**Video Observation: Analyzing Group Work**

Context: Group of 4 8th grade students work together to solve alarm system tasks

First Look: What did you notice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weakness</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2 Leaders / dominant in group</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1 leader included other student – took time for this to happen</td>
<td>• Students had different goals: complete task vs. explore / experiment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sense of experimentation; willing to try lots of ideas “…what if we tried this…?”</td>
<td>• Brushed off suggestions- didn’t honor everyone’s ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Different levels of prior knowledge – saw application of how this could be used as a doorbell</td>
<td>• No science explanations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Diverse group (teacher assignment?)</td>
<td>• No documentation of success or failures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Proximity / seating allowed for few distractions</td>
<td>• No why questions from students. Only trying to solve problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teacher pushed students further – new goal of getting bulb brighter/buzzer louder</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Group comfortable with each other (?)</td>
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What are some factors of effective group work?

- Everyone has a role/ knows what they are supposed to do (structured)
- Leader in group (defined leader)
- Accountability – show evidence of work done (Final Product)
- Clear Expectations; students understand what is required of them; rubric
- Meaningful, rigorous task – requires group effort to complete successfully
- Common Motivation
- Time
  - Optimal amount- enough for the task that allows time to grapple with ideas/concepts but not so much students become idle –
  - Set Deadlines
- Ability grouping
- Commitment to group
- Team identity
- Group accountability
- Routine
- Group space
- Develop confidence - Momentum

Student and Teacher Accountability in Group Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Do:</th>
<th>What Teachers Do:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Group</td>
<td>Establish routines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow routines</td>
<td>Logistics (provide resources)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand logistical</td>
<td>Space / Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work towards goal</td>
<td>Set product / goals / task</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with teammates</td>
<td>Monitor / facilitate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain to teammates</td>
<td>Cheerleader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contribute their expertise</td>
<td>Defined rules, task, meaningful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Document work</td>
<td>Value effort of students work (effort based instruction)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stay on task</td>
<td>Give student useful feedback</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Discussion: Group Learning and the Impact of Attendance Issues

Possible Ways to Motivate Less Absenteeism During Implementation of Unit

- Exciting Unit that motivates students to participate
- Time of day
- Breakfast (food)
- Reward for target attendance level achieved (food, less assessment, homework pass)
- Recognition of accomplishment (Group of the week)
- 50/50 tickets prize drawing
- All chronic absent students in same group
- Depends on how effective build team identity
- Time of year (School actual at end of year)
- Extend over course of year (certain days)

**Note:** It is understood that these are just strategies and that the root of this problem tends to be social, however, it was also cautioned that rewarding negative behavior may be at the expense of those students who are “following the rules”