

What is Co-Teaching? The Five Models of Collaborative Teaching

The five models of co-teaching are arranged somewhat developmentally, the first model is the one most first observed in the classroom and the last model is observed when the two teachers have developed a deep trust and comfort with each other as a result of much planning and positive experiences (Cook & friend 1995). In reality, co-teachers choose from among the five models in order to best teach a specific concept to their students. Therefore, it is not uncommon for co-teachers to use a variety of these models throughout a unit of study or even a class period.

<https://www.understood.org/en/articles/6-models-of-co-teaching>

One Teach, One Assist

Just like it sounds, in this model one member of the team teaches, (usually the content specialist), while the other assists. The “assisting” can be a variety of things: checking homework; re-teaching concepts; answering questions; monitoring student behavior record-keeping; taking notes; etc. This model tends to not take full advantage of the skills and talents of both members of the team and can lead to one teacher feeling like a glorified assistant.

The One Teach, One Assist model can, however, be a very powerful tool for certain learning goals. In a secondary class, for example, one teacher, could lead the class while the other teacher models note-taking for the students on the projector. Alternatively, one teacher could write key words on the board as a way of summarizing information and providing a visual cue. In order to make this model of co-teaching most effective, the use of the assistant must be mindfully planned.

Station Teaching

Station Teaching is often used when teaching complex topics. In this model, the co-teachers develop three learning activities related to the learning goal. Two of the activities are led by the co-teachers and the third activity is designed to be completed individually or in pairs. Depending on the timing of the class periods, Station Teaching may take place over two days. The class is divided into three groups and the students rotate through the stations, taking about 20 minutes per station, to develop a deep understanding of the complex concept.

Station Teaching affords the opportunity for students to take advantage of a lower teacher-student ratio to explore a complex concept in a variety of ways. Station Teaching requires shared responsibility of planning activities that are well-aligned, yet also allows the co-teachers a certain amount of independence in delivering their instruction.

Parallel Teaching

Parallel teaching is a co-teaching strategy which reduces the teacher-student ratio in order to create an environment which encourages participation, allows for increased peer interaction, or promotes hands on activities. In Parallel Teaching both the teachers teach the same lesson to half the class. The class grouping in Parallel Teaching should be heterogeneous in order to ensure that both halves of the

class complete the same activities in the same amount of time. Parallel Teaching is especially effective for drill and/ or review activities, discussions, and group projects. One way to adapt Parallel Teaching to expand the possibilities for the two teachers to teach the same topic but from a different perspective. Armed with their knowledge, the students then debate or teach each other the differing perspectives.

Alternative Teaching

Alternative Teaching is very effective in classes with a wide range of abilities. In Alternative Teaching. The teachers split the class and teach the same concept to different ability levels. Alternative Teaching may include; pre-teaching significant vocabulary to a small group of weaker students; re-teaching concepts to a small group: providing a structured support for pre-writing; leading higher ability students in a discussion of symbolism; making connections between a subject-area topic and cross-curricular parallels; working with a small group on special-interest readings; etc.

A significant concern with Alternative Teaching is stigmatizing students who always fall in the remedial group. Therefore, Alternative Teaching lessons should be developed to vary the groupings or may even allow students the choice with which activity to follow.

Team Teaching

In Team Teaching, both teachers teach the lesson together. Team Teaching requires a significant amount of planning and trust, yet is very effective. In Team Teaching, teachers may lead a discussion together, each adding their input and asking questions as they come up; one teacher may explain a concept while the other teacher demonstrates it; co-teachers may role-play a situation or model types of interactions.