



# Collaboration in Today's Classroom

## Teaching Large Classes

### Group Life-cycle:

- Forming \_\_\_\_\_ **(A)** Things begin to settle down. Arguments and disagreements subside. People start to agree what it is that they need to do and how to do it. They start engaging with their own responsibilities for the task at hand, collaborating and supporting others where necessary.
- Storming \_\_\_\_\_ **(B)** This is the stage (which may last a long time) when a group is functioning at its peak, doing the task well, moving towards its goal. Engagement and achievement is high. Everyone is working to their best ability.
- Norming \_\_\_\_\_ **(C)** People come together as a group. Individuals arrive with many personal worries about their own likely successes or contributions. They tentatively check out other members and start to find out how they fit into the group. Generally not seeking to get involved in conflict at the moment
- Performing \_\_\_\_\_ **(D)** Once the immediate initial personal worries are calming down, the group can start to work on the task(s) they have. A lot of ideas and attitudes will fill the air. There may be a lot of energy, and perhaps disagreements and uncertainties, as working relationships are established. Leaderships and other roles will establish themselves, and there may be arguments about what to do and how to do it.

### Activity 1:

#### Challenges

How could Tasks 1–7 be challenging working with large classes?

1. maintaining control
2. monitoring learners' progress during the lesson
3. marking learners' work
4. making coursebook activities more interactive
5. managing the physical space and seating plan
6. dealing with individual student participation
7. building an effective relationship with all learners

#### Opportunities

What opportunities can a large class present?

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Thinking and learning skills

Creativity & innovation

Participating in creative activities

Creating new content – from own ideas or other resources

Discovering & expressing own personal identity and feelings through creative activities

Critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making

Understanding links between ideas

Evaluating texts, ideas and arguments

Synthesizing ideas and information

Identifying and prioritising problems to be addressed

Evaluating options

Asking effective questions

ICT literacy

Using digital and online tools

Following safe online practices – to protect yourself and your school

Behaving appropriately to others online – ‘netiquette’

Learning to learn, self-efficacy, study skills

Practical skills for participating in learning –

Showing a positive mindset for learning (English)

Reflecting on and evaluating own learning success

Identifying and articulating learning goals

Identifying and using effective learning techniques

Seeking help from other people or resources

Making notes, storing & retrieving information

Preparing for and taking exams

Social skills

Social responsibilities and global competences

Understanding personal responsibilities as part of a group and in society – including citizenship

Behaving consistently with personal and social responsibilities

Showing leadership skills

Understanding and describing own culture

Understanding and respecting how other cultures can differ

Understanding and discussing global issues – environmental, political, financial and social

Understanding & managing career development options and techniques

Communication

Using appropriate language/register for context

Managing conversations

Overcoming own language gaps

Participating with appropriate confidence & clarity

Supporting others to communicate successfully

Collaboration

Taking turns in shared activities

Listening to and respecting others’ contributions

Sharing ideas

Taking personal responsibility for own contributions to a group task

Managing the sharing of tasks in a project

Evaluating and responding constructively to others’ contributions or activities.

Emotional skills

Identifying and talking about own emotions

Managing own emotions

Empathy & relationship skills: recognising & responding appropriately to other children’s emotional state



## Reader

### How could you finish Sentences 1–8 about classroom routines?

1. It can be a good idea to involve our learners in forming class rules because ...
2. Some learners like to sit in the same place every lesson, and some are happy to change seats. However, in the first few weeks of a new school year, it might be useful to have a fixed seating plan. It can help us to ...
3. When our learners don't understand what to do with a task or activity, they quickly lose focus and motivation. Therefore, we need to be effective and consistent in the way we give instructions. Some effective ways to give instructions are ...
4. Due to the large number of learners and/or a lack of physical space, we might not always be able to move around the class and see what's going on. It can therefore be a good idea to designate different roles within particular groups of learners. These roles could include ...
5. It is a good idea to find out a little personal information about our learners. This can feel like an overwhelming task in a large class, but it's important because ...
6. One way to learn personal information about learners is ...
7. If you want to get our learners to stop talking – either because the noise level is too great or it is time to stop a communicative speaking activity – an effective way to do this is ...



## Reader

Read Strategies A–G about dealing with student interaction and participation.

What problems could the strategies apply to? And which strategies would be effective in *your* class?

- A. We could explain to our students that their English will improve if they *communicate* with it in class, for example to get information, to negotiate, to disagree. Tell them that writing silently in English won't prepare them for situations when they actually need to use it.
- B. We can get learners to agree on a minimum amount of English to use during an activity  
e.g. at least five sentences or at least 50% of talking time. At the end of the activity, they can evaluate their own or each other's contributions.
- C. Assign written roles to group members and set a time limit for them to read and understand the roles,  
e.g. 'All the As in the groups, look at your role on page 5 and read it carefully. All the Bs, look at page 6 and read your role. All the Cs, your role is on page 7. You have two minutes to read your role card.'
- D. We can hand out coursebooks to just Group 1:
- **Group 1** give them ten minutes to read a text on a specific topic (e.g. job interviews).
  - **Group 2** brainstorms vocabulary for job interviews;
  - **Group 3** plans some questions for a job interview;
  - **Group 4** discusses and writes down some interview 'Dos and Don'ts'. After ten minutes, the groups swap tasks
- E. Give an answer sheet to one person in each group – the 'checker'. The checker marks the group's work, noting down common problems or mistakes. Then the checker reports back to us after the task is finished and asks for clarification.
- F. If we stand on the other side of the classroom, rather than right next to a student, they will have to speak more loudly. Then the whole class can hear.



## Secretary

How could you finish Sentences 1–8 about classroom routines?

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## Secretary

**What problems could the strategies apply to? And which strategies would be effective in *your* class?**

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