

# Jigsaw

The jigsaw is a method of teaching that was developed about 20 years ago to decrease segregation and polarization in the classroom. It is a very powerful method of involving all participants as teachers of each other.

## Preparation

- Write or find three short articles on subjects the teenagers need to learn. For example, if the teens are studying nutrition, you may find or write three articles on topics such as fruits and vegetables, grains, and dairy products.
- Create three picture location signs. For example, for a nutrition jigsaw you might make signs with pictures of a carrot, a slice of bread, and a piece of cheese. Place the signs in the three locations where the “expert” groups are to meet.

## Activity Directions

- Teenagers form “home” groups of three. Then a member of each home group chooses a different “expert” group and goes to that picture location so that each home group has a representative at each picture.
- Each teen in an expert group is given the same written information about a topic and 5 to 10 minutes to read it. For example, each teen in the fruit and vegetable group receives an article about fruits and vegetables to read and learn from.
- Within the expert group, the teenagers discuss (pairs work best) the major concepts presented in the article and what information they will teach members of their home group. This requires another 10 to 15 minutes.
- The teenagers then return to their home groups. Each teen is given 5 minutes to teach the other home group members about his or her topic. For example, for 5 minutes the fruit and vegetable expert teaches the other two what he or she

learned, then the grains expert teaches about grains, and so forth.

- At the conclusion of the 15 minutes, the large group is reconvened and the information processed. This can happen through a large group discussion or by having the teenagers generate the most important concepts they learned and writing these on chart paper.

## Tips

- The articles used in the activity should be short and concise. Full-length articles can be available at the end of the activity for those who want them.
- This method could also be used as a means of teaching games or becoming more effective at giving directions.

