



Collaboration: The Keys to the Kingdom

How to work effectively with members
of your faculty and staff



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"Dear Faculty, Which of these defines collaboration?"



1. Drop off the class and let the librarian take care of them.
2. Finally, a chance to sit down and rest.
3. I don't know a thing about bibliographies, will you guide, plan, teach, test, evaluate the lesson?
Pssst, none of these is the answer!



COLLABORATION

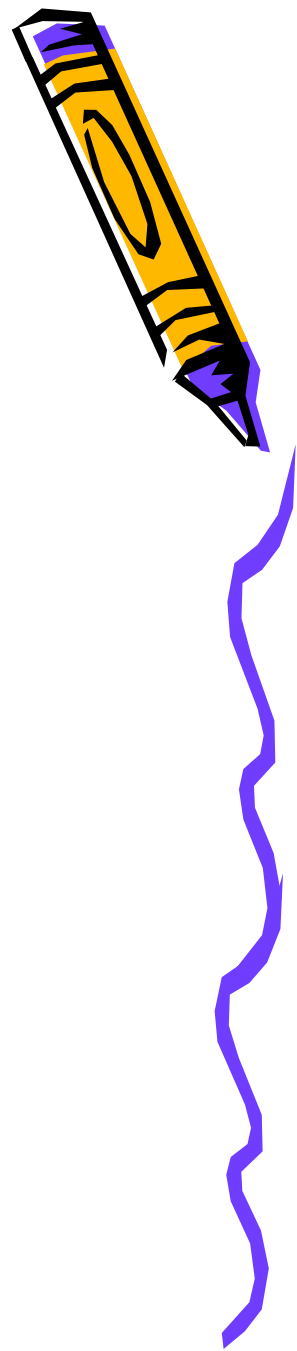
actually means:

- * working together.
- * listening and appreciating each person's contributions.
- * understanding that some folks think faster than others, some folks work faster than others.
- * taking a chance by giving up some control to another person. (this is tough to do!)



These words describe the art of collaboration:

- Cooperation
- Flexibility
- Thoughtfulness
- Professionalism
- Creativity
- Open communication
- Dynamic
- Energizing
- Fun
- Time-saving
- Friendly
- Welcoming attitude



How to begin

- First, decide that you want to collaborate with someone!
- Next, select the person(s) you wish to work with, and the topic you think you could share successfully.
- Then, contact them and ask...



Ideas...thoughts...what could work....

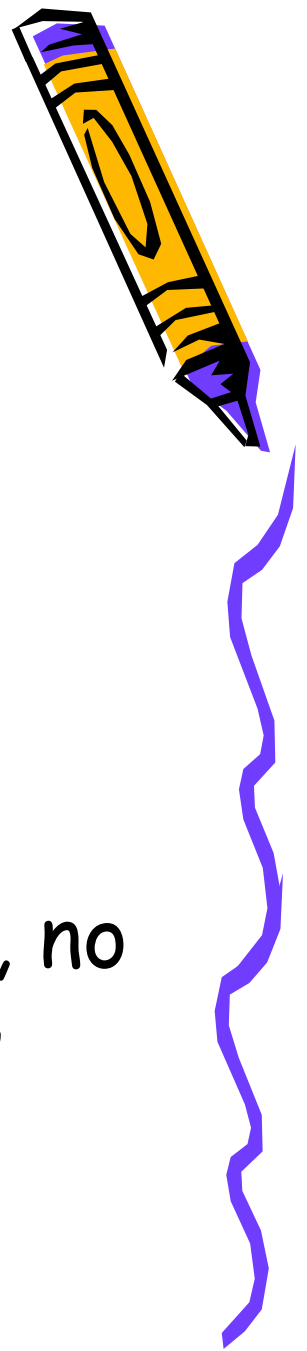


- Grades 1-4: hurricanes, snow, dinosaurs, lighthouses, pets, character education, recycling
- Grades 5-7: genres of literature, diseases, sports, countries, customs, religions, conflicts, global warming
- Grades 8-12: research projects, specifics in each curricular area, forensics, literature analysis, ecology, health/fitness



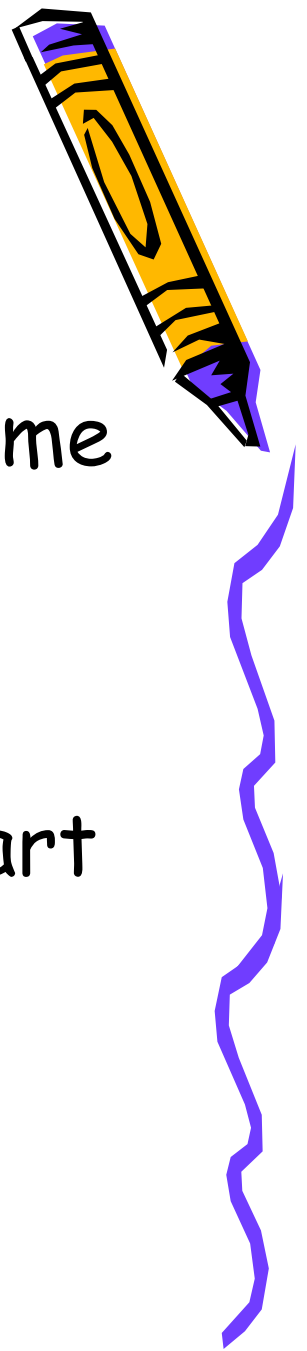
What you can offer:

- Library/media resources
- Webliographies
- Graphic organizers
- Scavenger hunts for materials
- Picture books appropriate to topic, no matter what grade level is working



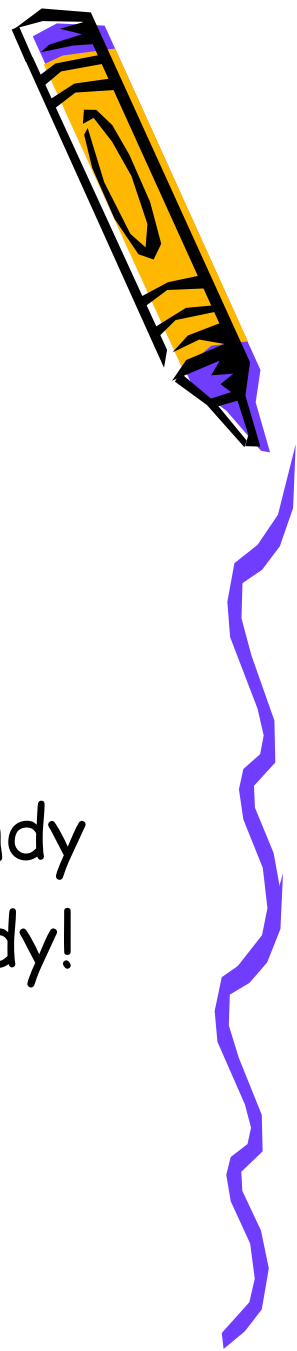
What to avoid:

- Pre-made, completed units (save time to talk and share)
- "Knowing it all" "My way or no way"
"Don't touch my stuff">>> thinking.
- Limiting the teachers involved. Start with one and be happy to include more.



Be sure to:

- Schedule times to meet uninterrupted.
- Have all participants together for all meetings
- Have supplies handy
- Have calendar handy
- Have copier handy
- Have snack ready!



And then,

- Schedule one meeting to begin collaborative discussions.
- Schedule one meeting to gather and prepare materials
- Schedule one meeting to review, wrap it all up, make changes, and debrief!
- Have snacks because you will be proud of yourselves!



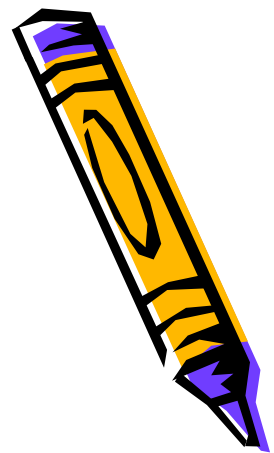
To make it easier:

- One person should be the recorder.
- One person should be the "holder of materials."
- One person should be the scheduler.
- One person should be the "filler"-- fills in for each person when needed, the troubleshooter.
- Everyone is a "go-fer" ...go fer this and go fer that!



Topics to address:

- Length
- Location (what happens where)
- Dates (when)
- Weight of grade
- Assessments
- Supply list
- Resource list
- Hardware-software needs
- Outside resources (guest speakers, props, examples, artifacts, etc.)



Plan thoroughly...



- Always aim high
- Always plan more than you can do, then edit as you go.
- As ideas occur, write them down.
- Be sure everyone has a copy of the entire unit/lesson. Each collaborator should be able to walk away with a complete package.



Design an evaluation sheet



- Teacher evaluation sheet
- Student evaluation sheet
- Observer evaluation sheet (invite others to observe a collaborative lesson in action!)
- Read and review these together after the lesson. (Use these for reflection and fine-tuning before using the lesson again.)



What next?



- Share, in positive manner, what was accomplished.
- Tell others about the success of the collaboration.
- Don't minimize the weaknesses, but don't magnify them either.
- Offer to collaborate with others as the requests come in. Be prepared for successes and failures...roll with the tide!



Finally,



- be sure to keep a file/notebook of collaborative lessons/units. Refer to these as other units develop and requests come in.
- Make collaborative units a standard part of the library/media experience. Set aside days/times in the schedule for these types of events.
- Ask participants to encourage others to join the company of collaborators.
- New teachers are always looking for ways to learn from seasoned professionals. Retired librarians love to be asked back to help!



TOOT YOUR OWN
HORN!

