

Jigsaw (Group Presentations)

Type: Sharing Ideas, Checking for Understanding



What Is It?

An activity where participants learn about a topic in “expert groups” and then return to a “home group” to share their knowledge.

Why Use It?

Encourages group sharing about a particular topic

More active than a standard lecture / presentation

Gives participants practice communicating what they learned, which helps deepen understanding

How to Use It

1. Assign each participant to an “expert group” of three to five people.
2. Give each group a topic. Each topic should have clearly defined learning objectives or questions and resources to help the groups find the information they need.
3. Establish guidelines about what the participants should read and how they should summarize their findings (for example, by filling in a worksheet, writing a summary, etc.).
4. Give the expert groups time to meet together to learn about their topic. This could involve researching together, reading through resources you provided and / or working through problems together.
5. Remind the expert groups to consider how they will teach the material to their home group members.
6. Break the participants into “home groups” so that each home group contains at least one member from each expert group. For example, if you had four expert groups working on different topics, your home groups should contain at least four people (at least one person from each expert group).
7. Ask participants to take turns presenting what they learned in their expert groups to their home group. Give them guidelines about how much information to present and what to discuss.
8. If appropriate, ask the participants to fill out a worksheet where they can collect the information presented by each expert.
9. Debrief as a large group and discuss any topics that were confusing or questions that could not be answered by the “experts.”

Trainer Notes

This approach works best when participants are comfortable with each other and confident enough to present information. It is best to use later in a workshop when participants know each other and have gained confidence.

If possible, create mixed-ability groups so that participants of varying skills can learn from each other as they become experts on the material.

Be sure to clearly divide the groups to avoid confusion. For example, you can give each participant a card showing their expert group and home group number / name.

Prepare a question sheet or chart to help expert groups gather information.

Prepare a summary chart to help participants summarize what they learn from other experts in their home groups.

Circulate to answer questions and make sure groups stay on task.