

## Other grouping ideas

There is a range of grouping organisations that promote collaborative learning. Once introduced to students, these groupings can be used across the curriculum to encourage students to take on different roles and responsibilities and to all contribute to a group task. This is a successful way to introduce students to cooperative learning strategies, which are essential life skills.

Below are a few of the most common grouping organisations.

### Doughnut circles

Students sit or stand in two circles. The outside circle faces inwards and the inside circle faces outward, so that everyone is facing a partner. The teacher sets a talking task, for example, share ideas on a topic, share facts, introduce themselves, share a fact or opinion, share one success from a lesson, share their goal(s). For ideas for talking topics for doughnut circles, see PM36 — 4 pages, PM37 — 5 pages and PM55 — 3 pages.

Students have a turn each to speak. The teacher could call 'Switch' when it is time to change partners. After they have both spoken, the inside circle moves one partner to the left (this could differ, for example, five spaces to the left or three spaces to the right). A good listening activity is to ask students to share what their previous partner said with their new partner. Students could also take notes on what partners have shared.



*Doughnut circle using a Talk topic (PM36).*

### Jigsaw grouping

This grouping organisation is effective when planning an in-depth collaborative task. The students are initially organised into 'home' groups of equal numbers. Each student in the group is given a number: 1, 2, 3 or 4.

Students with the same number then move to form a group with other students who have the same number. This new 'expert' group allocated the same topic. For example:

- 1 = information about the habitat of a panda
- 2 = information about the diet of a panda
- 3 = general information about the panda
- 4 = conservation information about pandas.



*Expert groups share their learning and record ideas on the Four square notes (PM19).*

The students work together to learn about their expert topic. The teacher may give the groups a section of text to read, a video clip to watch or some research links. The students could take notes or record information on a graphic organiser.

After the expert group has prepared its information, the members return to their home group and each team member shares his or her 'expert' information.

*Four square notes* (PM19) could be used to record the information learned from each expert in the group.