

Working on Team Tasks

SUBMITTED BY: WGYP Summer Instructor

SUBJECT(S): Communication, Management

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

In this lesson, students will learn how to identify team tasks. They will read about team tasks from a Knowledge@Wharton article. After that, they will play a few games to see how to identify team tasks and what characteristics identify these tasks from other kinds of tasks.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Management, III. Business Organization
- Communication, III. Workplace Communication
- Management, VI. Human Resource Management

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“Top Qualities: ‘Everyone Has the Capacity to Be a Leader’”](#)
- [“Thinking Like an Innovator: The Power of Experimentation”](#)
- [“Teamwork with a Marshmallow on Top”](#)
- [“Learning to Embrace the Impractical and Think More Creatively”](#)
- [“Leadership Challenges from an FBLA President”](#)
- [“Is High School Killing Your Creativity? Rajat Bhageria Has a Remedy for That”](#)

Common Core Standard(s):

Reading Informational Text–RI.9-10.1.; RI.9-10.2.

Speaking and Listening–SL.9-10.1.

Purpose:

- In this lesson, students will learn about team tasks.
- They will identify what qualifies as a team task and what doesn't, as well as why.

Related Reading:**Knowledge@Wharton:** [“Building Leadership Through Teamwork”](#)**Wharton Global Youth Program:** [“Is High School Killing Your Creativity?”](#)**Activity:***Introduction (10 min)*

Ask students to think about why certain tasks are team tasks and others can be done individually. As a class, ask them to brainstorm a list of team tasks from school or after-school activities and create a list of characteristics that these tasks have in common. Try to be specific about these characteristics and then generalize. Put this on the board.

Silent Reading (5 min)

Ask students to read the Knowledge@Wharton article on “Building Leadership Through Teamwork.” Don't be put off by the date of the article; it is evergreen for this important discussion that helps establish the impetus for teamwork.

Group discussion (5 min)

Ask them to answer the following questions about the article in groups. Walk around to help them.

1. How does Katzenbach define a team?
2. Do you agree that team tasks and single leader tasks are not an either/or situation?
3. Why is group identity an important part of teamwork?
4. What are some reasons that teams fail?

Class discussion (5 min)

Look back at the characteristics that the students came up with at the beginning and Katzenbach's definition. Compare the two to see what's similar and what's different.

Team Activity (10 min)

"Line Up"

Divide the group into two. Each team will compete against each other to see who can get the challenge done faster. Challenge could be to line up according to birthday months/dates, with January at one end and December at the other. They should do this without talking.

Discussion (5 min)

Analyze the activity with respect to the criteria from earlier.

- Was this a team task or did a leader emerge who directed the group as to where to stand?
- Was the leadership split between multiple people?
- How did teams work out communication strategies? The students could have worked as a team or had one person (or two/three) take charge.
- Compare the two groups to see what was different and what was similar.
- Does any specific group identity emerge between the two groups?

Tying It All Together:

The students learn the definition of a team task and then they practice with a "line up" game. The teacher can come up with any other game to get students to think about team tasks and how leadership can affect the team identity.