**Ethics of Group Work Case Study**

**Directions:**

Read the following case study about a group of students. Decide where you stand on the issue and answer the questions at the bottom. Be sure to explain the consequences of your decision for both Greg and Natalie. Use complete sentences to fully describe your opinion on the subject. We will discuss the best way to grade group work. Come prepared with some ideas on how this should be done.

**\*\*DISCLAIMER: All characters and scenarios in this post are fictional.\*\***

Greg and Natalie have been in classes together since they were little. While they’re not close friends, they have always enjoyed each other’s company in class and have been in the same social circle. Greg and a few of his friends invite Natalie to join their group at the start of the term, and they begin to work on their project.

Fairly quickly, though, Greg realizes that Natalie isn’t pulling her weight. Any aspect of the project that’s assigned to her has to be redone by other members of the group, she doesn’t pay attention in meetings, and she consistently shows up late unprepared. Greg and his other groupmates think that Natalie needs to step it up and take this project seriously, but they ultimately agree it would be more trouble than it’s worth to confront her about it. They decide to just push through and let her do her own thing. Natalie continues to participate marginally in discussions, planning, and writing, but makes it clear through her actions that their final presentation is not her biggest priority.

After Greg’s group gives its final presentation, the members are asked to write an evaluation on their teammates that the teacher will use to determine individual grades. When it comes to most of his teammates, Greg easily gives them all A’s and B’s for their participation and contributions to the project. However, when Greg comes to Natalie’s evaluation, he is faced with a dilemma. It’s their last big project of the year, and if he were to evaluate her in a harsh way, it could negatively affect her grade. He doesn’t want to throw her under the bus; however, her apathy and poor work ethic put a huge burden on everyone else’s shoulders, and Greg had to personally sacrifice a lot of time and effort to make up for her mistakes or tasks that she left undone.

Is it worth giving her an honest evaluation, just so the teacher will give her the grade she deserves? Or is giving her a bad evaluation petty and unnecessary, considering that the year is almost over and their group received an A, regardless of her performance?

**Instructor Notes**

**Standards**

*Iowa Core*

*Grade 8*

*21st Century Skill: Employability Skills*

**21.6–8.ES.1**

Communicate and work productively with others, considering different perspectives, and cultural views to increase the quality of work.

### 21.6–8.ES.3

### Demonstrate leadership, integrity, ethical behavior, and social responsibility in all environments.

**Context/Uses**

This assessment will allow me to determine where students stand on the ethical issue of group work. We will use their opinions and ideas to determine an appropriate course of action when handling future group work situations.

**Checklist**

The items on this list are the highest possible points. Partial credit may be given.

\_\_\_\_\_ Student answers all three questions thoroughly and in complete sentences (**6 points**)

\_\_\_\_\_ Student comes prepared to discuss ideas about how to grade group work (**2 points**)

\_\_\_\_\_ Students actively participate in small group discussion (**4 points**)

\_\_\_\_\_ Students contribute to whole group discussion (**3 points**)

**Total:\_\_\_\_\_/15**

**Source:**

<http://www.scu.edu/r/ethics-center/ethicsblog/thebigq/15667/Picking-Up-the-Slack?utm_source=scu&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1306&>

The case study used was taken from this source and modified to fit my needs.