

# **HLP Highlight Tool**

# **HLP 17 – Use Flexible Grouping**

Embedded HLP under Pillar Explicit Instruction (HLP 16) & HLP 7

## Here’s What It Is:

Teachers differentiate by grouping students into small similar or mixed ability groups for intensive instruction, intervention, extension activities, collaborative work, and inquiry. Groups are flexible because their composition changes, depending on the lesson’s learning goals/target and students’ skills, prior knowledge, IEP goals, and learner characteristics. Groups are data driven, and either teacher led or cooperative.

Tools:  [HLP Self-Assessment Tool](https://highleveragepractices.org/assessment-tools-high-leverage-practices-students-disabilities) [HLP 17 Rubric](https://ttaconline.org/Resource/JWHaEa5BS76oPuH_olYAwg/Resource-rubric--hlp-17-use-flexible-grouping-vdoe-ttac-at-gmu) [Flexible Groups Considerations](https://ttaconline.org/Resource/JWHaEa5BS75pPS88qEWTiw/Resource-types-of-flexible-groups-vdoe-ttac-at-gmu)

## When Do I Use It?

* When students need intensive instruction, intervention, or specially designed instruction.
* When students need accelerated learning.
* When creating an inclusive class culture that promotes positive interdependence.
* When encouraging collaborative work among diverse members to promote academic discussions, inquiry, and social skills.

## How to Use It

* Use data about students’ skills, prior knowledge, and IEP goals to determine the type of group (similar or mixed ability) most appropriate for the learning goal/target.
* Align group activities with the learning goal/target.
* Structure cooperative groups to encourage equal participation that acknowledges the contributions of all members with shared and individual accountability.
* Communicate group member and individual responsibilities.
* Explicitly teach group activities and expectations.
* Give feedback on learning and behavior.

## Here’s What It Looks Like:

* [HLP 17 Video](https://highleveragepractices.org/hlp-17-use-flexible-grouping) (17:08)

## Selected Resources:

### Literacy

* [Reading Rockets: Grouping Students Who Struggle with Reading](https://www.readingrockets.org/article/grouping-students-who-struggle-reading)
* Learner Variability Project
* [Flexible Grouping grades 4 – 6 (Literacy)](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/literacy-4-6/strategies/flexible-grouping-literacy-4-6/summary)
* [National Center on Intensive Interventions (NCII) Intensive Interventions in Reading](https://intensiveintervention.org/training/course-content/intensive-intervention-reading)

### Mathematics

* [Think Pair Share - Mathematics](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/math-7-10/strategies/think-pair-share-math-7-10/summary)
* [Reciprocal Teaching](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/math-7-10/strategies/reciprocal-teaching-math-7-10/summary)
* [Jigsaw (Mathematics)](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/math-7-10/strategies/jigsaw-math-7-10/summary)
* [Gallery Walk](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/math-7-10/strategies/gallery-walk-math-7-10/summary)
* [Collaborative Problem Solving](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/math-7-10/strategies/collaborative-problem-solving-math-7-10/summary)
* [Student Choice - Mathematics](https://lvp.digitalpromiseglobal.org/content-area/math-7-10/strategies/student-choice-math-7-10/summary)
* [NCTM Questions to Elicit Student Thinking](https://www.scusd.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/questions_to_elicit_student_thinking__art_of_questioning.pdf)
* [NCII Intensive Interventions in Mathematics](https://intensiveintervention.org/training/course-content/intensive-intervention-mathematics)

## Resources to Extend Learning

* [IRIS Center](https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/sca/)
* William & Mary TTAC [Flexible Grouping in the Co-taught Classroom](https://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/articles/consultcollaborate/assessflexgroup/)

## References

Aceves, T. C., & Kennedy, M. J. (Eds.) (2024, February). *High-leverage practices for students with disabilities. 2nd edition*. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children and CEEDAR Center.

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching. New York: Guilford Press.

CEEDAR Center (2024). *High-leverage practices self-assessment tool*.  Retrieved from <https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/high-leverage-practices/>

Hashey, A. I., Kaczorowski, T. L., & DiCesare, D. M. (2020). High-Leverage Practices in Special Education, Guide 4. Council for Exceptional Children.

Kennedy, M. J., Cook, L., Morano, S., & Peeples, K. N. (2019). High-leverage practice #17: Use Flexible Grouping. <https://youtu.be/WmFz-1PXo8k?si=G8hp6Ld9IaTVxFSU>

McLeskey, J. (Ed.). (2019). *High leverage practices for inclusive classrooms*. New York: Routledge.

## For additional HLP Highlight Tools, go to [TTAC](https://ttaconline.org/Resource/JWHaEa5BS75BpXRi_D6u2A/Resource-hlp-highlight-tools-1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22) Online

For information about TTAC Region 4, go to [https://ttac.gmu.edu/](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fttac.gmu.edu%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cctalber1%40gmu.edu%7C717a601d8f47402ccfc108d9fd416faf%7C9e857255df574c47a0c00546460380cb%7C0%7C0%7C637819279759882488%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=GbznIwsPLTJua0kFL7zcwup4SVohdCUFFXuU1cQkHck%3D&reserved=0).