

I first did cooperative work two school years ago, once as a year-long project and once as a month-long exercise in Greek. However, it wasn't till last year that I first did a whole year's worth of lessons in a specific subject through cooperative teaching. All in all I have to say that it was a welcome change of pace from the beginning, though it had a few minor faults.

In Chemistry, we had theory and instructions either presented to us by the professor or written on the exercise sheets that she would hand out to us. We worked in pairs solving problems and exercises and showing them to the professor when we were done. We were quite focused as pairs, even those who didn't particularly care for Chemistry as a subject. The more proficient of the pair would sometimes help the other one, but there was rarely such a vast difference within the pair that they wouldn't work side by side. The work would go smoothly, but the ambience that was developed for the lesson made the students uneager to study the theory at home.

In Physics and Greek we would be put into groups of four or five. Some days, the professor would explain theories or introduce new material; in other cases we would devote ourselves to groupwork from start to end. The larger groups would typically talk among themselves more and be less devoted, but that is not to say that we didn't work at all. In those groups, it was also more common for the best student to do most of the work by him or herself. The lesson was made more interesting though,



and this meant that otherwise uninterested students would pay more attention. In Greek there was much more room for debate and exchange of different views, which was welcome to see.

Overall, I think the benefits of cooperative teaching outweigh whatever disadvantages it may have. I would like to see it become the usual way of teaching, since it seems that the students both learn more and find it more interesting than the old-fashioned way of teaching.

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