

# Group Learning

Elliot Aronson is a researcher in Education theory with 45 years in the field. He saw that the main problem students have is feeling disconnected from the learning process, from the teacher, and from each other. If students feel they are on the outside, they become passive, attendance drops, grades drop, and other problem behaviors emerge.

To change this, students must become more involved with each other and with the material. They should be the speakers, the negotiators, and the doers in class, in a cooperative group setting. But just because students are in a group does not mean that the material will help them to take advantage of this. Lessons must be structured so that they feel it is a team effort to learn the material. A well-structured lesson includes the following parts:

1. A text describing the topic of the lesson gets divided into parts.
2. The class divides itself into groups.
3. Each student gets a different part to read and think about.
4. Each student presents a summary to the rest of the group.
5. Other students listen and ask questions, because it is new to them.
6. At the end of the activity, everyone must demonstrate his or her new knowledge outside of the group setting.

Benefits of using this method are as follows:

1. If every student teaches well, then everyone in the group will succeed.
2. Members of each group begin to see each other's real personality, not just the face they put on for class.
3. Students begin to understand, feel for, and like being around each other.
4. Over time, students begin to like school better, they begin to like each other more, they show up for class more, they do better on exams, and they feel better about themselves.
5. Students feel like an active part of something important, which leads to success, because it becomes part of them.