



Teacher Tip of the Week

New Teacher Support Program 2008-2009

Terry Edwards, Program Coordinator

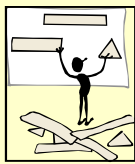
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Teacher Tip of the Week
New Teacher Support
Program
Wilson County Schools
615-453-7282

The Jigsaw Classroom: Cooperative Learning for the "Real World"

HELPFUL WEBSITE FOR TEACHERS



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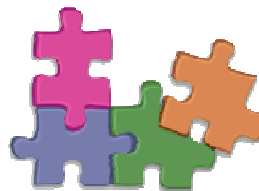
Cutting Corners

CARD NAME GAME

When I have a few minutes to spare the students love to play the "card name game." I have all of their names written on a playing card. While seated at the carpet, I distribute one card to each child (making sure no one has their own name). When their name is called they have to say something positive about the person on the card. This has really helped them to learn about respect and treating others how they want to be treated. It is fun and only takes about five minutes.

The jigsaw classroom is a cooperative learning technique with a three-decade track record of successfully reducing racial conflict and increasing positive educational outcomes. Just as in a jigsaw puzzle, each piece--each student's part--is essential for the completion and full understanding of the final product. If each student's part is essential, then each student is essential; and that is precisely what makes this strategy so effective.

Here is how it works: The students in a history class, for example, are divided into small groups of five or six students each. Suppose their task is to learn about World War II. In one jigsaw group, Sara is responsible for researching Hitler's rise to power in pre-war Germany. Another member of the group, Steven, is assigned to cover concentration camps; Pedro is assigned Britain's role in the war; Melody is to research the contribution of the Soviet Union; Tyrone will handle Japan's entry into the war; Clara will read about the development of the atom bomb.



Eventually each student will come back to her or his jigsaw group and will try to present a well-organized report to the group. The situation is specifically structured so that the only access any member has to the other five assignments is by listening closely to the report of the person reciting. Thus, if Tyrone doesn't like Pedro, or if he thinks Sara is a nerd and tunes her out or makes fun of her, he cannot possibly do well on the test that follows.

To increase the chances that each report will be accurate, the students doing the research do not immediately take it

back to their jigsaw group. Instead, they meet first with students who have the identical assignment (one from each jigsaw group). For example, students assigned to the atom bomb topic meet as a team of specialists, gathering information, becoming experts on their topic, and rehearsing their presentations. We call this the "expert" group. It is particularly useful for students who might have initial difficulty learning or organizing their part of the assignment, for it allows them to hear and rehearse with other "experts."

Once each presenter is up to speed, the jigsaw groups reconvene in their initial heterogeneous configuration. The atom bomb expert in each group teaches the other group members about the development of the atom bomb. Each student in each group educates the whole group about her or his specialty. Students are then tested on what they have learned about World War II from their fellow group member.

What is the benefit of the jigsaw classroom? First and foremost, it is a remarkably efficient way to learn the material. But even more important, the jigsaw process encourages listening, engagement, and empathy by giving each member of the group an essential part to play in the academic activity. Group members must work together as a team to accomplish a common goal; each person depends on all the others. No student can succeed completely unless everyone works well together as a team. This "cooperation by design" facilitates interaction among all students in the class, leading them to value each other as contributors to their common task.

(continued on page 2)

The Jigsaw Classroom

(continued from page 1)

JIGSAW IN 10 EASY STEPS

- The jigsaw classroom is very simple to use. If you're a teacher, just follow these steps:
- Divide students into 5- or 6-person jigsaw groups. The groups should be diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, and ability.
- Appoint one student from each group as the leader. Initially, this person should be the most mature student in the group.



“The world talks to the mind. A teacher speaks more intimately; a teacher talks to the heart.”—

Haim Ginott

- Divide the day's lesson into 5-6 segments. For example, if you want history students to learn about Eleanor Roosevelt, you might divide a short biography of her into stand-alone segments on: (1) Her childhood, (2) Her family life with Franklin and their children, (3) Her life after Franklin contracted polio, (4) Her work in the White House as First Lady, and (5) Her life and work after Franklin's death.

- Assign each student to learn one segment, making sure students have direct access only to their own segment.

- Give students time to read over their segment at least twice and become familiar with it. There is no need for them to memorize it.

- Form temporary "expert groups" by having one student from each jigsaw group join other students assigned to the same segment. Give students in these expert groups time to discuss the main points of their segment and to rehearse the presentations they will make to their jigsaw group.

- Bring the students back into their jigsaw groups.

- Ask each student to present her or his segment to the group. Encourage

others in the group to ask questions for clarification.

- Float from group to group, observing the process. If any group is having trouble (e.g., a member is dominating or disruptive), make an appropriate intervention. Eventually, it's best for the group leader to handle this task. Leaders can be trained by whispering an instruction on how to intervene, until the leader gets the hang of it.

- At the end of the session, give a quiz on the material so that students quickly come to realize that these sessions are not just fun and games but really count.

BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- * Promotes critical thinking skills
- * Involves students actively in the learning process
- * Improves classroom results
- * Models appropriate student problem-solving techniques
- * Personalizes large lectures
- * Motivates students in specific curriculum
- * Develops a social support system for students
- * Builds diversity under-

THANK A TEACHER



Roy Oswalt
Pitcher, Houston Astros

“My favorite teacher was my health teacher, Coach Gant. He was also my football and baseball coach. As a teacher and coach, he got the most out of me and really got me to push myself.”—Roy Oswalt

standing among students and staff

- * Establishes a positive atmosphere for modeling and practicing cooperation
- * Develops learning communities
- * Raises students' self-esteem
- * Reduces anxiety
- * Develops positive attitudes towards teachers
- * Utilizes a variety of assessment techniques

COOPERATIVE LEARNING WEBSITES FOR TEACHERS

<http://home.capecod.net/%7Etpanitz/starterpages/csites.htm>

New Teacher Support Participants:



Dan Lorenzon
Lebanon High School
Math



Rodina Moga
Lakeview Elementary
3rd grade

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I am passionate about teenagers and desire to build professional relationships with students, challenging them to learn and to pursue their goals and dreams. I want to serve as an advocate for every student that I meet. I want to encourage and to teach."—Dan Lorenzon

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"...I wanted to become an educator because this profession would provide me with the opportunity of helping students succeed. Being a teacher is what I intended to be. This profession is the one profession in which a teacher is required to give a little bit of himself/herself to every child, in return for little recognition. Educating children is the one profession with requires much sacrifice, provides little pay, yet for some strange reason, makes me get up at 5:30 in the morning full of energy and excitement. I can't imagine myself being anything else but a person who will touch lives forever."—Rodina Moga



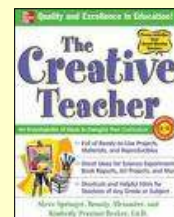
Extras! Extras! Extras!

How many times have you passed out papers only to hear a student say, "I didn't get one!" An easy solution is to have student helpers (paper passers) distribute worksheets to the class and place the extra ones in a specific drawer or deep basket.



Having a set place for extra papers alleviates the problem of having paper passers handing you extras while you're teaching, and anyone who is missing a paper or needs another copy can just go up to the drawer and find what they need. Empty the basket infrequently (about once a month) to enjoy the convenience of having extras on hand for absent students, during parent conferences, and so on.

From the Bookshelf:



Creative Teacher: An Encyclopedia of Ideas to Energize any Curriculum
by Steve Springer, Brandy Alexander, Kimberly Persiani-Becker

A comprehensive, practical resource packed with proven techniques and seasoned advice for time-strapped educators. For teachers of grades K-6. Facing ever-more-demanding state standards and less disciplined students, even the most experienced teacher carries a heavier burden today than ever before.

The Creative Teacher offers inventive tools to enhance standards-based curricula and helpful strategies for creating new and engaging lesson plans. Filled with fresh ideas for everything from bulletin boards to math activities, this one-stop resource will quickly become the most valuable volume in your library.



The Kissing Hand
by Audrey Penn and Ruth Harper
(ages 4-8)



Master Teacher Tips... Discipline

When you are correcting or counseling a student, use these five steps to make sure you are getting through:

1. Think through what you have to say and why.
2. Try to predict how the student will react to what you say—and be ready to respond professionally, not emotionally.
3. Watch for silent feedback—shrugs, gestures, and body language.
4. Test the students' responses with questions: "Can I clarify that for you?" or "Do you need examples?"
5. Put yourself in the student's shoes. How would you respond? These techniques are particularly effective when you are correcting inappropriate behavior.

Don't be quick to judge a student during a conference. Experts say anxiety is greatest just before the interchange begins. This level of anxiety usually lasts two or three minutes. Therefore, use the first minutes of every conference to break the ice, build relationships, and help the student relax and trust you. The conference may turn out better if you do.



Upcoming Events

Child Abuse Prevention Month

Laugh at Work Week April 1-7

Golden Rule Week April 1-7

National Fun Day April 1

National Love Our Children Day
April 4

Metric System Day April 7

Stress Awareness Month

For a Laugh!



"Dear Mr Trent: Since you only pretended to write this paper, I only pretended to grade it!"