

Lesson Plan: How a Community Works Together - Understanding Cooperatives

Materials Needed

- Provided text: "Cooperative Societies in Vanuatu"
 - Paper, pen, or pencil for each learner
 - Whiteboard, chart paper, or digital equivalent
 - Markers or colored pencils
 - Scissors and glue/tape (optional, for flowchart activity)
 - Index cards or small slips of paper (optional, for flowchart activity)
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I. Introduction (10 Minutes)

Hook

Ask the learner(s): "Imagine you and your friends wanted to open a small shop to sell snacks or games. Who would be the boss? Who would get the money if it was successful? What if, instead of one person being the boss, *everyone* who helped was an owner and shared the profits? That's the main idea behind a special type of business called a cooperative."

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define what a cooperative society is in your own words.
 - Identify the key roles and structures within a cooperative, like members, a committee, and a manager.
 - Organize the steps for how a consumer cooperative operates into a logical sequence using a flowchart.
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II. Body (25-30 Minutes)

Part 1: What is a Cooperative? (I Do - 10 mins)

1. **Introduce Key Concepts:** As the educator, read the "Cooperative Societies in Vanuatu" text aloud with the learner(s). Pause to define key vocabulary.
 - **Cooperative Society:** A business or organization owned and run jointly by its members, who share the profits or benefits. Think of it as "team ownership."
 - **Dividend:** A share of the profits paid to the members. If the co-op makes money, the members get a piece of it.
 - **VNCF (Vanuatu National Cooperative Federation):** A larger organization that helps coordinate and support the smaller village cooperatives.
 - **Commercial Centre:** A hub that provides services like a bank, a wholesale store, and a retail store to support the local cooperatives.
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2. **Explain the Structure:** Use a whiteboard or chart paper to draw a simple diagram showing the relationship between the members (the owners), the government's Cooperative Service (the helpers/trainers), and the VNCF (the coordinator). Explain that the government's role is to provide training and advice to help these community businesses succeed.
3. **Formative Check:** Ask quick questions to check for understanding: "Who owns a cooperative society?" (The members.) "What is the money members receive from the profits called?" (A dividend.) "What does the Cooperative Service do?" (Provides training and advice.)

Part 2: The Steps to Success (We Do - 10 mins)

1. **Present the Puzzle:** Introduce Activity #4 from the text. Write the seven jumbled steps for how a consumer cooperative operates on the board or on separate index cards.
 - The secretary or manager operates the store.
 - People buy shares and become members.
 - Some profits are reinvested in the store; the remaining profits are distributed equally among members.
 - The committee appoints a secretary or manager.
 - The store makes a profit.
 - The annual general meeting of shareholders... is held, where decisions are made on how to use the profits.
 - A committee is elected from among the members of the society.
2. **Guided Discussion (Think-Pair-Share):**
 - **Homeschool/Individual:** Work together. "Let's figure this out. What has to happen before anything else? Can you run a store without members?" Guide the learner to identify "People buy shares and become members" as the first step.
 - **Classroom/Group:** Ask learners to pair up and discuss which step they think comes first and which comes last. After a minute, have pairs share their reasoning with the larger group.
3. **Collaborative Ordering:** As a group, talk through the logic of the sequence. Ask questions like: "What needs to happen before you can appoint a manager?" (You need a committee to do the appointing.) "When do you think decisions about profits are made?" (After the store has made a profit.) Guide the group to a consensus on the correct order.

Part 3: Show How It Works (You Do - 10-15 mins)

1. **Activity - Create a Flowchart:** Instruct learners to create a flowchart that shows the seven steps in the correct, logical order. This is their main task to demonstrate understanding.
 - **Instructions:** "Now that we know the correct order, your task is to create a visual flowchart. Write each step in a box and use arrows to connect them from start to finish. This chart should clearly explain how a cooperative works, from gathering members to sharing profits."
 - **Modality Options:** Learners can draw this on paper, use a digital tool, or arrange the pre-written index cards in order and tape/glue them to a larger sheet.
2. **Success Criteria:** A successful flowchart will:
 - Include all seven steps.
 - Place the steps in the correct logical sequence.
 - Use boxes for steps and arrows to clearly show the flow from one step to the next.
 - Be neat and easy to read.
3. **Differentiation:**
 - **Scaffolding for Support:** Provide a template with the first and last boxes already filled in. Or, give learners the seven index cards and ask them to physically arrange them before drawing the chart.

- **Extension for Advanced Learners:** After creating the flowchart, ask them to write a short paragraph answering: "Why is the 'annual general meeting' step so important for a cooperative business model?" Or, "Propose a new type of cooperative for your community (e.g., a tool-lending co-op, a garden co-op) and explain its purpose."
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III. Conclusion (5 Minutes)

Review and Recap

Bring everyone back together. Ask a learner or a group to share their flowchart and explain the process. Display a correct version of the flowchart for all to see.

The correct order is:

1. People buy shares and become members.
2. A committee is elected from among the members of the society.
3. The committee appoints a secretary or manager.
4. The secretary or manager operates the store.
5. The store makes a profit.
6. The annual general meeting of shareholders, the committee, and the cooperative inspector is held, where decisions are made on how to use the profits.
7. Some profits are reinvested in the store; the remaining profits are distributed equally among members.

Reinforce Takeaways & Real-World Connection

Ask a final summary question: "Based on what we've learned, what is the biggest difference between a cooperative and a regular store owned by one person?" (Focus on shared ownership, democratic decision-making, and shared profits). End by reinforcing that cooperatives are a powerful way for communities to work together to meet their own needs.

IV. Assessment

Formative Assessment

Observe learner participation and answers during the "I Do" and "We Do" discussions. The quick questions about key vocabulary check for initial comprehension.

Summative Assessment

The completed flowchart serves as the summative assessment. Evaluate it based on the success criteria: correct sequence of all seven steps, clarity, and proper flowchart format (boxes and arrows).
