Organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge advances understanding by helping students learn the content at a higher level of rigor. Students benefit from this type of cooperative grouping as they see and hear the thinking processes and alternative solution methods of their peers. Together students analyze, practice, and begin to apply their learning to effectively deepen knowledge rather than process new content. This type of group work is often called productive group work because students usually consolidate their thinking and understanding.

When deepening knowledge, groups can be larger than two or three, but should be no larger than five. Groups larger than that often erode individual accountability and may allow students to “hide” and fail to deepen their learning. Just like organizing students to interact with new content, learning groups can be heterogeneous (mixed ability) or homogeneous (same ability) in nature. If the purpose of grouping is to help struggling students, heterogeneous groups work best. If the purpose of grouping is to encourage medium or average ability students to learn at high levels then homogeneous groups work best.
When organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge, the teacher should consider the **cognitive skills** students will use to deepen understanding, address problems and issues, create patterns and mental models, or analyze the content effectively. Guidance should also be provided on the **conative skills** appropriate for the lesson. Conative skills like helping students become aware of the power of interpretations, avoiding negative thinking, taking various perspectives, interacting responsibly, and handling controversy and conflict resolution should be taught and supported during group work. More information can be found on cognitive and conative skills in the resource library.

Organizing students to practice and deepen their knowledge works best when intentionally planned. The purpose of the grouping and the instructional strategy to be used to help students practice and deepen their knowledge should be predetermined. Monitoring techniques should be employed to verify the students reach the desired effect.