

# Roles People Play

1. To promote an awareness of helpful group roles
2. To learn how the accomplishment of group tasks depends upon helpful behaviors
3. To learn collaborative skills

## Instructions

1. Discuss the objectives and ask students to review the Tribes agreements.
2. Distribute the handout on "Roles That People Play In Groups."
3. Ask the students to study the cartoon and decide which role (or roles) they usually play when working with others in their tribe.
4. Ask the students to write answers to the questions on the bottom of the handout. Allow five to ten minutes time.
5. Have them share their responses with a partner.
6. Ask the students to share with their tribe a helpful new role that he or she will try for the day (or week).

### OPTION #1: A ROLE PLAY

- Have each tribe plan and present a brief role-play in which one person is playing an unhelpful role.
- Ask the class to guess which role is being demonstrated.

### OPTION #2: FOR ADULT AND/OR MULTICULTURAL GROUPS

- Delete the "What People Say" right hand column on the role description handout before distributing it to the tribes.
- Have the groups brainstorm and list all the things that people of their own peer group culture may say.
- Then proceed with steps three to six in the instructions above, or use role-play option #1.

## Suggested Reflection Questions

### CONTENT (COGNITIVE LEARNING)

- What happens in a group when even one person is acting in an unhelpful role?

### COLLABORATIVE (SOCIAL LEARNING)

- What helpful roles do people play in your tribe?
- How do those roles make working together easier?
- Are people in your tribe able to play different roles? How is that helpful?

### PERSONAL LEARNING

- What feelings did you have during this strategy?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- What helpful role(s) do you often use in groups?

## Appreciation

Invite statements of appreciation:

- "I appreciated it when..."
- "Thank you for..."

- **TIME** 20 minutes
- **GROUPING** community, tribes
- **MATERIALS** handout on roles
- **DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS**
  - Independence/Autonomy
  - Social Competency
  - Sense of Purpose
  - Problem Solving

## OPTIONS

Choose roles that apply to historical or social situations.

Try a "headband" approach, where the role is worn as a headband; the person wearing it has no knowledge of what role it is, and has to figure out the role, based on the behavior and statements of others.

DESCRIPTIONS OF HELPFUL ROLES	WHAT PEOPLE SAY
<p><b>Encourager:</b> Tells group positive things and keeps energy going well.</p> <p><b>Organizer:</b> Helps group stay on task and time; encourages management of materials and resources.</p> <p><b>Peace Keeper:</b> Helps members to solve problems, make decisions, express feelings and understand each other.</p> <p><b>Idea Person:</b> Gives and seeks helpful ideas. Initiates action and clarifies.</p> <p><b>Helper:</b> Is supportive and friendly, willing to listen and help others.</p>	<p>Right on! Good job! Yes! Let's do it. Keep going. Brilliant!</p> <p>File the papers. We have one bottle of glue. First we should...</p> <p>Time out. Let's talk about this! You both have a good point.</p> <p>What if we looked at it this way? Another idea would be to... What ideas do you have? Let's brainstorm more ideas.</p> <p>We need to hear from everyone. I'll help you. Let's work on it together.</p>
UNHELPFUL ROLE DESCRIPTIONS	WHAT PEOPLE SAY
<p><b>Joker:</b> Claims attention by interrupting, goofing off, distracting and trying to be funny.</p> <p><b>Boss:</b> Takes charge. Knows it all. Tells people what and how to do things. Usually doesn't listen well.</p> <p><b>Sitter:</b> Doesn't participate. Sits on the side. Always claims the right to pass. Will not help others. Can seem judgmental.</p> <p><b>Put-Downer:</b> Ridicules others and their ideas.</p> <p><b>Talker:</b> Goes on and on talking. Ignores others also wanting time. Controls by not pausing between sentences.</p>	<p>There's a spider on your head. At lunch I'm going to... Look at this! Want some gum?</p> <p>Do it my way! That's not right. The best way is to...</p> <p>I pass. Don't count me in.</p> <p>That's stupid. You're so dumb. We tried that once. How can you be so oblivious?</p> <p>Blah, blah, blah. And then he said to me... I also know that... Stop interrupting me.</p>

This page may be duplicated for classroom use.

# ROLES PEOPLE PLAY IN GROUPS

Encourager • Joker • Organizer • Boss • Peace Keeper • Talker • Idea Person • Sitter • Helper • Put-Downer



## Questions

Why do you think that it's the easiest role for you to play?

What other role or roles would you like to play to help your group?

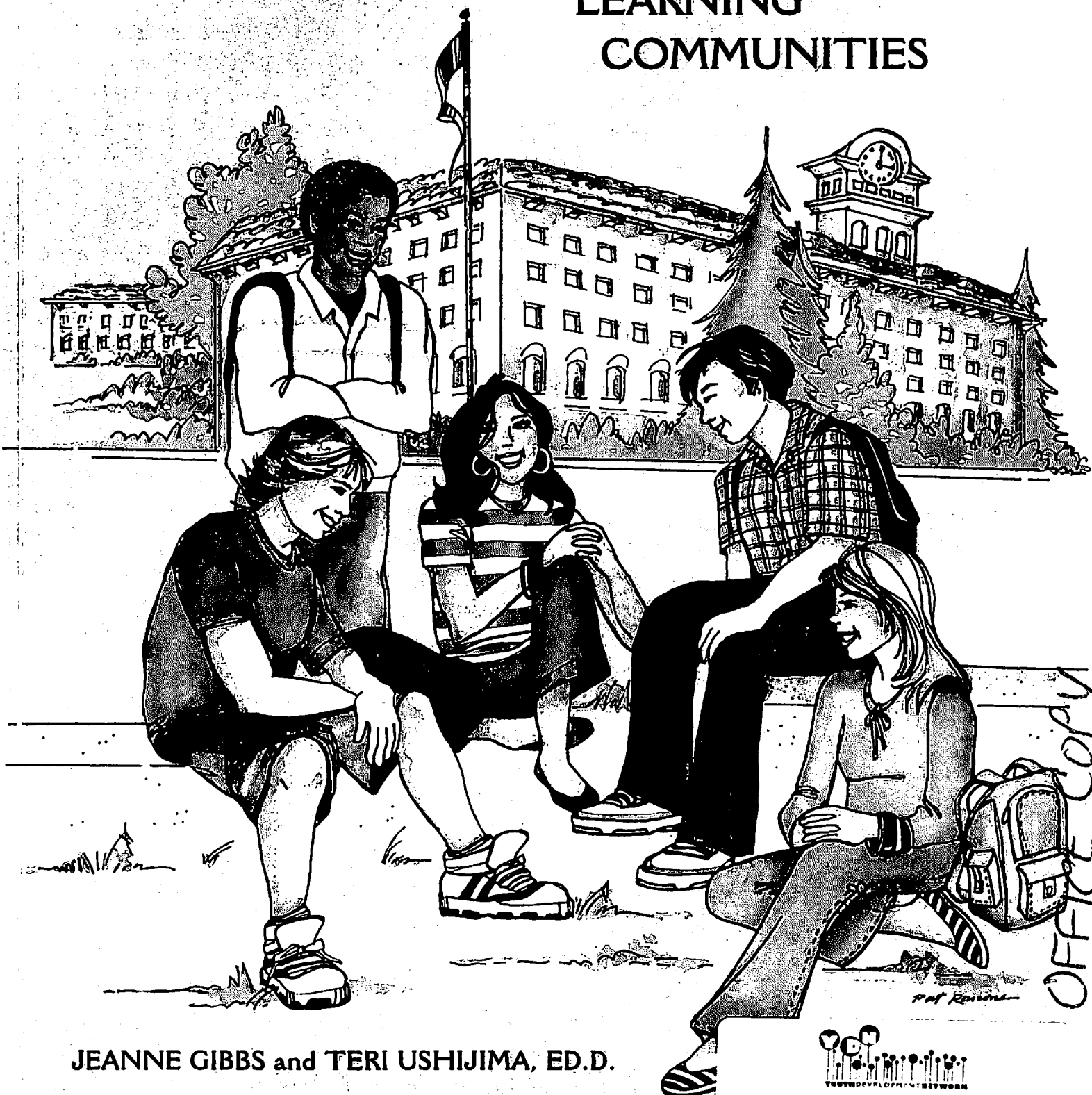
Which role do you usually play in a group?

How willing are you to try out a new helpful role today?

This page may be duplicated for classroom use.

# Engaging All

by **CREATING**  
**HIGH SCHOOL**  
**LEARNING**  
**COMMUNITIES**



OFFICE COPY

**JEANNE GIBBS and TERI USHIJIMA, ED.D.**



PO Box 269003  
Sacramento, CA 95826-9003