

Working together

Approach: Team

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Resources: Paper pads, summary of instructions, activity sheet.

Questions/instructions

Place 4 pads of paper on the table for students to use. Imagine that for the next two weeks you are going to be working together ...

YEAR 4: to make a big poster about New Zealand.

YEAR 8: on a social studies project.

Think about what rules you could have to help your group work well and make every person feel part of the team.

I want each of you to think about this on your own, and to write down four really important rules for working together. Write each idea on a separate piece of paper.

Allow about 5 minutes, ensuring that students work independently of each other.

Now I want each of you to read out your ideas for rules to the others, and to put them in the middle of the table where they can be seen.

Allow time.

Finally I want your group to talk about the rules and choose just 4 rules that all of you agree with, and all of you think are really important. If you want, you can use the ideas that each of you has already given.

YEAR 4: Tell me four rules and I'll write them on this activity sheet.

YEAR 8: When you have decided, write the four rules on this activity sheet.

	% responses	
	y4	y8
Merit of first rule:		
excellent	2	8
very good	33	54
good	51	34
poor	14	4
Merit of second rule:		
excellent	1	7
very good	36	49
good	44	41
poor	19	3
Merit of third rule:		
excellent	2	8
very good	43	45
good	35	44
poor	20	3
Merit of fourth rule:		
excellent	1	8
very good	32	46
good	42	39
poor	25	7
Level of collaboration:		
very good	4	9
good	16	31
moderate	45	43
poor	35	17
Quality of discussion:		
very good	2	10
good	14	19
moderate	34	42
poor	50	29
Number of good distinct rules:		
4	18	35
3	33	52
2	37	10
1	8	3
0	4	0

Commentary

Although there was a slight difference between year 4 and year 8 in the way the task was administered, it was of little substance in terms of what the students were asked to do, or the marking and analysis of responses. Overall, most teams of students at both levels handled the process of rule formulation well, with more than half the year 8 teams and about one third of the year 4 teams presenting quality rules. Only 13 percent of year 8 teams failed to produce at least three good rules. However, when processes of group discussion and collaboration rather than rule formulation were examined, fewer teams demonstrated the ability to use appropriate skills.