

"A Puzzling Project"

This is a good starter project for stop animation. Students put together a puzzle one piece at a time then take the puzzle apart one piece at a time. After each piece they put in or take out they take a picture. The pictures are then used to create a stop motion video so that the puzzle looks like it is being put together and taken apart by itself.

Time: 90 minutes

ISTE Standards met:

Creative Communicator: Students create original works or responsibly repurpose or remix digital resources into new creations.

Global Collaborator: Students contribute constructively to project teams, assuming various roles and responsibilities to work effectively toward a common goal.

Materials:

- *One jigsaw puzzle per group:* A small puzzle works best, usually about 100 pieces. It's surprising how long it takes some students to put a jigsaw puzzle together.
- *Board or cardboard sheet big enough for the completed puzzle:* This is useful as a background and for storing puzzles between sessions.
- *Camera:* Any digital camera will work. It's best to make the picture size as small as possible so the pictures can be uploaded easier.
- *Tripod (optional):* A tripod will help keep the camera the same distance from the puzzle while students take pictures. This will make the animation look much smoother. Students can hand hold the camera, but encourage them to keep it the same distance from the puzzle as much as possible.
- *Google Slides or video editor or app:* This will depend on your school. If you are familiar with a video editor or can use apps on a tablet or phone, you'll be able to create better stop motion and should be able to include a sound track, but Google Slides should work for almost everyone.

Lesson Plan:

- Talk about how stop motion animation works first. There are several videos in the resource list that you can use. There are several popular stop motion movies that the students will be familiar with so ask students what stop motion animation videos they've seen.
- Show students examples of puzzle animations (resources). Emphasize that students are only going to put in one piece at a time and then take a picture. One advantage of this as a starter project is that it forces kids to slow down creating animations. Point out the different ways puzzle animations can be created, such as twisting pieces or putting pieces in a pattern.
- Before starting to take pictures, have students put the puzzles together first. It is much easier to animate the puzzles when students know how the pieces fit together. Students can also use this time to think about how they are going to animate putting the puzzle together and taking it apart.
- It's best to have students work in pairs. One student takes pictures while the other moves the puzzle pieces. Students have to work out how they are going to communicate to avoid taking a picture at the wrong time. Once the puzzle is assembled, then students switch positions and take the puzzle apart one piece at a time.
- To create the stop motion video you can use a video editor or Google Slides. In Google Slides, students simply insert a picture for each slide. It's time consuming but it works (see the instructions in resources for creating an animation with Google Slides). If you are familiar with a video editor or can use apps on a tablet or phone, you'll be able to create better stop motion and should be able to include a sound track

Resources:

[What Is Stop Motion Animation and How Does It Work? | Mashable Explains](#)

[How to Make Stop Motion Videos](#)

[The making of Shaun of the Sheep | How Stop Motion Animation Works](#)

[Puzzle animation examples from students](#)

[Puzzle Pieces - A Stop Motion Animation](#)

[Jigsaw Puzzle Stop Motion](#)

[Using Google Slides for Stop Motion Animation](#)

