

# Works and Plays Cooperatively with Others

## What does “Works and Plays Cooperatively with Others” mean?

This skill relates to the positive relationships a child has with other children. School provides chances for children to work and play together in a give-and-take manner. A child works and plays cooperatively when they take part in a shared activity and allow other children to contribute. For example, a child shows this skill by helping another child clean up or by listening to another child’s ideas. This skill helps children learn from others and work well in a group.

## TIPS for TEACHERS

### How can I explain this skill to children?

Let children know that the class is like a team. When we learn how to work and play well with each other, we make our team the strongest it can be. Being part of a team means learning how to cooperate with your teammates so you can get things done. When we work and play well together, our team wins!

### What are some examples of best practices from educational experts and fellow teachers?

#### TIP1

**Think-pair-share.** Create learning opportunities that require children to work together. One way to do this is through pair and small group work. Give children a prompt that makes them think creatively. Then, put them in pairs and give them a cooperative task to do based on their creative thinking. Finally, have them share their work with the rest of the class. Here is an example of a think-pair-share activity:

1. During literacy time, read halfway through a book and stop.
2. Ask children to think about what the ending of the book might be.
3. Create groups of two or three and have them discuss their ideas about how the book might end and try to come up with one ending that they all agree on.
4. Within their pairs, have the children draw a picture of the ending they have created, with each person contributing something to the drawing.
5. Have each group show their picture to the class and describe the ending they imagined for the book. Ask each child what part of the picture they added to the whole.

6. After each group shares their work, read the ending of the book to the class.

## TIP2

**Create sharing teams.** Instead of a show-and-tell activity where one student presents to the entire class, create smaller groups of three where each child is assigned a role. Each week, one child can be the sharer, one child can be the explorer, and one child can be the applauder.

- The sharer’s job is to share something with the group.
- The explorer’s job is to ask questions about what the sharer has talked about.
- The applauder’s job is to positively recognize something about what the sharer said.

Use a chart like the one below to remind children what each person is supposed to do. Have children rotate roles every week. Once they have all had a turn with each role, create new groups of three and begin again.

### Our Sharing Teams

SHARER



Share something for five minutes.

EXPLORER



Ask the sharer three questions about what they shared and listen closely to what they say.

APPLAUDER



List three things you liked about what the sharer told the group.

## TIP3

**Tootle notes.** Give children the power to recognize and praise each other to help them build cooperation and positive relationships. Instead of tattling on their friends when they do something wrong, teach children to “tootle.” Tootling is when we “tell on” our peers for doing something right. Here are some ways that children can tootle:

- When children see a peer do something positive, such as sharing crayons, they can give their peer a “toot” by recording their good behavior with a note or a drawing.
- Children can give each other these notes to show their appreciation.
- You can set up a box in the classroom where children can put these notes or drawings if they don’t want to give them directly to their peers.

## TIP4

**Collective goals.** Give the entire class a goal that they must work together to achieve. At the end of the activity, encourage children to talk about ways they worked well together to get the job done.

Here is an example of a project with a collective goal:

- Let children know that the whole class will be doing an art project. If they work together to complete it, they can hang it up in the classroom.
- Give every child two strips of paper. Ask them to draw a picture on one strip and write their name on the other.
- Once everyone creates a drawing and writes their name, the strips can be linked together to create a paper chain that can be displayed in the room.
- Let children know that they can help each other. For instance, if one child is struggling to write their name, a peer can help out.
- Remind them to share the art supplies so everyone can complete their strips.
- At the end of the activity ask the class, “How did we work together well to make our chain? Could we have made this chain if we didn’t work together? What are other activities we can do together at school?”
- Write out children’s responses to the last question on a big piece of paper and post it in the classroom as a reminder of what we can get done when we work together.

## TIP5

**Keys to connecting.** Finding ways to connect with others can be hard for children. You can help children learn how to positively engage with others by talking about and modeling these keys to connecting:



**Listen.** Remind children that everyone likes to be heard and respected. Tell children that they should listen to what others are saying to understand their thoughts and feelings.



**Ask a question.** Suggest that children ask a question when in a group setting to show that they are engaged. Tell them that they should wait to talk until others are done speaking. For example, when building a block tower, a child could ask the other children how tall they want to build it.



**Contribute.** Tell children they can connect with others by offering a way to contribute to the activity. For example, when doing a puzzle with others, a child could offer to find the blue pieces.



**Show support.** Children can also positively engage with others by complimenting the work or thoughts of a group member. For example, when making a group art project, a child could say what they like about another person’s drawing.

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## How can I encourage children when I see them trying to learn this skill?

**Acknowledge children for their efforts!** For example, say, “Wow, Owen! You worked so hard to help Kyrie and Gabriella put that puzzle together” or “Nora, aren’t you proud of yourself for playing that game so nicely with Ben?”

To learn more about the tips and where they came from, please visit our references page: [ckphilly.org/citations](http://ckphilly.org/citations)