**General Principles of Group Tasks:**

- Group work should always have a purpose linked to the work to be done; for example, if interpretation of a text is one aspect of the work, sharing the different perspectives of group members and explaining one’s position is valuable work that is furthered by group talk.

- If the goal is draft preparation, asking students to read one another's work will be more successful if the actual audience of the draft is to be fellow class members.

- The teacher should write specific instructions for group work and create focused, clear tasks, asking group members to do work they're prepared to do. Modeling the work of the group can help members to understand the task and perform it better.

- Groups work better when credit for the work is clear; students can turn in a summary of their work or report to the whole class or other groups. Varying the nature of reporting and credit helps keep group work from becoming routine.

- Group work is generally low stakes, but it should be clearly linked to a project and move along the business of the class. Its value should be clear.

- Some scholars, such as Roskelly, suggest that groups should remain stable and have specific roles for each member, though these roles can rotate. Informal models can also be effective.

- Since group work is generally low stakes, credit for each member is generally the same. If the work is high stakes, there should be a plan for giving credit that differs for amount of work and/or quality of product. Work contracts for each student can indicate the extent of that student’s work. If possible, credit for work quality should be individual. If students present a group presentation, each student can write a reflective piece about the nature of his or her work, what he or she learned, and some critique of the product for an individual grade.