



### CO-Teaching That Works

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CO-TEACHING

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### What Is Co-Teaching



#### Key Elements of Co-Teaching

- Two or more people sharing instructional responsibility for the students assigned to a classroom.
- Distribution of responsibility among people for planning, instructing, and evaluating students assigned to a classroom.
- A way to facilitate access to the general education curriculum by differentiation of instruction to increase students' success in mixed-ability classrooms.
- Collaboration of people with diverse backgrounds and interests to share knowledge and skills that generate novel methods to individualize learning.
- A partnership that can be likened to a marriage wherein it is necessary to establish trust, develop work on communication, share the chores, work together, overcome inevitable challenges and problems, anticipate conflict and handle them all in a constructive way.



### Rationales for Co-Teaching

- Co-teaching offers a legal, cost-effective way to accomplish the NCLB and IDEA priorities. Creating partnerships between general educators, the masters of content, and special educators, the masters of access, increases the probability of curriculum being differentiated and students with diverse learning profiles succeeding in the general education curriculum.
- NCLB requires that students are taught by teachers who are highly qualified in the curriculum content area they instruct.
- Co-teaching allows general and special educators to collaborate in planning and teaching to prevent referral to special education through the early intervention approach referred to, in the 2004 IDEA reauthorization, as Response-To-Intervention (RTI).
- The intention of RTI is to have general educators work with special educators and other specialists to ensure that research-based instruction and interventions occur in the general education classroom and provide enhanced instruction to struggling students.

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RtI

interventions  
help reduce  
# of sp ed

### Five Basic Elements of Effective Co-Teaching Partnerships

1. At least one common goal (enhanced student learning)
2. A shared belief system where each co-teacher is valued for unique expertise.
3. Equality between the co-teachers who both give and receive.
4. Use of a distributed functions theory of leadership where what one teacher traditionally did alone is transformed into a shared distribution among all co-teaching team members.
5. A cooperative procedure with face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, monitoring and processing interpersonal skills, and individual accountability.

enhance  
student  
learning

### Approaches to Co-Teaching

different types

- 1 **Supportive co-teaching**-one member of the team takes the lead role and the other member rotates among students to provide support.
- 2 **Parallel co-teaching**-classroom teacher and other personnel instruct different groups of students in different areas of the classroom.
- 3 **Complementary co-teaching**- member of the co-teaching team does something to supplement or compliment the instruction provided by the other member of the team (paraphrases the other co-teacher's statements).
- 4 **Team teaching**- members of the team co-teach along side one another and share complete responsibility for planning, teaching and assessment for all students.

interchangeable



### Supportive Co-Teaching

One co-teacher takes the lead instructional role, while the supporting co-teacher watches and listens as students work, stepping in to provide academic, behavioral, or communication assistance, as needed.

\*\* Who takes the lead and who supports can change over the course of a lesson.

one

approach

**Supportive Co-Teaching Cautions**

- Supportive co-teacher becomes Velcro-ed to an individual student, blocking the student's interactions with other students.
- Avoid stigmatizing either the student or the supporting co-teacher leading classmates to perceive that the student and co-teacher are not genuine members of the classroom.
- Avoid maintaining a co-teacher, such as special educator, in the supportive role, making it difficult for that person to fully utilize his or her skills.

- warnings

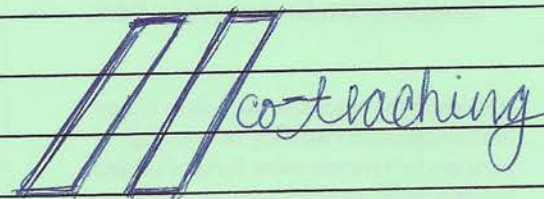
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**Parallel Co-Teaching**

Two or more people work with different groups of students in different areas of the classroom.

Variations

- Split class- Each co-teacher is responsible for instructing and monitoring a portion of the class. Both might provide guided instruction and on different aspects of a lesson and then exchange students and repeat the instruction. While one co-teacher might work with a group of students on a concept or skill the other provides enrichment or help to students who need extra assistance.
- Learning center-Each co-teacher is responsible for guiding and monitoring one or more centers. Students rotate among centers.
- Monitoring cooperative groups- Each co-teacher takes responsibility for monitoring and providing assistance who are in a cooperative group.
- Learning Preference -One co-teacher teaches the lesson to a group of students according to their preferences(verbal, spatial, kinesthetic, auditory). The other teacher teaches the same lesson to another group.



- 1/2 & 1/2 of class
- rotating centers
- monitoring
- learning styles

**Parallel Co-Teaching Cautions**

- Avoid creating a special class within a class by routinely grouping the same students together with the same co-teacher. Instead group heterogeneously when possible and regroup often.
- Avoid stigmatization that may happen if someone other than the classroom teacher always teaches one group of students (special educator, paraprofessional).
- \* Make sure all members of the co-teaching team are familiar with all students.

regroup often

**3** Complementary Co-Teaching

- A co-teacher does something to enhance the instruction provided by another co-teacher.
- A content area co-teacher provides a lecture, while the complementary co-teacher provides illustrative examples, models the use of graphic organizer, summarizes, or records key words and definitions for a word wall.

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Complementary Co-Teaching Cautions

- \* Minimize the emphasis that many content teachers place on wanting co-teaching partners to have the same level of subject mastery as the content teacher.

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**4** Team Teaching Co-Teaching

- Two or more people do what the traditional teacher has always done-plan, teach, assess all students in the classroom.
- Both teachers share the leadership and responsibility for all students in the class.
- Co-teachers exchange roles readily and easily.
- Team teachers make decisions about what co-teaching approach to use at any point in lesson. The student views each teacher as their teacher.

share:

- planning
- teaching
- assessing

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**Team Teaching Co-teaching Cautions**

- Forget to monitor students. Co-teachers can get so caught up in co-delivering instruction at the front of the room that they fail to move among and closely monitor the students.
- Avoid being stuck in one role and not expanding what you teach and co-teach.

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**Common Characteristics of the 4 Approaches to Co-Teaching**

- Presence of two or more teachers in the classroom.
- Utilization of specific strengths and expertise of co-teachers
- Provision of greater teacher/student ratio and availability of 1:1 support for students.
- Heterogeneously grouped students
- Shared responsibility for all.



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**Benefits of Co-Teaching**

**Increased overall student achievement**

- \* Increased positive attitude towards schoolwork and school.
- \* Exposure to active learning strategies and more engaged in lesson.



*increased*

*achievement*

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### Benefits of Co-Teaching

Decreased referrals for intensive special education services.

Increased flexibility in grouping and scheduling, making it possible for students to experience less wait time for teacher attention and increased time on task.



decreased

wait time

### Benefits of Co-Teaching

Fewer Behavioral problems

Teachers reports of being happier and not feeling so isolated



teachers

### Who Can Co-Teach?

Any member of the school can co-teach including:

- Title I personnel
- Reading Specialists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Gifted Teachers
- Counselors
- Administrators





### Can Paraeducators Be Co-Teachers?

"Instructional Aide"



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### Who is the Paraprofessional?

- Paraprofessionals- individuals who are involved in the delivery of instructional services to students



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supplemental

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### Roles and Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals

- Provide Instructional Support
  - Implement instructional programs and lesson plans as directed by teachers
  - Assist students with individual work
  - Assist in collecting and maintaining data
  - Score objective tests and maintain appropriate records
  - Contribute information and/or attend IEP/FBA or other staff meetings

Functional behavior assessment

TRIGGERS

slow	fast
grumpy	directions
didn't eat	assignment
-delayed	- give something + behavior results

### Roles and Responsibilities of Paraprofessionals

- Provide behavior management support
- Provide clerical/technical support
- Provide personal/health assistance
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals while the teacher works with other students
- Hear requests for help, observe learning difficulties of pupils, and report such matters



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### Roles of Special Education Teachers in Regards to Paraprofessionals

- Directing the role of the paraprofessional
- Planning lessons that match the skill level of the paraprofessional
- Mentor and maintain instructional dialogue with the paraprofessional
- Set an example of professionalism in execution of teacher responsibilities



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### Roles of Special Education Teacher continued

- Communicate the needs of each student to the paraprofessional
- Establish and communicate the paraprofessional's role in behavior management
- Assist the paraprofessional in defining his/her position as an authority figure
- Introduce the paraprofessional as part of the teaching team



SDI - Specially  
Designed  
instruction

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**Instructional Duties the Paraprofessional May Not Perform**



- Be solely responsible for a classroom or a professional service
- Be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating instruction
- Be responsible for assigning grades to students

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**Least Effective Use of Paraprofessionals**



The students lose a valuable resource if the paraprofessionals' role is to:

- Photocopy papers
- Copy notes (solely)
- Run errands
- Hold up the back wall of the classroom

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Statistics reveal that over half a million paraeducators are currently employed in full-time positions nationwide. Of these, over 50% are assigned to support students in general education classrooms.

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### What is Not Co-Teaching

Part of learning what something is, involves understanding what it is not.



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### Co-Teaching Is Not....



- \* One person always taking a lead role and the other person always relegated to a secondary supportive role.
- \* One person teaching one subject followed by another who teaches a different subject.
- One teacher conducting a lesson while others are standing or sitting by and watching.
- One person deciding what is to be taught or how it will be taught

Team  
Word

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