and unsuccessful strategies. In addition, this paper proposed cooperative learning as an appropriate and valuable model for enhancing self-esteem in the classroom.
In the field of education, self-esteem has long been examined for the relative effect it has had on academic achievement. Of more current interest in education is cooperative learning theory and the relationship it has had on developing self-esteem. Most recently, the literature has indicated that the three concepts (1) achievement, (2) self-esteem, and (3) cooperative learning can be integrated.

Self-esteem

There are a variety of interpretations of the meaning of self-esteem in professional literature. One noted authority is Coopersmith (1967), who defined self-esteem as "a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that individuals have toward themselves" (p. 5). Coopersmith also believed that an individual's self-esteem remained fairly constant over a period of years. He further wrote that individuals with high self-esteem are generally happier and more able to meet societal (which includes academic) demands. A 19th century psychologist, William James, concluded that human aspirations and values have an essential role in determining an individual's self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1967). Woolfolk (1987) wrote that "Children's self-concepts change as they develop... concrete facts like physical appearance, name, or family membership are the important answers to the question, Who are you?" (p. 105). Combs, Avila, & Purkey (1971)
stated that “Self-concept” means “all those aspects of the perceptual field to which we refer when we say ‘I’ or ‘me’. It is the organization of perception about self which seems to the individual to be who he is” (p. 77). Rogers (1959) emphasized the importance of self-worth by stating, "If I were to search for the central core of difficulty in people as I have come to know them, it is that in the great majority of cases they despise themselves, regarding themselves as worthless and unlovable (p. 184).”

Brody (1991) wrote that “a favorable opinion of oneself is the backbone of one’s future. It breeds confidence, competence, willingness to take chances, an ability to stick up for oneself, a healthy respect for others and a sense of responsibility. Such traits are clearly desirable for personal success” (p. 15).

While enhanced self-esteem has been found to increase positive behavior and academic achievement, a lack of self-esteem has been shown to increase failure. Brody (1991) stated that the “lack of self-esteem on the other hand is commonly associated with depression, anxiety, hostility, undue defenses, difficulty in adapting to new circumstances and reluctance to make an effort. Indeed, psychologists have linked low self-esteem to disruptive behavior in the classroom and antisocial behavior outside it, difficulty in making friends and abuse of drugs, alcohol and other people” (p. 15). A youngster who lacks self-esteem can be caught in the vicious cycle of “I am no good, I am going to fail. Therefore I won’t try. Then I have an excuse for failing”. Brody described the cycle of behavior when self-esteem is low:

Self-esteem is put to its greatest test in adolescence. The lower a
child's self-esteem upon entering this critical stage of life, the more likely it is that the youngster will become estranged from his or her parents. Even if a teenager has a healthy self-concept, it can be shaken from time to time. A once easy subject may become difficult, a close friend may inexplicably become an enemy, a coveted group may reject the child. Despite moments of self-doubt, a teenager with very high self-esteem is unlikely to blame herself for such a failure or rejection. But a child whose confidence is shaky to start with may not bounce back so readily (p. 15).

The Relationship Between Self-esteem and Academic Achievement

Children in school often base their perception about self on their academic success. Rosenberg, Schooler, & Schoenbach (1989) examined the reciprocal relationship between self-esteem and three problems of youth: juvenile delinquency, poor school performance, and psychological depression. A group of nearly two thousand adolescent boys were selected to participate in this study. Rosenberg's scale of self-esteem was utilized to assess global rather than specific aspects of self-esteem. The researchers found that low self-esteem fostered delinquency and delinquency might enhance self-esteem. Adolescents who underwent unsatisfactory experiences, experiences which created a painful feeling about their self-worth, would seek out a delinquent reference group to enhance their self-esteem.
Self-esteem theory, according to Rosenberg, et. al. (1989) also led to the prediction that school marks are a cause of self-esteem. Schooling is generally a major arena of achievement among adolescents. Class grades are visible, overt indicators of an important aspect of a student's worth, and academic success is generally valued in society as a whole. Thus, those who do well receive more favorable public attention which in turn raises their self-esteem.

Finally, self-esteem theory suggests that low self-esteem can cause depression. A desire for positive self-esteem is a major motive in human beings. If an individual becomes frustrated by a negative self-image, he may experience depression. The depressed person thinks that the world is a rotten place, all people are selfish, and the future is hopeless. This individual feels worthless, guilty and unimportant, and has a negative attitude toward himself. The data show that school marks have a direct and significant effect on self-esteem. Rosenberg, et.al. (1989) stated that those adolescents who do well in school usually receive more favorable appraisal from significant others. In addition, high marks in school yield positive social comparisons. Finally, high grades are expected to produce favorable self-attribution in young people. This would contribute to one's feeling of self-worth. These three principles of self-esteem formation, then, suggest that high academic marks have an effect on self-esteem.

Kunjufu (1984) stated that if academic performance by either parent or teacher is high, adolescents will try to meet these expectations, and will also tend to achieve academically. The assumption here is that the expectations are realistic for the adolescent and not idealistic.
However, if the adult's attitude and expectations of the child are low, the child's performance will be lower regardless of his true ability. Kunjufu wrote that "performance is a by-product of self-esteem and stems from high expectation" (p. 26). Kunjufu also wrote that the peer group is very important to the individual student. The peer groups give valued opinions of approval or disapproval to the student. These indications of value are very valuable to the student trying to find himself.

While there are a variety of interpretations of self-esteem, adolescents tend to perceive themselves through others' expectations of them. Adolescents also utilize academic performance as an evaluation of their self-esteem. Many educators acknowledge that self-esteem is an integral part of academic achievement. Researchers continue to debate what is the nature of that relationship. Whether self-esteem builds academic achievement or whether high self-esteem comes as a result of academic achievement continues to be an area of discussion.

Lecky (1945) was one of the first investigators to demonstrate that low academic achievement was often due to a child's definition of himself as a non-learner. Lecky wrote that a person's self-concept has a direct bearing on his intellectual efficacy. This theorist also hypothesized that an individual's self-esteem remained fairly constant because of his need for psychological consistency. Holly (1987), on the other hand, found that high self-esteem is a consequence of having experienced meaningful success. Students who can see for themselves the value of what they are asked to learn and do will not require the additional rewards to raise their self-esteem. The perceived value of the work itself
will motivate the students. Holly concluded that the most reliable route to a healthy sense of self-esteem is for adolescents to forget about self-esteem as a goal in itself and to simply concentrate on being the best they can be in the pursuit of those things most worth doing. Holly, through interviews, found that teachers have emphasized that self-esteem comes from hard work and effort. Teachers generally have stressed the importance of students having a good value system, a realistic self-concept, a sense of responsibility, and an acceptance of the worth and rights of others.

The way one perceives himself as a student will influence his academic performance in the classroom. A positive perception and attitude towards oneself will yield a positive perception about school, and provide academic success. Greenwald (1988) affirmed the fact that high self-esteem is associated with perseverance in problem solving which then helps the individual to adapt to the world and varied problems.

Adolescents who have experienced academic failure, helplessness, and low self-esteem see their world as something happening to them, and outside their control. Consequently, Conrath (1986) found that these same children do not accept responsibilities for their own actions. These adolescents feel that academic failure is something they cannot control. Conrath's locus of control studies indicated that students with low self-esteem often view school and academic tasks as something out of their control. Conrath found that students who are internalizers, who feel that they have control over their lives, have confidence in themselves and in their abilities. These students also tend to accept responsibilities for
their actions. Covington (1984) argued that self-esteem in itself does not cause students to achieve anything at all. Rather, it is the desire to get more self-esteem or to preserve the self-esteem they already have that motivates them.

Additional studies which add variations to the debate of the correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement are interesting to consider. A 1984 study by Covington noted that the fear of failure can outweigh the desire to succeed. When this happens students may adopt a no-effort strategy to protect the little self-esteem that they have. They try to hide their incompetence by refusing to do their work. Covington suggested that failure will be sure to follow when the student does not even try. He also suggested that the teacher point out to the students that as long as they attempt to carry out their tasks they will see improvement in their work, and take pride in their improvement. Cooperative learning was also suggested by Covington which provides the students the time they need to achieve a given level of competence, and reduces the perceived importance of ability. Lerner (1985) indicated that past approaches to building self-esteem have not resulted in greater student competence or self-esteem. She cited statistics on out-of-wedlock births, drop-out rates, and suicide rates to illustrate her belief. Lerner found that self-esteem needs to be earned, to be firmly grounded in actual competencies and accomplishments. A responsible assessment of self-esteem should be based on all aspects of one's self and what one must actually accomplish to succeed in life.

Some authorities found relatively little connection, however,
between self-esteem and academic achievement. Pottebaum, Keith, & Ehly (1986) attempted to find a causal relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. The researchers collected data from over 58,000 high school sophomores and seniors. Self-esteem was measured by an instrument that measured general, rather than academic, self-concept. Statements such as "I take a positive attitude toward myself" and "I feel I am a person of work, on an equal plane with others" were included in the instrument and ranked equally with statements about academic performance. The results of their analysis found no significant relationship, and they concluded that perhaps education should not focus on self-esteem to raise academic performance. But perhaps we should look at self-esteem and achievement as two separate and unrelated constructs. Scheirer and Kraut (1979) in this light, reviewed several programs and found that some programs did succeed in raising either self-esteem or academic achievement, but seldom caused both in the same program. For example, one program was designed to reduce delinquency by raising self-esteem. After 15 years, objective evaluation of the program found that levels of delinquency, academic performance, and self-esteem had not been affected. However, all staff involved with the program reported that they felt the program was effective in the targeted areas.

Achievement in the academic areas and self-esteem do appear to be related in some way. Educators need to keep this relationship in mind as it relates to their individual students. In teachers' working with their students to improve their academic performance, the adolescent's
self-esteem needs to be forefront in their approach to the individual. The adolescent will react to the various components of self-esteem in varied ways.

**Components of Self-esteem**

Although teachers may not be aware of the full extent of the cause and effect relationship of self-esteem and academic achievement, most researchers agree that there is a relationship. Researchers continue to debate whether that relationship is positively or negatively correlated. Perhaps both constructs should be addressed in the programs teachers present to the adolescents in their schools.

A teacher may need to utilize many and varied techniques to increase academic performance. Modeling appropriate behaviors, verbal persuasion, praise, and emotional arousal are examples of such techniques. In many cases, the teacher may have to try to help particular students acquire greater confidence and self-esteem (Biehler and Snowman 1990).

Since adolescents with low self-esteem tend to have poor school behavior and delinquent behavior (Mann, 1981), their experience at school may be a crucial mediating factor in the relationship of self-esteem and delinquent behavior. In this study, Mann took a sample of 720 boys divided into two groups according to age: 11-14 years and 15-18 years. The defensiveness of the boys was studied on measures of conscious self-esteem and unconscious esteem. Mann found that delinquency behavior could be predicted from these measures of esteem.
Cheerful children are those who tend to have high self-esteem, are open to new ideas, have more energy, and participate in more activities. Harter (1988) found that the child who has low self-esteem tends to be depressed, is a rigid thinker, and has little energy to devote to activities.

There appears to be a positive correlation between self-concept and the perceived evaluation of significant others. This evaluation may be based on performance in the academic areas (LaBenne and Greene, 1969). These authors encouraged the teacher to be honest and consistent in their evaluations. Teachers also need to set realistic expectations and goals for the student on an individual basis. Harter (1988) found that adolescents with low self-concept are unable to discount the importance of areas in which they are unsuccessful. Students with high self-concept are able to discount the areas in which they are inadequate. When adolescents are given small stories to judge, or on which to offer an opinion, Harter found that the students with high self-esteem were able to utilize a protective strategy to maintain positive feelings about themselves. Students with low self-esteem did not have this strategy. Harter also wrote that if others feel one is a worthwhile person, he would adopt that attitude about himself and experience high self-esteem. In several studies of children aged 8-15, Harter found that how the parent views the child is most highly predictive of the individual child's self-esteem. This was closely followed by how the classmate views the child.

Harter (1988) wrote that "the adolescent's self-concept may be a product of the incorporation of others' communications" (p. 71). Hart, in
explaining self-concept, referred to William James' theory that self-esteem is a function of both one's goals and one's achievements. As the child becomes an adolescent, the individual listens to communications from more and more sources. The individual's goals and achievements are related to these communications, i.e., what others think of that individual. A discrepancy may occur between the individual's goals for himself, the parent's goals, and the goals of the peer group. The adolescent is then faced with the confusing task of choosing goals, and living with the resulting communications from the individuals who either approve or disapprove. These communications then affect the individual's self-concept positively or negatively.

Researchers Bachman and O'Malley (1986) found that having school peers with relatively higher abilities does slightly lower one's self-esteem and self-concept of abilities. This indicates that students do not estimate their abilities primarily by comparing themselves with fellow students. In fact, actual ability itself seems to be the primary determinant of self-concepts of ability: it is more important even than grades or social comparisons. Bachman and O'Malley also found that one's actual abilities and not their self-concept of ability was what made the contributing difference in academic success. While there continues to be a debate regarding the exact relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement, researchers conclude that there is indeed a relationship. We as educators need to be aware of that relationship in our classrooms.

Motivation also appears to be an aspect of self-esteem. Biehler and
Snowman (1990) referred to Bandura’s theory when noting that prior achievement affects motivation by providing students with information about the effectiveness of their problem-solving skills. This contributes to a sense of self-efficacy, a conviction that one can successfully do what is necessary to produce a particular outcome. Studying motivation in adolescents, Scheier and Kraut (1979) concluded that “motivation for academic learning comes from the reinforcements of one’s social environment for specific learning skills. ... and that self-concept change is likely to be an outcome of increased achievement with accompanying social approval” (p. 144).

Both motivation to achieve and building self-esteem are often facilitated in a group situation. Rimm (1986) found that children who engage in intrinsically-motivating activities such as cooperative projects, small group projects, and discussion groups are more likely to develop self-directing exploration interests and personal growth. Rimm also found that children who get involved in a cooperative learning task, where they are more or less assured of credit, will develop a personal sense of accomplishment that is called intrinsic reinforcement. Intrinsic motives such as interest, curiosity, and desire for understanding through group exploration provide a variety of sources for motivation. Students working in groups cooperatively often develop a sense of competence in their own abilities to reason and solve problems (Glasser, 1986).

Group work can increase self-esteem also. While students work toward common goals, academic work becomes an activity valued by peers. The same can be compared to hard work in sports which is
valued by peers because the success of one team member brings success to the whole team. Students encourage and help one another to succeed because they want their team to succeed (Slavin, 1987). According to Glasser (1986), group members learn to nurture and support one another. Glasser also stated that cooperative learning can contribute to students’ motivation. Students have a strong need to affiliate; they often come to school to be with their friends. In the group, they can develop a higher level of trust, be more willing to take risks, and feel more comfortable in class as a whole. Glasser stated that “Group work may even reassure the overly anxious student and energize the unconcerned one” (p. 32).

Many things contribute to build an adolescent’s self-esteem. The educator needs to take advantage of group work to aid motivation which in turn enables the student to improve his academic achievement. Working within a group itself will motivate the adolescent to achieve.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a highly structured approach to interdependent group learning. Research has shown that cooperative learning can dramatically improve students’ academic achievement, cognitive development, self-esteem and attitudes toward school. It promotes important academic and social skills, and is effective in helping students learn to apply conceptual skills.

Cooperative learning involves structuring of the students’ learning
environment so that they can work together toward a common goal. Cooperative learning encompasses a wide range of strategies for promoting academic learning through peer cooperation and communication. This implies that students help each other learn, share ideas and resources, and plan cooperatively what and how to study (Sharan and Sharan, 1987). Cooperative learning, according to Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec (1990), is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together toward a common goal and maximize their own and each other’s learning. These researchers also indicate that there are a number of strategies that a teacher can utilize to incorporate cooperative learning into the classroom. They also write that cooperative learning can be utilized in any subject area.

Slavin (1989) stressed that two conditions are met if students’ achievement goals are to be met through cooperative learning. These conditions are: 1) the cooperating groups must have a group goal that is important to all the members of the group, and 2) the groups’ realization that their success depends on the individual-learning of all group members. This second condition maintains that individual accountability is as important as group accountability. Slavin continued, by stating that group goals may help individual students overcome their reluctance to ask for help or to set a goal. In a review of relevant research, Slavin (1991) indicated that, “There are a few exceptions, but almost every study of cooperative learning in which the cooperative classes achieved more than traditional control groups used some sort of group reward” (p. 89). Slavin continued to explain that most individuals
who work to achieve a goal, work toward an extrinsic reward at the same time. Nearly everyone in school, and in society, works toward a reward of grades, a paycheck, praise or other reward. Cooperative learning, according to Slavin, "simply focuses the classroom reward system on helping others learn (as well as on one's own learning)" (p. 90).

There are many benefits from cooperative learning for cognitive development, academic achievement, and social-emotional growth according to (Nastasi and Clements, 1991). They write, "In the cooperative structure, goal attainment of individual students is positively correlated; if one student achieves his/her goal, other group members also are likely to achieve theirs. In contrast, individual goal attainment within competitive structures is negatively correlated; if one student attains his/her goal, others are less likely to attain theirs" (p. 111).

In an early study, Johnson, Johnson, & Scott (1978) found that cooperative learning promoted more positive attitudes towards feelings of oneness among peers. These researchers divided 30 boys and girls who were in a fifth and sixth grade advanced level math class into two groups. One group was taught through cooperative learning techniques, and the other group was taught with individualized techniques. After 50 days of one hour math sessions, the observations of the teacher and the teacher aid, as well as student self-reports, on a School Affective Assessment measure were analyzed. Higher daily student achievement, more internal locus of control, more positive attitudes toward the teacher and peers were noted. The teachers subjectively concluded that they preferred to work with the students in a cooperative learning
Other researchers (Slavin and Oickle, 1981) have shown that grouping students for cooperative learning is more successful than traditional grouping to increase the achievement of students in a racially and ethnically heterogeneous classroom. Beginning their study about the effects of cooperative learning methods on student achievement and race relations, Slavin and Oickle raised two questions: 1) does academic achievement occur equally for both black and white students, or 2) does learning cooperatively disproportionately benefit one race or another. The subjects consisted of 230 students in grades 6 through 8 with 33.9% African-American and the rest were Caucasian.

Four experimental classes studied language mechanics for twelve weeks by using cooperative learning methods, while six classes studied the same curriculum material on the same schedule but not in cooperative learning groups. Slavin and Oickle (1981) reported that the cooperative learning groups gained significantly more academic achievement than did non-cooperative learning classes. When analyzing cross-racial friendships, they found that a greater number of African-Americans were named as friend by Caucasians in the cooperative learning groups than in the non-cooperative learning groups. This study adds support to the body of literature that suggests that while cooperative learning strategies increase the achievement level of all students, they do more for African-Americans than for Caucasians. This study also supports the idea that cooperative learning strategies will reduce academic achievement disparities between African-American and
Caucasian students.

Findings are consistent across age groups (elementary through college), ability levels, variation in cultural and ethnic background, and subject area. Johnson and Johnson (1985) reviewed 37 studies which included interpersonal attraction. They found that cooperative learning experiences promoted greater interpersonal attraction and more positive relationships among students than do competitive or individualistic learning situations. A summary - impression method of reviewing this literature was used which allowed debate and criticism.

When comparing these studies, Johnson and Johnson considered a number of potentially explanatory variables to illuminate the internal dynamics of cooperative learning groups. Some of the variables examined were: 1) the type of learning task assigned, 2) the quality of the learning strategy used to complete the learning task, 3) the time spent on the task, 4) academic disagreement among group members, 5) peer regulation, encouragement, and feedback while interacting during the learning task, 6) active involvement of the group members while completing the learning task, 7) the ability level of the group members, 9) feelings of psychological support and acceptance, 10) more positive attitudes toward the subject area, and 11) greater perceptions of fairness of grading.

This review of the research has many implications. One important aspect of the study found that cooperative learning experiences create strong beliefs that one is personally liked, supported, and accepted by other students. This feeling of caring and being liked by other students
makes the students want to help each other learn. Thus, a positive
text is formed, and a greater opportunity for interpersonal attraction
will occur within the cooperative learning classroom environment.
Researchers have found that although the type of learning task did not
matter a great deal, tasks which required more conceptual learning
elicited more cooperative work among the students.

Research by Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Richards (1985) has
consistently shown that grouping students across racial and ethnic lines
not only will facilitate learning for all groups members but is also likely
to promote greater acceptance and liking of individuals from other
cultural groups. The Classroom Life Instrument, which consists of 59
Likert-type questions, was utilized to assess how 45 girls and 46 boys
from 5 eighth-grade classes in a suburban midwest school district felt
about their school environment. After a factor analysis, the researchers
found that the students like to work cooperatively, and that the more the
students perceived that everyone was working toward the same goals and
working with one another, the more they perceived the classroom
environment as supportive for both their academic and personal growth.
This study was unique in that it assessed the students' attitudes over a
period of time. As students continued to participate in the study, the
researchers found that the excitement of working in a group lessened
and that the excitement and dedication to helping other students within
the cooperative learning context increased. The researchers concluded
that the longer cooperative learning techniques are utilized, the more
involved the students become with one another and the more positive are
the effects on classroom social support.

Another key outcome of cooperative learning is the positive effects it has on the individual student. Research by Johnson and Johnson (1989), and Slavin (1983) found that cooperative learning shows positive effects in the areas of academic achievement, self-esteem as a learner, cross-race friendship, social acceptance of mainstreamed children, and social skill development. Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Richman, (1985) found that there was an increase in perceptions of class cohesion and personal support. They also found that students feelings of alienation decreased in correlation with the amount of time provided them for participation in cooperative activities. Slavin (1987) wrote that cooperative learning helps motivate every member to learn and to do his best. By children translating teachers' language into "kids' language" these pupils better understand the subject matter being discussed. Cooperative grouping fostered a helping attitude and environment. The students developed a "we are all in this together" attitude.

Mevarech, Silber, and Fine (1991) examined the effects of the Cooperative and Individualistic Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) program on cognitive and affective variables in mathematics. There were 149 sixth graders who participated in the study. There were several advantages which constantly reappeared in this study. One was that the student who had more control over his learning through either cooperative CAI or individual CAI was more motivated to learn. Instantaneous feedback appeared to offer immediate positive reinforcement and transfer to further learning. It also offered additional
time for the student to review right and wrong responses.

The results of this study showed that those who used CAI for drill and practice in cooperative groups performed better than students who used the same program individually. When students were placed in small learning groups, the social situation raised the need to verbalize, and to discuss the material. More peer tutoring took place which in turn facilitated learning. The advantages of cooperative CAI were observed by means of both immediate and delayed post-tests. Cooperative CAI alleviated math anxiety of low ability math students. One possible explanation for this difference between cooperative CAI and individual CAI achievement could be the competitive setting. Comparing outcomes is likely to produce feelings of confidence and even superiority in high achievers compared to the feelings of hostility and anxiety in low achievers. The immediate feedback of a student's low scores can strengthen his negative feelings while a high achiever can see his relative gains. Such comparisons are not so traumatic when students are placed in small groups. Children tend less to make social comparisons. The low achiever can benefit from the support and encouragement he receives from his group members.

Finally, this study showed that compared to individualized learning, a student's cooperative work at the computer did not result in lower gains in terms of achievement nor did it increase his math anxiety. The main reason for the students' advantages gained in the cooperative groups was considered to be the interaction among children during the lesson.
Types of Cooperative Learning Groups

Cooperative learning groups can be identified as four basic structures. They can be described as team learning, expert groups, collaborative task completion, and collaborative problem solving or investigation. Table one will provide the characteristic, effects, and applications of the four types.

Insert Table One here

Team Learning

In team learning, students are directed by the teacher to learn materials for later recall, and are to then assist teammates in mastering the same material. Teams are generally formed with 4 to 5 students with every level of achievement represented. The group is rewarded on the basis of subsequent pooled performance. For example, Slavin (1985) developed the Student Team-Achievement Division (STAD) and Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT). In both activities, children are on teams and directed to complete worksheets related to the task. Learning is considered an asset, and individuals are rewarded on the basis of team members' performances. This method also leads to positive social outcomes, such as enhancing interpersonal relationships, increased
liking and acceptance of minorities, including racial minorities, and handicapped individuals (Slavin, 1986). Students on the team learn to interact with one another in an appropriate manner. The team members also learn to listen to one another's ideas, to share their own ideas, and to value the opinions of others.

**Expert Groups**

In the expert group, students are responsible for teaching material to the other students. In this approach, both individuals in a paired group play the role of tutor and tutee. Each student on the team is given the opportunity to first develop the expertise in the particular area and then teach the material to the other.

Slavin (1985, 1986) developed the popular Jigsaw and Jigsaw II approaches, not confined to a pair. These approaches require each member of a group to become an expert in a particular part of the subject material, and then to teach that material to the other members of the group. The only difference between Jigsaw and Jigsaw II is that in Jigsaw each student masters one part of the material. In Jigsaw II, the whole group must become experts on all the material, and are rewarded on one combined performance. Slavin (1986) found that both approaches are effective for improving cross-ethnic attitudes and behaviors, which in turn improves the self-esteem of the individual group members. Since each individual within a group is viewed as an expert, and gives the other members of the group valuable information, each
member of the group increases his self-esteem. The individuals within the group learn to value what other members of the group offer as information. Each student then learns that everyone else in the group has something valuable to offer. This often transfers to other environments.

Collaborative Task Completion

This cooperative learning approach is utilized when students are given a task to be completed in a cooperative manner (such as a worksheet). Students are responsible to choose which approach they want to take for this task, for example, selecting the necessary steps to reach their goal. During the cooperative process, each student in the group is assigned a role. The group is evaluated and rewarded on the basis of the final product. Johnson and Johnson (1983) have consistently found this approach beneficial in promoting learning, enhancing motivation and fostering attitudes towards learning and positive interpersonal relationships. Again, each member of the group is a valuable member. Every individual can begin to see his own worth as well as the worth of the other members of the group. The interrelationships of the members of the group become very important as they learn that they have to learn to work together in a cooperative manner.
**Collaborative Problem Solving**

In this approach the students are given choices on the material or subject matter that they want to investigate. Students are responsible for every step of the problem-solving from defining the problem, deciding what member will carry out each step, apply chosen strategies, and most importantly to evaluating their own performance. There are very few external rewards. Instead there is a greater emphasis on intrinsic motivation. Collaborative problem-solving has been found to be successful in improving higher order skills (Slavin, 1986). Higher order skills are developed as students learn to be responsible for every aspect of a problem. They work cooperatively to realize that the problem exists, to understand the nature of the problem, gather relevant information, formulate and carry out a solution and finally, to evaluate the solution. In working cooperatively to solve problems, students learn that each member has something important to contribute.

Our classrooms should be structured in an environment that enhances cooperative learning. Such an environment promotes increased learning in the adolescent. Consequently, the adolescent likes school more, and his self-esteem is raised. The individual exposed to cooperative learning also relates better to school peers.

**Summary**

Through a review of the literature, we find that there is a strong
relationship between academic achievement and self-esteem. It is inconclusive, however, whether high self-esteem is a product of academic achievement as such or not. Literature shows that some students who improve their self-esteem will begin to persevere in problem-solving and increase their academic performance. Many students, however, with low self-esteem tend to hide those feelings by not trying in school and by engaging in inappropriate behaviors, possibly leading to delinquent behavior.

Cooperative learning has been shown to have numerous benefits. It appears that any number of structures can be utilized to implement cooperative learning in the classroom. Adolescents who are exposed to cooperative learning have improved self-esteem, peer relationships, and motivation for learning. These adolescents also appear to have greater intrinsic motivation and less of a need for external rewards or motivation.

While there is not a great deal of literature integrating the three concepts of self-esteem, academic achievement, and cooperative learning, it appears that they interrelate in helping the adolescent to do better in school and to have improved social skills. With the many concerns facing the adolescent in today's society, perhaps educators should strongly consider implementing these three concepts into their classrooms in an integrated manner. If cooperative learning can improve social skills, the adolescent will then become a more positive influence and contributor to society. The long range benefits are many. The adolescent may persevere to finish high school and pursue a college degree. With higher self-esteem, the adolescent may be less likely to be involved with a gang
engaging in delinquent behavior because he no longer sees those extrinsic motives as important.

With cooperative learning being utilized in the classroom today, the adolescent's self-esteem and academic achievement tend to improve. This enables the adolescent to develop a stable emotional environment for himself, which is typically not found in today's urban youth.
CHAPTER THREE

Communications in our technological society call for personal relationships which do not naturally occur in the course of daily give and take. A geometrically multiplying population is becoming ever more interdependent on itself, but it is not developing the human resources necessary to maintain satisfying means of communication. The news media daily record society’s failure to achieve compatibility among its differing races, cultures, sexes, and ability groups. It is, therefore, imperative that the school setting provide strategies for developing better interpersonal skills within the school curriculum.

Cooperative learning skills are beneficial in all areas of social, academic, and business activity. The executive needs to brainstorm with his sales force to develop a new advertisement campaign, neighbors attempt to work together to form a crime watch, a family strives to create a pleasant home atmosphere through shared responsibilities, and, most importantly, diverse interest groups need to work cooperatively to insure a civilized society. It is increasingly obvious that all human society must learn to work together in order to maintain the global stability of our planet.

In the past, educational philosophy has focused upon individual development and potential. Stressing individual accomplishment tends to encourage competition. Grading systems, recognition, and praise are used to reward or punish individual achievement or failure. A competitive environment which identifies winners and losers limits the
participants to achieve that which is expected of them. Students who have a record of success will continue to succeed. Those who see themselves as failures, tend to give up trying, and they could become classroom disrupters. Education should provide the support system necessary for individuals to value themselves. With proper cooperative learning strategies in place, every student can experience success through group and individual achievement of specific goals. In doing so the student will build the self-esteem necessary for future endeavors.

The Teacher's Role in Cooperative Learning

A teacher who values the opinions of students will succeed in raising the students' attitude towards themselves and others. A teacher who demonstrates respect for students' efforts and ideas will help enhance their self esteem, and ultimately encourage more learning. A student whose opinions are valued by others begins to feel a responsibility to others' ideas and beliefs.

Helping students overcome a low self-esteem is certainly one of the most perplexing problems facing educators today. Society too often focuses on what is wrong with somebody rather than what is right with him. The student then lacks confidence in himself and his school performance. The result is low self-esteem, which affects the individual's social growth and achievement.

To reverse the trend of negativism, every teaching strategy should be examined for its potential value. Cooperative learning offers the
teacher the opportunity to turn the tide of negativism into a positive force. One such effort to reverse the negative trend was implemented by this writer into a lesson plan to achieve more positive social interaction between students during cooperative learning sessions. It was found to be a very important first step in getting students involved with the idea of using positive words towards one another.

Students were placed into groups and were asked to discuss “Put Downs” that they heard on the playground, in the hall, at lunch, and in the classroom. The students had an opportunity to talk about what “put downs” sounded like, what they looked like, and how it felt to be “put down”.

Students then were offered an alternative to “put downs”. The teacher, with the help of the students, listed all the opposite meaning words for “put downs”. For example, some common “put downs” were words like: dumb, queer, or stupid. “Put Ups” were words like: all right, totally awesome, and cool dude. The students discussed and compiled a list on a “T chart” entitled, “Put Ups.” This list was then placed on the classroom wall. From that point on the students were allowed to use only “put ups” during cooperative learning sessions. This list stayed up all year to remind the students of the correct words when interacting. Anytime a “put down” was discovered in the room, someone would ask, “Was that a ‘put up?’” and point to the chart on the wall to reinforce the positive words.

Activities such as these have been effective when working with adolescents in an urban classroom. Students begin to realize that “Put
Downs* hurt other's feelings, started fights, and prevented positive interactions from taking place. Because the society into which each student enters is likely to be divergent in race, gender, culture, and creed, positive solutions to problems become more and more crucial. When teachers make students aware of the self-defeating effects of negative attitudes, teachers set the stage for cooperative learning to take place in a positive atmosphere.

The Student's Role in Cooperative Learning

In a cooperative learning group, students work together toward common goals. Within the context of the activity, students are encouraged to share knowledge and responsibility. The adolescent student who is very responsive to peer approval has the opportunity to encounter instances of receiving and giving peer approval to others.

Cooperative learning provides the setting for improving relationships among students. Peer relationships are a critical element in the development and socialization of adolescents. Through interactions with peers, adolescents learn attitudes, values, skills and information that they would not necessarily learn from an adult. In addition, interaction with peers provide the opportunity for students to model pro-social behavior. Adolescents learn to view situations and problems from many different perspectives other than just their own. People need close and intimate relationships with peers with whom they can share their thoughts, feelings, hopes, and aspirations. Healthy peer
relationships help to develop life-long friendships and to avoid loneliness.

**Student Achievement in Specific Curriculum Areas and Cooperative Learning**

Strong relationships have been found to exist between student achievement and cooperative learning techniques in a variety of curriculum areas. Significant gains have been found in language arts, reading, social studies, and mathematics.

Paired-reading is a cooperative learning activity in the area of reading which is easily fitted into the classroom routine without a great deal of teacher preparation. Paired-reading can be defined as a cooperative learning activity in which a more able reader joins with a less able reader to encourage reading enjoyment through modeling and tutoring. The participants read books of choice which are within the competence of the tutor. Researchers found that students become quite skilled at choosing reading materials sensibly and appropriately, and that they are able to negotiate so that the reading interests of both parties are met.

In a typical reading session, the pair of students read out loud together. The tutor adjusts to the tutee's natural reading speed, and a mutual working relationship is established. The tutor corrects errors made by the tutee and requires the tutee to repeat the correction. Discussion takes place during the reading session. Improved academic outcomes occur for both the tutor and the tutee. In most instances, self-
concept and social relationships improve also because the students learn to work together, to accept one another's strengths and weaknesses, suggestions and criticisms.

Social studies is an area in which students benefit from cooperative learning by using the social skills developed in group projects. The class may be divided into teams, with each team selecting a captain and all members assuming specific roles, such as reader, researcher, reporter, or observer, and participating in project investigations. At the end of each session, members summarize and evaluate the group's performance on two levels: accomplishments, and social interactions.

Cooperative story development has been successfully used in the language arts area. Members of the group select roles, such as editors, printer, reporters, and researchers. The group selects a topic to write on, and then works together to develop an outline. Researchers, editors, and reporters create a rough draft which the printer enters into the computer word processor. Each member of the group adds input until a story is finished. Discussions are held within the group to share ideas about changes. The final draft is submitted to the instructor for a group grade. This activity provides the students with supportive encouragement and reinforcement of language development skills by means of a shared responsibility experience.
Classroom Strategies for Cooperative Learning

To introduce cooperative learning in a classroom, the teacher must first prepare students to work together constructively. Surprisingly, most students have not been exposed to a true cooperative learning environment. A good strategy to demonstrate cooperative learning is to compare it to a team-orientated sport in which all team members work together toward a common goal. This comparison can be the springboard when introducing cooperative learning to the class. In addition, using this comparison the students can understand the team concept "one for all, and all for one". If everyone masters the plays on the team, the team will win.

When students realize the important implications of cooperative learning as it relates to school achievement and real life situations, they become motivated to participate in the activity. The teacher must emphasize that each individual regardless of age or ability can not stand completely alone, as though on a deserted island, throughout life. Each individual depends upon others for companionship, love, and the satisfaction of needs. Learning to work, play, and interact cooperatively with classmates in a school setting will lead to happiness in real life situations.

The teacher's role is to create an opportunity for students to investigate and clarify their understandings by actively exchanging and using each other's ideas. Teachers guide the students to value their own contribution and appreciate their peers as learning resources. This can
be accomplished with well-organized learning projects and clearly defined learning tasks. Students appreciate activities which are interesting, challenging, and fun. Exciting activities help create self-motivated learners. Everyone's ideas are examined through discussion and peer encouragement.

Rewarding students intrinsically and extrinsically will enhance achievement within the learning group environment. The teacher's positive attitude towards a cooperative environment will promote constructive peer interaction. The teacher serves this role by being a model and mediator. Teachers who practice cooperative behaviors with their colleagues by sharing ideas, materials, and emotional support set beneficial examples for students.

**Behavioral Skills and Cooperative Learning**

Behavioral expectations must be clearly defined in order for students to function effectively in any classroom situation. Without limits, chaos will reign. Each teacher has standards regarding behaviors they expect in the classroom. Unfortunately, these standards are not always met because of lack of communication or lack of consistency. As a consequence, the teacher becomes disappointed in the students, and transmits this lack of confidence to the students. The students, in turn, become resentful and negative.

The classroom that has an environment of well-defined limits of behavior promotes positive self-esteem. Students see themselves as
having virtue or goodness because they feel successful in staying within the established limits. Beyond the broad general classroom rules, the cooperative learning classroom rules define the rights and responsibilities of the individuals for the success of the whole class.

Cooperative learning rules emphasize the student's right to be listened to, and his responsibility to listen to others. Rules include contingencies that allow students to be emotionally safe, to be themselves, and be free from being called names or being ridiculed because of dress, speech, ideas, or personal feelings they have expressed. When these parameters are established in the classroom, the students develop a true sense of self-identity and self-worth.

**Pro-social Skills and Cooperative Learning**

Preparing students for cooperative learning groups is very important. Students must understand the basic principles of getting along with each other. A teacher can introduce these pro-social skills through games and team sports. Action-filled activities or events are more relevant than a lecture full of good ideas. Meaningful discussion should follow the activities to enforce such concepts as team cooperation and support.

These activities or events need not be difficult or competitive. The purpose of the activity is for the students to learn how to work together. The activities are the vehicle for students' to acquire new understandings, and should not be considered an end in themselves.
For this reason the activities should not be too difficult or complex.

The real winning takes place within the students' discussion that follows the game. It is important that the teacher assist the class in reflecting on the importance of what has happened in addition to developing key insights for future group work activities.

**Motivation in Cooperative Learning**

Research has consistently found that group rewards used in cooperative learning increases a student's motivation. Providing students with praise and a group grade, certification, or treats for a satisfactory group performance motivates students to produce quality work. However, not all group activities need extrinsic rewards. For example, team sports activities held in the gym do not need extrinsic rewards to motivate students to want to fully participate. Teachers in the academic areas must constantly observe students to assess their likes and dislikes to determine which activities should be reinforced with rewards and what activities are intrinsically satisfying and need not be reinforced with token rewards. Whichever the form of reward, it is important to note that group rewards instill an attitude within the students that when task achievement of all members is accomplished, then everyone wins. Helping one another is a primary goal of cooperative learning.

Guidelines for planning motivating activities for teenagers should include activities that make the students feel good about themselves.
Provision should be made to recognize the contributions of all the participants. Attempts to make the activity as much fun as possible are important, but fun should not be the primary goal.

Finally, since adolescents want to be treated as adults so activities which are selected should reflect their interest level and require mature, reasonable thinking. Thought should also be given to the selection of rewards so that tokens are attuned to the adolescents' interest. Often a list of possible rewards can be brainstormed by the students. It is important that groups who do not reach the criteria established to merit the reward do not receive the reward.

Student Accountability and Cooperative Learning

An important goal in cooperative learning is student accountability. At the outset of each lesson, the teacher should clearly explain the criterion by which the student's work will be evaluated. This criterion for success should be challenging and realistic for each member of the group and the group as a whole. To insure that all members learn and fulfill their group roles, the responsibility of each role must be made clear. Positive interdependence comes when students realize that success lies within the confines of the group. At this point the "one for all, all for one" spirit takes over and moves the group forward.

The teacher frequently assesses group performance along with each member's contribution to the group. Practice tests, randomly calling members to explain their answers, and group members
discussing the merits of others individual writings are ways of structuring individual accountability.

The student's responsibilities to the group are to interact with the other students, to share ideas and materials, and to support and encourage others to gain academic achievement. Each member will hold the other members accountable for learning the material.

Peer Relationships and Cooperative Learning

When children become adolescents, they interact more with their peers and less with adults. Traditionally, educators have not recognized peer interactions as a powerful teaching method. Most peer interactions have been limited primarily to extracurricular activities. Because of these limitations, interactions among children are discouraged. The system has failed to train students adequately in the basic social skills necessary for interacting effectively with peers. Consequently, many children grow up without the proper social skills-training that one needs to become a cooperative and productive member of society.

There are many ways that peer relationships contribute to one's social and cognitive development and socialization. Through interaction with peers, children and adolescents directly learn attitudes, values, skills, and information unobtainable from adults. Children and adolescents often want to imitate and identify with friends or peers who are successful and competent. These children often model, reinforce and
help shape a variety of social behaviors, attitudes, and perspectives. Interaction with peers provide opportunities for models of pro-social behaviors. Adolescents learn to view situations and problems from others' perspectives other than their own through interactions with peers. Healthy peer interaction allows for building friendships with those with whom they can share feelings, thoughts, and aspirations.

Finally, in both educational and work settings, peers have a strong influence on productivity. Adolescents achieve more when they work in a collaborative situation. Within a cooperative learning situation, peer relationships can be structured in a way that students can experience feelings of belonging, acceptance, support, and caring, and the social skills needed to maintain the interdependent relationships. Through repeated cooperative experiences, students can become more sensitive to what behaviors others expect from them, and learn the actual skills to meet such expectations. By holding each other accountable for appropriate social behaviors, students can greatly influence the values they internalize and the self-control they develop. It is through a series of cooperative learning relationships that values are learned and trust is developed among group members. In this way, peer relationships can be a constructive influence and become an important aspect in the incorporation of cooperative learning in the classroom.

Summary

Self-esteem as it relates to academic achievement has been
explored by many educators. Enhanced self-esteem has been found to be a vital trait in ensuring success or failure in life. The amount of self-esteem an individual possesses is directly related to the amount of motivation and achievement he attains. A child's self-esteem is developed through relationships with his family, friends, and teachers. Therefore, the child's perception of himself plays a major factor in his ability to achieve.

Today's students deal with many pressures that were not present in past generations. Advances in technology and the media have had a great influence on how an individual deals with these pressures. The positive strength of an individual's self-esteem is a crucial element of his personality. The teacher's role is to help each student increase his self-esteem in order to function more successfully in school and in society.

The purpose of this paper was to review the literature dealing with ways in which the Cooperative Learning approach helps improve the student's self-esteem. The literature was reviewed in order to examine both quantitative and qualitative studies for successful cooperative learning strategies. In addition, this paper proposed cooperative learning as a valuable model for enhancing self-esteem in the classroom.

What spectacle can be more edifying or more seasonable than that of liberty of learning.
Each leaning on the other for their mutual and surest support.
James Madison
REFERENCES


Conrath, J. (1988). *Our other youth: Handbook of guidelines for teachers and other adults who work with at risk kids and discouraged or defeated learners*. Published by author.


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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Effects</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Team Learning (e.g., STAD, TGT)</td>
<td>Students learn and assist teammates in learning material for later recall; Students are rewarded on the pooled performance of individual members; use of rewards is crucial to cognitive benefits</td>
<td>Positive effects on student learning, especially in basic skills (e.g., arithmetic skills and language mechanism). Positive social outcomes (including liking of social others and handicapped). Some evidence of improved attitudes toward subject matter.</td>
<td>Implemented across a variety of content areas and at both elementary and secondary grades.</td>
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<td>Expert Groups (e.g., Jigsaw)</td>
<td>Each student develops expertise in one area within an expert group and then teaches this material to other peers. All students are tested on all areas. Achievement benefits depend on students learning the material in expert groups, all students reading all material (becoming an expert in one area), and using rewards based on individual and combined group performance.</td>
<td>Positive effects on achievement, if all requisite characteristics are present. Improvement of cross-ethnic attitudes and behaviors.</td>
<td>Primarily social studies, at both elementary and secondary grades.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Collaborative Task Completion (e.g., Learning Together)</td>
<td>Students work on a task cooperatively and are rewarded on the basis of the group product. Students may have substantive responsibility for deciding how to accomplish the task.</td>
<td>Promotion of learning and cognitive development. Positive effect on interpersonal relations. Enhancement of motivation and attitudes toward learning.</td>
<td>All academic domains, at primarily elementary grades.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative Problem Solving or Investigation (e.g., Group Investigation)</td>
<td>Students cooperate to solve or investigate either assigned or self-selected problems, taking substantial responsibility for all aspects of their work. Intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, rewards are emphasized.</td>
<td>Positive effect on higher order skills. Little evidence of benefits for basic skills. Positive impact on social emotions’ development, including effectiveness motivation and interpersonal relations.</td>
<td>Social studies and English-as-Second-Language curricula; variations used to teach problem-solving and math, and in computer environments. Primarily elementary grades.</td>
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