

ORGANIZING GROUP WORK IN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This paper discusses the organization of small group work in the classroom, including the components of group work during the lesson, planning for group division, adapting the classroom layout accordingly, the preparation stage, and the structure of group work.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, modern pedagogical technologies, form, method, tool, approach, student grouping, small group work.

Where there is learning, there is greatness.
Where there is knowledge, there is abundance.
Yusuf Khas Hajib

Introduction

The social and economic changes in our lives demand that the youth develop as well-rounded individuals. This places a great responsibility on primary education, which is the foundation of the lifelong learning system. This is because the basics of all academic subjects are mastered in primary grades.

Lifelong learning consists of deep, comprehensive education and upbringing, with a harmonious integration of various forms, methods, tools, approaches, and directions of professional training. The quality of lifelong education depends on the interrelationship between various components and the effective application of specific methods and techniques in the teaching process.

The general pedagogical and didactic requirement at all stages of education is to enhance students' ability to work independently based on their academic knowledge, imagination, and skills; to promote scientific thinking, increase interest in academic subjects, deepen professional knowledge, and boost their activity during theoretical and practical lessons. Global pedagogical experience confirms that modern pedagogical technologies provide limitless opportunities to engage students and increase their independence in learning.

Today's educational task is to teach students to act independently in the increasingly information-rich educational environment and to use information wisely. To achieve this, it is essential to continuously provide them with opportunities and conditions for independent work. One of the most critical aspects of organizing group work during lessons is dividing students into groups. What should be considered when forming small groups? Factors include students' ability to work at the same pace, their level of comprehension, capabilities, and awareness of the subject and the specific task. If possible, groups should consist of both boys and girls, and it is also advisable to consider which students prefer to work together. For effective discussion



of a given task, 6–8 students per group is optimal, but groups of four can also yield good results in terms of increasing student activity. To avoid distractions during class, the group setup and seating arrangement should be planned in advance. Desks and chairs should be arranged in a semicircle or "P" shape to ensure that students can see each other, the board, and the teacher clearly.

Group work fosters creativity, freedom, and independent thinking. It requires prior preparation, including a well-developed discussion topic, time management, and other essential elements. This demands thorough preparation from the teacher. The success of small group work largely depends on this preparation. The teacher should not only formulate questions but also ensure interdisciplinary connections, integrating materials from other subjects, and not limit themselves only to the subject they teach.

During the preparation phase, attention should be given to the following:

Determining the goal of the activity, i.e., what should be achieved through small group work.

Setting up a problem situation and carefully sequencing the questions.

Engaging all students in discussion and promoting mutual exchange of ideas.

Monitoring the discussion, ensuring the focus remains on the topic, and avoiding unnecessary debates.

Taking notes of ideas generated during the process on the board or in a notebook for future use.

Example structure of a small group session:

1. Presentation of the topic and purpose – 5 minutes
2. Introductory remarks and posing of questions – 10 minutes
3. Group presentations – 10 minutes
4. Conclusion and summarization of presentations – 12 minutes
5. Evaluation – 3 minutes

During the introductory remarks, the main issues for group discussion and the time regulations are set. Questions for group discussion are selected, and preparations are made for the presentation.

The student presenting for the group should not be allowed to speak for too long. Other students must be actively engaged and given the opportunity to speak and express their opinions. At the end of the discussion, the teacher summarizes the tasks and questions assigned to each group and announces the winning group.

In the evaluation phase, group performance is summarized, active students are highlighted, and individual evaluations are given. If necessary, feedback on the grades is provided.

Every teacher can adapt this method to their subject when planning their lessons. As a result, students reinforce their knowledge, expand their intellectual horizons, and develop comprehension skills.

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