

Group Work “Rules”

As we have discussed, working together in groups is one of the most effective ways for students to learn. You probably decided that you wanted to work in groups to understand the material better. However, you must remember what the purposes of this class are; to learn the TEKS, to learn how to think and to **prepare you for Advanced Placement classes**. It is not about socializing and wasting time. You are responsible for doing the work (hey, it’s only a few minutes a day!). Remember, “the person that does the work does the learning”. So have fun, make it enjoyable. But don’t blow it by abusing the privilege. After all, we can always do **homework!**

These rules are designed to help everyone get the most out of these activities. We will make sure you are following them.

1. **Stay on task.** Every activity will require you to finish with a product of some kind. Whether it’s a graph, a poster, a puzzle, a thesis, a paragraph, an outline, a graphic organizer, a worksheet or whatever – your ultimate goal is to get the product done in the time allotted.
2. **Everyone participates.** If you are allowing other people to dominate and do the work for you, you are only hurting yourself. When the test comes, the other people will be prepared and you, well, you will be lost!
3. **All viewpoints are valid.** Do not ridicule or make fun of people or their ideas. Don’t get pushy, what comes easily to you may not come easily to others. And besides, you just might be wrong!
4. **Listen.** Just as I insist that we listen during lectures and class discussions – courtesy and effective work procedure requires you to allow others to express themselves. You might accidentally learn something!
5. **Transition smoothly.** Moving desks and breaking into groups and back will be done quickly and smoothly. Two (2) minutes is plenty of time.
6. **Pay attention to instructions.** I will always give you direction as to what is to be done and how. Valuable time is lost if I have to repeat what you are doing. You aren’t going to make it in the “real world” if you can’t take direction the first time. Ask the adults in your life about how this is at work. (By the way, school IS the “real world”.)

Notes:

1. If you don’t like your group, don’t worry, we will change groups often.
2. Because we are trying to learn to work together, groups will stay together for at least two to three activities before changing.
3. Some of Group Work is graded. I may ask your group partners to grade you on your participation!
4. Five or more groups may be working in the room. Keep the noise level to a “dull roar”, (be as quiet as possible).