



# Self-Management

## ABOUT CENTER FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM

The Caring School Community (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based program for grades K-6 that builds classroom and schoolwide community while developing students' social and emotional (SEL) skills and competencies.

# Groups of Four

By: The Caring School Community

# Groups of Four

## Lesson Purpose

Students:

- Get to know one another
- Include others
- Contribute to group work

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## The Lesson

### 1 INTRODUCE GROUP WORK

Remind the students that they have been building a community by doing various activities to help them get to know one another. In the previous team-building activity, they found classmates who fit certain descriptions, like having a pet or a younger brother or sister. Today, they will work in groups of four people to find out more about one another. Ask:

**Q How might working in a group of four be different from working in pairs?**

**Q What might help your group members work together well?**

**Students might say:**

“In a group, you might have to wait longer for a turn to talk.”

“We can make sure to let everyone talk.”

“Don’t leave anyone out.”

Have a few volunteers share with the group. As the students share, follow up with questions such as:

**Q How can you make sure that [everyone gets to talk]?**

**Q What might you do if [people in the group don’t agree]?**

## Materials

- Paper and pencils for each group



**If the students have trouble generating ideas, prompt them with examples such as those in “Students might say.”**

## 2 FORM GROUPS OF FOUR AND MODEL GENERATING TRUE STATEMENTS

Randomly assign the students to form groups of four and have group members sit together. (For suggestions on assigning groups randomly, see *CSC Overview*, p. 25.) Explain that today the students will work together to find ways to describe their group. Working in groups gives them a chance to hear the thinking of several other people and practice sharing their own thinking.

Ask a group of four made up of two boys and two girls to stand. Ask the class:

**Q** How could you describe the number of boys and girls in this group?

**Students might say:**

“There are two boys and two girls.”

“Half the kids are boys, and half the kids are girls.”

“Two out of four are girls.”

Have two or three volunteers share their ideas with the class. Have the group of four sit down and ask another group to stand. Ask:

**Q** How could you describe the number of people in this group who have brown hair and the number who don't?

Have a few volunteers share their ideas, and then have the group of four sit down. Point out that the things the students have said are true statements that describe each group. Explain that they will work together to write true statements that describe their own group. Explain that after the groups write their statements, you will read them to the class, and the class will try to figure out which group of four the statements describe. Ask each group to write at least four statements and circle two they would like to share with the class.



**Group work fosters the students' academic and social development. In groups, the students are exposed to a greater variety of ideas, and the more complex interactions of the group require that the students develop critical social skills, such as including one another, solving problems, making decisions, and reaching agreement. (For more information about the role of cooperative structures in social development, see *CSC Overview*, p. 19.)**



**If the students need help writing statements, consider writing the following sentence prompts where everyone can see them and having the students use them to write their statements:**

- Half of us \_\_\_\_.
- One out of four of us \_\_\_\_.
- Two out of four of us \_\_\_\_.
- Three out of four of us \_\_\_\_.
- All four of us \_\_\_\_.

### For Grades 2–3

**You may want to ask the groups to write two or three true statements and have them choose one or two to share with the class.**

# Class Meeting Lessons

## 3 GENERATE TRUE STATEMENTS IN GROUPS OF FOUR

Distribute paper and pencils to the groups and have them begin the activity.

Let the class know when they have about two minutes left. Remind the groups to circle two statements they want to share with the class. When time is up, collect the statements.

## 4 MATCH GROUPS AND STATEMENTS

Have the students stay seated in their groups. Read each group's circled statements aloud and have the class try to figure out which group they describe. Probe their thinking with questions such as:

- Q** How do you know that these statements describe this group?
- Q** Is there another group these statements could describe? If so, how?
- Q** Do you agree or disagree with [Paolo]? Why?

## 5 REFLECT ON THE GROUP WORK

Ask and discuss:

- Q** What is something new you learned today about your classmates?
- Q** How did your group do working together?
- Q** What might you do the next time we work in groups to make things go better?

Explain that the students will be doing team-building activities throughout the year to help them continue to learn about one another.



Circulate around the room as the groups work. If you notice a group that is having trouble generating ideas, you can help by offering additional examples or asking questions such as:

- Q** Earlier we described a group by looking at the color of the group members' hair. What else might you look at to describe your group?
- Q** What common activities do you like to do?
- Q** What are some other things you have in common?



You can enhance the mathematics in this lesson by having the groups state their descriptions in fractions or percents. Then you can have two groups of four combine into a group of eight and explore whether or not the statements they wrote for their group of four are true for the larger group. You may want to do this expanded version of the activity over more than one day, being sure the groups know to pick descriptions that won't change overnight. (For example, a true statement about clothing color might not be true on another day, but a true statement about eye color will.)