

# Creating Community Online

In this webinar, we will:

- explore strategies for building community in the online English language classroom
- identify differences between synchronous and asynchronous learning and how each learning format can be effectively used
- discuss how to create a plan that establishes communications-related expectations and how to build a positive class community by incorporating reflection
- review activities and tools for enabling student collaboration



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# Heather Gaddis



Heather received her Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics in 2008 and first taught English to adults. In 2009, she moved to southern Mexico to teach at a public university; after that, she moved to Turkey where she gained experience integrating technology into ELT. Heather went on to complete a Master in Educational Technology degree. She returned to Mexico in 2011, working as an academic coordinator at a bilingual school.

Currently, Heather works on a variety of projects and courses, including delivering courses for pre- and in-service teachers, materials writing, and working as an examiner for international proficiency exams.



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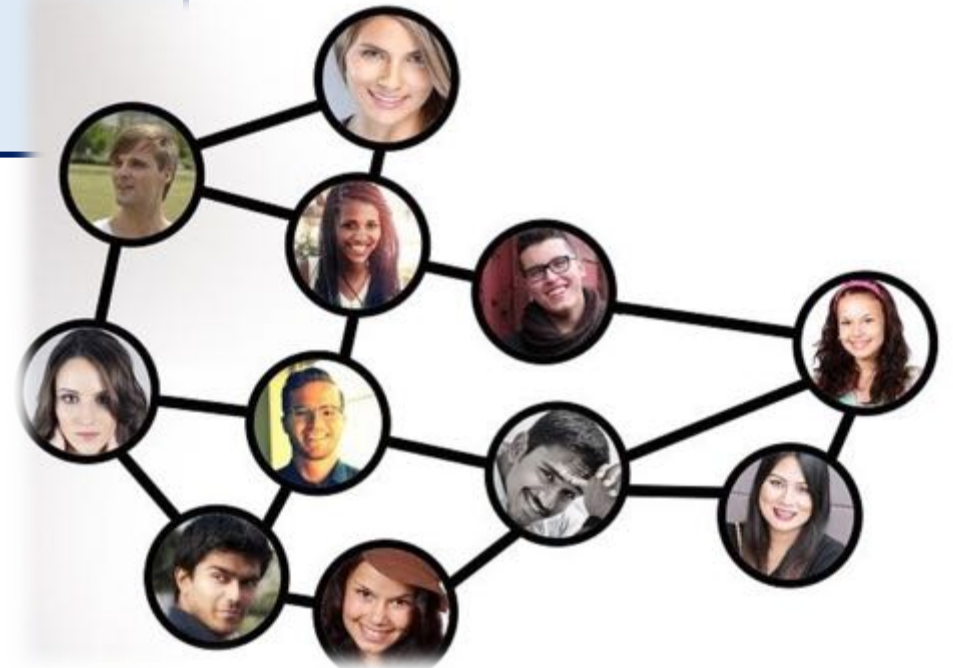
# Challenges to Community Building in the Online Classroom

- Passive or distracted students
- Lack of connection between students and teacher
- Finding ways for students to collaborate



# Let's hear from you!

**What challenges have you faced when building community in the online classroom?**



# Agenda



**Synchronous vs  
Asynchronous  
Learning**



**Communication**



**Positive  
Communities**



**Student  
Collaboration**

# Agenda



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# Synchronous vs Asynchronous



## **Synchronous Learning**

Happens in real time at a specific place and time.



## **Asynchronous Learning**

Happens at any time and can be done according to one's schedule.

## Let's classify some tools as synchronous or asynchronous!

|                                                                              |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Students share one idea on <b>Jamboard</b> within 1-2 days after the lesson. |  |
| Students are engaging in the <b>Zoom chat</b> during a discussion activity.  |  |
| Students <b>email</b> the teacher to ask a question about an assignment.     |  |
| Students read a <b>blog</b> and write a reflection on the class platform.    |  |
| Students play <b>Kahoot</b> to review vocabulary at the end of class.        |  |
| Students attend a lecture given by a community member via <b>Zoom</b> .      |  |

## Let's classify some tools as synchronous or asynchronous!

|                                                                              |                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Students share one idea on <b>Jamboard</b> within 1-2 days after the lesson. | <b>Asynchronous</b> |
| Students are engaging in the <b>Zoom chat</b> during a discussion activity.  | <b>Synchronous</b>  |
| Students <b>email</b> the teacher to ask a question about an assignment.     | <b>Asynchronous</b> |
| Students read a <b>blog</b> and write a reflection on the class platform.    | <b>Asynchronous</b> |
| Students play <b>Kahoot</b> to review vocabulary at the end of class.        | <b>Synchronous</b>  |
| Students attend a lecture given by a community member via <b>Zoom</b> .      | <b>Synchronous</b>  |

# Synchronous Learning

## Pros

- Increased engagement
- More dynamic learning
- Personalized instruction

## Cons

- Depends on availability
- Connectivity

# Asynchronous Learning

## Pros

- Flexibility
- Pacing
- Reflection
- Richer feedback

## Cons

- Social isolation
- Lack of praise

# Balancing Both Types of Learning

- What tasks are best suited for **asynchronous** versus **synchronous** learning?
- How will students **collaborate** with each type of learning?
- How will the two types of learning be **connected**?

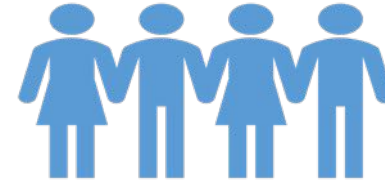
# Agenda



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# Communication

- Students
- Families
- Personal time



# Communication Plan: Students

- **When**

- When will I post assignments, feedback, responses to questions?
- When will assignments be due?

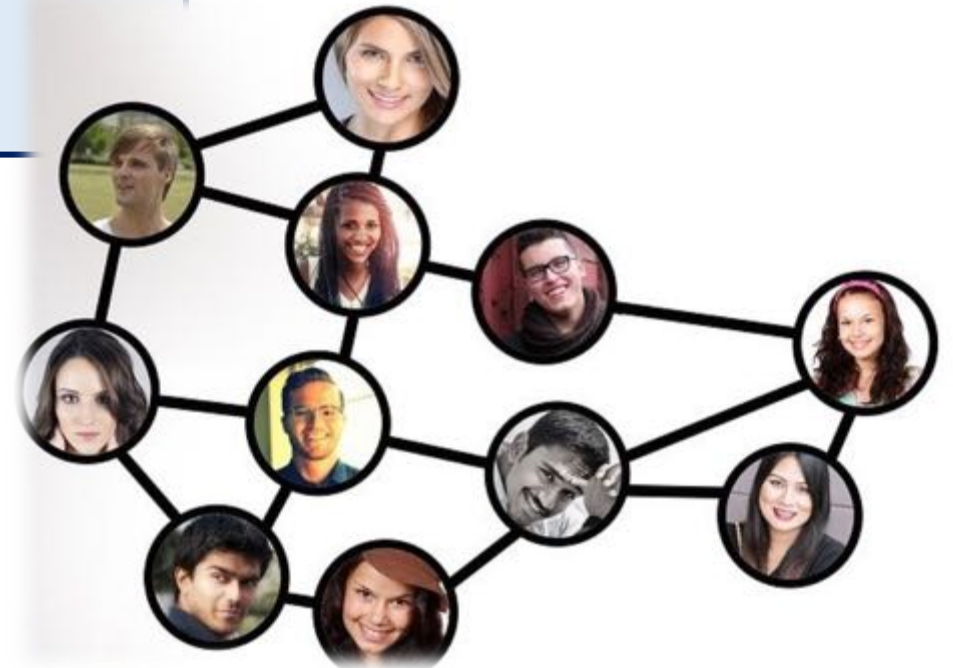
- **How**

- How will students turn in assignments?
- How will feedback be given to students?
- How will students check in during synchronous learning?
- How will I follow up with absent students?



# Let's hear from you!

**Have you had any difficulties  
communicating with students?  
If so, please share with us!**



# Communication Plan: Families

- **What**

- What tools will be used to communicate with parents?

- **How often**

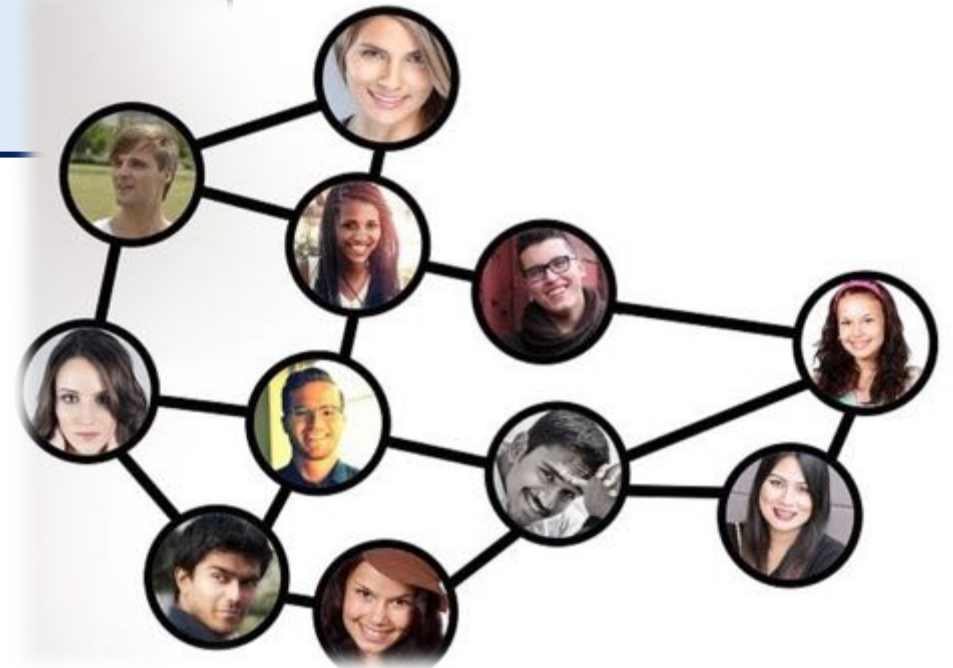
- How often will I send class updates?
  - How often will I reach out to individual families? For what reasons?

- **How long**

- How long can families expect to wait for a response to a question?

# Let's hear from you!

**If you communicate with parents,  
what strategies have worked for you?**



# Communication Plan: Attendance and Personal

- **When**
  - When will I read and respond to questions from students and parents?
  - When will I monitor asynchronous work (forum or group work)?
  - When will I be available for meetings with students?



# Communication Strategies

- Use synchronous and asynchronous communication tools (email, chat, course announcements).
- Let your students see and hear you.
- Regularly praise and recognize student success.



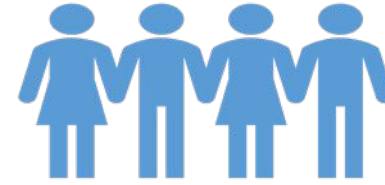
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# Creating a Positive Community

- Icebreakers
- Surveys/polls
- Time for reflection
- Student-led feedback



# Icebreakers

1. Model the icebreaker with your own example. (Write 3 clues about yourself for students to guess.)
2. Have students brainstorm their own clues.
3. Monitor to make sure all students have understood.
4. In pairs, have students read out their clues and guess how they are related to their partner.
5. Encourage students to share what they learned about their partners.

# Icebreakers

Guess how the word below is connected to my life. Write your responses in the chat or comments.

**Chopper**



# Agenda



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# Student Collaboration

- Collaborative writing
- Think/Pair/Share
- Jigsaw activities



# Collaborative Writing: Restaurant Review

1. Teacher sets up shared document using a template.

*Note: There is one space for each student to write their review.*

2. Students write their restaurant review in the shared document.

3. Students choose a classmate's restaurant review to read and edit.

4. Teacher monitors activity and writes comments to help students.

# Collaborative Writing

- Restaurant Review

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Author: XXXX                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Reviewer: XXXX                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p>Original:</p> <p>PALMAR</p> <p>Palmar is a seafood restaurant and I think that is the most delicious in Querétaro, I've never eaten a toast like the one they are prepared. They have a great variety of seafood and drinks. I recommend that you will go the saturday michelada. I think that the only wrong with them is t worth going. I was expected that the food portions v Another thing I liked was they give you half an avoc toast for starter. Palmar is a very clean place with a</p> | <p>Edited</p> <p>Palmar is a seafood restaurant and I think that is the most delicious in Querétaro, I've never eaten a toast like the one they are prepared. They have a great variety of seafood and drinks. I recommend that you will go the saturdays in the morning and order a michelada. I think that the only wrong with them, is the price because is expensive but still worth going. I was expected that the food portions were small, but the food is very filling. Another thing I liked was they give you half an avocado dipped in a very tasty sauce with toast for starter. Palmar is a very clean place with a vintage style and I recommend it. The seafood is prepared by a experienced chef and the restaurant was designed by a famous architect.</p> |

# Community Building: Restaurant Review

- Students are working in a shared space.
- Students have a reason to read each other's work.
- Students support each other's learning.

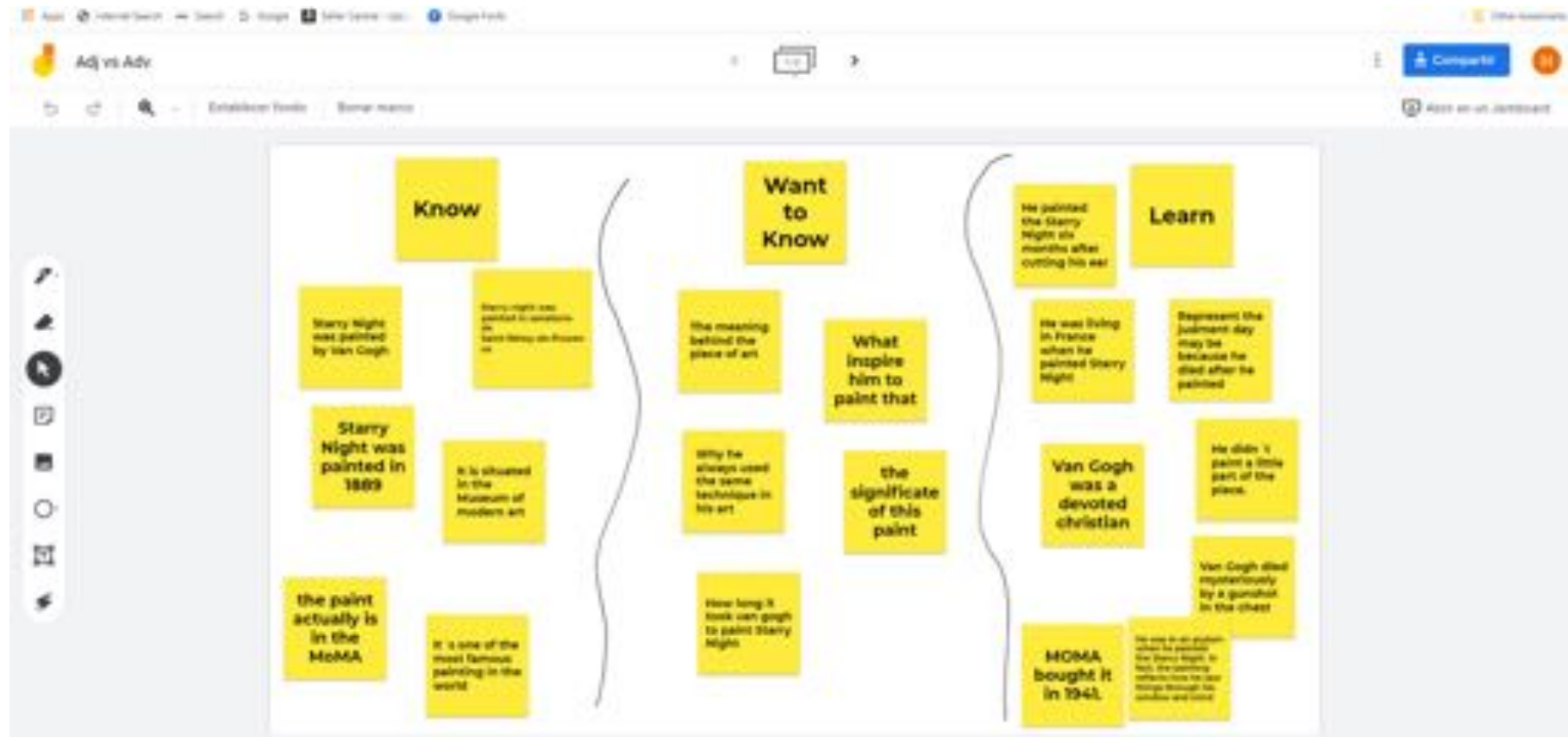


# Collaborative Writing: KWL Chart

1. Create a chart with three columns using a tool like Jamboard.
2. Have students write in the first column what they want to know about the topic.
3. Have students write in the second column what they want to know about the topic.
4. Have students read a text or watch a video about the topic. Tell them to focus on answering their questions about the topic.
5. Have students write in the third column about what they learned about the topic.

# Collaborative Writing

- KWL Chart



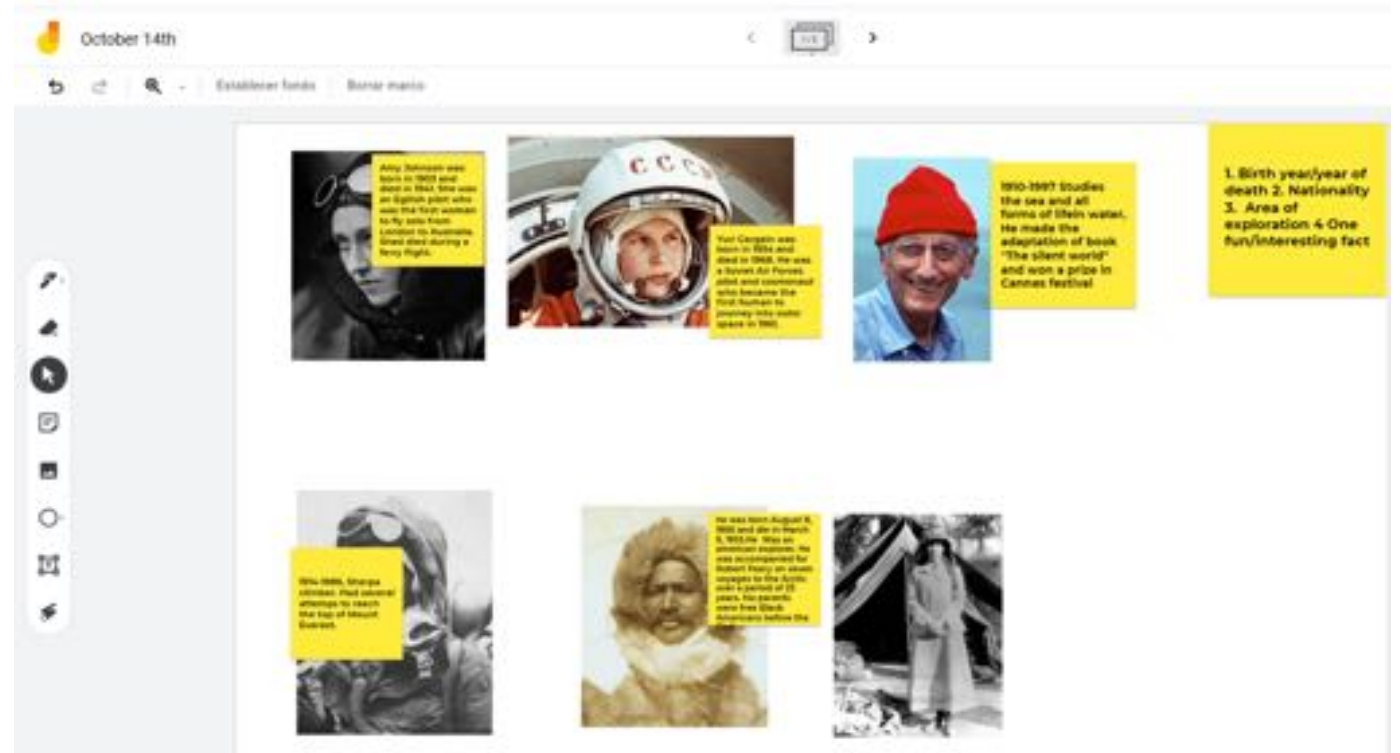
# Community Building: KWL Chart

- Students are working in a shared space.
- Students learn from each other.
- Students get to know each other.



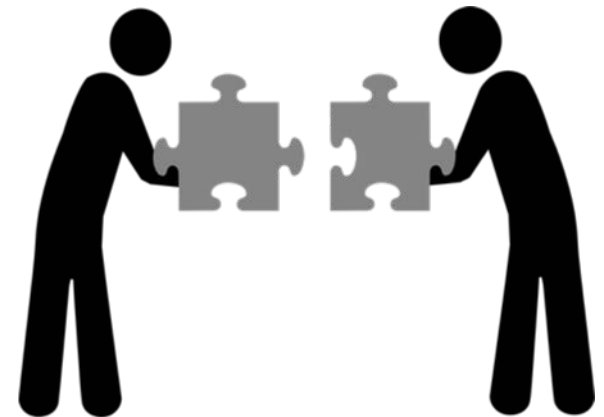
# Jigsaw

1. Assign each student or group a topic/article.
2. Allow time for students to read text or research the topic.
3. Students write or present their findings to each other.



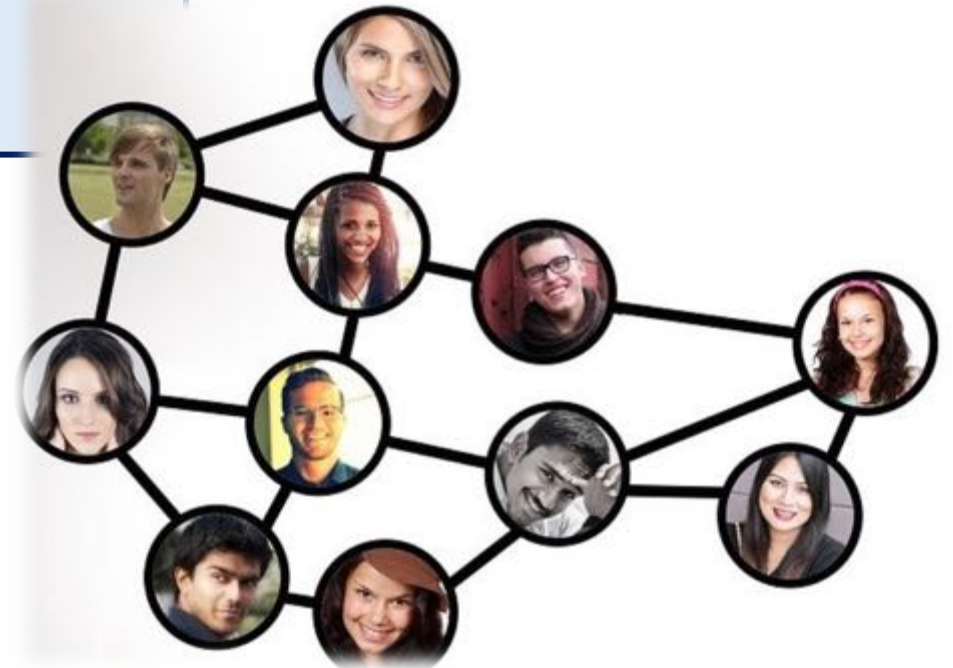
# Community Building: Jigsaw

- Students depend on each other in a positive way.
- Students feel a sense of responsibility to their classmates.
- Students communicate with each other about their doubts.



# Let's hear from you!

**Have you had great success with any community-building activities not discussed today?**



# Summary

- Take advantage of **synchronous** and **asynchronous** learning.
- Create a plan for clear, supportive **communication**.
- Create opportunities for **reflection** and **connection**.
- Find ways for students to **collaborate** and **support** each other.



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# Thank you!

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# Reflection Questions

1. What was the most successful activity you have used in an online class to build community? Why do you think this activity was particularly helpful?
2. Which tools have you found most success with for encouraging students to connect with each other? Share details about implementing these tools.
3. Discuss any community-building tips or strategies that have been particularly useful for you during the transition from in-person to online teaching.



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