



Instruction in Behavior and Academics

HLP Pillars

HLP 7

Establish consistent, organized, and responsive learning environments.

HLP 16

Use explicit instruction.

Embedded HLPs

What to teach

HLP 9: Teach social behaviors.
HLP 18: Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence.

HLP 21: Teach students to monitor and generalize new learning across time and settings.

How to teach

HLP 13: Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals.
HLP 16: Provide individual supports.
HLP 17: Use flexible grouping.

HLP 18: Use strategies to promote active student engagement.
HLP 19: Use assistive and instructional technologies.

HLP 22: Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning (HLP 22) and behavior (HLP 9).

HLP 17: Use Flexible Grouping

The use of flexible groupings offers educators options for designing and delivering instruction or promoting student active learning/demonstrations to suit specific goals. Educators deploy student groups to provide a setting for new instruction, group work, review activities, and everything in between. Group configurations and sizes should be the result of deliberative educator collaboration, informed by data and student goals, to ensure a tight match between demands of the curriculum and student learning. HLP 17 is an embedded practice under How to Teach in the Instruction in Behavior and Academics Domain. It is an instructional practice that is frequently used across all grade levels, content areas, and instructional settings.

This resource is intended to support school leaders looking to embed the HLPs in professional development, implementation, teacher observation, and feedback efforts at their school site.

Teachers Who Effectively Use Flexible Grouping

- Vary grouping size (e.g., whole or small group) and type (e.g., same-ability/homogeneous or mixed-ability/heterogeneous groups) based upon students' instructional needs and learning objectives.
- Use same-ability (homogeneous) small groups to provide focused, intensive instruction for students with similar instructional strengths, needs, and/or interests, to help them meet short-term instructional goals and objectives.
- Use mixed-ability small groups to increase engagement in academic discussions and the sharing of knowledge and skills and to improve interpersonal relationships among students with and without disabilities.
- Use cooperative learning structures (e.g., jigsaw, quiz-quiz-trade) to meet a wide range of instructional objectives (i.e., academic, behavioral, interpersonal).
- Carefully monitor students' learning and interactions between group members when students are participating in group work.
- Hold students accountable, both individually and collectively, to strengthen their personal accountability and promote positive interdependence.
- Provide groups with frequent and varied opportunities to respond to promote active engagement of all students.

Tips for School Leaders to Support Teachers

- Provide educators with instruction, professional development, and/or coaching on how and when to use flexible groupings.
- Observe educators providing instruction within flexible grouping and provide feedback and/or coaching on its effectiveness, as well as support in improving its use as needed.
- Encourage co-teaching partners, individual teachers, and teams to be creative (and flexible!) with grouping students, reminding them of the multiple instructional objectives that varied types and sizes of groups can address.
- Implementing and managing flexible groups can be challenging—be sure to check in with teachers who may be having difficulty, help them identify specific challenges, and work with them on mitigating these issues.

Questions to Prompt Discussion, Self-Reflection, and Observer Feedback

- What structures (e.g., PLCs, data teams) can help teachers collaborate around flexible grouping practices?
- How often should student groupings be changed, and what data should inform those decisions?
- What role does formative assessment play in guiding flexible grouping decisions?

**MORE HLP RESOURCES AT
CEEDAR AND CEC**