Co-Teaching: A Platform for Enhancing Collaboration in Student Teaching and Field Experiences

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Valley City State University in cooperation with St. Cloud State University
In this workshop we will . . .

- Define co-teaching
- Discuss the roots of co-teaching
- Compare traditional student teaching with co-teaching
- Summarize the benefits of co-teaching
- Present data on the impact of student teaching with co-teaching
- Describe seven co-teaching strategies
- Envision how co-teaching might be used to enhance instruction in your classroom

What is Co-teaching?

- Co-teaching is an attitude . . . of sharing the classroom and the students
- Co-teaching is two teachers working together in a classroom with groups of students.
- Co-teaching is sharing the same physical classroom space.
- Co-teaching is shared planning, implementation, evaluation, and reflection of instruction.
The Roots of Co-teaching

- PL94-142 (Currently IDEA) All students have the right to be taught in the least restrictive environment (which is often the general education classroom)
- Co-teaching—between general education teachers and special education teachers—is used today in many schools in conjunction with the Response to Intervention model

Traditional Student Teaching

- Student teaching hasn’t changed much in 80 years.
- In the initial weeks, the student teacher is a silent observer, watching as the cooperating teacher models instruction.
- The student teacher gradually assumes the role of teacher.
- The student teacher is often left alone, or unassisted, as s/he assumes responsibility.
- The student teacher learns to teach in isolation.
- Student teaching culminates with a solo experience.

Co-teaching

- From the beginning, the teacher candidate is an active participant, helping to plan, implement, evaluate, and reflect on instruction.
- From the beginning, the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate share the role of teacher.
- The cooperating teacher mentors the teacher candidate through scaffolded shared teaching.
- The student teacher is assisted as s/he gradually assumes the role of lead teacher.
- The student teacher learns to teach collaboratively.
- Student teaching culminates with a solo experience.
Why co-teach?

- Co-teaching reduces the teacher/student ratio
- Co-teaching enhances classroom management
- Co-teaching increases the ability for teachers to meet student needs in today’s increasingly more diverse classrooms
- Co-teaching helps pre-service teachers build knowledge, skills, and dispositions for teaching
- Co-teaching increases student learning

The Impact of Co-teaching: K-6

Reading Proficiency

In Minnesota, Reading Proficiency scores were significantly better all four years in classes that were co-taught.

| MCA Reading Proficiency | Co-Taught | Not Co-Taught | χ²  
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|------
| 2004–2005               | 82.1%     | 74.7%         | .007 |
| 2005–2006               | 78.3%     | 72.7%         | .008 |
| 2006–2007               | 75.5%     | 64.3%         | < .001 |
| 2007–2008               | 80.8%     | 61.4%         | < .001 |

Math Proficiency

In Minnesota, Reading Proficiency scores were significantly better all four years in classes that were co-taught.

| MCA Math Proficiency | Co-Taught | Not Co-Taught | χ²  
|----------------------|-----------|---------------|------
| 2004–2005            | 82.3%     | 75.3%         | .009 |
| 2005–2006            | 68.9%     | 64.1%         | .041 |
| 2006–2007            | 69.0%     | 61.5%         | .007 |
| 2007–2008            | 74.5%     | 59.9%         | < .001 |
The Impact of Co-teaching: Student Data, Classrooms Grades 7-12

In Minnesota, students reported many benefits of co-teaching.

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The Impact of Co-teaching: Teacher Candidate Evaluations

In Minnesota, teacher candidates who were placed in co-teaching experiences scored significantly higher on professional dispositions.

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Seven Co-teaching Strategies

- One Teach, One Observe
- One Teach, One Assist
- Station Teaching
- Parallel Teaching
- Supplemental Teaching
- Alternative (Differentiated) Teaching
- Team Teaching
One Teach, One Observe

- One teacher has primary instructional responsibility.
- The other teacher is engaged in purposeful observation.
- Observation may be gather on the instructing teacher or the students.
- The key is pre-planned, focused observation.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011)

In your classroom, in what situations might "One Teach, One Observe" be an effective teaching strategy?

What might you have a teacher candidate observe as you teach?

What might you want to observe as a teacher candidate teaches?

Additional thoughts:
One Teach, One Observe
Possible Scenarios

In a “One Teach, One Observe” lesson, one teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the (instructing) teacher. The key to this strategy is to focus the observation so that the teacher doing the observing is recording specific behaviors. It is important to remember that either the teacher or the teacher candidate can be either the teacher or the observer, so this approach should be repeated so that both roles are experienced by both individuals. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Example 1: Cooperating teacher teaches an entire math lesson. Cooperating teacher asks teacher candidate to observe teaching with the following focus: Is cooperating teacher calling on both boys and girls equally?

Example 2: Teacher candidate teaches an entire math lesson. When planning the lesson, cooperating teacher and teacher candidate decide to focus on teacher candidate’s use of higher level questioning. While teacher candidate is teaching, cooperating teacher writes down all questions asked by teacher candidate, and classifies the questions according to level of Bloom’s taxonomy. During debriefing, cooperating teacher and teacher candidate discuss what questions were asked, what level of question was most prevalent in the lesson, and what additional questions might have been asked.

Example 3: Cooperating teacher teaches an entire math lesson. Teacher candidate focuses on behaviors of one student during the lesson. Teacher candidate records time off task, off task behaviors, duration of off task behaviors, and/or antecedents to off task behaviors. Following the lesson, cooperating teacher and teacher candidate discuss student’s behavior and determine what interventions might be applied, given the data collected during the lesson.
Planning a One Teach One Observe Lesson  
(Owen, 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of coteaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:

1. Who will teach?
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed?
   d. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   e. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   f. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   g. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?

2. Who will observe?
   a. What is the focus of the observer?
   b. What data will be gathered?
   c. What format will be used to gather the data?

Implementing a One Teach, One Observe Lesson

1. Teacher teaches the lesson as planned.
2. Observer gathers the information as planned.

Evaluating a One Teach, One Observe Lesson

1. Discuss: Was the objective met? What percentage of students accomplished the objective at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?
2. Discuss: What information did the observer gather? How can that information be used to improve future lessons?
Reflecting on a One Teach, One Observe Lesson

1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. What strengths were there in the One Teach, One Observe format for this lesson?
4. What weaknesses were there in the One Teach, One Observe format for this lesson?
5. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time a One Teach, One Observe lesson is given?
6. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
One Teach, One Assist

- One teacher has primary instructional responsibility.
- The other teacher assists students with their work or monitors behaviors.
- The teacher assisting often lends a voice to students or groups who would hesitate to participate or add comments. (Example: “Mrs. Smith, group 5 has a question they would like to ask.”)
- The key is shared responsibility, with one teacher in a lead role.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011):

In your classroom, in what situations might "One Teach, One Assist" be an effective teaching strategy?

How might you have a teacher candidate assist while you teach?

How might you assist as a teacher candidate teaches?

Additional thoughts:
One Teach, One Assist
Possible Scenarios

In a One Teach, One Assist lesson, one teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, or corrects assignments. The teacher assisting often lends a voice to students or groups who might otherwise hesitate to participate. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

**Example 1:** Cooperating teacher teaches an entire math lesson. Cooperating teacher asks teacher candidate to assist with group problem solving. Both cooperating teacher and teacher candidate monitor groups as they solve a complex math problem. Teacher candidate finds that one group, especially, needs more scaffolding, so s/he stays with that group and assists as necessary. S/he then helps them word an explanation of how they arrived at their solution. Each student in the group, as well as the teacher candidate, has a speaking part when it is their turn to present their solution.

**Example 2:** Teacher candidate teaches an entire grammar lesson. Both teacher candidate and cooperating teacher assists students as they work on the guided practice portion of their lesson.

**Example 3:** Cooperating teacher teaches an entire math lesson. Teacher candidate stands in the back next to a group of students who tend to pass notes. The presence of the teacher candidate is enough to refocus the students on the lesson, and they do not pass notes.
Planning a One Teach, One Assist Lesson
(Owen, 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of co-teaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:
1. Who will teach?
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed?
   d. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   e. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   f. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   g. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?
2. Who will assist?
   a. What specific duties will the one assisting have?
   b. What outcomes are expected as a result of having one person assist?

Implementing a One Teach, One Assist Lesson
1. Teacher teaches the lesson as planned.
2. Observer assists by performing specific duties as planned.

Evaluating a One Teach, One Assist Lesson
1. Discuss: Was the objective met? What percentage of students accomplished the objective at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?
2. Discuss: Who needed the most assistance? What kind of assistance was needed most often? How did the planned assistance contribute to student success? How might we plan for better assistance next time?
Reflecting on a One Teach, One Assist Lesson

1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. What strengths were there in the One Teach, One Assist format for this lesson?
4. What weaknesses were there in the One Teach, One Assist format for this lesson?
5. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time a One Teach, One Assist lesson is given?
6. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
Station Teaching

- Instructional content is divided into two parts.
- The class is divided into parts.
- Each teacher instructs one of the groups at a designated station.
- The groups then rotate between the stations.
- A third station may be used for independent work.
- The key is shared responsibility of instruction.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011):

In your classroom, in what situations might "Station Teaching" be an effective teaching strategy?

What stations might be taught by you and a teacher candidate?

How might independent work be incorporated as a third station?

Additional thoughts:
Station Teaching
Possible Scenarios

In a Station Teaching Lesson, the co-teaching pair divides the instructional content into parts, and also divides the class into groups. Each teacher instructs one of the groups. Groups then rotate or spend a designated amount of time at each station. An independent third station can be used along with the teacher led stations. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Example 1: The class is studying the American Revolution. On Tuesday, the class is divided into three groups. At station 1, the cooperating teacher teaches one group about the contributions of Paul Revere to the American Revolution. At station 2, the teacher candidate teaches about the contributions of Benjamin Franklin to the American Revolution. At station 3 (their desks), students read a chapter on causes of the American Revolution and complete a study guide on the chapter.

Example 2: The class is studying plants. On Wednesday, the class is divided into three groups. At station 1, the teacher candidate guides students as they plant beans in small pots. At station 2, the cooperating teacher guides students as they dissect a bean seed, draw what they find, and label the parts. At station 3 (their desks), students read a chapter on plants in their science book and complete a directed reading activity as they read.
Planning a Station Teaching Lesson  
(Owen, 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of co-teaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:

1. How many stations will there be? At each station,
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed?
   d. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   e. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   f. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   g. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?
   h. How will the students be divided for their first station?
   i. How long will each rotation last?
   j. What signal will be used to rotate stations?
   k. How will the stations be sequenced?
   l. How will station rotation be explained to the students?
   m. Who will explain the station rotation?

Implementing a Station Teaching Lesson

1. Each teacher teaches the station lesson as planned.

Evaluating a Station Teaching Lesson

1. Discuss: Were the objectives met at each station? What percentage of students accomplished the station objectives at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?
2. Discuss: Did the rotations go as planned? What would you do next time to improve the rotations?
1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. What strengths were there in the Station Teaching format for this lesson?
4. What weaknesses were there in the Station Teaching format for this lesson?
5. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time a Station Teaching lesson is given?
6. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
Parallel Teaching

- Each teacher instructs half of the students.
- Both teachers address the same instructional material using the same strategies.
- The key is planning so that both teachers deliver the same lesson in the same manner.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011):

In your classroom, in what situations might "Parallel Teaching" be an effective teaching strategy?

How would the teacher/student ratio change if you implemented parallel teaching?

How might spatial issues be addressed in order to facilitate parallel teaching?

Additional thoughts:
Parallel Teaching
Possible Scenarios

In a Parallel Teaching co-teaching lesson, each teacher instructs half the students. The two teachers are addressing the same instructional material and presenting the material using the same teaching strategies. The greatest benefit to this approach is the reduction of student to teacher ratio. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Example 1: The class is divided in half. The cooperating teacher teaches a math lesson to one half of the class. The teacher candidate teaches exactly the same lesson to the other half of the class. Examples and methods are the same for both groups.

Example 2: The class is divided in half. The cooperating teacher leads half of the class in the discussion of a literary selection. The teacher candidate leads the other half of the class in a discussion of the same literary selection. The discussion questions are exactly the same for both groups.
Planning a Parallel Teaching Lesson
(Owen, J. 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of coteaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:

1. What lesson will be taught?
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed? Will students be assessed in small groups, or after returning to the large group?
   d. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   e. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   f. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   g. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?
   h. How will the students be divided?
   i. Who will divide the students? What procedures will be followed as students move to their assigned group?
   j. How long will the lesson last?
   k. How will you ensure that both lessons finish at about the same time, and if they don’t, what activities will be provided for the group that finishes first?

2. Plan the lesson, scripting it if necessary, so that both the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate will deliver the same lesson, present the same material, utilize the same strategies, involve students in the same activities, and use the same assessment.

Implementing a Parallel Teaching Lesson

1. Cooperating teacher teaches the lesson to half of the students as planned.
2. Teacher candidate teaches the lesson to half of the students as planned.
Evaluating a Parallel Teaching Lesson

1. Discuss: Was the objective met? What percentage of students accomplished the objective at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?

Reflecting on a Parallel Teaching Lesson

1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. What strengths were there in the Parallel Teaching format for this lesson?
4. What weaknesses were there in the Parallel Teaching format for this lesson?
5. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time a Parallel Teaching lesson is given?
6. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
Supplemental Teaching

- Students are divided into a larger group and a smaller group.
- One teacher works with students their expected level.
- One teacher works with students who need the lesson concepts or materials extended or remediated.
- The key is collaborative planning so that the essentials of the lesson are taught in both groups, with appropriate extensions or remedial activities for the smaller group. The learning outcome may differ between the large group and the small group.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011):

In your classroom, in what situations might "Supplemental Teaching" be an effective teaching strategy?

What subgroups within your class would benefit the most from supplemental teaching?

How might supplemental teaching increase your productivity?

Additional thoughts:
Supplemental Teaching
Possible Scenarios

In a Supplemental Teaching co-teaching lesson, one teacher works with students at their expected grade level, while the other teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials extended or remediated. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

**Example 1:** The cooperating teacher delivers a math lesson on long division to most of the class. The teacher candidate also delivers a long division lesson, but s/he works with only four or five students who have already proven grade level proficiency in long division, as measured by a pretest. The teacher candidate delivers a lesson that extends the long division lesson well beyond the lesson delivered to the rest of the class and provides adequate challenge for the students who have already demonstrated proficiency.

**Example 2:** The teacher candidate delivers a math lesson on long division to most of the class. The cooperating teacher also delivers a long division lesson, but s/he works with only four or five students who have already struggled with both multiplication and division facts. The cooperating teacher provides multiplication charts and calculators for her group to use for their long division problems, and also gives step by step support as necessary.
Planning a Supplemental Teaching Lesson
( Owen, 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of coteaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:
1. What lesson will be taught?
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed? Will students be assessed in small groups, or after returning to the large group?
   d. How will the outcomes for each group differ?
   e. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   f. Who will be in the supplemental group? How will students be identified for this group?
   g. How will the lesson be differentiated for the supplemental group? What specific strategies for differentiation will be used by the teacher of the supplemental group?
   h. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   i. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   j. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?
   k. Who will announce the groups to the students? What procedures will be followed as students move to their assigned group?
   l. How long will the lesson last?
   m. How will you ensure that both lessons finish at about the same time, and if they don’t, what activities will be provided for the group that finishes first?

Implementing a Supplemental Teaching Lesson

1. Cooperating teacher teaches the lesson to his/her group as planned.
2. Teacher candidate teaches the lesson to his/her group as planned.
Evaluating a Supplemental Teaching Lesson

1. Discuss: Was the objective met? What percentage of students in the core group accomplished the objective at 80% or better? What percentage of students in the supplemental group accomplished the objective at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?

Reflecting on a Supplemental Teaching Lesson

1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. How effective were the strategies for differentiation used in the supplemental group?
4. Which students might have been better placed in a different group?
5. What strengths were there in the Supplemental Teaching format for this lesson?
6. What weaknesses were there in the Supplemental Teaching format for this lesson?
7. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time a Supplemental Teaching lesson is given?
8. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
Alternative (Differentiated) Teaching

- One teacher teaches the lesson to part of the class, using the prescribed approach to the lesson.
- One teacher teaches the same lesson, using a different approach based on the learning style of some students.
- The objective and learning outcome is the same for all students; only the avenue for getting there is different.
- The key is planning for differences in learning style.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011):

In your classroom, in what situations might "Alternative Teaching" be an effective teaching strategy?

Which students stand to benefit the most from alternative teaching?

What spatial, material, or delivery issues might need to be addressed in order to facilitate alternative teaching?

Additional thoughts:
Alternative Teaching
Possible Scenarios

In an Alternative Teaching co-teaching lesson, the teachers provide two different approaches to teaching the same information. The learning outcome is the same for all students, however, the avenue for getting there is different. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

**Example 1:** The class is working on memorizing multiplication facts. In the classroom, the cooperating teacher works with one group on timed tests for practicing and memorizing multiplication facts. The teacher candidate takes a small group of students who have shown strength in “musical intelligence.” Outside of the room, this group works on singing with a Multiplication Rocks CD. Both groups work on the same multiplication facts, but they take different routes to memorize them.

**Example 2:** The class is studying the water cycle. The cooperating teacher works with students who are linguistically strong; this group describes the water cycle through writing. The teacher candidate works with students who are artistically strong; this group describes the water cycle through illustrations.
Planning an Alternative Teaching Lesson
(Owen, J. 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of co-teaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:
1. What lesson will be taught?
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed? Will students be assessed in small groups, or after returning to the large group?
   d. How will the strategies for each group differ?
   e. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   f. What student needs will be met by one of the groups? How will students be identified for this group? What student will be met by the other group? How will students be identified for this group?
   g. How will the lesson be differentiated for each group?
   h. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   i. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   j. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?
   k. Who will announce the groups to the students? What procedures will be followed as students move to their assigned group?
   l. How long will the lesson last?
   m. How will you ensure that both lessons finish at about the same time, and if they don’t, what activities will be provided for the group that finishes first?

Implementing an Alternative Teaching Lesson

1. Cooperating teacher teaches the lesson to his/her group as planned.
2. Teacher candidate teaches the lesson to his/her group as planned.
Evaluating an Alternative Teaching Lesson

1. Discuss: Was the objective met? What percentage of students in each group accomplished the objective at 80% or better? What percentage of students in each group accomplished the objective at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?

Reflecting on an Alternative Teaching Lesson

1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. How effective were the strategies used in each group?
4. Which students might have been better placed in a different group?
5. What strengths were there in the Alternative Teaching format for this lesson?
6. What weaknesses were there in the Alternative Teaching format for this lesson?
7. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time an Alternative Teaching lesson is given?
8. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
Team Teaching (Heck, 2010; Owen, 2010)

- The “highest,” most complex level of co-teaching.
- Two teachers teach a lesson collaboratively.
- There is an invisible flow of instruction between the two teachers.
- There is no prescribed division of authority.
- Both teachers are equally involved in the lesson.
- Synergy between the two teachers is evident.
- The key is multiple previous co-teaching experiences with the first six models, collaborative planning, and a willingness to let synergy develop in front of the students.

Small Group Discussion (Owen, 2011):

Have you ever experienced—as a student, a teacher, or an administrator—the synergy of true "Team Teaching"? Describe your experience.

How might true team teaching be perceived by various stakeholders: students, colleagues, parents, administrators, school board members, evaluation teams, etc.?

How might true team teaching fit in with your vision of a master teacher?

Additional thoughts:
Team Teaching
Possible Scenarios

In true team teaching, the co-teaching pair seamlessly moves back and forth during the school day, utilizing all of the previous strategies for co-teaching, as appropriate, throughout the day. A synergy develops between the co-teaching pair, and the result is bigger and better than the sum of what the teachers could produce working individually. A lesson may begin to take on a life of its own, going in directions beyond what the co-teaching team planned. More learning may take place than what had been envisioned. Objectives may be met and exceeded. Students, parents, and colleagues perceive the team as equals. A common sense of humor is often shared between the two teachers. The two seem to know, instinctively, how to adjust to unexpected situations, and can easily switch roles or strategies if necessary in a moment’s notice.

**Example 1:** Before school starts, the two teachers conduct a quick review of the day’s plans, and make sure that all materials have been set out. At the same time that they realize that one set of copies is still at the copy machine, a parent walks in, wanting to know more about the upcoming field trip. One teacher retrieves the copies, while the other explains the field trip details to the parent. The bell rings. As the fourth graders arrive, they sit down and begin self-starting on a writing assignment posted on the board. One teacher takes attendance and collects homework and lunch money; the other moves from student to student—welcoming the student personally, reading over the student’s writing and quickly conferencing with the student about the writing process. When the teacher who was taking attendance finishes, she calls a small math group—a few students who need more repetition in order to be successful.

The teacher starts the small group by introducing problems similar to the ones the students will be doing when the whole class meets for math. With only four students, the teacher is able to break the problems into smaller steps, thereby frontloading the students so they will be better prepared for success on the math assignment that will be given to the whole class. The teacher who was reviewing students’ writing calls the second math group a few minutes later. This group is quickly given a challenge assignment for math, and is told at the same time what math problems they can eliminate from the class assignment, since they have been given a differentiated assignment on their level. The remaining students finish their writing, then they self start on a math warm-up activity that is on the board. The students from the two groups
return to their desks, and one teacher leads the whole class while the other teacher conducts a focused observation on a student with behavior problems. As she observes the student, the teacher notes off-task behaviors, antecedents to the behaviors, and the duration of each behavior.

When math is over, one teacher leads literature. She explains that the class will divide into two groups. Both groups will read and discuss the same selections. The half of the class at the back of the room faces the back, scooting their chairs closer to the back of the room. The half of the class at the front of the room faces the front. One teacher stays at the front of the classroom; the other moves to the back. Both teachers begin their group by reminding students to use their “half-voices” during the discussion. The teachers, also, lower their voices to “half-voice.” There is a buzz in the classroom, but neither group is able to make out the details of what the other group is discussing. The groups proceed. When literature is over, one teacher walks students to the playground for recess. The other teacher stays in the room to assist students who need to make up homework.

During science, stations are set up: one teacher leads an experiment station, one teacher leads a station at which students are drawing pictures and writing descriptions of different birds for a class bird book.

Class continues similarly throughout the day.

Several times during the day, the teachers deviate from their original plans, either to extend learning in a way they hadn’t planned, or to further emphasize concepts when students have evident need. Once, as the students are teaching, they become almost melodramatic as they explain an event from the social studies textbook. The mini-drama wasn’t planned; it was spontaneous. Yet it is highly effective. The students laugh and clap at the end; it is evident that both students and teachers are engaged in joyful learning.

At the end of the day, the two teachers review their teaching and the children’s learning. They discuss what aspects of the co-teaching day went well, what students learned, and how they know that students met their objectives. The teachers decide which students need extra support or more challenges in what areas, and how co-teaching might be implemented again tomorrow to meet student needs.

The teachers are truly working as a team.
Planning an Alternative Teaching Lesson
(Owen, J. 2010)

Research shows that planning time is critical to the success of coteaching. [Heck, T. & Bacharach, N. (2010, November) Valley partnership co-teaching training. Training session presented at Valley City State University, Valley City, ND]

Consider the following:
1. What lesson will be taught?
   a. What standard/benchmark will be addressed?
   b. What is the objective of the lesson?
   c. How will the lesson be assessed? Will students be assessed in small groups, or after returning to the large group?
   d. How will the strategies for each group differ?
   e. What activities will the students be engaged in during the lesson?
      1. What ideas does the teacher candidate have for increasing student engagement?
      2. What ideas does the cooperating teacher have for increasing student engagement?
   f. What student needs will be met by one of the groups? How will students be identified for this group? What student will be met by the other group? How will students be identified for this group?
   g. How will the lesson be differentiated for each group?
   h. What materials will be needed for the lesson?
   i. What management issues might need to be addressed during the lesson?
   j. What will need to be done, beyond the planning meeting, to prepare the lesson?
   k. Who will announce the groups to the students? What procedures will be followed as students move to their assigned group?
   l. How long will the lesson last?
   m. How will you ensure that both lessons finish at about the same time, and if they don’t, what activities will be provided for the group that finishes first?

Implementing an Alternative Teaching Lesson

1. Cooperating teacher teaches the lesson to his/her group as planned.
2. Teacher candidate teaches the lesson to his/her group as planned.
Evaluating an Alternative Teaching Lesson

1. Discuss: Was the objective met? What percentage of students in each group accomplished the objective at 80% or better? What percentage of students in each group accomplished the objective at 80% or better? How do you know? What would you do next time to improve the lesson?

Reflecting on an Alternative Teaching Lesson

1. What knowledge about himself/herself will the teacher candidate take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
2. What knowledge about himself/herself will the cooperating teacher take from this lesson, and apply to future lessons?
3. How effective were the strategies used in each group?
4. Which students might have been better placed in a different group?
5. What strengths were there in the Alternative Teaching format for this lesson?
6. What weaknesses were there in the Alternative Teaching format for this lesson?
7. What changes might be made to the planning process the next time an Alternative Teaching lesson is given?
8. What issues did you address that were NOT asked by this planning page?
Successful Co-teaching:
Welcoming Your Candidate

- Welcome your teacher candidate as an equal.
- Introduce your teacher candidate—to students, colleagues, parents, etc.—as a co-teacher rather than a student teacher.
- Provide a desk for your candidate.
- Put your candidate’s name on the door next to yours.
- Expect that your teacher candidate will participate alongside you in staff meetings, conferences, and other professional duties outside the immediate classroom.

Successful Co-teaching:
Sharing Planning (Heck, 2010; Owen, 2010)

- Share responsibility from the first day forward.
- At the end of each day, decide what content to teach using a co-teaching strategy, what strategy to use, who will lead what parts of each lesson, how students will be assessed, and who will gather which materials and resources.
- Scaffold planning in the beginning; gradually encourage the teacher candidate to take a leadership role in your daily planning.

Successful Co-teaching:
Sharing Implementation (Heck, 2010; Owen, 2010)

- Share leadership in front of the students as well as behind the scenes.
- Act and be seen as equal partners.
- Share responsibility for classroom management.
- Make changes as needed during instruction.
- Establish signals for communicating with each other when co-teaching.
Additional Strategies for Welcoming Your Teacher Candidate

- Arrange to meet with your teacher candidate before the official start of the experience. Spend time learning about one another as people, not just as educators.
- Introduce the teacher candidate to other faculty members, support personnel, and administrators.
- Tour the school....staff work areas, the lounge, adult restrooms, etc.
- Post the teacher candidate’s name (Mr. Ms. Smith) along with your name near the classroom door.
- Send a note to families to let them know that you will have a teacher candidate co-teaching with you.
- Provide a desk (preferably NOT a student-sized desk) or designate a work area for the teacher candidate with supplies and copies of necessary manuals, textbooks, the current read-aloud book, etc.
- Provide a picture of the class or individual students to help the teacher candidate learn names more quickly.
- Review items in the faculty handbook that directly affect the teacher candidate” the contractual day, issues relating to school security, etc.
- Share that “bit of information” that matters about the school culture: “The third table in the cafeteria is peanut-free.” “Staff members never park in Lot A.” etc.
- Explain any staff activities or special events the teacher candidate could attend.
- Discuss classroom rules and expectations for student behavior, as well as acceptable rewards and consequences. Review the student handbook.
- Assemble a binder with useful information including class lists, daily schedules, classroom rules, discipline referral forms, etc.
- On a desk-top calendar or planner, mark important dates for faculty meetings, your week for hall duty, school-wide music programs, etc.
- Start a file with your favorite tried-and-true activities and good teaching ideas. Encourage your candidate to add to it throughout the experience.
- Leave an inspirational quote or article related to teaching on the candidate’s desk that might spark an interesting discussion.
- Gestures of kindness, no matter how small, have a positive impact.
- If your teacher candidate will start later in the school year, send an email or letter from the class a few weeks before to share information about current units, upcoming special events, etc.

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Successful Co-teaching: Sharing Evaluation of Students

- Participate as a partnership in determining what students know or can do as a result of daily lessons.
- Share the workload of grading assignments.
- Utilize formative and summative assessments.
- Discuss student performance on a daily basis.
- Jointly determine grades.

Successful Co-teaching: Reflecting Together (Owen, 2010)

- Reflect together at the end of the day, considering such questions as:
  - What aspects of the co-teaching lesson went well?
  - What did the teacher candidate learn—about children, about teaching, about management, etc.?
  - What did the cooperating teacher learn about mentoring?
  - What aspects of teaching might need further development and scaffolding in the next co-teaching lesson?

Successful Co-teaching: A Scaffolded Journey Towards the Solo Experience

- From the beginning the teacher candidates are expected to:
  - Contribute ideas towards day to day instruction.
  - Engage students and assist with their learning. (Heck, 2010; Owen, 2010)
  - Be "out of their seat and on their feet!" (Heck, 2010)
  - Gradually take on full leadership in planning for instruction, implementing lessons, and evaluating student learning. (Heck, 2010)
  - Have many co-teaching opportunities to demonstrate teaching competency.
  - Synthesize and demonstrate what they are learning from collaborating with their cooperating teacher. (Owen, 2010)
Successful Co-teaching: The Stages of Concern for Teacher Candidates (Stage 1)

- Stage 1: Pre-teaching Concerns
  - Classroom involvement is more about observation than participation.
  - Teacher candidates are more students than teachers.
  - Teacher candidates are idealistic.
  - Personal life may interfere with teaching life and at times inhibit professional growth.
  - The real concerns of teaching—student progress and attainment of standards—are very remote.
  - Teacher candidates may be critical of the cooperating teacher.

Successful Co-teaching: The Stages of Concern for Teacher Candidates (Stage 2)

- Stage 2: Survival Concerns
  - Teacher candidate is more involved in the classroom, and is beginning to understand the magnitude of the profession.
  - Idealism is fading and the teacher candidate is beginning to be more concerned with his/her survival as a teacher in managing the classroom management and mastering of content.
  - Concern about evaluations by supervisors and cooperating teachers is emerging.
  - Being observed may cause a great deal of stress at this stage.

Successful Co-teaching: The Stages of Concern for Teacher Candidates (Stage 3)

- Stage 3: Teaching Situation Concerns
  - Teacher candidate is now beginning to feel master of classroom management and content.
  - Frustrations at this stage are about limitations of the teaching situation.
  - Methods, materials, and strategies learned in coursework are now taken more seriously and there may be the lament “Why didn’t I pay closer attention.”
  - The difference between theory and practice is being felt.
Successful Co-teaching: The Stages of Concern for Teacher Candidates (Stage 4)

- Stage 4: Concern about Pupils
- The teacher candidate begins to see the trees in the forest.
- There is concern for the individual pupil.
- The teacher candidate is concerned about understanding individual learning styles and social-emotional needs of pupils.
- The teacher candidate is beginning to realize that s/he can be “caring and strong, flexible and consistent, child-centered and in control” (Company in YOur Classroom, 2000, p. 69)
- The teacher candidate is developing an awareness of the broader issues in education and a connection to how these issues impact individual students.

Co-teaching: Questions to Ponder (Owen, 2010)

- In addition to helping to raise student performance . . .
- . . . might co-teaching move teacher candidates through the stages of concern more quickly and efficiently?
- . . . might co-teaching produce teacher candidates who, when they graduate, are performing more like teachers with one or two years experience?
- WE HOPE SO!!!

Co-teaching FAQ’s

- Do teacher candidates still have a solo teaching experience? Yes.
- Don’t students get confused with two teachers sharing responsibility on an equal basis? The research indicates that there is not a significant amount of confusion, but there is a significant gain in student learning.
- Do we have to co-teach everything? No. We encourage you to co-teach some each day. Many teachers find that students benefit when co-teaching is used even more frequently.
- Can co-teaching be used in other field experiences beyond students teaching? Yes. Some teachers who began co-teaching experiences with student teachers are now implementing it with intro and practicum students. We believe that the earlier students are engaged in co-teaching experiences, the better prepared they will be for their student teaching and new teacher experiences.
"I think that this is a great model for teaching; it is very empowering for the student teacher and creates a great relationship and future mentor."

- Teacher Candidate

"We both were leaders in our own respects and at different times."

- Teacher Candidate

"Certain lessons work really well when they are co-taught. It is a good feeling to pump out a great lesson cooperatively, knowing that the lesson would not have been as dynamic if it had not been co-taught."

- Teacher Candidate
“There is more creativity because you are able to talk ideas through and make them great by having the two perspectives.”

- Teacher Candidate

“When the teacher’s talking, or teaching, the other one can go around and make sure they’re paying attention and not stop the whole lesson just to make sure that other kids are paying attention. It’s kind of nice that she doesn’t have to stop the lesson.”

-- Elementary Student

“Everyone in our class is at a different stage. So if you have more trouble with reading, you can get more one-on-one time, and if you’re advanced you can go ahead.”

-- Elementary Student
“We’ve done a lot of different projects that we couldn’t have done with just our regular teacher, we needed two grown ups. It’s fun!”
—Elementary Student

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References