

1) Is there a setting where CL works best?

Cooperative Learning has been found to have less of an impact in a special education setting and more of an impact in a general education setting. Supporters of cooperative learning believe that the success in the general education setting is because the wide range of student learning capabilities in a general education provides students with learning disabilities a wider range of support because of peer tutoring.

2) What's the "active" ingredient?

The article says the "active" ingredient is when individual accountability and group rewards are included in cooperative learning. Studies show a substantial positive effect on students when individual accountability and group rewards are implemented.

3) Is CL effective in comparison to other best practices?

Cooperative learning seemed to produce some benefit in opposition to traditional instructional tactics used by teachers. Although there are other teaching methods that can provide positive outcomes, there would have to be more research to provide support. Cooperative learning may be the preferred method of teaching because of the positive experience the students undergo and may improve social and emotional experiences for students with learning disabilities.

4) Do CL students make sufficient progress?

According to the article, the goal of cooperative learning is to decrease the academic achievement gap between students with learning disabilities and average-achieving classmates. Even though cooperative learning increases the academic performance of students with learning disabilities there is no evidence that special education students' progress is the same as the general education students they are in class with.

5) How do structured and unstructured CL settings compare?

Structured cooperative learning produces more positive results. In a classroom with a structured cooperative learning setting the students are trained how to cooperate with each other and develop interpersonal skills within the instructional setting. Students make more progress working in groups when they are taught how to use cooperative learning components. When the cooperative learning setting is not structured students do not achieve the same progress. Just putting students in groups without specific direction is not a successful model.