

Jigsaw

Jigsaw is one of the more advanced structures, and it's one that needs to be monitored carefully. In Jigsaw, students are placed in heterogeneous Base Teams of 4 or 5 students. Each student is assigned a topic on which to become an "expert." Students leave their base teams to form Expert Groups where each person in the group has the same topic. While in Expert Groups, the students study a particular topic and prepare some sort of presentation. They return to their based teams and take turns teaching what they learned to their team. Like the pieces of a puzzle, everyone's information must fit together to create a complete "picture" of the topic. At the end of the activity, everyone takes a test on all the topics.

Steps of Jigsaw

1. Assign students to Base Teams of 4 or 5 students (generally their regular cooperative learning teams). Have students number off within their teams.
2. Assign study topics to Base Team members by giving them an assignment sheet or by listing their numbers and corresponding roles on the board.
3. Have students move to Expert Groups where everyone in the group has the same topic as themselves.
4. Students work with members of their Expert Group to read about and/or research their topic. They prepare a short presentation and decide how they will teach their topic to their Base Team. You may want students to prepare mini-posters while in their Expert Groups. These posters can contain important facts, information, and diagrams related to the study topic.
5. Students return to their Base Teams and take turns teaching their team members the material. I find it helpful to have team members take notes or record the information in their journals in some way. You may want them to complete a graphic organizer or chart with the new information.
6. Involve the class in a whole-group review of all the content you expect them to master on the assessment. (You can use Teammates Consult, Mix-Freeze-Pair, Roundtable or Numbered Heads Together for this.)
7. Administer an individual assessment to arrive at individual grades.