



EduTrend Contents

W4C · SOCIOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGY · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Groups and Roles

Observe how teams form and work together

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

60 minutes

Teams of 5 · up to 30

Activity 04

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Groups and Roles

Teams tackle a short building challenge while observers record who leads, who suggests ideas, how decisions are made and how conflict is handled. Afterwards, students compare observations with models of group roles and stages of group development.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- identify roles people take in groups;
- record behaviour using an observation schedule;
- describe stages of group development;
- suggest how to make teamwork more effective and inclusive.

KEY WORDS

group · role · norm · leadership · communication · conformity · observation · stages of group development

CURRICULUM LINKS

Sociology and psychology: groups and social behaviour. PSHE: teamwork and relationships. Research methods: observation.

1

WONDER

Why do people act like this?

2

PREDICT

Make a hypothesis

3

ASK OR TEST

Survey, observe, experiment

4

RECORD

Collect data

5

ANALYSE

Find patterns

6

REFLECT

Ethics and meaning

Materials (per team)

- Building materials (spaghetti and tape, or card) for a timed challenge
- Observation schedule with behaviour categories
- Timer
- Summary of Tuckman's stages
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Prepare the building challenge and materials.
- Create an observation schedule with categories such as suggests idea, agrees, disagrees, asks a question, encourages.
- Assign one or two observers per team.
- Agree that observations focus on behaviours, not personalities.

SAFETY

Feedback is about behaviours, not people. No personal criticism; observers share general patterns.

ACTIVITY 04 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Rotate observers if time allows so everyone experiences both roles.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Brief	Explain the challenge and train observers on the schedule.	<i>"How will you record fairly?"</i>
10–30 min Challenge	Teams build; observers tally behaviours every minute.	<i>"What do you notice about decision making?"</i>
30–40 min Share	Observers share patterns with their team.	<i>"Did anyone take on a role without being asked?"</i>
40–50 min Models	Introduce group roles and Tuckman's stages; match to observations.	<i>"Which stage did your team reach?"</i>
50–60 min Improve	Teams agree three rules for better teamwork.	<i>"How can everyone's ideas be heard?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Complete a team challenge, record group behaviour with an observation schedule and explain your team's roles and stages using a model.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The social science in brief

Sociologists and psychologists study how groups behave. People often take on roles, such as leader, ideas person, encourager or finisher. Groups develop norms, shared expectations about behaviour, sometimes without discussing them.

Bruce Tuckman (1965) described stages of group development: forming, storming, norming and performing. Structured observation uses clear behaviour categories so that different observers record in the same way, making results more reliable.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Groups always make better decisions.” Groups can also rush or ignore quieter members.
- “Leaders are born, not made.” Leadership skills can be learned.
- “Conflict means a group is failing.” Some disagreement helps groups find better ideas.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use an observation schedule with three categories and picture icons.

Stretch

Compare two teams’ observation data and suggest why their performance differed.

WORKSHEET 1

Observation schedule

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Tally each behaviour you see.

Tally

Behaviour	Minutes 1–5	Minutes 6–10	Minutes 11–15	Total
Suggests an idea				
Agrees or builds on idea				
Disagrees				
Asks a question				
Encourages others				
Makes a decision				

WORKSHEET 2

Roles and stages

Match observations to models.

Roles we saw (no names)

Stage reached and evidence

WORKSHEET 3

Better teamwork

Agree improvements.

Three rules for our team

How we will include quieter members

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Uses an observation schedule	Applies group models	Suggests inclusive improvements

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Groups and Roles is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Sociology & Psychology programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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