

It's all changed since I was at school....

Parents and Carers from Mattocks Primary School were set a practical co-operative learning task. Pupils from Primary 6 and 7 led the evening, with a little help from staff, and introduced the parents to a new way of working in the Classroom.

Background...

Parents completed a questionnaire about the work of the school. The replies showed that while they were happy about lots of aspects, they felt they needed more information about the way children learned in the Classroom.

The school introduced Home/ School books which are taken home once a term and contain samples of work, photographs, Children's evaluations of their own work and formative feedback (two stars and a wish).



All Angus schools use Co-operative Learning as a teaching strategy, and examples of this appeared regularly in the home/school books. The next logical step was to give the parents much more information about the co-operative learning tasks they were seeing in the books and hearing about from their children. So....

We arranged a co-operative learning evening for parents. Rather than talk about it, we wanted to demonstrate the main principles and show that the learning could be fun, so we called on the experts THE CHILDREN!

What happened?

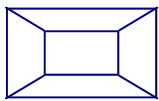
The adults felt a bit nervous to begin with but settled in to a great evening. The feedback was tremendous - "more evenings like this, please" was the message.

The children were very proud of their success. They enjoyed the evening, they spoke confidently, they adapted to their different roles, they encouraged their parents, ran the evening efficiently and the feedback was "More, please".



The aim of today's workshop was to give a brief view of one way that parents have become more closely involved in the work of our school. As part of the workshop you have completed a few "taster" activities to explain how co-operative learning works in our school. However, there are many more strategies. We have included some very brief details of one or two more below.

Tablemats



Each member of the group writes their response or opinion in their section of the mat. They then have to discuss and agree a number of these to enter in the centre of the mat. Good for: agreeing class rules, summarising main points of a lesson, voting for new resources etc.

Numbered Heads

Pupils are numbered in the group. They coach one another in the required learning. The teacher selects a member of each group by number, and if they answer correctly the whole group gains a point. Good for: Learning tables, facts, modern languages vocabulary, poetry.