

Jigsaw

Overview of teaching strategy:

A jigsaw is a cooperative teaching strategy that promotes Student Team Learning (STL). Typically STL strategies combine individual accountability and group goals or rewards which educational research suggests increases student achievement.

Central features include:

- common task or learning activity
- small-group interaction
- interdependence (often referred to as positive interdependence)
- individual responsibility

It can be used to develop a number of favorable learning skills such as:

- community building
- peer-to-peer communication
- collaboration
- relationship building
- interpersonal and social skills
- decision-making
- student-centered independent and/or autonomous learning
- understanding of multiple points of view
- content knowledge (the goal is for all members to learn the material)

Content and structure can vary by:

- subject (commonly used with text-based learning materials)
- size of group (a smaller base or home group/team of 3-4 students is suggested)
- individual and group goals or rewards (tests or quizzes of the material can count toward the individual and/or team; improvement points can also be awarded)

How it works:

- either assign or ask students to form a home group/team
- within each home team, assign letters or numbers to each individual (e.g., A-D)
- all individuals representing the same letter or number form an “expert” group
- expert groups read an assigned portion of text and either summarize or answer selected questions (the key is for all members of the expert group to have selected, agreed upon and recorded the same information)
- after the portion of text has been sufficiently learned, expert groups disband and individuals move back to their home teams
- back in their home teams, students teach each other the information investigated in their expert groups
- at the end, an assessment or evaluation of some kind is usually given

Learning Environments Jigsaw

Learning Goal:

To understand the four learning environments outlined in the text *How People Learn*.

Task:

1. Divide yourselves into groups of 4 (minimum). This will be your home team. Do the following steps before you move to #2 (**5 min**).
 - a. Read pp. 131-133 together to get an introduction to the chapter.
 - b. Letter yourselves off A-D. If there are more than 4 people, duplicate one of the letters.
2. Move to your expert group by letter. Each expert group will be responsible for learning the information in Chapter 6 of *How People Learn* in the following way (**20 min**). As you read, mark anything that was insightful or surprising with (!) and anything that was confusing or something you disagree with (?).
 - A: Learner-Centered Environments (pp. 133-136)
 - B: Knowledge-Centered Environments (pp. 136-139)
 - C: Assessment-Centered Environments (pp. 139-144)
 - D: Community-Centered Environments (pp. 144-149...end before *Television*)
3. In your expert groups, summarize the information in the section of text assigned. Write down 3-5 key ideas in the space provided below. Also discuss anything that was surprising, insightful, confusing, or something that you are skeptical about or disagree with.
4. In your home team, teach each other the information learned in your expert group (**20 min total**). Record the information about the four learning environments in whichever manner you decide on together.
5. Be prepared to perform in a team evaluation (**15 min**). What worked well with this type of learning activity? What didn't go well? Whose presentation was particularly effective and why?

Expert Group: _____

Write in this space, 3-5 key ideas from the section of text you have been assigned.

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