



## **Effectiveness of Group Work in a TESOL Classroom**

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There are many teaching techniques used in the classroom. Different teachers have different methods and standards for how they present information to their students. However, there are certain techniques that can be used by any teacher, for any age. One such technique is the implementation of group work in the classroom.

Group work is a very useful tool in teaching information, but it is especially useful when used for language teaching. First, group work means that everyone in the class is occupied. If there is an odd number of students, just place the remaining students in a random group. There is nothing wrong or detrimental about a group having an extra member. In fact, it may make the child feel more accepted. Children, however, should not be allowed to choose their groups for several reasons. One, this takes too much time. Two, the teacher has the ability to match children who will benefit from working together. For example, extremely clever children will often help the not so clever children, but need to be monitored so they are not doing all the work.

Children can certainly benefit from group work, but group work can also be detrimental. The teacher should monitor children for a short period before placing them into groups in order to avoid problems between certain students. For example, two children that clearly do not like each other and do not get along would not benefit much from being in a group together. One child might be concerned with being provoked or antagonized by a student, while the other child might be distracted with picking-on or teasing the other student. For these reasons the teacher needs to have performed some form of monitoring before deciding if groups will be appropriate and conducive to learning.

In conclusion, group work can be a very helpful tool in producing good results in an L2 classroom, but it must be fine tuned by the teacher. If a teacher rushes into group work, or is not fully cognizant of what is going on between students, the group work may become more detrimental than beneficial. However, if implemented properly group work can be a great teaching tool and can help students flourish.