

# Cooperative Controversy

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1. The teacher lectures to the class on the topic of the unit.
2. The students are placed in groups of four, and each foursome is divided into pairs. Each pair is given material supporting one of two sides of a controversial issue connected to the unit's topic. Thus, one pair in each foursome has material on one side of the issue, and the other pair has material supporting another side. Using the teacher-prepared material and their own ideas, the pairs prepare to present their assigned positions to the other pair in their foursome.
3. The pairs present their assigned sides of the issue to each other. Each side takes notes during the other's presentation. Then they debate the issue, defending their assigned positions.
4. The pairs then change sides and prepare to present and defend the side of the issue previously presented by the other pair. They are not given the teacher-presented material supporting that side.
5. The foursomes repeat step three with their newly assigned positions.
6. The students are no longer assigned a position. Instead, they use their own opinions and try - although it is not necessary that they actually do -to reach a consensus on the issue within their groups.
7. Students take a quiz, write an essay, or work on other tasks based on the topic of the controversy.