

Starting out the School Year

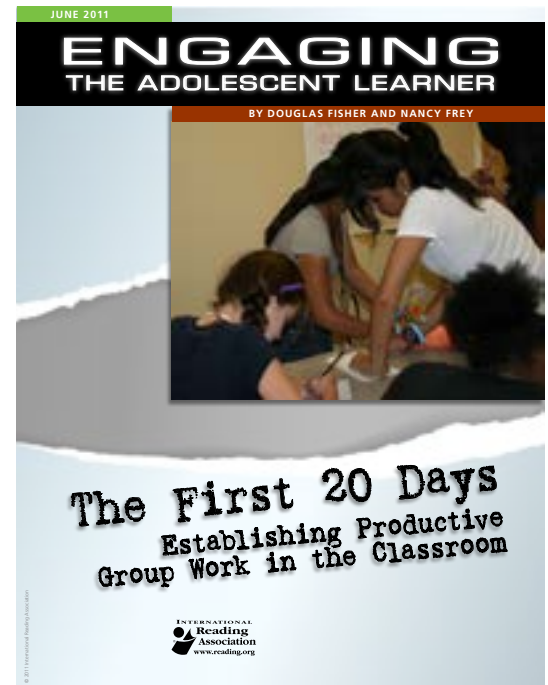
Do you want your students to take more responsibility in your classes?

Are you looking for a way to get your classes operating more smoothly?

Check out Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey's "Engaging the Adolescent Learner." It's a sure fire guide to implement the gradual release of responsibility in your classes, while promoting respectful discourse and collaborative problem solving (see chart below).

You can download this booklet at http://fisherandfrey.com/_admin/filemanager/File/First_20_Days.pdf and get started right now, making this school year better than the last.

~recommended by WCTE board members



Spotlight Lessons on Personal Responsibility				
Spotlight Lessons on Respectful Discourse				
Spotlight Lessons on Collaborative Problem Solving				
Silent Interview Interview your partner in writing only, then introduce him or her to the class.	On-Task Partners When prompted, check to see if your partner is on the right page and the like.	Helping Curriculum Offering help, asking for helping, accepting help, declining help.	Accountable Talk to the Community Explain your partner's ideas to the class.	Paired Response Cards You and your partner have one set of response cards and must agree on an answer.
Noise Meter Discuss how loud noise levels should be in the class.	Discussion Partners Discuss with your partner what makes for good communication between students.	Accountable Talk to the Knowledge Base Discuss how to ask for clarification, and what should serve as evidence in this content area.	Think-Pair-Square Discuss a topic with your partner, then extend the discussion with another set of partners.	Conversation Roundtable Create notes about a topic, then discuss these with your group. Write each member's ideas, then summarize on your own.
Novel Ideas Only Brainstorm a list of prior knowledge on a topic, then stand. One group member reads an item on the list, without repeating ideas. Goal is to have the most novel ideas.	Reading Partners You and your partners read the same piece of text twice and discuss its meaning.	Group Response Cards Your group has only one set of response cards and must agree on an answer.	Sounding Board Meet with a partner to share work in progress and provide responses.	Accountable Talk for Reasoning How do you disagree with someone without being disagreeable? How do you respond when someone disagrees with you?
Walking Review Seek other students to answer questions on a worksheet. Students must sign their names for each solution. Answer the last question on your own at your desk.	ReQuest You and your partners read the same piece of text and quiz one another using questions you each wrote. If one of you can't answer, the other has to show how to locate the answer.	Numbered Heads Together Resolve a problem with your group, making sure all group members can answer it. The teacher will identify the spokesperson for the group by selecting a number.	Opinion Stations Choose a stance on a controversial topic and discuss your opinion with others who answered similarly, then with someone who had a different opinion.	Collaborative Posters Work with your group to create a poster summarizing your work on a topic. Each member must write in a different colored marker.

Most of these are 10–20 minutes in length. All should be modeled by the teacher first! After each instructional routine has been introduced, use it as many times as you can to reinforce and refine skills.

FIGURE 2 First 20 Days of Spotlight Lessons for Teaching Students to Work Productively in Groups