

Coteaching what does it look like, and how might it change throughout the semester?

Coteaching is the shared responsibility of classroom practice and student learning. It can take many forms. Some forms of coteaching include:

1. **Copanning:**
Copanning is used to develop instruction. When copanning, coteachers work together in pairs or teams to reflect on the current status of the class and collaborative plan instruction.
2. **One coteacher lead teaches, One coteacher actively observes:**
In this coteaching approach one teacher leads class instruction while the other actively observes the classroom. This is a time for anecdotal note taking, child study, or curriculum assessment. The teacher observing is engaged in the classroom activity and ready to support instruction as needed.
3. **One coteacher lead teaches, One coteacher assists or guides:**
While one teacher leads classroom, the other actively works to support on-going instruction. Coteaching support can take many forms. Some examples include: helping with classroom management and materials, making curricular connections and adding additional points, supporting individual students as needed. Support may be asked for by the lead teacher, or offered by the assisting teacher by stepping into and out of instruction.
4. **Center, small group, or station teaching:**
During small group instruction both coteachers may be working with different groups of students around different or similar goals.
5. **Extra support or supplemental teaching:**
While one teacher is leading classroom instruction, the other coteacher can work independently or in small group to help strengthen student learning. This may occur one-on-one or in small groups, and could take many forms including RTI, tutoring, supplemental instruction, catch up for students who have missed class, or enrichment.
6. **Split-class instruction:**
There are multiple reasons why coteachers might choose to split the class. During split-class instruction each coteacher may teach the same lesson using the same approaches, or through different approaches but with the same goals. Split-class instruction provides one way to decrease student:teacher ratios and groupings may be heterogeneous or homogeneous depending upon instructional goals.
7. **Pass the Baton:**
This has also been described as “tag-team coteaching.” In this model coteachers split the lesson and swap lead roles throughout instruction. Coteachers might, or might not, develop a “script” or rehearse the lesson ahead of time.
8. **Coteaching as equal partners:**
A goal of coteaching is for both teachers to truly share classroom and instructional responsibilities. When coteaching is fully attained, teacher practice is mutual and coteachers are able to anticipate each other’s moves. Coteachers respect each other’s contributions to the classroom, and classroom space and responsibilities are completely shared.
9. **Reflecting together:**
Coteachers reflect together after and during instruction. After the lesson coteachers debrief to discuss how the lesson went and think collectively about future action. Quick reflective exchanges during instruction are called huddles. These types of comments include reflection on the progress of lesson and student learning, and sometimes lead coteachers to adjust their plans.

Becoming a coteacher

Student teachers are encouraged to take an active role in the classroom from the first day in the semester. One way to accomplish this is by not sitting down. Student teachers should be actively working to become a part of the classroom life even from the first day. We realize that it is not realistic to think that teachers new to a classroom can fully participate in all aspects classroom practice on the first day—this happens over time. Below is a list of coteaching activities that are reasonable expectations during the initial weeks of coteaching to help the student teacher integrate fully into classroom life. This is a suggested progression of activities. Do what makes sense to you and your classroom; you do not need to do everything at once.

	Possible coteaching activities and practices
Week 1: <i>Becoming part of the life of the classroom</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact with all the children in your classroom. Get to know them as individuals and learners • Get to know your cooperating teacher; begin to develop a working relationship • Actively work to insert yourself into the activity of the classroom (sit down less than your cooperating teacher); provide instructional support and assistance • Read a story with a child, or a small group of children • Check for student understanding (listen in to student comments during instruction, answer questions as appropriate and work to support student learning, ask for clarity and help to bring questions to the floor) • Answer student questions • Work one-on-one with a child or in small groups • Tutor a child, provide extra support as needed • Begin to learn and support classroom management • See where there are needs, and step in to support learning • Actively observe students -- document learning, record anecdotal notes • Attend staff and faculty meetings as allowed • Coplan with your cooperating teacher (and team as applicable) • Read curriculum and instructional materials; gain an overview of instructional goals for the semester • Learn and follow school policies and procedures for teachers
Weeks 2-3: <i>Assuming a greater share of classroom responsibility</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the coteaching practices from last week and add to them • Continue to coplan with your cooperating teacher (and team as applicable) • Run a center or small group activity • Try split-instruction or supplemental coteaching approaches • Begin to “tag-team” coteach by the end of the week (ideally do this in areas that you will lead teach in next week)
Weeks 3-9: <i>Mutually shared practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the coteaching practices from last week and add to them • Continue to coplan with your cooperating teacher (and team as applicable) • Continue to move toward equal partnership in the classroom

This coteaching handout is informed by the following publications:

- Murphy, C. (n.d.) Investigative primary science with student teachers. Retrieved from http://www.azteachscience.co.uk/ext/cpd/coteaching/5_1.html
- Scantlebury, K., Gallo-Fox, J., & Wassell, B. A. (2008). Coteaching as a model for preservice science teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(4), 967-981.
- Scantlebury, K., Gleason, S. Gallo-Fox, J. & Rulon, M. (2004). Tag team wrestling, or whose line is it anyway? Coteaching in a secondary science education program. Paper presented as part of interactive symposium Tobin, K. Scantlebury, K., Roth, M, Lavan, S-K, Martin, S. & Wassell, B. Learning to teach science using coteaching and cogenerative dialogues. AETS, Nashville, TN.
- Bacharach, N., Heck, T. W., & Dahlberg, K. (2010). Changing the face of student teaching through coteaching. *Action in Teacher Education*, 32(1), 3-14.