

# Jumping Your Hurdles

## 14. Triangle Trick

**Spatial Requirements:** Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

**Activity Type:** Movement/group

**Grades:** 3-12

**Group Size:** 4 or more

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Introduction:** Sometimes jumping hurdles can be easier if you have others to help and support you. This activity is designed to help students understand the value of plugging in and/or working as a group when solving problems. It also helps illustrate the advantage of having a clearly defined goal – or finish line – when attempting to jump hurdles. This activity can also be applied to “Plugging In.”

**Materials:**

- 6 straight, equal-sized objects (straws, toothpicks, pencils, skewers, pipe cleaners, etc.) per person

**Activity:** Give each person six objects of equal length that can be used to make triangles. Instruct them that they are to use all six sticks to form a shape that has eight triangles. They are not allowed to bend or break the sticks. Do not tell them that the final answer is a Star of David (one triangle on top of the other, one pointing up and the other pointing down). Have the students work for a while by themselves, trying to solve the problem on their own. Then, after a few minutes, divide the students into groups and allow them to brainstorm together.

If they haven't solved the puzzle after a few minutes, give them the hint that the solution is in the shape of a kind of star.

**Processing the Experience:**

- How easy was it to solve the problem by yourself?
- Were any of you able to solve it once you worked in groups?
- What made it easier to solve as a group?
- When we have a problem or hurdle, why is it easier to have the help and support of others?
- Where can we turn to get the help and support we need in life?