

THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION

EDITOR

BEVERLY J. ROBINSON-RUMBLE
SENIOR CONSULTANTS
HUMBERTO M. RASI
REO E. GANSON
C. B. ROCK

CONSULTANTS

GENERAL CONFERENCE

ENRIQUE BECERRA
AGRIPINO SEGOVIA

AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN

ROBERT G. PIERSON

ASIA-PACIFIC

MILTON E. THORMAN

EASTERN AFRICA

HUDSON KIBUUKA

EURO-AFRICA

RONALD STRASDOWSKY

EURO-ASIA

HARRY MAYDEN

INTER-AMERICA

L. HERBERT FLETCHER

NORTH AMERICA

GORDON MADGWICK

GILBERT PLUBELL

SOUTH AMERICA

ROBERTO C. AZEVEDO

SOUTHERN ASIA

K. JESURATNAM

SOUTH PACIFIC

LESTER DEVJNE

TRANS-EUROPE

ORVILLE WOOLFORD

MIDDLE EAST

JOHNNY MANASSIAN

SOUTHERN AFRICA

V. S. WAKABA

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

CLARENCE DUNBEBIN

RESEARCH EDITOR

JEROME E. THAYER

GRAPHIC DESIGN

HOWARD I. BULLARD, JR.

ADVISORY BOARD

REO E. GANSON

JOHN FOWLER

KATHY GODDARD

MARION HARTLEIN

DUNBAR HENRI

BETTY HOWARD

GORDON MADGWICK

WALLACE MINDER

HUMBERTO M. RASI

MICHAEL RYAN

JANICE SALIBA

AGRIPINO SEGOVIA

VIRGINIA SMITH

DON WEATHERALL



THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION publishes articles concerned with a variety of topics pertinent to SDA education. Opinions expressed by our writers do not necessarily represent the views of the staff or the official position of the Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION (ISSN 0021-8480) is published bimonthly, October through May, and a summer issue for June, July, August, and September by the Department of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-8600. TELEPHONE (301) 680-5075, FAX (301) 622-9627. Subscription price, U.S. \$15.75. Single copy, U.S. \$3.25. Second-class mailing paid at Silver Spring, Maryland, and additional mailing office. Please send all changes of address to Southwestern ColorGraphics, P. O. Box 677, Keene, TX 76059, including both old and new address. Address all editorial and advertising correspondence to the Editor. © Copyright 1995 General Conference of SDA, POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION, P. O. Box 677, Keene, TX 76059.

Cooperative Learning— An Opportunity With Eternal Value

This edition of the JOURNAL is devoted to the use of cooperation as a teaching strategy. The idea seems innocuous enough, even a smart and sensible thing to do. Yet, despite its potential, controversy seems to erupt wherever it is introduced. This is a fascinating phenomenon to me, especially in our church setting. In the public sector, the effectiveness of cooperative learning is beyond question. True, there are still those who rail against it, but those who read and keep up with the best research—and especially those who are using cooperative learning—know that these objections lack merit. The main complaints usually come from parents who lack access to educational research. These parents seem to question anything that differs from their own experience as students, and are almost always the parents of gifted children. “Why should my child be held back helping others?” they ask.

People, in general, have very positive feelings about cooperation. It is seen as a valuable and even necessary strategy. Parents—even the complainers mentioned earlier—if caught at the right moment, would admit they want their children to know how to cooperate. Yet for some these positive feelings disappear when it comes to actually using cooperation in the classroom. Cooperative learning has presented our church and our schools with an incredible opportunity. Our mission, our very reason for existence, is to present the gospel to each son and daughter of God. That gospel is embodied in the life of Jesus. His example of servanthood, of loving one’s neighbor and of “esteeming others as greater than himself,” is our pattern. In cooperative learning, we have a teaching model that resembles the gospel commission. It brings students closer together, presents them with their responsibility to help others, shows them how to receive help as well as give it, teaches them to communicate compassionately, and allows them to experience a sense of community.

Think for a moment of the potential in combining cooperative learning with the power of the Holy Spirit. Imagine what would happen if the church with the largest Protestant school system in the world—*our church*—were to grab hold of these principles. Cooperative learning has had a great impact on teaching and learning, but that impact would be a drop in the bucket compared to what could happen if our schools, combined with divine agencies, carried the cooperative learning flag and implemented its principles.

As you consider the ideas contained in these articles, keep in mind the mission of our church. Maybe you, too, will see the unique and special opportunities that can be provided through the use of cooperative learning.

The scope of the articles should provide something for everyone. Elementary through college-level teachers, superintendents, beginners in cooperative learning, and those more experienced will all find useful and important information.

I have enjoyed working with the authors. They each care about teaching, and teach about caring. They believe students “want to know how much teachers care before they care how much teachers know.” They know that “we cannot all play the same instrument, but we can all be in the same key.”

Paul D. Moody once said that “The measure of a man is not in the number of his servants, but in the number of people whom he serves.” That doesn’t have to be the reason you like cooperative education. There are plenty of other reasons. But I think that is why cooperative learning appeals to me. The idea of having a compassionate worldview, and of perceiving yourself as a helper is an educational goal with eternal value.—Jim Roy.

Jim Roy is Principal of Livingstone Junior Academy, Salem, Oregon, and coordinator for this issue.