

GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

A number of teaching and learning approaches promote group activities --- active learning, cooperative learning, collaborative learning, problem-based learning, to name some of the more prominent ones. Some of the benefits of group work include:

For the student,

- It increases participation by all students
- It develops problem-solving skills
- It encourages brainstorming of diverse ideas and approaches
- It provide an encouraging learning environment
- It closely resembles team work at the workplace
- It helps develop leadership skills
- It can contribute to the efficient use of time

For the teacher,

- It is an alternative to lecturing
- It allows the teacher to interact with students more directly
- It provides an opportunity to cover more material
- It can promote deeper understanding of content relationships

Group Assignment Level I

1. Each group of 3-5 students is assigned a task --- reading, analysis, research etc.
2. Each group determines sub-tasks for each member.
3. Completed sub-tasks are assembled and presented as the group's completed assignment.
4. Each member of the group is graded individually, and additional points may be awarded for the assignments produced by the group.

Group Assignment Level II

1. Each group of 3-5 students is assigned part of a large assignment --- a section of a chapter to read, a portion of a system to design, etc.
2. Each group completes its task as outlined in Level I.
3. Each group presents/teaches its completed assignment to the entire class.
4. Every student in the class is responsible for learning all components of the material: three sources of information - individual student, small group, and other groups.
5. Each student is credited for contributions made to the group's assignment and is graded on knowledge of the entire content area through whatever assessment tools are used (tests, reports, etc.)

Group Assignment Level III

1. An identical long-term project is assigned to groups of 3-5 students.
2. Groups proceed as outline in Level I.
3. Groups report on their progress to the entire class at regular intervals.
4. Groups report fully to the entire class at the conclusion of their assignment.
5. Class analyzes and discusses the differences and similarities in the outcomes of all groups.
6. Students are graded on their individual contributions to the group's work, and on the quality of the final group product.