

Preliminary Discussion Questions

It is helpful for potential co-teachers to discuss their teaching philosophies, routines, and student expectations before making the commitment to co-teach. The questions below are designed to serve as a starting point for co-teaching discussion. Depending on previous experiences working together, some questions may not be relevant. Review the questions in advance and plan to spend about an hour together discussing these items. Remember that differences of opinion are inevitable; differences are OK and perfectly normal. Effective co-teachers learn and grow professionally from their work together. Competent professional skills, openness, and interest in working together are more important than perfect agreement on classroom rules.

1. What are your expectations for students regarding: a. Participation? b. Daily preparation? c. Written assignments and/or homework completion?
2. What are your basic classroom rules? What are the consequences?
3. Typically, how are students grouped for instruction in your classroom?
4. What instructional methods do you like to use (e.g. lectures, class discussions)?
5. What practice activities do you like to use (e.g. cooperative learning groups, labs)?
6. How do you monitor and evaluate student progress?
7. Describe your typical tests and quizzes.
8. Describe other typical projects and assignments.
9. Do you differentiate instruction for students with special needs? If so, how?
10. Is any special assistance given to students with disabilities during class? On written assignments? On tests and quizzes?
11. How and when do you communicate with families?
12. What are your strengths as a teacher? What are your areas of challenge? How about your pet peeves?
13. What do you see as our potential roles and responsibilities as co-teachers?
14. If we decide to co-teach together, what are your biggest hopes for our work as a team? What are your biggest concerns?

Walter-Thomas, C. & Bryant, M. (1996). Planning for effective co-teaching. *Remedial and Special Education*, 17(4).