

Presentation of Network and establishing buddies

Purpose of Lesson 1A

Involving the students in the importance and the process of Network and to ensure a safe transition to the youth education.

Content (45 min.)

- Welcome and presentation of buddies and buddy groups (approx. 5 min.)
- Presentation of Network (approx. 15 min.)
 - What is the purpose?
 - How long does Network last?
 - What activities do the students have to go through?
- Buddies and buddy groups (approx. 10 min.)
 - What is the purpose?
 - How are they made?
 - How long do they last?
 - What are the tasks of the buddies and buddy groups?
- Interview and presentation of your buddy to the rest of the class (approx. 15 min.)

Practical info

The students enter the class and sit down at the seats you have assigned to them. Table cards make it easy for them to find their seats. They sit next to their buddy and near their buddy group. You welcome them and introduce Network. The presentation is based on a PowerPoint presentation, and the lesson ends with an exercise.

Presentation of Network

The purpose of Network is to create a strong community and a healthy class culture, because it prevents loneliness, and because the social and the academic are connected - everyone performs better academically when everyone in the class thrives socially.

The buddy program continues for the rest of until the autumn holiday, and it may be established again later if needed. The lesson plan lasts until the Christmas holidays, and the community-building activities continue for the rest of the school year. Familiarize yourself with Network's annual cycle to be aware of when to do community-building activities during the year. You will find the annual wheel on the website www.projektnetwork.dk, under 'English'.

The buddy program

Every student is paired up with another person, and this is their buddy. The buddy groups consist of two pairs of buddies giving a total of four students. See under 'Preparation' how the groups are established. Distribute a handout with a buddy exercise to each student. Pass around contact sheet for everyone to write their phone numbers on.

The buddy program last until the autumn holiday, and the students will change buddies twice.

Remember to inform the other teachers in the class about the division into buddies and buddy groups, and

let them know when they change.

After the autumn holiday, the buddy groups continue primarily as study groups. The groups change every month for the rest of 1st grade. Students are encouraged to still keep an eye on each other's well-being, but they do not have the same social obligations as they do in the beginning of the school year.

Going through the various elements of Network

To prepare the students for Network, there is a short review of the various elements Network in the presentation, so the students know what they will be going through. You introduce the lesson plan, buddy program and the community-building activities.

Interview and presentation of each other

To get to know each other a little better (and to get all students to contribute on the first day), students need to interview each other. You provide a list of possible questions. They have to choose three questions they want to ask each other. The interviews should be very short, and afterwards the students will be given 10 seconds to present their partner. There is a total of approx. 15 minutes for the exercise - approx. 5 minutes for interviews and 10 minutes for the presentations.

NOTE: If you have more time, the interviews can easily last longer. You can also let the students write portraits of each other in a language course.

Main points in lesson 1A

- The academic and the social are connected.
- Networking is about turning students into good *colleagues* - caring and respecting differences.
- It is your responsibility to prevent anyone from feeling lonely in your class.

Preparation

- May you write in the welcome letter to new students that their class is a part of Network
- Make a contact sheet for the students to fill out so everyone has each other's phone numbers from the beginning - this is safer for some students than having to ask for their buddie's phone number.
- Make table cards for all students.
- Print or upload 'Interview Guide' for students (it is also inserted as a slide in the PowerPoint presentation).
- Divide the class into buddy pairs and buddy groups. There are different options:
 - Completely random.
 - Divided by gender and then mix at random.
 - Look at which schools the students come from and mix them so that they become buddies with someone they have not attended class with before.

The argument for it to be random is that students need to get to know each other across the board. They must be able to work with someone they have not chosen themselves - this will also be the case later in life when they enter the labor market.

There can be good reasons for 'controlling the coincidences' a bit and, e.g. by taking into account gender or ethnicity. Several schools have had good experiences with same-sex buddies, as it feels safer in the beginning, and it provides a good basis for friendships. If you have divided by gender in the buddy pairs, it

can make sense to mix the genders in the buddy groups.

If there are an odd number of students in the class, you can have three buddies – no one is ever alone. If a student is absent, buddy group is converted into a group of three students. If there are several who are always absent, you may form new buddies with the remaining students.