



This month we are talking about Cooperation! Cooperation is about making sure we know how to be on a team or work in a group towards a common goal. Here is the definition we are using:

Cooperation: Working together and helping others.

A lot of messaging in our world would suggest that “doing it on your own” is a measure of success. And while independence is important, we must develop skills to work alongside one another and create things, together, that are better than anything we could create on our own. We want young people to know how to work hard on their own. But, just as important, we want them to know what it looks like to be a part of a really supportive, helpful, empowering team. Successful people know when and how to ask for help and are generous in giving it out when they have something to offer!

Cooperation requires great communication, self-awareness, and the ability to step up (or step back) when the time is right to best support whatever group you are working with. We will be thinking about the skills needed to work together well and how each of us contributes to a group in big and small ways.

Over the course of the month, we will be creative in teams, accomplish amazing things side by side, and learn about what it means to do meaningful, PurposeFull work together.

Conversation Starters

K-2

- Sometimes you just feel like doing things all by yourself. What is something that someone can do to help you to get into the spirit of Cooperation?
- When we are working with others, it can be tough when a teammate is not cooperating. How do you deal with that frustration? What can you say to the teammate to tell them how you feel?
- Talk about a time when you worked on a really effective team. What were the ingredients? What did you contribute? How did they help you?

3-5

- It has been said that teams are only as good as their weakest player. What do you think about that?
- What skills are important for Cooperation? Which of those skills are your strengths and which skills would you like to improve?
- What does Cooperation look like in your home? How would each member of the household prefer others Cooperate with the

Questions You Could Ask

K-2

- What are some activities where it's easy for you to practice Cooperation? Which activities make it difficult? Why do you think that is?
- Do you like working together with other people? Can you name some things you do at home that require Cooperation or teamwork?
- Who is someone you love to work with? What makes it easy to Cooperate with them?

3-5

- Think about a sports team that you've played on or seen on television or your computer. Which athlete do you think of when you hear the phrase "team player?"
- What makes working with others fun? What makes working with others challenging? Where do you see Cooperation work well? Where doesn't it work well?
- Who is someone you Cooperate well with? Who is someone you struggle to Cooperate with? Why do you think that is?

Application Books

K-2

- [**That Fruit Is Mine!**](#) by Anuska Allepuz
Five elephants learn the power of teamwork from mice that work together to accomplish the goal of getting fruit from a tall tree!
- [**Red & Yellow's Noisy Night \(The Olive Branch\)**](#) by Josh Selig
Red and Yellow have to learn how to cooperate with each other and resolve their problem together. Red is playing loud music while Yellow is trying to sleep.
- [**Frankie**](#) by Mary Sullivan
Frankie, the dog, was so excited to be adopted into a new family. When he gets to his new home, he meets Nico. Nico has lived here for a while. See how Nico and Frankie learn to be friends.

- [Swimmy](#) by Leo Lionni
The tale of a little fish who finds his purpose when he discovers the need to work together.
- [Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns About Sportsmanship](#) by Howard Binkow
Playing just for the fun of it? Sure thing. In this story, Howard learns the value of working together and cooperating to create a win-win, win or lose.
- [Nugget and Darling](#) by Barbara Joosse
When Darling, the new kitten, threatens to get in the middle of Nell and her dog Nugget, will they learn to all get along and become friends?
- [Yoga Friends](#) by Mariam Gates
In this treasure, the author invites friends to buddy up and work together as they stretch, relax, and grow through yoga poses.
- [The Little Red Hen \(Makes A Pizza\)](#) by Philemon Sturges
In this version of the age-old fable, the Little Red Hen is about to make a pizza, but will she be able to get any of her friends to help her?

3-5

- [The Whispering Town](#) by Jennifer Elvgren
This story shows how townspeople can work together with whispers to help a fleeing family during the Holocaust.
- [Code 7: Cracking the Code for an Epic Life](#) by Bryan R Johnson
Throughout the book, each character learns an important lesson about themselves when faced with a challenge. At the end of the book, you are left with 7 code words from each character's story that can help to make a life epic!
Working together to accomplish a goal takes teamwork and Cooperation.
- [Goal!](#) by Mina Javaherbin
In a dusty township in South Africa, Ajani and his friends have earned a brand-new, federation-size soccer ball. They kick. They dribble. They run. They score. These clever boys are football champions! But when a crew of bullies tries to steal their ball, will Ajani and his friends be able to beat them at their own game?
- [The Subway Sparrow](#) by Leyla Torrest
An English-speaking girl, a Spanish-speaking man, and a Polish-speaking woman might not be able to converse, but when a sparrow trapped in their subway car needs help, their common concern bridges the language barriers between them.
- [Chasing Vermeer](#) by Blue Balliet
When unrelated, strange events start happening, Petra and Calder team up to combine their talents to solve an international scandal
- [Teamwork Isn't My Thing And I Don't Like To Share](#) by Julia Cook
RJ doesn't want to cooperate and share at school or at home. Will his soccer coach help him understand why Cooperation is a skill that he'll need on and off the field?

- [Earth Day – Hooray](#) by Stuart J. Murphy
When Ryan, Luke, and Carly decide to collect and recycle cans, they find out that Cooperation pays off as they meet their goal of 5,000 cans to get enough money to beautify the local park.

Activity

K-2

Only available for 3-5 for this Character Trait

3-5

Play the classic cooperative catch game as a family! Choose an object to toss back and forth. Use a water balloon if you are feeling brave or keep it simple with a beanbag. Stand across from your partner with your toes about one foot apart. One partner tosses the object to the other partner. Each time the object is caught, the partners take one step backwards to create a larger gap. The thrower and the catcher must work cooperatively to be successful! See how you can improve your communication and score (distance) over the course of the month.

For your reading

K-2

[Teaching Children to Cooperate](#) from the PennState Extension

[5 Simple Yet Powerful Ways To Get Kids To Cooperate](#) by Erin Leyba

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[5 Ways To Encourage Cooperation](#) by Susan Brunk

[6 Pediatrician-Recommended Tips For Getting Kids To Cooperate](#) by Wendy L. Hunter, M.D.

PurposeFull Pursuits:

K-2

Popcorn Storytelling

In this challenge, you will work together to craft a story about an unforgettable neighbor named Junior. Starting with, "I'll never forget Junior," everyone takes turns adding details to bring Junior's fictional story to life. Pop in when you've got a detail you want to add. It'll be fun to see where this delicious tale takes you.

If you want, write it down as you go! Leave room for illustrations. Who knows? You just may want to get this one published!

Creating Your Family Crest

Does your family have a Family Crest? A Family Crest is a coat of arms typically drawn on a shield, unique to your family, to honor your family name. In this challenge, you will work together to research to find out if your family already has a crest. If not, here's your chance to create your Family Crest. What symbols, words, colors, logo will you use to represent your family, to tell the world who you are and what you stand for?

Using whatever supplies you want, work together to make one. When it's done, take a picture and send it to other family to see if they want to contribute!

Cooperation Cook-off

Invite another family to join you in a Cooperation Cook-off! You and your child will partner up and compete against another duo or trio to see who can make the better _____. At the end, have a tasting for your families (or for the neighborhood!) and the prize is a delicious meal for all!

Board Game Night

Search through your cupboards for some board games your family has not played in a while. Pop some popcorn and have fun playing together! Look for moments of Cooperation that you can point out to your kids. For example:

- Choosing which game to play
- Choosing who gets to go first
- Handling wins and losses
- Working together to solve a problem

Better yet, play a game that is normally played solo with a partner and see how you can navigate working together toward a common cause!

3-5

That's Puzzling

Put all of the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle out on a common-area table and work as a family to build the puzzle. As an additional challenge, could you do it without the picture on the box as a reference point?

Cooking Up Cooperation

In this challenge, every family member will be in charge of one dish for tonight's dinner. Work together to plan the meal, then make room for one another in the kitchen as you all take a task and prepare something to savor for tonight's collaborative meal.

Work together to plan the menu ahead of time or get creative and make each part in secret and see how they come together!

Spring Cleaning

As a household, brainstorm a list of chores that help keep the home in order. What are some things that would really make the home feel more peaceful, beautiful, or inspiring? After brainstorming, each person chooses a role to help tidy or decorate the home. Throw on some music that everyone enjoys and get to work beautifying your home.

Better yet, make it a game! Have points associated with how quickly (and how quality) each person can clean each thing. Keep track of the score and have a prize waiting for the Clean Up Champion.

Cooperative Storytelling

To prepare for this activity, gather about 25 small scraps of paper. Ask each family member to write down one noun on each scrap of paper. Encourage family members to write a variety of people, places, and things. Shuffle the scraps and place them face down on a table. One family member will start the story by drawing one scrap of paper. The family member will include that noun in the beginning of the story and add extra details as needed. Family members will continue to build the story by drawing more nouns and adding more details until you run out of scraps. Don't forget to start winding down the story to prepare for an ending when you get low on scraps. With Cooperation, your family can create a wonderfully creative story!