Assessing Social Skills

Emphasis on cooperative learning suggests the need to teach and assess social skills in the classroom.

One way of teaching and assessing social skills follows.

At the start each group receives a scale from -5 to +5 as below.

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-5 -4 -3 -2 -1  0  +1 +2 +3 +4 +5
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1. At the beginning of the activity each group begins with +5 bonus points.

2. The teacher monitors the group, when inappropriate social skills are observed the teacher crosses off the +5 on the scale leaving the group with 4 points. The process continues during the class.

3. This shifts the responsibility for appropriate behavior from the teacher to the students.

4. Remaining bonus points may be used as the teacher prefers from extra credit to special privileges.

5. When using this form of assessment, the teacher rarely has to cross out more than 1 or 2 numbers. Students help monitor each others’ behavior.
6. If one student continually has problems using the appropriate social skills, it may be necessary to use a separate scale for that student alone leaving the rest of the group on the group scale.

7. This is usually needed for the first 4 to 6 weeks of the year rather than the whole year. Sometimes social skills slip at the mid-year point and may need reinforcing at this time.

8. Grading may (or may not) be 2 tiered with an achievement grade and a social skills grade.