

'TIS A PUZZLEMENT!

Objective

Students cooperate to complete a task and solve a problem; discuss strategies for dealing with or figuring out problems.

Materials Needed

- Several jigsaw puzzles of animals (classroom pets, if possible)

Directions

1. Put all of each puzzle's pieces into separate large envelopes. On the envelope, put a picture of the finished puzzle (for older students, don't include the picture.)
2. Remove one piece from each puzzle and place it in a different envelope.
3. Put students into small groups (3-5 per group.) On teacher's signal, students begin to put the puzzles together.
4. As they work, they will notice the "problem" of the odd piece, and, hopefully, notice that other groups are having the same problem. (Do not help them; they should try to solve the problem on their own.)
5. Allow 10 minutes to work on the puzzles.
6. Ask your students these questions:
 - What did your group do when you realized you had a problem?
 - How did you solve the problem?
 - Did you work on finding a solution together, or did one person take over?
 - What are some important things to remember to do when you are faced with a problem?

