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ABSTRACT

The participant guide to implementation of the Collaborative Learning Process (CLP) is presented. The CLP is designed to increase the application of content through inservice teacher training. The first section reviews the basic components of CLP, summarizes how to prepare for the first session, and how to keep CLP going. The second section outlines the rationale for and benefits of CLP. CLP involves a partnership of two teachers who provide each other with focused feedback and encouragement. The four steps of the CLP process are detailed: (1) choosing a partner; (2) establishing a climate of trust; (3) developing collaborative learning sessions (broken down into planning sessions, learning sessions, and debriefing sessions); and (4) keeping it going. The appendix contains examples of forms that may be used in the CLP process. (DB)

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ED 340 187

**GIST**

*Generalized InService Training Project*

# CLP Participant Guide

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**CLP Participant Guide**

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Appendix: Examples of Completed CLP Forms (with blank CLP Forms)

Designed and edited by Michael Boer

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## CLP Participant Guide

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Congratulations! The fact that you are reading this means you are involved in an exciting professional growth opportunity . . . the Collaborative Learning Process.

The Collaborative Learning Process (CLP) goes beyond inservice training through practice and refinement of skills. The intent of this guide is to provide concise information on how to apply CLP in day-to-day situations. The first section of this guide reviews the basic components of CLP, and summarizes how to prepare for the first session and how to keep CLP going. The second section outlines the rationale for and benefits of CLP. The appendix contains examples of forms that may be used during CLP.

### Why CLP?

Joyce & Showers (1983) reviewed 49 studies to determine the effect of inservice training on knowledge, skills, and application of new practices. They found that while 100% of training models produced knowledge and 88% produced the development of skills by participants, only 9% resulted in teachers applying new skills with their students. One suggestion generated from this review was peer coaching.

In peer coaching, inservice participants work in teams to observe and support each other. Through feedback, they “coach” each other to implement new skills in daily practice. Coaching models have several purposes:

- Provide companionship and support.
- Provide technical feedback.
- Analyze new information for application.
- Aid in the adaptation of new information to particular students.
- Help practice new skills.

The Collaborative Learning Process is a coaching model in which peers help each other learn, then adapt new skills in day-to-day situations. Throughout the learning process CLP participants have someone to give them support when they feel like giving

up, someone to give feedback on how well a new practice is being applied, help in how to use the new information to the benefit of their own students, and someone with whom to practice new skills.

## **Step One: Choosing a Partner**

There are tangible and intangible factors to consider in partner selection. Time to participate in the process and accessibility to one another are just two important tangible factors to consider. Nonschool commitments, characteristics of a particular class, extra duty activities, and daily schedules may need to be considered too.

The intangible factors may be more difficult to define, but are nonetheless important. Do you already share ideas, materials, concerns? Have you worked well together in the past? Is this person open to new practices? Do you respect this person as a professional? Do you have similar personal styles? Finally, do you trust this person and want to work with him/her? The *CLP Partner Selection* form may be helpful when choosing a partner. This form may be completed to help “think through” partner selection. The *Partner Selection* form is included in Figure A of the Appendix.

Potential partners may include teachers, teacher aides, support service personnel (such as communication specialists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, adaptive physical education teachers, and counselors), administrators, Special Education administrators and coordinators, central office personnel, or any other school personnel that are deemed as appropriate.

## **Step Two: Climate-Setting**

The Collaborative Learning Process may be new and unfamiliar to many engaged in the process. Several activities may occur to “set the climate” (Crouse, 1987).

A first activity may be a meeting. This is especially helpful when partners are anxious about CLP. An initial meeting gives partners an opportunity to discuss and understand each other’s work situations, learn each other’s personal preferences, and share information. Information that may be helpful to share could be: characteristics of students, school environments, and management styles.

Each partner’s view on CLP should be discussed. Just what is this process going to

### How to do a “Walk-By”

1. Decide on roles (learner/facilitator).
2. Learner leaves classroom door open.
3. Facilitator walks by.
4. Facilitator gives feedback to learner.
5. Switch roles.

### How to do a “Drop-In”

1. Decide on roles (learner/facilitator).
2. Facilitator goes into learner’s classroom.
  - a. Near door.
  - b. Side of the room.
3. Observe for a short time (no data collection).
4. Facilitator gives feedback to learner.
5. Switch roles.

entail? Do we have the same ideas about CLP? Do we have enough time to hold a planning session for each learning session or can we schedule them a term at a time? Do all visits need to be planned or can some be unannounced? What are some potential trouble spots and how can we avoid them? One big question to answer during this meeting is “Who observes first?”

Time and perceived needs are two critical factors in preparation for CLP. If CLP partners do not perceive a need for an initial meeting, this step may not occur. So remember, it is an optional step.

Another step before the first planning session may be building trust with your partner. This step may not be needed for all teams. One trust-building activity is the “walk-by.” For example, one partner leaves his/her door open. The observing partner then “walks by” and takes a quick look in without entering. Later, the observing partner will give feedback that is reinforcing in nature. This feedback could take the form of a note in the office mail box, a note on teacher’s desk, or a comment when a private time can be found. This feedback should be given on the same day as the walk-by if possible. This feedback is a courtesy, a thank you for your partner’s openness and willingness to be observed.

Once the coaching partners are comfortable with being observed, a “drop-in” may be conducted. The purpose of a drop-in is to get used to having another adult in the same room. A drop-in is a short observation from inside the room. It is unobtrusive and is conducted from near the door or side of the room. No data are collected. When the drop-in is completed the observing partner will give reinforcing feedback. Again, the purpose of this feedback is to thank the observed partner for being open and willing to let you in their room.

### **Step Three: Collaborative Learning Sessions**

Each Collaborative Learning Process session should consist of three components: a planning session, a learning session, and a debrief session.

#### **Planning Sessions**

During planning sessions, partners define the logistics of the CLP session and deter-

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mine the best way to meet the learning needs of one partner. The *CLP Planning Sheet* may be completed. This form specifies the roles each partner will take, dates relevant to the process, the target skill or area to learn, purpose, data/information to collect, and any special considerations that may be important to either partner. This form is a good way to clarify information about the CLP session. Each item on the planning sheet is explained below and a sample of the form is shown in Figure B of the Appendix.

**Role** The first step in the planning process is to determine the role of each partner. There are two roles in CLP, learner and facilitator. The learner is the team member learning or practicing a new skill. The learner is responsible for setting the direction and the limits of the process—learners are responsible for their own learning. The facilitator's role is to help the learner master the new skill. These roles are not permanent. CLP partners exchange roles when it is appropriate. It is suggested that the roles be exchanged after each debrief session.

**Time** The time for the learning session to begin and end should be planned. This will aid in planning any out-of-class time and working CLP into the rest of the day. Schedule a date and time for the debrief session during the planning session. The debrief should be scheduled as soon as possible after the learning session. This will allow for timely feedback.

The times of the planning and learning sessions may be scheduled in several ways. You may decide to schedule one learning session at a time as your needs and the needs of the new skill dictate. For some, especially when support service personnel are involved, scheduling larger time blocks (e.g., a quarter or semester at a time) would be more convenient. For others, a regular schedule throughout the year (e.g., meet every other Wednesday) may prove best. Again, the schedule of planning and learning sessions will depend on the needs of the partners and the new skill.

A debrief session is held after completion of the learning session. It is important to plan the debrief session ahead of time. The learner

determines the level of feedback from the facilitator based on a variety of concerns. How comfortable are you with the new practice? How comfortable are you with your CLP partner? Do you need to build some trust with that partner? What kind of feedback would be most helpful in learning this new practice? What kind of feedback can you handle?

Again, the learner decides the kind of help the facilitator will give during the debrief session. The level of help may range from merely acting as a sounding board (listening while the learner identifies, analyzes, and generalizes) to collaboration on all steps. At this level, partners identify what happened *together*, analyze what happened *together*, and generalize *together*.

- Target skill/area** The target skill/area is what is to be learned. It may be based on the content of inservice education, a specific skill (e.g., giving positive reinforcement), or an area of concern (e.g., behavior management).
- Purpose of learning session** The learner determines the purpose of the learning session. The purpose is then communicated to the facilitator during the planning session. The purpose may be written in objective terms.
- Information to collect** The learner determines, with the help of a partner, what type of data would help give the information needed to learn. Written products (e.g., an IEP, a lesson plan, a bulletin board) may be developed or direct observations of a teaching or therapy technique may prove most helpful. Again, the information collected will relate directly to the target skill and purpose of the CLP session.
- Notes** Information such as administrative support (e.g., is release time needed to complete the learning session?), special equipment, or anecdotal information (e.g., a fire drill is expected sometime during the day) is noted in this section.

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## Learning Sessions

The CLP learning session is conducted in the manner outlined during the planning session. During the learning session, the facilitator collects the required information or data. During an observation the facilitator will be as unobtrusive as possible, interrupting only if absolutely necessary, and then only with a smile.

## Debrief Session

A debrief session is held after completion of the learning session for the facilitator to give requested feedback to the learner. The learner may complete a *CLP Debrief Sheet* to record the feedback given for future reference. CLP sessions are not intended to be used for evaluation purposes. Therefore, all materials relating to a CLP session are the property of the learner. Figure C of the Appendix includes a completed debrief sheet.

The acronym **EIAG** describes the levels of feedback that can occur during a debrief session. Suggested questions are listed, but they are only suggestions.

*Experience.* The experience is everything that happened during the learning session. It is what was “lived through” by both partners.

*Identify.* What happened during the learning session? How are you doing in relation to your objectives?

*Analyze.* How would you describe your performance during the learning session? Why did you do so well? Why did things go poorly? What factors led you to performing this way? What were the strengths of that approach? How could your approach have been improved?

*Generalize.* If you had it to do over again, what would you do differently? Based on your analysis, how could you do even better next time? What would you tell someone else who is about to attempt this?

## Step 4: Keeping It Going

When any behavior is being learned or changed, be it losing weight, not smoking, or learning a new skill, one may expect enthusiasm at the beginning. This is something new, exciting, and different. But as any one who has tried to change their own behavior knows, the fun soon wears off. Staying on the diet and not smoking that cigarette is difficult, and we need support and reinforcement to continue changing our behavior. The Collaborative Learning Process embodies change, providing the supportive environment needed to continue the change process.

One suggestion that might help maintain a supportive environment is to offer a time and place for all CLP participants to share information and problems, and to generate potential solutions. Information shared could include discussions about the mastery of the new practice, clarifications of instructional aims, examinations of the theory and purpose behind new practices, and examples of new materials developed. New practices, or any practices that proved difficult, could be demonstrated. Obstacles to CLP and their resolutions could be shared so that teams operating in separate buildings may learn from one another.

These meetings could be held on a regular basis as determined by the CLP group. Meetings may be held in an informal setting, (e.g., a team member's home or a local restaurant), or formal setting (e.g., in the school or administrative building). The time of the meeting is also determined by the CLP group. A portion of an inservice session could be devoted to group sharing and problem solving as well. The principal, staff development person, or a CLP group member may serve as the facilitator for these meetings.

Finally, keep in mind what the "C" in CLP means: *Collaboration*. The teams won't work without team work. Be gentle with each other as you begin to use CLP as a tool to improve your skills. Ultimately, you'll be enriching the lives of your students at the same time as you and your peer are developing your own careers.

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## References

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## Appendix

Figure A: Partner Selection

Figure B: Planning Sheet

Figure C: Debrief Sheet

These forms were developed for use at the GIST pilot sites. Blank copies are included with each sample so that you can reproduce them for your own use.

You may want to create forms of your own. We would be glad to hear about how you use or adapt the GIST model.



## FIGURE A

### CLP: Partner Selection

Name Olga School Johnson Elementary

Time(s) of day you prefer learning sessions During school, before school, 2nd recess

Time(s) you could most conveniently meet Before school, lunch

With potential partners in mind, ask yourself the following questions:

Is the potential partner open to trying new ideas? Willing to persist?

Willing to learn new skills and refine old ones?

Have we worked well in the past?

Are we compatible?

Do we have easy access to each other's classrooms/case load?

Do we have schedules that conflict?

Do we have times to meet?

Does the potential partner have extra duties that could make meeting difficult?

List three choices for your partner

1. *Ragna*
2. *Lee*
3. *Christy*

This form is adapted from materials developed by Sue Wells-Welch and the Instructional Training Company, Phoenix, Arizona.  
Used by permission.



## CLP: Partner Selection

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Time(s) of day you prefer learning sessions \_\_\_\_\_

Time(s) you could most conveniently meet \_\_\_\_\_

With potential partners in mind, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the potential partner open to trying new ideas? Willing to persist?
- Willing to learn new skills and refine old ones?
- Have we worked well in the past?
- Are we compatible?
- Do we have easy access to each other's classrooms/case load?
- Do we have schedules that conflict?
- Do we have times to meet?
- Does the potential partner have extra duties that could make meeting difficult?

List three choices for your partner

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

This form is adapted from materials developed by Sue Wells-Welch and the Instructional Training Company; Phoenix, Arizona.  
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# FIGURE B

## CLP: Planning Sheet

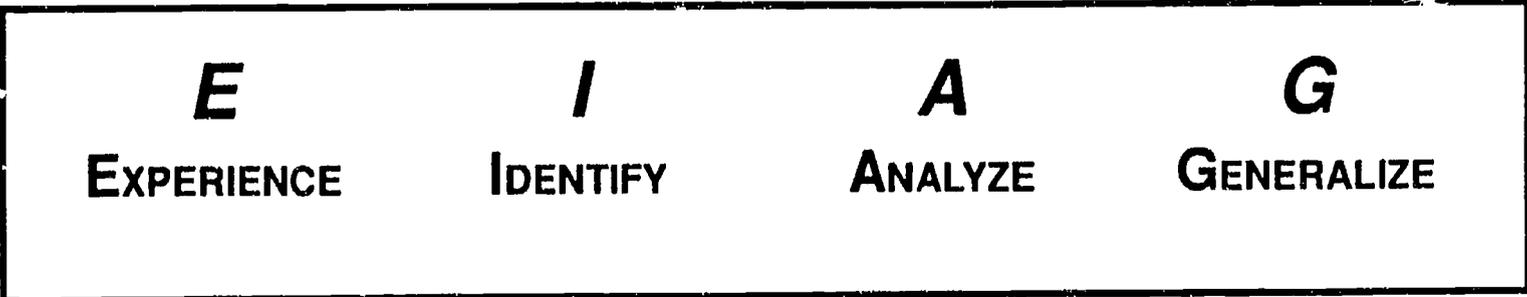
Learner: Olga Date/time learning session: 1/25 at 10:00-10:15  
 Facilitator: Lee Date/time debrief session: 1/25 at 3:15-4:00

Target skill/area: Social interaction between my preschoolers.

Purpose of the learning session: There's not much interaction going on. Maybe I need to increase positive reinforcement given for interacting with peers during play. Do I nag too much?

Information to be collected: Number of positive interactions (talking, touching, etc.) with kids. Also try to get some verbatim statements.

Notes: I'm really worried about little Harpo. He doesn't talk and just takes toys and "honks" them in kids' faces. I think I'm reacting to him only when he's bad. I just need to know if I'm getting to him when he's good.





## CLP: Planning Sheet

Learner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time learning session: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time debrief session: \_\_\_\_\_

Target skill/area : \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of the learning session: \_\_\_\_\_

Information to be collected: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>E</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>IDENTIFY</b>	<b>ANALYZE</b>	<b>GENERALIZE</b>

**CLP: Debrief Sheet**

Date/time: January 25th, 3:20

Notes: Lee said I seemed comfortable having him observe.

Identify: Lee watched my interactions with two boys and two girls. Harpo was absent!

Analyze: I do give lots of praise--Yeah for me! It feels phoney to me sometimes, but I guess it is better to be positive. I'll try this again with Lee watching--I did feel a bit funny.

Generalize: I'm going to put a large happy face over the clock. That way whenever I look at the time, I'll be reminded to be positive. That may help--I'll wait and see. I may have to see if I can praise interactions during circle time. Maybe I can structure some finger plays, songs, or whatever that will force kids to interact. One good idea: At fine motor, I'll give everyone only one can of play dough--that way they'll have to ask to share!

<b>E</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>G</b>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>IDENTIFY</b>	<b>ANALYZE</b>	<b>GENERALIZE</b>

