



# CLASS 3

## Running a Student Cooperative

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Copies of the Student Activity Handout  
Money to buy equipment or supplies to start up the student cooperative

### CLASSROOM NARRATIVE

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This activity is complex and will require a substantial time commitment, so plan accordingly.

Explain that the class is going to form a cooperative. Our cooperative will either help us buy something we all need or give us a way to earn some money. Steps 1 and 2 on the student handout pose critical questions to guide the planning process. After completing Steps 1 and 2, determine the length of time available for enacting the plan in Step 3. At the end of the project, ask students to complete Step 4, evaluating the success of the project.



NAME:

DATE:

# Running a Cooperative

**Step #1:** First, let's decide what kind of cooperative we want to be.

Do we want to be a consumer cooperative that helps us buy things we need? Or...

Do we want to be a worker cooperative that helps us have control over our workplace and helps us participate in our work?

**IF YOU DECIDE TO BE A CONSUMER COOPERATIVE:** What does everyone in the class need to buy? Which items may be too difficult or expensive to buy? Which items would be fairly easy for our cooperative to buy together and sell at school? *Choose what you want to purchase together, for example: lunch, sports equipment, school supplies, or healthy snacks.*

**IF YOU DECIDE TO BE A WORKER COOPERATIVE:** What work can you do together? What work do you have the equipment/resources/knowledge to do? Are there any jobs where a cooperative could help recruit more work or get the work done more quickly or better? *Choose what you want to do for work together, for example: lawn mowing, selling food at sports events or parent events, cleaning houses, taking care of pets, fixing computers, videotaping or audio taping conferences, or making websites.*

Record your decision on paper and post it in the front of the classroom.

**Step #2:** Let's get organized.

What do we need to do to get ready to launch our cooperative?

How does our group make decisions?

Who will do what, and by what time, to help us get ready?

How will we set our prices and divide up the money we earn?

When we open for business, who will do what?

How will we know if we are successful?

Record your plan on paper and post it in the front of the classroom.

**Step #3:** Let's get started.

Encourage students to implement their plan, checking off each step as they accomplish it and making changes to their plan as needed.

**Step #4:** Looking back.

How did it go? Did we get our cooperative started? Did it work? What would we do again? What would we do differently?

