

Maria's Advice

Individual Accountability in Group Work

Strategies I use include holding class meetings and asking for short oral reports on progress from each group, asking for short written progress reports from individuals, and conducting frequent checkpoints through observation and conferences.

Strategies for Students with Learning Disabilities

To accommodate students, I often:

- Team higher-ability students with lower-ability students
- Allow dictation or computer-based journal entries and ideas
- Provide a daily outline of tasks to aid organization and work completion
- Provide templates for research and scientific investigations
- Provide resources with lower readability, including Web sites

Strategies for Nonnative Speakers

To accommodate students, I often:

- Provide visual models
- Ask more proficient bilingual students to help with translation
- Develop a bilingual glossary of terms to aid vocabulary development
- Allow written work in the student's first language for later translation

Technology That Helps Students Meet Learning Goals

Technology can greatly increase students' motivation and their mastery of 21st century skills. Be sure to focus on technology that truly enhances student learning. You do not want to shift the project emphasis from learning content to managing technology.

Technology That Supports Project Work

While many possibilities exist, I often set up a project wiki at the beginning of a project and teach students to set up their own pages to post their work. This promotes collaboration in group work and with our partner classrooms. Students also use online collaborative sites to write, edit, and review their group work from any location.

Keeping Everyone Organized

Before a project begins, I complete a project timeline and implementation plan. Student groups also complete project plans at the beginning of a project.

During the project, I keep a folder for each group containing my notes on progress and observations. Groups also have folders for progress checklists and other tools to track tasks and accomplishments. When meeting with groups, we review the work in their folders, and check off what they accomplished against what they said they were going to do.

We also use the project wiki and online collaborative sites to keep track of documents.