

ELL

Cooperative
Learning Tools

Cooperative Learning Tools

Tools	Language Acquisition for ELL			Access to Content for ELL		
	Peer Input (interpretive)	Interactive Intake (interpersonal)	Output Practice (presentational)	Concept Exposure (before)	Concept Development (during)	Concept Attainment (after)
Circle-the-Sage	X			X		
Corners		X	X		X	X
Draw What I Say	X			X		
Fact or Fiction		X			X	
Inside/ Outside Circle		X			X	
Jigsaw Problem Solving		X			X	
Line Ups	X			X		
Mix- Freeze- Group		X			X	
Numbered Heads Together			X			X
One Stray			X			X
Pairs Check or Pairs Compare			X			X
Paraphrase Passport		X			X	
Q-Spinner		X			X	
Rotating Review		X			X	

Cooperative Learning Tools

Roundtable		X			X	
Sages Share		X			X	
Send-A-Problem			X			X
Showdown			X			X
Stir-the-Class		X			X	
Teammates Consult		X			X	
Team-Pair-Solo			X			X
Team Stand-n-Share			X			X
Team Mind Map		X			X	
Think-Pair-Square		X			X	
Three-Step-Interview		X			X	

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Circle-the-Sage (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: attend to a listening activity for an extended period of time; listen to comprehend or acquire information

Science: seek clarification and compare with own observations

Math: listen to solutions shared by others; gather data in response to questions posed by teacher

Social Studies: gather information on an important event or turning point; form conclusions from multiple perspectives

How it works? Students who understand a concept or who can perform a particular skill are selected and become sages. They gather around the sages to learn. Afterwards, students return to teams to share ideas. A variation might be to have students rotate from one sage to another in order to practice listening for information or to have students (sages) give oral presentations on a topic.

Variations for emergent ELL: Select a sage which can share the skill in the primary language if possible (i.e. a translator); have visual support to assist ELL understand main concept; have the ESL teacher share the concept beforehand to build background knowledge or teach basic vocabulary; have the ESL teacher come into class to participate (see peer co-teaching model).

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Corners (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: present a short oral report (or retelling) and speak loudly enough to be heard by audience; share what they know, want to know and have learned about a topic; give book reviews

Science: share research plans with others; present results or findings of experimentation with others

Math: communicate and reason mathematically; explain to others how problems are solved; justify claims or develop an argument

Social Studies: consider different interpretations; develop and present a multimedia report; plan and execute an inquiry to answer questions about a region of the country or world

How it works? Students select or are assigned to a corner where they interact with others students. This might be a useful way to have students give presentations over the course of a week rather than to have individual students do so at the front of the class one at a time which will take more time.

Variations for emergent ELL: ELL are more comfortable sharing in small groups than in front of the entire class so corners is a safer way for them to give an oral report or share information; have ELL perform later rather than earlier so they have models to follow; provide opportunities for ELL to prepare and rehearse before performing; have the ESL teacher come into the class so both teachers can assess the presentations along with peer assessments (see station co-teaching model).

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Draw What I Say (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: follow directions; describe a character or a setting; use note taking and graphic organizers; interpret information represented in pictures and illustrations

Science: design charts, tables, graphs, and other representations of observations in conventional and creative ways to address research questions

Math: represent problem situations graphically; plot points to form geometric shapes or describe characteristics of geometric shapes; draw the graphic representation of a pattern from an equation or from a table; represent data graphically; display, read, and interpret data represented graphically

Social Studies: draw a map (school, neighborhood, country, world); draw a political cartoon

How it works? One student draws what another student describes. To develop better listening and description skills, have the two students sit back to back.

Variations for emergent ELL: Have ELL sit facing each other rather than

English speaker; provide ELL with a partially-completed drawing so they only need to listen for missing information; allow ELL to use primary language to clarify; have ESL teacher rehearse with ELL beforehand in a separate setting (see parallel co-teaching model).

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Fact or Fiction (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: distinguish between fact and opinion; identify conflicting information

Science: defend a conclusion or explanation; work toward clarifying points of agreement or disagreement

Math: justify solutions; use inductive reasoning to evaluate arguments or solutions

Social Studies: distinguishing fact from opinion

How it works? Teammates try to distinguish which statements are fibs or if a statement is true or false.

Variations for emergent ELL: Put students into groups of three and have the ELL their job is to record whether a statement is true or false; provide a rebus (pictures representing the nouns and verbs) format for ELL to follow visually; have linguistic buddies translate if possible or appropriate; have the ESL teacher prepare ELL beforehand with the vocabulary or concepts.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Inside/ Outside Circle (Kagan. 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: learn and use new words; engage in conversations; speak in response to a variety of texts; connect, compare, and contrast ideas and information

Science: formulate hypotheses, question the explanations they hear from others; describe patterns (e.g. weather) or cycles (e.g. life)

Math: use appropriate mathematical terms and language; explain to others how problems are solved; listen to solutions shared by others

Social Studies: identify key turning points and important events; discuss differences (e.g. governments)

How it works? Students form concentric circles and communicate with the respective partner. After sharing is completed, the teacher directs either the inside or outside circle to move to the right or left so that partners are continually rotated. For younger children, it might be helpful to put cut-out feet on the floor ahead of time to facilitate placement.

Variations for emergent ELL: For the first few rounds, keep ELL in the middle of the circle so they can observe the dynamics - be sure to act as the partner to the ELL; when ELL are ready to participate with the circle, provide a cue card with some visual reminders of the topic under discussion; pre-teach essential vocabulary which are new to all students and use inside-outside circle as an opportunity to practice using the vocabulary with one another.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Jigsaw Problem Solving (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: retell multiple pieces of information in sequence; listen to and follow multi-step directions; connect, compare and contrast ideas and information; synthesize information from different perspectives

Science: explore and solve problems; generate ideas for possible solutions through group activity; consider constraints and generate ideas for alternative solutions using group ideation techniques

Math: practice problem solving; interpret information, identify problem, generate solutions; identify independent and dependent variables in problems

Social Studies: arrange events in chronological order; suggest alternative solutions to problems or issues; describe historic events through the eyes of others

How it works? Each student has a part of the answer; teammates must put their information together to solve the problem.

Variations for emergent ELL: Jigsaw allows students to be responsible for material at their level of comprehension or parts of tasks which they can complete so it is an inherently scaffolded strategy for all students; have ESL teacher help select material and task for ELL.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Line Ups (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: express an opinion or judgment; make connections between texts and own lives; show interest in a topic

Science: formulate and defend conclusions; clarifying points of agreement and disagreement

Math: share mathematical claims with verbal explanations; draw conclusions; support or disprove an argument

Social Studies: create timelines; explain different perspectives; consider different interpretations

How it works? Students physically line up by whatever criteria is designated (e.g. characteristics, opinions, estimates, values).

Variations for emergent ELL: ELL will have a chance to understand the big idea by seeing that there are two issues at each end of the continuum, especially if there are visual representations at each end; rather than participate in the line ups, have the ELL tape record the discussion so they can listen for the information in class and later out of class (in the ESL class or at home).

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Mix-Freeze-Group (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: share reading experiences; describe the actions of characters; recognize vocabulary of oral interaction experiences; express an opinion in an organized way; make connections between text, own lives, and other texts

Science: explain the functioning of major systems and their interactions; defend explanations and conclusions; tell what procedures and materials will be used for an investigation

Math: explain to others how problems were solved; verbally support reasoning and answer; answer questions; draw conclusions

Social Studies: explain ideas; compare events from different time periods; use key terms

How it works? Students mix or walk around until the teacher gives the command to freeze or stop in place. Students rush to form a group of a specific size that the teacher has designated. Students which are left over (did not make it into a group) land in the 'lost and found interact with the teacher.

Variations for emergent ELL: Be sure ELL have a cue card to carry with them so they can use it as a reminder for the interaction (the cue card can be pictorial or have key words and definitions or translations); have ELL partner as they participate (two students mix as one); if ELL end up in the

attention; have the ESL teacher rehearse the questions and responses beforehand.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Numbered Heads Together (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: work cooperatively with peers to comprehend and respond to literary texts; express an opinion, summarize, explain, discuss, express, communicate ideas in an organized and cohesive manner; participate actively and productively in group discussions

Science: explain, critique, revise, and submit information; analyze, construct, collect and compare data; provide a correct, complete, coherent and clear rationale for thought processes used in problem solving

Math: represent problem situations verbally, numerically, algebraically, and/ or graphically; explain to others how problems were solved; justify claims - develop and explain an argument

Social Studies: explain major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points; suggest alternative solutions; discuss reasons

How it works? Students are put into teams of four and each student is assigned a number from one to four. The teacher asks a question and students huddle (i.e. heads together) to discuss the answer. The teacher spins a numbered heads together spinner on the overhead to identify which number has the chance to answer the question (available from www.kaganonline.com).
response wins a point for the team.

Variations for emergent ELL: This strategy is inherently scaffolded because students accept the responsibility for assisting their teammates with the correct responses; ESL teachers can practice questions with ELL beforehand; this is excellent for reviewing test questions for ELL.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Pairs Check or Pairs Compare (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: engage in reading activities; discuss versions of text; identify, explain, and evaluate ideas; interview peers

Science: interpret organized data; observe, describe and explain; plan and build models; discuss how to test solutions

Math: compare the similarities and differences of mathematical ideas; share mental images of mathematical ideas and understandings; question the explanations they hear from others

Social Studies: compare characters and events described; gather and organize information; propose an action plan; discuss newspaper articles or political cartoons

How it works? Students work in pairs to complete a problem or task and then check or compare with another pair; the two pairs can see if the answer was correct, how the other pair went about solving the problem or completing the task, or as a foursome they can come up with another response.

Variations for emergent ELL: ELL can be paired together and the task and material can be differentiated accordingly; ELL can use the primary language as a pair and then use English with the second pair; ESL teachers can preview the problems or task in advance to prepare ELL.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Paraphrase Passport (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: listen respectfully and responsively; follow directions; acquire information and understand procedures; determine a sequence of steps; synthesize and paraphrase information

Science: explain the functioning of major systems; tell what materials and procedures will be used

Math: listen to solutions shared by others; restate mathematical solutions shared by others

Social Studies: brainstorm a list of alternative solutions; interpret historic events and issue from different perspectives

How it works? Students share their ideas only after they have paraphrased the student who spoke before them.

Variations for emergent ELL: Provide ELL students with a graphic organizer so they can take notes or draw pictures as their partner speaks; assign the ELL to present the second time around so they have a model to follow; have the ESL teacher build background knowledge on the topic beforehand with ELL.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Q-Spinner (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: ask probing questions to clarify interpretations or responses to stories or literature; identify what they want to know about an informational topic; ask follow up questions

Science: formulate questions about natural phenomena; refine and clarify questions so they are subject to scientific investigation; ask questions to seek greater understanding

Math: formulate mathematically relevant questions; pose questions to collect and record data

Social Studies: ask geographical questions; investigate important events by posing analytical questions

How it works? In pairs, students generate questions from one of 36 question prompts produced by spinners (available from www.Kaganonline.com).

Variations for emergent ELL: Providing the question prompts and working with partners helps ELL to generate questions; have the ESL teacher practice the forming of questions with content material beforehand; the spinners are available in English and Spanish and students can make their own in other languages.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it?

Rotating Review

(Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: interpret information represented in pictures and illustrations; connect information from personal experiences to information from texts; identify main ideas and provide supporting details; offer feedback to others during conferences

Science: refine and clarify questions so they are subject to investigation; formulate hypotheses; collect and organize data and use collected data to communicate a scientific idea

Math: formulate problems and solutions from everyday situations; use inductive reasoning to construct, evaluate and validate conjectures and arguments; translate from a picture/ diagram to a numeric expression; translate verbal expressions into algebraic expressions;

Social Studies: compare important events and accomplishments from different time periods; interpret and analyze documents; compare governmental structures; suggest alternative solutions

How it works? Post topics on butcher paper around the room. Teams are assigned to discuss and record their thoughts (or feedback) and then move to the next topic.

Variations for emergent ELL: Use visual icons to symbolize the meaning of the topic so ELL have more than one way to obtain meaning; assign a bilingual

teacher build background knowledge of the topic beforehand through the use of a prepared outline.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Roundtable (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: retell multiple pieces of information in sequence; identify or summarize main ideas and supporting details; draft main ideas and supporting details; present direct references to text to support ideas

Science: participate in projects requiring students to work effectively, gather and process information, generate and analyze ideas, and present results

Math: translate from a picture/ diagram to a numeric expression; practice problem solving; use multiple representations; use venn diagrams to sort and describe data

Social Studies: create historical timelines of major events and characters; classify information by type of activity; draw maps and diagrams; present information by developing charts, tables, and diagrams write from varying points of view (journals, diary accounts, letters or news accounts)

How it works? In teams of four, students take turns passing the same paper from one to the next in order to write or draw collectively (1 paper, 1 pencil).

Variations for emergent ELL: This strategy is inherently scaffolded for ELL because they can complete a task interdependently which they might not be able to do independently. Seat the ELL so they have the last turn.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Sages Share (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: take turns speaking in a group; express an opinion; identify, explain and evaluate ideas; speak in a response to text; recognize cultural influences on text; synthesize and paraphrase information; respond

actively in group discussions

Science: design charts, tables, graphs and other representations of observations in conventional and creative ways to address research questions; seek to clarify, to assess critically, and to reconcile with their own thinking the ideas presented by others; participate in structured group tasks requiring planning, designing and follow up

Math: practice problem solving; justify claims and listen to claims others make; use mathematics to show and understand phenomena (physical, social, and mathematical)

Social Studies: present information about important developments, events or periods; use a variety of research skills to locate, collect, and organize data; create a list of reasons, justifications, causes, consequences

How it works? Students brainstorm ideas, and each student initials the ideas

Variations for emergent ELL: Provide ELL with prepared outlines, notes or key vocabulary so they can participate; have the ESL teacher practice

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Send-A-Problem (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: prepare and give presentations on informational topics; present interpretations and support them through specific references to the text; ask and respond to questions to clarify interpretations or responses to literature

Science: consider constraints and generate ideas for alternative solutions using group ideation techniques (i.e. discussion, brainstorming); use logical reasoning to develop conclusions; interpret organized data to answer research questions and to gain insight into the problem; provide a correct, complete, coherent and clear rationale for thought processes used in problem solving

Math: represent problem situations verbally, numerically, algebraically, and/ or graphically; compare and discuss ideas for solving a problem; apply a variety of strategies to solve problems

Social Studies: suggest alternative solutions; propose an action plan; complete well-documented and historically accurate case studies; investigate important events

How it works? Teammates make problems which are sent around the class for other teams to solve.

Variations for emergent ELL: Have the ESL teacher come to class (see station co-teaching) or have the ESL teacher prepare the ELL with vocabulary and background knowledge; provide ELL with cue cards (short phrases) so they can participate with their peers; provide bilingual dictionaries for ELL.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it?

Showdown

(Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: identify elements of literature in response to questions; express an opinion, summarize, explain, discuss, express, communicate ideas in an organized and cohesive way; express a point of view providing supporting facts

Science: develop, present, and defend explanations and conclusions; construct descriptions of objects and events and form tentative explanations; represent, present and defend proposed explanations of everyday observations

Math: calculate in response to problems posed (e.g. sum of, perimeter of, length of); compare and discuss ideas for solving a problem; listen to solutions shared by others

Social Studies: listen to and participate in classroom debates; arrange events in chronological order; identify, explain and discuss turning points or ideas embodied in documents

How it works?

Teammates each write an answer in response to a question posed by the teacher. When signaled, students have a 'showdown' as they show each other their answers. Teammates select best answer.

Variations for emergent ELL: Provide ESL teacher with questions and answers beforehand so ELL can be prepared with key vocabulary and responses.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it?

Stir-the-Class

(Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: retell stories; respond orally and share information; relate events; describe actions or motivations of characters; speak in response to a variety of texts

Science: explain or describe the functioning of major systems; cite examples; describe patterns, relationships, properties, changes, effects, characteristics and variations of

Math: communicate and reason mathematically; compare and discuss how problems were solved; answer questions related to data

Social Studies: explain major ideas, eras, themes, developments and turning points

How it works? Teams huddle to discuss a question from the teacher and stand shoulder to shoulder to signal they have a response. The teacher calls a number and students who are assigned that number rotate to the next team to share their answer. Students who move join the new team for the next question.

Variations for emergent ELL: Use the strategy as a review of information so ELL have already received the 'input
be sure ELL have had the opportunity to practice responses either with other students in class or with the ESL teacher outside of class (see parallel co-teaching).

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Teammates Consult (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: take turns speaking in a group; share reading experiences; share what they have learned about a topic; communicate ideas in an organized and coherent way; listen in brainstorming sessions with peers; contribute to group discussions by offering comments; present reasons and examples from sources to support or defend opinion or judgment

Science: interpret organized data; formulate and defend explanations and conclusions; explore and solve problems; seek clarification and compare with own observations; share research plans or results with others; interpret organized data to answer questions

Math: communicate and reason mathematically; compare and discuss ideas for solving a problem; question the explanations heard from others; verbally support reasoning or explain rationale for strategy selection

Social Studies: listen to and participate in debates; consider different interpretations; make hypothesis about relevant issues; interpret and analyze documents; answer questions about regions of the world

How it works? For each of a series of questions, students place pens in a cup, share and discuss their answers, and then pick up pens to write answer in their own words.

Variations for emergent ELL: If possible, find someone who can translate the questions in advance for the ELL so they have an idea of what will be discussed; provide a partial script for ELL to follow during the discussion; have the ESL teacher prepare ELL for the discussion.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Team-Pair-Solo (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: engage in reading activities or recognize the use of literary devices (team), interpret, make inferences or draw conclusions (pair), and construct a personal response to texts (solo)

Science: gather and process information (team), generate and analyze ideas (pairs), present results using media (solo)

Math: interpret information from word problems (team), identify problem (pair), generate solutions (solo)

Social Studies: list analytical questions to guide investigations (team), gather information in response to research questions (pairs), present results (solo)

How it works? Teammates first work together on a problem or task as a team, then as a pair, and finally alone.

Variations for emergent ELL: This strategy is inherently scaffolded because students progress from interdependence to independence (i.e.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Team Stand-n-Share (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: attend to a listening activity; speak audibly and with expression appropriate for the audience and task; retell stories; role play characters; construct a personal response to literature; report information to peers

Science: form and defend a logical argument; use logical reasoning to develop conclusions; share findings with others; describe, compare and contrast, or explain

Math: listen to claims others make; listen to solutions shared by others; justify claims; develop and explain an argument which explains rationale for strategy selection

Social Studies: forming conclusions; describing historic events through the eyes of others; explain ideas embodied in a historical passage or primary source document; present historical narratives that link together a series of events

How it works? All teams stand to share ideas. Teams sit when ideas are

Variations for emergent ELL: Have ELL tape record team responses and then listen to the responses later while completing a graphic organizer from which they can study; have ELL identify when students provide repetitive responses.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it?

Team Mind Map

(Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: represent information in pictures and illustrations; identify main ideas and supporting details; use note taking and graphic

for note taking; connect, compare and contrast ideas and information

Science: participate in projects requiring students to work effectively, gather and process information, generate and analyze ideas, and present results; use graphical, statistical and presentation software to present projects to classmates (e.g. Inspiration)

Math: use multiple representations; share mental images of mathematical ideas and understandings

Social Studies: classify information by type of activity; draw maps, diagrams, and pictures showing how people make use of their physical environment; interpret an important event or development in history

How it works? Students draw and label the central image, brainstorm, draw and label main ideas radiating out of the central image, and add details using colors, images, branches, and key words.

Variations for emergent ELL: This strategy is inherently scaffolded for ELL since visual representations show what they know and can do; mind maps can serve as a modified assessment for ELL.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it? Think-Pair-Square (Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: draw on prior experience to understand ideas; learn and use new words; recognize vocabulary of oral interaction experiences; participate in small group interactions; synthesize information from different perspectives

Science: gather and process information, generate and analyze ideas; observe common themes, and present results; work toward reconciling competing explanations

Math: interpret information, identify problem, generate solutions; use appropriate mathematical terms, vocabulary and language; solve multi-step equations

Social Studies: discuss key turning points and important events; listen to different perspectives; debate various views

How it works? Students think about their response to a question, discuss answers in pairs, and then share their ideas with another pair.

Variations for emergent ELL: Pair ELL with students who can use the primary language for the first round (i.e. pair); provide ELL with visual cues to help them generate language or with partial scripts to follow; have the ESL teacher review information with ELL beforehand.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

What is it?

Three-Step Interview

(Kagan, 1998)

Why use it?

Language Arts: listen purposefully to different speakers; take turns speaking in a group; ask and answer questions about informational or literary text; interview peers

Science: share findings with others; explore ways to address research questions or conduct experiments

Math: compare and discuss ideas for solving a problem; solve multi-step equations

Social Studies: conduct interviews to gather and record information; discuss newspaper articles

How it works? Students are grouped into a team of four to share as follows: Step 1 - pairs share with one another; Step 2 - pairs switch with other pairs to share with a different partner; Step 3 - all four students share with one another. This strategy provides three opportunities to practice oral skills in a small group yet each time is done with a different audience.

Variations for emergent ELL: Assign role of listener during all three steps so student has three chances to make meaning from peers; provide a visual code or cues to help ELL follow conversation; pair ELL for the first step with another student who shares the primary language; have the ESL teacher practice the strategy with the content beforehand.

Cooperative Learning Tools for Oral Skills

Reference

Kagan Smart Card of Cooperative Learning Structures, 1998.