

Jigsaw is an active-learning strategy in which students act as jigsaw pieces in a puzzle - each student bringing some knowledge, that when connected together forms a whole.

Step 1: Students form small groups and/or do pre-reading about one topic. They work on a prompt or have a discussion to become an expert on their topic.

Image description: Three groups of three students are clustered together. While each group member is the same shade of gray as others in their group, each group is a different color from each other group. One group is labeled Topic A, one Topic B, one Topic C.

Step 2: Students form new groups, with an expert on every topic represented in each group. Each expert then explains what they've learned to the other members of their new group. Often there's a new prompt or problem to solve.

Image description: Three groups of three students are clustered together. Each group contains one member from each of the original groups, such that each group is represented: A, B, and C.

What are the benefits of a Jigsaw?

- Students gain self-efficacy, as they have the opportunity to be experts.
- Students take ownership over knowledge, which can increase motivation.
- Students teach each other, which is a great way to retain information.
- Students practice skills, such as engaging with each other and teaching.
- Instructors can identify areas of misconceptions by listening to groups.

What are the caveats of a Jigsaw?

- If misconceptions are not addressed, they can proliferate and quickly!
- If students have not done the pre-reading, things may not go as planned.
- If attendance is very variable, it can be hard to adequately plan groups.

Jigsaw can promote student identity in their field or major!