

Equitable Student Grouping

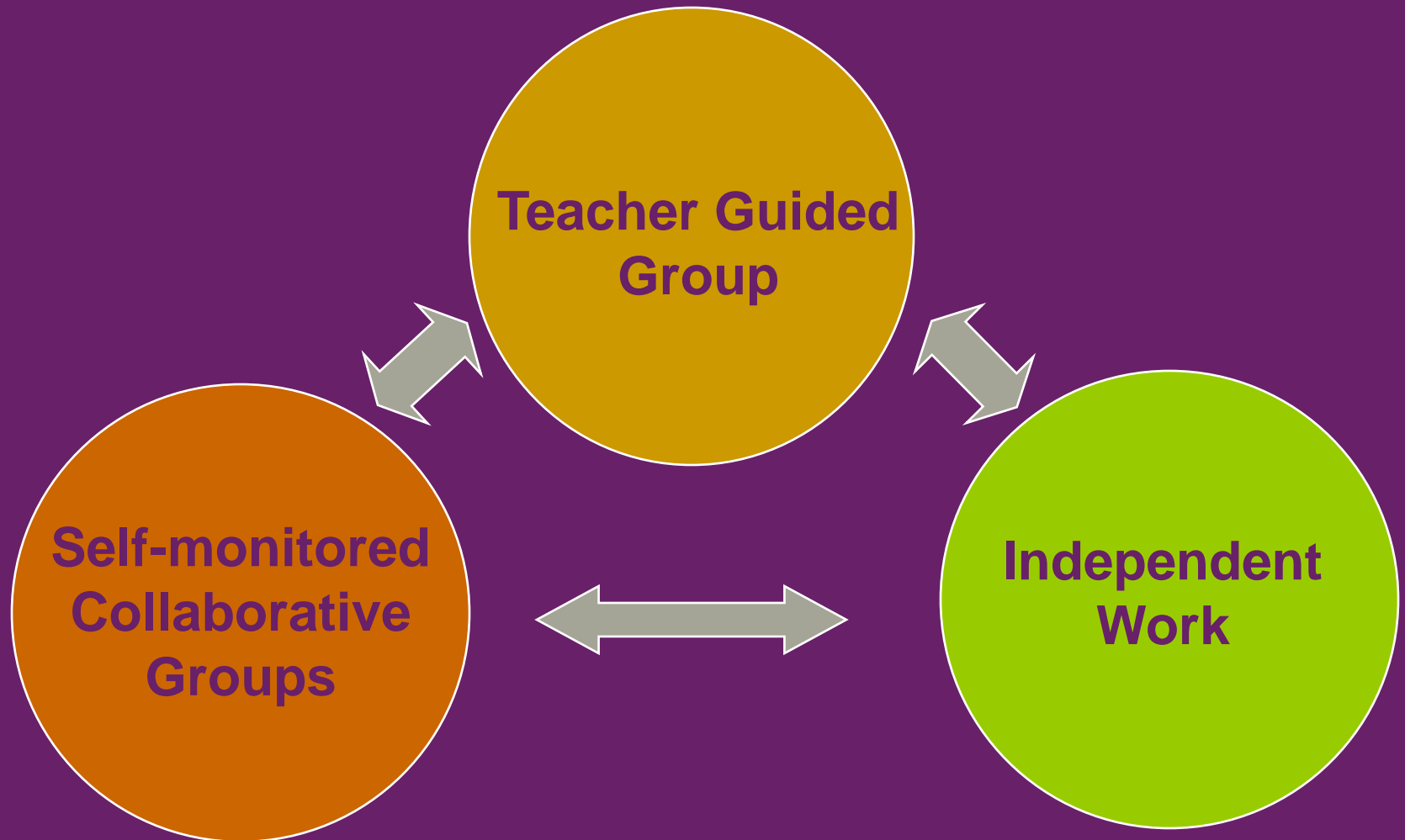
*Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality
@ Metropolitan Center for Urban Education*

New York University

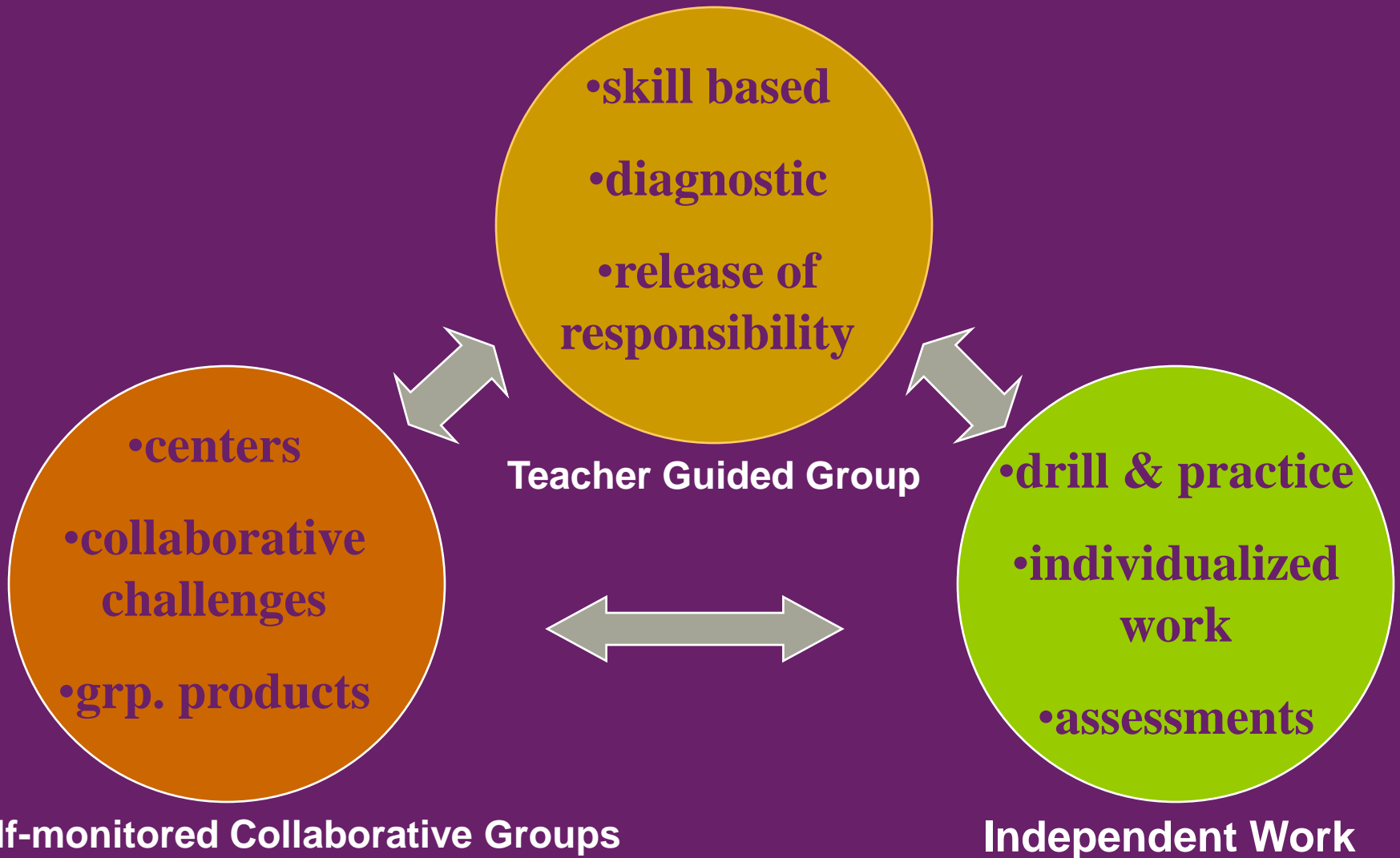
Objectives

- To understand the research behind students working in small groups
- To understand why grouping students is important in addressing disproportionality
- To understand the essential elements for effective student groups

Flexible Grouping for Instruction



Flexible Grouping for Instruction



Does Homogeneous Grouping of Students Work?

- Low ability
- Medium ability
- High ability

Why Use Heterogeneous Groups?

- To improve social competencies
- To improve self-esteem
- To build positive relationships between majority and minority students
- To foster leadership skills
- To prepare students for the workplace
- To increase student achievement

(Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Brown, 2000; Slavin, 1994)

Improved Social Competencies

- Respect for human differences
- Appreciation of minority rights
- Awareness of equity and justice
- Willingness to negotiate differences
- Patience for orderly participation
- Openness to others' ideas
- Respect for the rights of others
- Sense of responsibility for the general welfare

(Schmuck & Schmuck, 2001)

Improved Self-esteem

Within cooperative groups, self-esteem is enhanced since individuals tend to:

- Interact more with peers
- Promote each other's success
- Form multidimensional and realistic impressions of each other's competencies
- Give accurate and more immediate feedback

(Johnson & Johnson, 1989)

Improved Positive Relationships Between Majority and Minority Students

- Greater cross-ethnic interactions
- Greater perceived helping
- Greater generalization of social interactions between ethnic groups

(Johnson & Johnson, 1982)

Improved Leadership Skills

- A Chance to be a leader
- Better initiative
- Better ability to provide positive feedback
- Better resistance to peer pressure

(Kagan, 1994; Johnson & Johnson, 2000)

Improved Preparation for the Workplace

- To prepare today's students for the workplace requires schools to teach students to work in teams to make decisions, solve problems and create new ideas.

(Mandel, 2003)

- “The heart of most jobs, especially the higher-paying more interesting jobs, is teamwork. Teamwork involves getting others to cooperate, leading others, coping with complex power and influence issues, and helping solve people's problems in working with each other. Teamwork involves communication, effective coordination, and divisions of labor.”

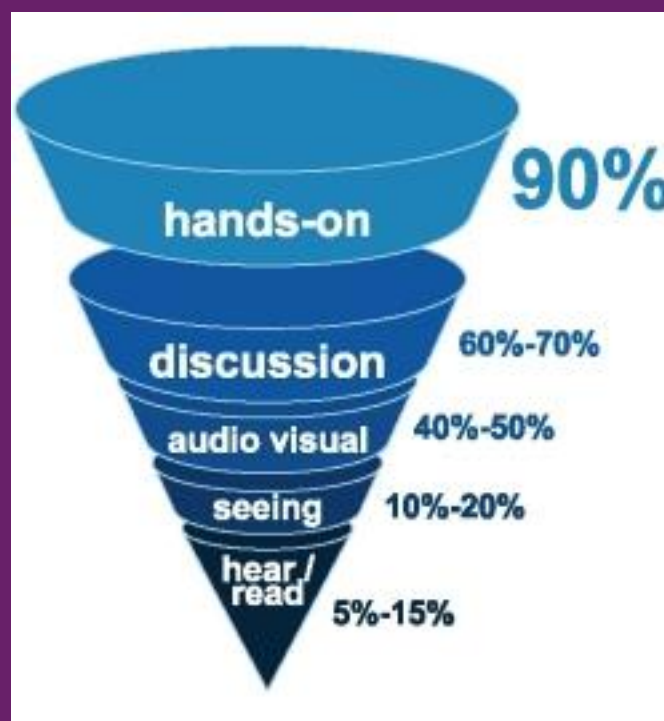
(Johnson & Johnson, 1991, p. 1:24)

Improved Student Achievement

- Higher individual achievement
- Increased retention with active participation
- More frequent higher-level reasoning, deeper-level understanding and critical thinking
- “...learning is often best achieved through in conversation among students.”

(Johnson & Johnson, 2000; Slavin 1994)

Based on Dale's Cone of Learning By Edgar Dale, Professor of Education, Ohio State University



Retention Rates

Teacher Beliefs

- The immediate and clear implication of this finding is that seemingly more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor. Effective teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels, regardless of the level of heterogeneity in their classrooms.

(Wright et al., 1997, p.63)

How to Group

- Ability Groups
 - should be done sparingly
- Base Groups
 - supports set up for extended time (year, semester)
- Skill Set Groups
- Informal Groups
 - random, pair share, turn to your neighbor
- Formal Groups
 - thorough, multiple sessions, limited members (3-4 members best), defining elements

(Marzano, Pickering, Pollock, 2001)

Formal Groups

- Formal groups should be:
 - Mixed ability
 - Academic
 - Social
 - Behavioral
 - Mixed gender
 - Mixed ethnic make-up
 - Limited in number of members

5 Defining Elements Effective Heterogeneous Groups

- Positive Interdependence
- Face-to-face promotive interaction
- Individual and group accountability
- Interpersonal and small group skill
- Group processing

Positive Interdependence

- Each group member's efforts are required and indispensable for group success
- Each group member has a unique contribution to make to the joint effort because of his or her resources and/or role and task responsibilities

Explicit Teaching

Positive Interdependence

- Democracy
- Internal Thoughts vs. External Actions
- Team Rules
- Cooperative Games
- Positive Identity
- Positive Outside Enemy
- Equity

Face-to-face Promotive Interaction

- Students encouraging students to achieve
- Applauding success and effort
- Teaching one's knowledge to others
- Checking for understanding
- Discussing concepts being learned

Explicit Teaching

Face-to-face Promotive Interaction

- Sharing
- Teach tutoring skills
- Reward asking for help or clarification
- Role play ways to encourage group members
 - Positive situations
 - Making mistakes

Individual and Group Accountability

- Students are giving individual assessments in which they cannot receive help
- All roles or responsibilities rotate among members
- The group as a whole received reward/grade for quality of group work

Explicit Teaching

Individual and Group Accountability


- Teach self-monitoring skills (checklists)
- Call on random students to explain group process or information
- Stop activities to point-out positive interactions
- Have students quiz each other to practice for assessment
- Have a “checker” for group participation


INSTRUMENT 3.5

Observing Work in Our Class: Form 2

For younger students the following simple observation form could be used. Initials of the students could be placed in the "What I Saw" area, and the observation should last only ten to fifteen minutes so students can remember the evidence.

1. Who listened?  What I Saw!

2. Who talked? 

3. Who gave an idea? 

4. I think this group was:



5. Why I think the group was like that?

Interpersonal and Small Group Skill

- Leadership
- Group Decision Making
- Trust Among Members
- Effective Communication
- Conflict-management

Explicit Teaching

Interpersonal and Small Group Skill

- Brainstorm actions of a good leader
- Practice ways to give positive and negative feedback
- Role play acceptable and unacceptable ways to attend
- Role play acceptable and unacceptable ways to react to ideas (manners)
- Play communication and trust games

Group Processing

- Group members discuss how well they are achieving their goals and maintaining effective working relationships
- Describe what member actions are helpful and not helpful
- Make decisions about what behaviors to continue or change

Explicit Teaching

Group Processing

- Make sure students know the purpose and objective for the group as a whole
- Assign each member a specific role for each time they meet
- Debrief – what worked and what didn't

Contact Information:

Fredrick Mann fm44@nyu.edu

Alan Ripp adr9@nyu.edu