

# Jigsaw



## Purpose

This protocol allows small groups to engage in effective, time-efficient comprehension of a longer text. Having every student read every page or section may not be necessary. Students can divide up the text, become an expert in one section, hear oral summaries of the others, and still gain a summative understanding of the material.

## Materials

- Text divided into manageable sections, corresponding to the number of students in a group
- Optional: recording form for observations/thoughts and/or text-dependent questions

## Procedure

1. Divide the chosen text into manageable sections.
2. Arrange students into groups so that there is the same number of people in each group as there are sections to read. Assign the sections to each member.
3. Students read their section independently, looking for key points, new information, or answers to questions.
4. Each member in turn shares his or her important points or summaries of the text.
5. Have students independently write or reflect on their own understanding after the discussion.

## Variations

- Use Jigsaw to have students read several shorter texts, one per group.
- Jigsaw texts, if several are used, can be differentiated according to student need.
- Have students work with a single text in topic-alike groups first to become experts on a text. Then, redistribute the groups so that each student can serve as an expert on the text he or she read in the previous group.

## References

- Aronson, E. (1978). *The Jigsaw classroom*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- McDonald, J., Mohr, N., Dichter, A., & McDonald, E.C. (2007). *The power of protocols: An educator's guide to better practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.