



COOPERATIVE

WHY BE COOPERATE?

To be cooperative with peers means getting along with others to meet a goal, while also minimizing conflict with others. These are difficult skills for children to learn, but research shows that children who are able to negotiate well with peers using social problem solving strategies are more socially competent. Children with these skills are also able to play well with others and are able to form relationships.¹ Thus, helping children learn and apply these important skills will help them get along with others better and promote their healthy social development.

GOALS

To help your students understand the meaning of being cooperative.

To help your students improve their co-operative behaviours with others.

To help your students think about the different ways they can continue to work on being cooperative as individuals, in a classroom, and in a school.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Blank paper

Pencils

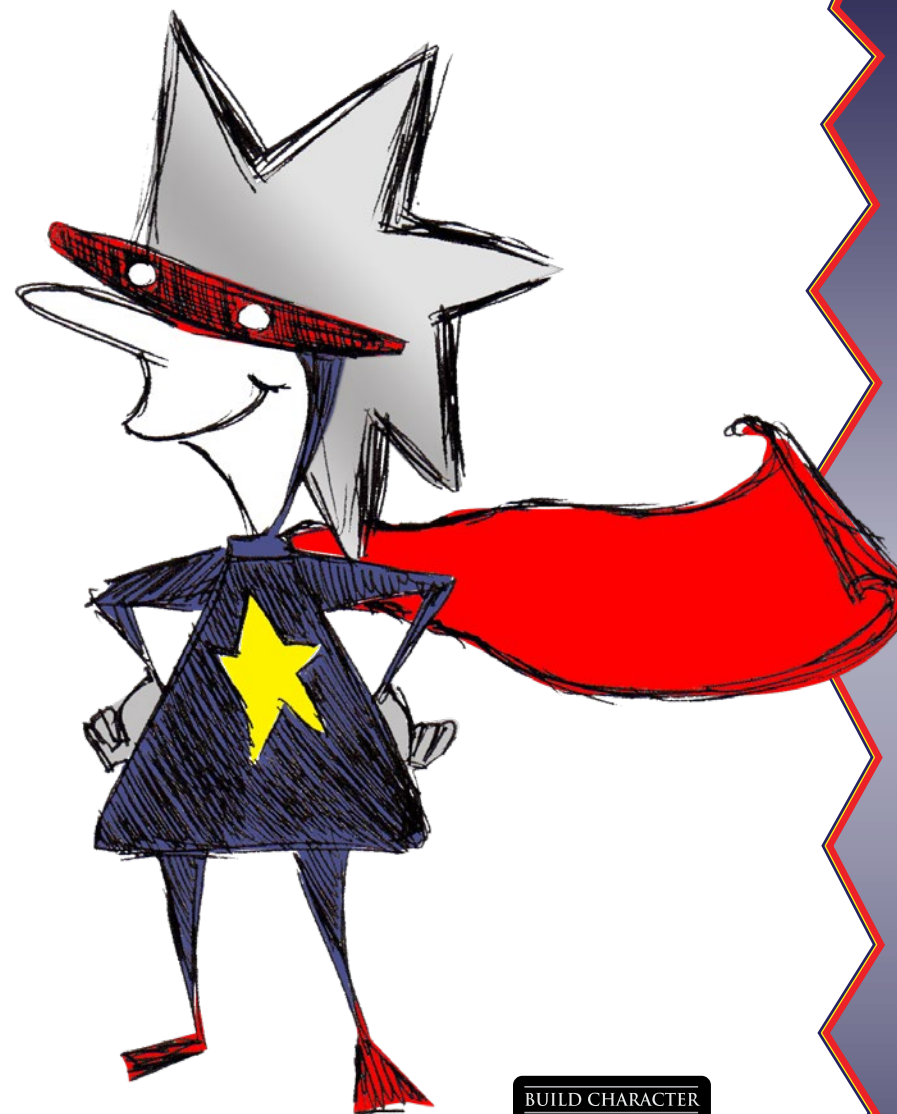
Scissors

Markers

Bristol board

The authors of this manual recognize that you are the expert of your classroom and if you wish to add to this lesson any of your own activities or materials related to this module's theme, please feel free to do so.

¹ Green, V.A., & Rechis, R. (2006). Children's cooperative and competitive interactions in limited resource situations: A literature review. *Applied Developmental Psychology* 27, 42–59.



BUILD CHARACTER
BUILD SUCCESS

Introduction

Ask your students to help you come up with a definition of being cooperative. Brainstorm a definition for the classroom, along with examples of what being cooperative might look like. Organize these behaviours in terms of how to improve co-operation skills as a) an individual, b) a classroom, and c) a school (see table below). Post this list in your classroom over the next month to help the children remember the components of co-operating with others. Here are some ways to help them define the concept of being cooperative:

For younger students

- Working together to get something done
- Being able to do something together that you couldn't do alone

For older students

- Working well with others to accomplish a common goal



What Being Cooperative Looks Like ²

Good co-operation may include the following:

- Happily doing something that will help others
- Helping someone in need who couldn't do it alone like helping to carry something or helping them put something away
- Playing fair when participating in sports or games, and being a "good loser" and a "good winner"
- Giving your best effort to help the group succeed
- Volunteering time or resources to a group community project
- Asking group members for their ideas and opinions
- Participating in making a plan by making suggestions respectfully and listening to the ideas of other group members
- Offering to do a job that nobody else in the group wants to do
- Helping to find a compromise when a group is in disagreement
- Inviting someone who is alone or "left out" to join the group
- Sharing ideas and materials with all group members
- Cheering others on
- Asking the teacher for help if there is a disagreement
- Encouraging and congratulating others when they do a good job

² Adapted from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Build Character Build Success website.



CHALLENGE: HOW TO PROMOTE BEING COOPERATIVE AS A(N)...

Individual

Asking others for help and offering help to others

Working calmly with others

Showing appreciation for others' help by saying 'Thank-you'

Being a good sport

Helping to find a compromise if there is a disagreement

Classroom

Being positive with classmates by cheering them on

Being inclusive by asking everyone his/her opinions

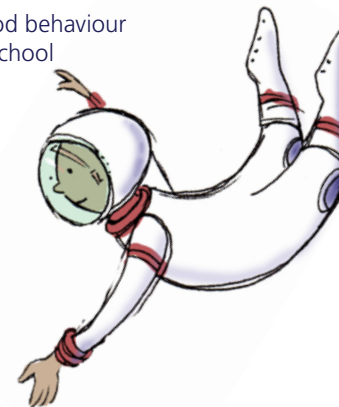
Volunteering to help with setting up classroom activities or to help clean up

School

Taking part in school fundraisers

Compromising with other students when planning the all-inclusive recesses

Showing enthusiasm and good behaviour at school-wide events (e.g., school assemblies, concerts)



Quazar Video 1 Questions

NOTE: These video clips are snapshots of the character attribute. They are not meant to be complete lessons, but simply to bring awareness of the attribute to your students.

Here are some follow-up questions for the Quazar video to help your students think about cooperation:

- 1) How did the kids in the video be cooperative in building a sandcastle?
- 2) Do you think their sandcastle would have been as tall without everyone working together? Why or why not?
- 3) When can it be difficult to be cooperative with others?
- 4) How can we be the kind of friend that others want to co-operate and work with?
- 5) How can we use cooperation in our classroom? How can we use it in our school?

Quazar Video 2 Questions

Here are some follow-up questions and possible answers for the Quazar video to help your students think about cooperation:

- 1) Quazar is completing a crossword puzzle that includes the word help. What does help have to do with being cooperative? How are they related?**

A: Help and being cooperative are related because in order to get some things done, you need help from others because you can't do it alone. To be cooperative means working as a group, with each person helping the others in the group in order to get the job done. Without other people's help, some things could not get done.

- 2) What were some clues Quazar saw that told him the students on the two moons were not being cooperative?**

A: Some clues that showed the students were not co-operating occurred when they were arguing with each other; they weren't listening to each other's directions; they weren't being polite to one another; and they weren't working together.



- 3) Why was it impossible to complete the task of moving the mirrors without co-operation between the schools?**

A: Moving the mirrors to be able to see each other's school was impossible without co-operation because the students needed each other's help. Each moon couldn't do it on their own. They could only reach their goal if they worked together, but neither group was admitting this because they were being stubborn.

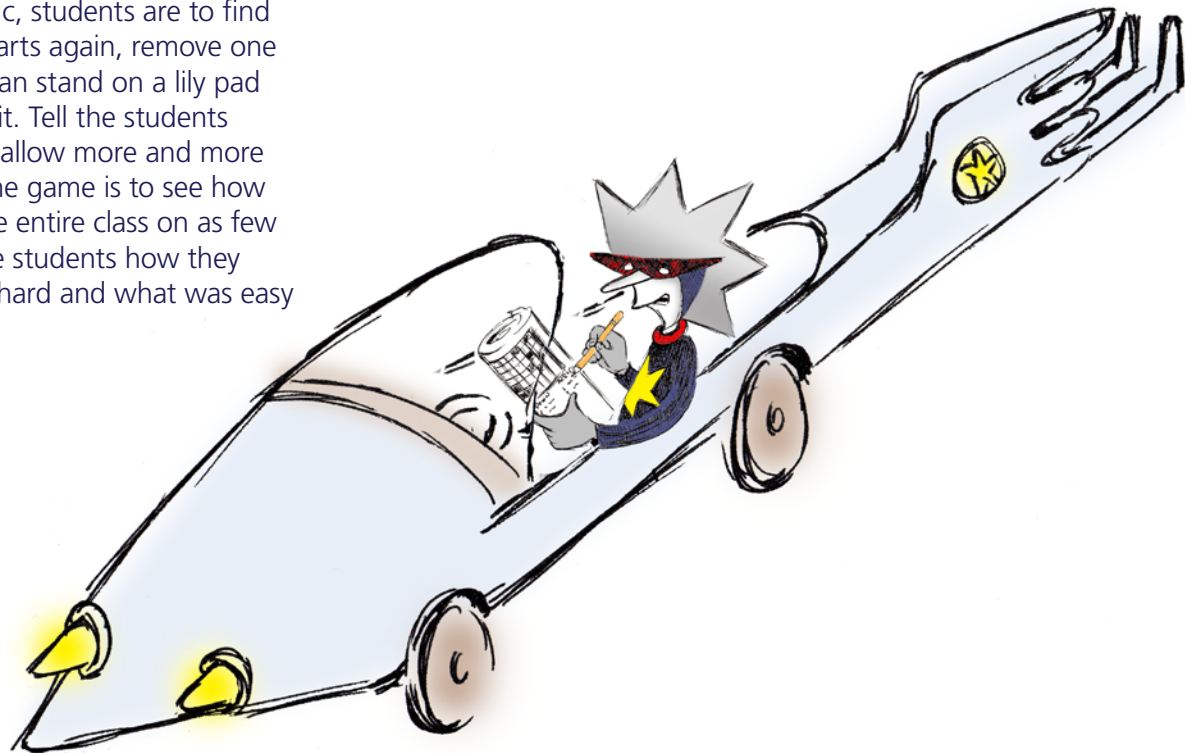
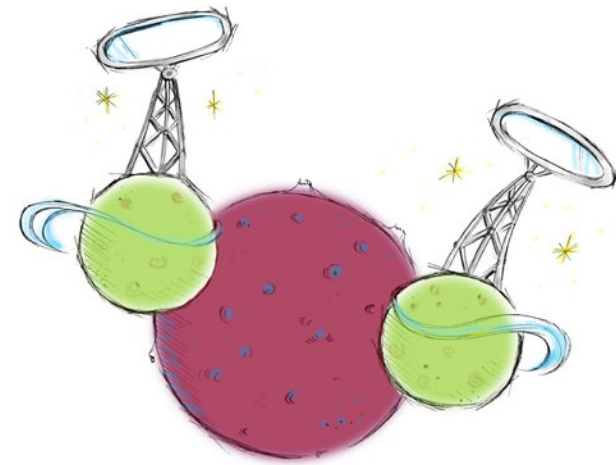
- 4) Quazar talks about 'rising above' a problem as being one way to solve a problem with co-operation. In the video, he had the students go into his spaceship to see the problem from a new angle. In real life, how do you 'rise above' a problem to help with being cooperative?**

A: In real-life, 'rising above' a problem means taking the time to listen to everyone's point of view and coming up with the best solution. If you keep arguing, you cannot be cooperative and find a way to work together. You have to be patient and communicate with others in order to be cooperative and reach your goal.

Classroom Activities

For younger students

- 1) This activity is meant to show students that some things cannot be done without someone else's help. Assign children to pairs and have them sit back to back. Tell students that sometimes, being cooperative is needed to complete a task and someone else's help is needed. Have the students link elbows and try to stand up as quickly as possible without the help of their hands. Once everyone has done this, have students repeat this activity in groups of three, four and five. Ask students what strategies they used to complete the task successfully when they were in bigger groups. What helped them co-operate to complete the task?
- 2) Prior to this activity, cut lily pads out of paper (roughly 1 square foot) and prepare a CD player to play music. Place the lily pads on the ground and instruct the students to walk around the room while the music is playing. When you stop the music, students are to find a lily pad to stand on. Each time the music starts again, remove one lily pad from the floor. More than one child can stand on a lily pad as long as one part of their body is touching it. Tell the students that they will need to work co-operatively to allow more and more children to fit on the lily pad. The object of the game is to see how the children can work co-operatively to fit the entire class on as few lily pads as possible. After the activity, ask the students how they were able to work co-operatively. What was hard and what was easy about the process?



Classroom Activities

For older students

1) This activity is meant to make students aware of how being cooperative can be used to accomplish incredible feats. Ask your students to list some things that you can do within a group but that you can't do by yourself. Encourage them to think about historical structures that were built with co-operation, social movements that changed laws, team sports, or jobs that require many people to help (e.g., firemen). Have each student choose one group accomplishment they are most interested in, and have them research the facts about this accomplishment for homework. When students have completed this activity, break them up into groups according to the type of co-operative event they chose and have them discuss how the people involved were able to co-operate with each other to accomplish their goal. How did they communicate? What strategies did they use to accomplish the task? Have the groups report back to the class about what they thought were the primary strategies that make cooperative efforts successful based on the events they chose.



2) This activity is a fun way for your students to practice working together on a creative project and practice working co-operatively. Divide students randomly into groups of 4 to 6 students. Give each group a large piece of Bristol board, pencils, and markers. Without giving them any information about the task, have group members draw one closed shape on the Bristol board with a pencil. All of the shapes must overlap with each other. They can make any shape they want, but the shapes have to be big enough to take up most of the Bristol board. Once every group has completed this task, explain to your students that the shapes they have drawn are the rough outline of a cooperative mascot that their group will be designing. This mascot is a sidekick for Quazar who also wants to help students learn to co-operate! Each group is to decide what their mascot is going to look like based on their rough outline and complete the portrait of this mascot by erasing some of the pencil lines and coloring in the drawing. They must also name it and decide upon the mascot's super powers related to being cooperative. Once everyone has completed their mascot, each group can present it to the class and share any information about the mascot they have created. Groups will also have to share how they worked together to come up with the concept for their mascot. These pictures can be hung up around the school to further enhance the theme of being cooperative.

Quotations About Being Cooperative

These quotations can also be posted in the classroom to remind students about the importance of working with others as members of a team:

"No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody helped you."

~ Althea Gibson (Athlete)

"Co-operation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there."

~ Virginia Burden Tower (Author)

"We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now."

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

"It is through co-operation, rather than conflict, that your greatest successes will be derived."

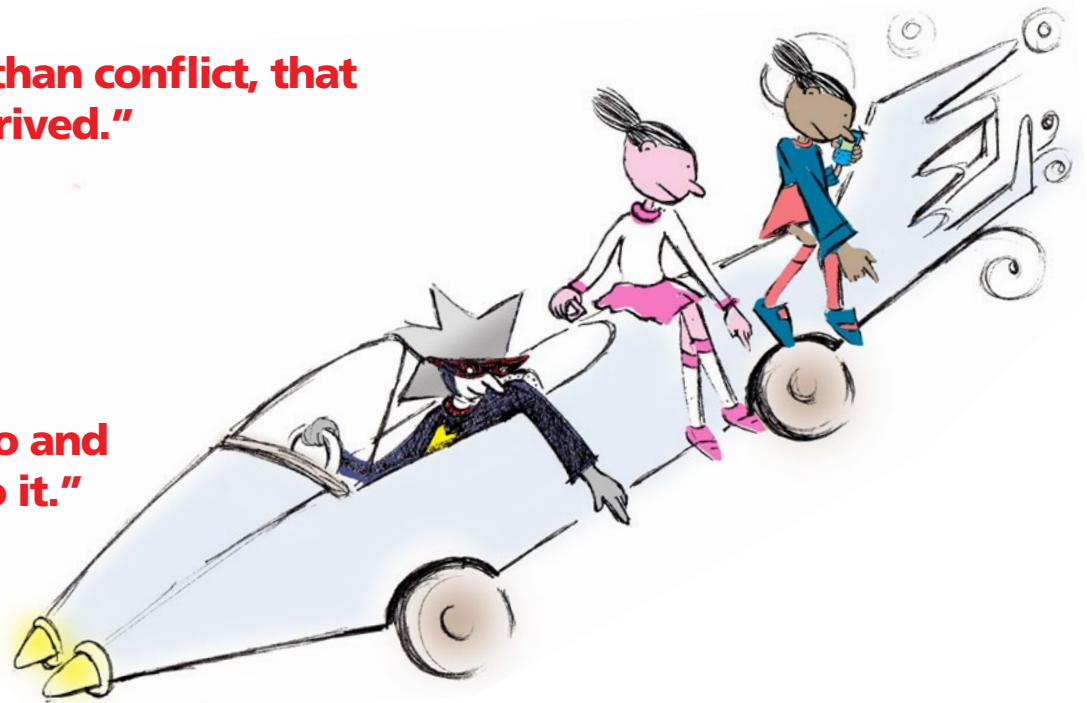
~ Ralph Charell (Author)

"Union gives strength."

~ Aesop (Author)

"Tell everyone what you want to do and someone will want to help you do it."

~ W. Clement Stone (Businessman and author)





Cooperative Reading List

The following books explore the theme of being cooperative for children of different ages and can also be used to help teach students about working well with one another:

Grades K-3:

- *Tony and the Pizza Champions* by Tony Gemignani
- *The Little Red Pen* by Susan Stevens Crummel and Janet Stevens
- *The Way Back Home* by Oliver Jeffers

Grades 3-5:

- *Andy Shane and the Queen of Egypt* by Jennifer Richard Jacobson
- *Margarine and Marbles* by Nicola Moon
- *Ryan and Jimmy: And the Well in Africa That Brought Them Together* by Herb Shoveller

Grades 6-8

- *The Doom Machine* by Mark Teague
- *Whiteout* by Becky Citra
- *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner

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