

# GAINING COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

LEVEL: **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
AGE GROUP: **STUDENTS AGES 6 TO 11**



## ACTIVITY SUMMARY


Students learn about cooperative values, cooperatives in their community and set up their own cooperative project.

## FINANCIAL AND COOPERATIVE SKILLS

- Understanding complementary strengths of different team members (ages 8 and 9)
- Differentiating cooperative values (ages 10 and 11)
- Recognizing local cooperatives (ages 6 and 7)
- Understanding the role of members in a cooperative (ages 8 to 11)
- Defining cooperatives and recognizing different types (ages 10 and 11)

 **AGE GROUP**  
Students ages 6 to 11

 **WHEN**  
October

 **TIME REQUIRED**  
1 week or more, depending on project

**AREA OF LEARNING**  
Citizenship and community life

## COMPETENCIES

### AFFECTED DISCIPLINARY COMPETENCIES

- Mathematics
- English

### NON-DISCIPLINARY SKILLS

- Using information
- Putting creative thinking into practice
- Developing effective working methods

# PREPARATION

STUDENTS LEARN COOPERATIVE VALUES  
AND HOW THEY APPLY.

## TASK 1 COOPERATIVE BUSINESSES



**TIME REQUIRED**  
1 hour



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
What is a cooperative?  
[On desjardins.com](https://www.desjardins.com)

### TASK 1 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, students will be able to differentiate between cooperatives and other businesses.

### Instructions

1. Watch the video, **What is a cooperative?**
2. Discuss local cooperatives: have students list the ones they know and look others up in a directory of cooperatives.
  - [Répertoire des coopératives au Québec \(site in French only\)](#)
  - [The Ontario Co-operative Association directory](#)

### TEACHER'S NOTES

For all primary levels:

1. Discuss the principles of cooperation:
  - voluntary and open membership
  - the democratic exercise of power by members and their representatives
  - member economic participation in capital
  - autonomy and independence of the cooperative from governments and external interest groups
  - education, training, and information of members, officers and employees
  - cooperation among cooperatives
  - cooperative concern for the community
2. You can also invite the officers of a cooperative to come in and talk about how their cooperative business was started.

## TASK 2 ENCOURAGING COMPETITION AND COOPERATION IN CLASS



**TIME REQUIRED**  
2 hours



**TEACHING MATERIAL**

- What is a cooperative?
- Cooperation!
- Cooperative Values

[On desjardins.com](https://www.desjardins.com)

### TASK 2 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, students will be able to differentiate between cooperation and competition.

### Instructions

1. Discuss the idea of competition with students.

### TEACHER'S NOTES

For all primary levels:

1. Questions:
  - What is competition?
  - What is teamwork?
  - What is cooperation?
  - What are cooperative values?
  - Was it difficult to write a story using words that were given to you?
  - Did knowing that a winning story would be chosen put pressure and stress on you?

## TASK 2

### ENCOURAGING COMPETITION AND COOPERATION IN CLASS (SUITE)

2. Tell students they will be participating in a short story competition using 4 words written on the board. Specify that the best story will be read in other classes of the same level and posted in the hall or school newspaper. The goal is to stimulate competition among students.
3. Have students read their stories out loud and have them vote for the best story.
4. Ask students to describe the experience.
5. Explain the difference between competition and cooperation using the **Cooperative Values** poster.
6. Ask students to do a cooperative activity. Use the **Cooperation!** sheet.
7. Point out the advantages of cooperation.

#### TEACHER'S NOTES (SUITE)

2. Compare the 2 experiences (competition and cooperation) and ask students to explain the different processes and results in each of the activities.

## EXECUTION

STUDENTS LEARN COOPERATIVE VALUES AND HOW THEY APPLY.

## TASK 1

### FINDING A COMMON NEED AT SCHOOL



#### TIME REQUIRED

30 minutes in class, over 1 week to finish the project in school



#### TEACHING MATERIAL

How to Plan a Cooperative Project

On [desjardins.com](https://desjardins.com)

#### TASK 1 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, students will have identified a need in the school that will be the incentive to start a cooperative.

#### Instructions

- Suggest that students organize a cooperative at school.
- Remind students that a cooperative is formed to meet a common need. Explain how that could be applied in school.
- Lead a class discussion and identify 2 or 3 common needs project participants. Write each group's suggestions on the **How to Plan a Cooperative Project** sheet. Give the sheet to another class until it has been filled out by all participants and ultimately given to the project leader.
- The project leader meets with representatives from each class or level, depending on the model chosen by the school, and a common need is chosen from the list.
- The project leader or representatives from each class or level then announce the common need that was chosen for the cooperative project.

#### TEACHER'S NOTES

For all primary school cycles:

1. A leading committee should be named to oversee the project and coordinate activities. The student council could fill this role. The school may also create a student committee formed of representatives from each class or level. This task requires that a coordinator be named to receive the list of suggestions from students. **Recommendation:** Print only 1 guide per class.
2. Examples of common needs in the school:
  - Facilities that are used by everyone such as the library, school yard or cafeteria
  - An activity that the whole school population would enjoy
  - Material for students (e.g.: purchase of material for recess, gym or library)

## TASK 2

### ORGANIZING THE PROJECT



**TIME REQUIRED**  
Depends on project



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
How to Plan a Cooperative  
Project  
[On desjardins.com](https://desjardins.com)

#### TEACHER'S NOTES

- Planning tasks are aimed at students in cycle 3 of elementary school. However, each class may participate in the task and drawing up a plan for their activity.
- It's important to designate leaders for every task to make sure the activities are completed.

#### TASK 2 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, students will have planned the major steps of their project and assigned the tasks.

#### Instructions

1. Call a meeting of the leading committee and fill out page 1 of the planning guide for cooperative projects.
2. Consult with all participants to find out what each class or committee wants to do as a task.
3. Plan activities and fill out page 2 of the guide using the consultation results. The ideas aren't detailed. Each committee or class will be responsible for detailing the steps of the process.
4. Fill out part A of page 3 of the guide for each class or committee and give it to the representative.
5. Each class or committee is responsible for making the ideas happen.

## TASK 3

### INVITING LOCAL COOPERATIVES



**TIME REQUIRED**  
Depends on project

#### TEACHER'S NOTES

- Tasks are aimed at students in cycle 3 of elementary school.
- The **Ensemble vers la réussite** program helps students develop cooperative teamwork skills.  
Learn more about the:
  - [Programme Ensemble vers la réussite](#)
  - [Semaine de la coopération](#)

#### TASK 3 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, students will have practiced intercooperation by asking local cooperatives to participate.

#### Instructions

If the project requires financing, the school may appeal to a local cooperative. Designate someone for this task. A request may be made in writing or during an appointment with a manager of the cooperative.

## TASK 4 CARRYING OUT A COOPERATIVE PROJECT

### TEACHER'S NOTES

Tasks are for all primary school cycles.

### TASK 4 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, students will be able to carry out their project with the assistance of school staff.

### Instructions

1. Every committee or class carries out their assigned tasks. Some tasks may involve all or some school staff.
2. Indicate progress on the thermometer (in **How to Plan a Cooperative Project**) as the project advances. Record the goal (e.g.: an amount of money to collect or number of objects to collect). Use several thermometers when the project has several goals. Hang the thermometers on the walls throughout the school so all students can see them.

## EVALUATION

### STUDENTS EVALUATE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE COOPERATIVE PROJECT, INCLUDING THEIR PROCESS AND GOALS.

## TASK 1 THINKING ABOUT COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

### TEACHER'S NOTES

Tasks are for all primary school cycles.



**TIME REQUIRED**  
1 hour



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
Cooperative Experience  
Evaluation  
Cooperative Values  
[On desjardins.com](https://desjardins.com)

### TASK 1 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this task, you will be able to evaluate the students' understanding of and commitment to cooperation.

### Instructions

1. Hand out the Cooperative Experience Evaluation to students.
2. Ask students to fill out the grid. Direct students to number 3 and explain each value. Give examples without making a direct link to the project to allow the students to make the connection themselves.
3. Discuss the experience with students.