

COLLABORATION

Collaboration is an important 21st century skill for learning and working together. You can help children learn to contribute to team efforts and accomplish common goals. The arts are a great way to foster collaborative skills in school and at home.



**The 4 Cs—
Essential Skills All Students Need to Succeed**

Creativity

Discovering novel ways to think, learn and do

Critical Thinking

Using original ideas to solve problems

Communication

Expressing thoughts and feelings effectively

Collaboration

Working in partnership with others toward a common goal

plus

Arts-Infused Education Advocacy

Championing the integration of the arts across the curriculum and school-wide to build the 4 Cs

**Myths
and
Realities
About
Collaboration**

Myth	Reality
When students study or work together, it's "like cheating."	When students work together, share ideas and build on others' contributions, they benefit from collective understanding and learn valuable skills. These skills are useful in everyday life, in school and in the workplace.
Collaboration means that assertive, popular students take over and shy, less popular students are left behind.	With skilled instruction, collaboration enables children with various work styles and abilities to share what they know and can do with others with whom they might not routinely interact.
Collaborative learning experiences are difficult for teachers to grade, since it's not always clear who did the work.	Self- and peer assessments of collaborative projects provide useful information about how students handled conflicts, distributed workloads, provided feedback and made unique contributions.



4 Cs of COLLABORATION

COMMON GOAL

Do collaborators understand the shared objectives and their roles when they work as a group or on a team?

CONTRIBUTIONS

Are the talents and skills of everyone in the group leveraged?

Is everyone given the opportunity to make contributions and shine?

Do you assign roles and responsibilities that play to individual strengths?

Are diverse points of view solicited and welcome?

How is feedback used to improve collaboration?

How are individual contributions and individuals' ability to work as a team assessed?

COMPROMISE-CONSENSUS

Do collaborators know how to compromise and reach consensus?

Is the decision making process clear?

If no compromise or consensus is reached, who makes the ultimate decision?

CREATIVE, COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

Do collaborators have opportunities to share constructive feedback?

Does the group have strategies to make sure everyone contributes—without some people dominating or others being left out?

Is there a culture of creative collaboration—an environment in which people respect one another's ideas and nurture creative expression?

How is conflict handled? Are disagreements handled respectfully?

Tips for Educators and Parents

Educators and parents can work together to improve four kinds of collaboration that are critical for schools to make the most of the arts in education:

- Collaboration among **students**, which prepares students for project-based and group learning in school and in workplaces, where people work and innovate in teams, not just independently
- Collaboration among **faculty**, who can share their expertise and work on interdisciplinary challenges and learning experiences that leverage the arts
- Collaboration between **educators and parents**, who bring unique perspectives and contributions to helping individual students succeed
- Collaboration between **the school and the broader community**, such as the literary, visual and performing arts communities, which can support creative, collaborative experiences

