## **Working Collaboratively**

#### **Overview**

Minilesson & (Day &)

In this lesson students practice working together on a math problem and reflect on the importance of such.

Students need opportunities to work together —in math workshop this is essential. Working together helps students clarify their thinking, share their thought process, respect others' thinking, deepen their understanding, stay focused, and justify math solutions or strategies. Working together exposes students to other methods of solving a problem or other solutions to a problem. Seeing things from a different perspective may even be the catalyst in a student's math learning. By giving Giving students opportunities to voice their ideas helps them strengthen, extend, and cement their learning. To this end, it's valuable to make student interaction an integral part of instruction.

> —Marilyn Burns, author of About Teaching Mathematics, Fourth Edition (2015)

opportunities for students to work together, you are also promoting teamwork and encouraging math discourse.

#### **Materials**

- Working Collaboratively chart (created in this lesson)
- sticky notes for each student
- an open-ended math problem (select a problem that corresponds with the math topic students are currently learning. A great resource to consider is 50 Problem-Solving Lessons, Grades 1–6 by Marilyn Burns (1996).

#### Directions

There will be many times during math workshop when I ask you to work with a partner or work with a small group. This is called collaboration. When you work collaboratively, I have some expectations so that our best learning can take place. Let's work together to create a chart about what collaborative learning will look like in our classroom. What expectations can we agree on that will help each of us learn best as we work together?

(continued)

Chapter 2 Twenty Days to a Classroom Culture That Works

63

Have students brainstorm together and write each of their thoughts on a separate sticky note. Then have them share their thoughts and either "stick" them to the chart, or you can write them on the chart directly. (See Figure 2–3.) If you are writing their ideas down, phrase the ideas in a positive way (e.g., "Talk respectfully" rather than "Don't talk mean").





We may want to talk as a class about what to do if you have chosen a partner and realize you are unable to work with him or her. In some cases, you may find that it isn't always best to work with a friend. There are times when it may be appropriate to politely change partners, choosing a better fit. However, I hope that most of the time you will find a way to respectfully collaborate with your partner and progress through the task.

#### 64 Math Workshop

Math Workshop: Five Steps to Implementing Guided Math, Learning Stations, Reflection, and More by Jennifer Lempp Copyright © 2017 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

Now, let's take a moment to practice our expectations by working collaboratively on the following problem. Remember to refer to the chart if you or someone in your group is not following the expectations that we have listed.

At the end of the day's lesson, ask students to reflect on their work together.

Take a look at the chart that we made at the beginning of the class. Think about how your partners and you worked to solve problems today. Share an example of how one of your partners followed the expectations listed on our chart. Is there anything that we need to add to our chart to help us to collaborate better?

# VIDEO CLIP 2.3



### **Working Cooperatively**

In this clip, Ms. Lempp facilitates a discussion with first graders on "working cooperatively" as part of preparing them for math workshop. As you watch this clip, consider the following questions:

- How does the teacher phrase students' ideas in a positive way?
- How do you address the idea of working cooperatively in your classroom?



Chapter 2 Twenty Days to a Classroom Culture That Works

65