

Stability

Devised by Steve Cooke and Anne-Marie Thomas at Soar Valley College in Leicester in the 1990s. This activity has been used by Year 8 pupils.

The webaddress for this activity is:

<http://www.collaborativelearning.org/stability.pdf>

Last updated 12th March 2007

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECT

Project Director: Stuart Scott

Supporting a cooperative network of teaching professionals throughout the European Union to develop and disseminate accessible interactive teaching materials in all subject areas and for all ages.

17, Barford Street, Islington, London N1 0QB UK Phone: 0044 (0)20 7226 8885

Website: <http://www.collaborativelearning.org>

BRIEF SUMMARY OF BASIC PRINCIPLES BEHIND OUR TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

The project is a teacher network, and a non-profit making educational trust. Our main aim is to develop and disseminate classroom tested examples of effective group strategies that promote talk across all phases and subjects. We hope they will inspire you to develop and use similar strategies in other topics and curriculum areas. We want to encourage you to change them and adapt them to your classroom and students. We run teacher workshops, swapshops and conferences throughout the European Union. The project posts online many activities in all subject areas. An online newsletter 'PAPERCLIP' is also updated regularly.

*These activities were influenced by current thinking about the role of language in learning. They are designed to help children learn through talk and active learning in small groups. They work best in non selective classes where children in need of language or learning support are integrated. They are well suited for the development of speaking and listening . They provide teachers opportunities for assessment of speaking and listening and other formative assessment.

*They support differentiation by placing a high value on what children can offer to each other on a particular topic, and also give children the chance to respect each other's views and formulate shared opinions which they can disseminate to peers. By helping them to take ideas and abstract concepts, discuss, paraphrase and move them about physically, they help to develop thinking skills.

*They give children the opportunity to participate in their own words and language in their own time without pressure. Many activities can be tried out in mother tongue and afterwards in English. A growing number of activities are available in more than one language, not translated, but mixed, so that you may need more than one language to complete the activity.

*They encourage study skills in context, and should therefore be used with a range of appropriate information books which are preferably within reach in the classroom.

*They are generally adaptable over a wide age range because children can bring their own knowledge to an activity and refer to books at an appropriate level. The activities work like catalysts.

*All project activities were planned and developed by teachers working together, and the main reason they are disseminated is to encourage teachers to work effectively with each other inside and outside the classroom. They have made it possible for mainstream and language and learning support teachers to share an equal role in curriculum delivery. They should be adapted to local conditions. In order to help us keep pace with curriculum changes, please send any new or revised activities back to the project, so that we can add them to our lists of materials.

Stability

Aim of this activity is to help pupils to be able to generalise about stability (or instability), explain why some objects are more/less stable and compare the stability of different objects.

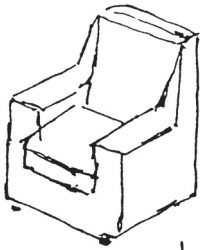
Object of this activity is to place cards on appropriate places on the board according to the relative area of base and relative centre of gravity. To decide which combination of features produces the most/least stable objects.

Language points. The language that tends to emerge from this activity involves comparison and qualifiers e.g. quite, fairly, pretty etc.

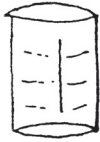
Stability

area of base	Centre of gravity		
	low	medium	high
small			
medium			
large			

Stability cards



an armchair



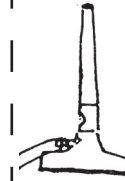
a glass beaker



a person on a bicycle



a bookcase



a bunsen burner



a packet of cereal



a glass of champagne



an empty dustbin



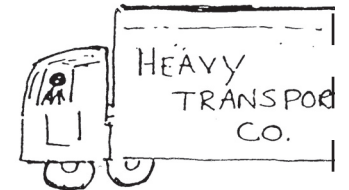
a conical flask



a flower pot



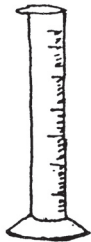
a giraffe



a lorry



a motor-racing car



a plastic measuring cylinder



a skittle



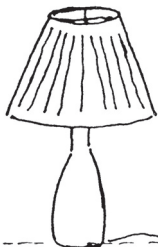
a stand and clamp



a stool



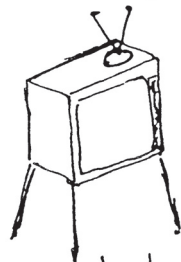
a person walking on stilts



a table lamp



a traffic cone



a television



a tripod



a flower vase



a 'wobbly' toy