



# Peer to Peer Learning

Peer to peer learning is just students working together on a shared task. It is nothing fancy. We do it every day but let's take a moment to reflect on how it can be done more inclusively and with greater impact on their learning.

Peer to peer learning offers a great opportunity to increase inclusion in the classroom, foster inclusive attitudes and develop social skills. Students can be given the opportunity to work with other people and gain insight into other points of view, they can try new skills and gain more independence.

## Grouping

Group work can be stress-inducing due to the social demands that it puts on students. Students can feel more vulnerable and out of their comfort zone and this is all before we consider the task that they have been set.

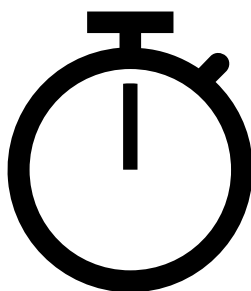
Consider the balance between the social demands of a task and the academic demands. If the task requires high levels of academic demand consider grouping students with their familiar peers or the people that they commonly sit near. But, if the academic requirements are lower, group work can be an excellent opportunity to develop social skills.



## Visual and verbal prompts

Consider using visual or verbal prompts. Make instructions as chunked and simple as possible.

Visual and verbal prompts may include exemplars, success criteria, sentence starters or a flowchart for how to complete the task.



## Timing

We can often take our visual cues for timing from the most able. We have a lot to pack into lessons and the temptation can be to want to move on. As set out in *The Inclusive Classroom* by Daniel Sobel and Sara Alston by always using the most able as our guide, we can be in danger of developing a culture in which some students are never given the opportunity to finish a task and this can lead to long term disengagement.



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## Roles

Students will have their preferred roles in group work: scribe, chair person, presenter, resource gatherer, data recorder, time keeper etc. Consider assigning roles to give students the opportunity to develop other skills. Discussing roles, recognising what skills they require and how they contribute to the overall task can be a useful metacognitive tool.

## Changed environment

Depending on the task, you may need to prewarn students about what to expect from the task. Changes in the environment can prevent students from accessing the learning. Be aware that the stress that this causes may be seen in the form of more fidgeting, distraction or other displays of discomfort.

You can be clear with the students prior to task about your noise level expectations. There are free [online visual tools](#) for displaying the noise level that you can use.

## Your role and the role of other adults

By using a carefully structured approach to peer-to-peer learning and careful planning, group work can feel make us feel uncomfortable because our role is less well defined. You may be required to provide light-touch intervention, prompts or praise. Remember to give students the time and space to try out ideas and solve issues before trying to help them.

Other adults, such as teaching assistants, will have an important role to play in supporting the set-up for the group work but as set out in the EEF's [Making the most of Teaching Assistants](#) guidance, students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and should be encouraged to be as independent as possible. Try to ensure that in peer-to-peer learning students are grouped with peers rather than relying on TA to take on the role of a student.

## Further reading

Sobel, & Alston, S. (2021). *The inclusive classroom: a new approach to differentiation*.

EEF (2021) *Making the most of Teaching Assistants: Guidance Report*.