

HOMOGENEOUS OR HETEROGENEOUS GROUPINGS: WHICH APPROACH SERVES LEARNERS BEST?

by:

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As we all know, each learner has unique abilities that others do not have. It means that each child has a different level of knowledge. So, as a teacher, we must be observant and know each learner we are dealing with. In our class we have two types of grouping when we provide group activities and lessons. Each of these approaches has a positive and negative effects and results. In this article, I will elaborate and explain further the difference between the two groupings.

Homogeneous grouping is when learners are grouped based on the same level of ability, similar interests, and intelligence. The positive effect of this is that it will be easier for the teacher to teach and set tasks because they are at same page. It will also be easier to acquire the target skills because they will only be studying the same learning objective. At the same time, the member of the group will no longer be ashamed of each other because they all have the same abilities. On the other hand, the disadvantage of this grouping is that other members of the group are already feeling bored and do not see the task interesting and challenging because the activity is already incline with their abilities, so it seems that they are more eager for something new or a higher level of activity. It seems like the things they can do are limited especially since they are all at the same level, they have no other ideas to compare to.

In heterogeneous group where there are mixed learners with different levels of ability regardless of their abilities and interests. There are smart, average and there are also learners who are struggling. The advantage of heterogeneous groupings is that it enhances cooperation, unity and teamwork among group members to achieve a set goal.

They join forces for a certain task. There is interaction among members because they have different ideas, opinions and knowledge. The negative effect of heterogeneous groupings is that for learners with high level of intelligence, they feel pressure because they know that they will be the ones leading the work. Sometimes they must teach other members of the group who are struggling with the assigned task even though they don't want to and against their will. There are also times that the struggling learners feel belittled or embarrassed because they feel they have nothing to contribute to the activity that has been assigned to them.

The question I will leave you with is Which approach is better? All I can say is that it depends on what you are looking for an activity or outcome. Always remember that in all decisions you make within the classroom, the welfare and needs of your learners must be prioritized and considered.

References:

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