Group work: horses for courses in 1st year Biology

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Professional Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL1001 (Molecules to Organisms)</td>
<td>BIOL1003 (Professional Skills for Biological Sciences 1)</td>
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**Philosophy for Group Work**

- Use group work where social interaction is an essential component of the work task.
- Design assessment so that it rewards positive group engagement.
- Include tools to assist students in engaging in groups and dealing with group conflict.

**The Great Diversity Challenge!**
(A Game of Life in Three Parts)

To win the challenge you will need to master 3 important aspects of the game of life.

- **The Ecology Game**
  - Biodiversity and Ecosystems
- **The Social Game**
  - Team Building
- **The Risk Game**
  - Hazard Assessment

What do we know from experiments with non-zero sum games?

- Alliances are key to win-win scenarios
- History and memory are important
This course has made me more aware of potential workplace hazards and occupational health and safety issues.

“Did it Work?”

“The team work emphasis which was used from the very first day was good” and “I made a lot of friends and had the opportunity to meet a lot of talented people. In my other classes people don’t interact as well with one another and don’t take the opportunity to get to know each other as well as we have in bio1003” – 19% voluntarily suggested group work when asked to nominate favourite aspect of the course.

“Enjoyed teaching hazard assessment – along with great diversity challenge is good opportunity to get to know student with greater inherent equity in process.”

Scientific Writing & Peer Review

(Weekly Paper)

Week 8
Develop Hypotheses and Experimental Design
Conduct Hazard Assessment
Class Field Collection
Begin Literature Review

Week 9
Laboratory Collation of Data
Analyse Data – Statistical Tests
Write Scientific Paper
Literature Review Due (5%)

Week 10
Scientific Paper Due
Editing – giving effective feedback(10%)  

Week 11
Editorial Approval – your paper is accepted for review (5%)  
Anonymous (Demonstrator) Review and Feedback
Self and Peer assessment of contribution

Mid Semester Break

Week 12
Final Report Submission (20%)

Resources Provided

- Literature Review Template
- Interactive library academic conduct website
- Turnitin plagiarism detection software
- Lab Report Template
- Exemplar Papers
- Organise Journals and provide web space
- Editors Check List
- Constructive Feedback Template
Did it Work?

Peer review was a valuable process that helped me in improving my report writing skills.

- Unanswered: 0%
- Strongly Disagree: 0%
- Disagree: 0%
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: 0%
- Agree: 0%
- Strongly Agree: 0%

34% voluntarily suggested report writing as most important part of the course

"the most valuable part was the lab report peer review section, receiving feedback from various people was extremely helpful and encouraged me to do my best."

"Peer review and demonstrating staff review. I learnt more about how to write a good lab report and consider my final report to be a huge improvement from my original. I was very happy with my final report."

"If it had worked well then it would have been a good experience, but my group was slack as and I ended up having to organise someone from another group to look at mine."

Bottom Line

No students in any survey or interview questioned the use of group work.

This suggests the context, relevance and importance of learning team work skills was obvious to the students via the authentic learning framework.