



Cooperating for Cooperatives!



Type of activity: Researching and working together

Who is it for? All the family

Links to the Sustainable Development Goals

This activity links to the Sustainable Development Goals 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and 17 Partnerships.

Find out more here

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>



What do I need?

- Piece of paper and a pen or pencil
- The Internet
- Open mind and willingness to work with other people

Introduction

On 4 July it is International Day of the Cooperatives, when people and groups working together for a common aim and good are celebrated. The day helps to build positive relationships between international groups, show how we are all equal, and that we can work in a way that gives all people who contribute their skills and energy to cooperatives enough money to live on.

In this activity, we're going to investigate what cooperatives are, find examples of them and see how you can contribute to or develop cooperatives within your local community.

Here's how to...

- Sit down with your family in a circle and start to talk about what 'cooperation' means in your family. Is it about helping each other? About putting other people first? Perhaps it is about each of you taking on little parts of a larger task, and to spread out the work evenly?

What other reasons do you help each other?

Note down on your piece of paper the main points of your discussions.

- What is a cooperative? Take a look at these links here to get an understanding of what a cooperative business is:
 - Short animation from UK Cooperatives <https://www.uk.coop/resources/what-co-operative>
 - A description and short animation from The Co-operative <https://www.co-operative.coop/about-us/what-is-a-coop>

- Can you think of any cooperatives that operate in your local area? (A couple of examples in Cumbria are Lakes & Dales Co-operative and Whitehaven Fishermen's Cooperative.)
 - Find out how they help your local community as well as the people they work with (like their suppliers, farmers, staff).
- Think about what you can do in your home or local community to help bring people's skills and talents together to help make a better community. Perhaps you can ask people to come together to:
 - clean up a neighbourhood (in a socially distanced way)
 - make jam for your community (perhaps your local allotment keepers can donate spare fruit, someone else can give spare sugar, friends can collect old jam jars, an adult with experience of making jam can cook the fruit and sugar and bottle the jam, you can make the labels, and you can all hand the finished jam out to everyone who contributed something, whether time, a skill or an ingredient!
- Now try and give your idea a go!

What now?

- Learn a bit more about the values of cooperatives. Take a look at this section of the Co-operatives website: <https://www.co-operative.coop/ethics>
- Find out how cooperatives and fair trade businesses are very closely aligned: <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/Farmers-and-Workers/Sugar/Manduvira-Cooperative>