

a quick guide to..... Tarsia for MFL

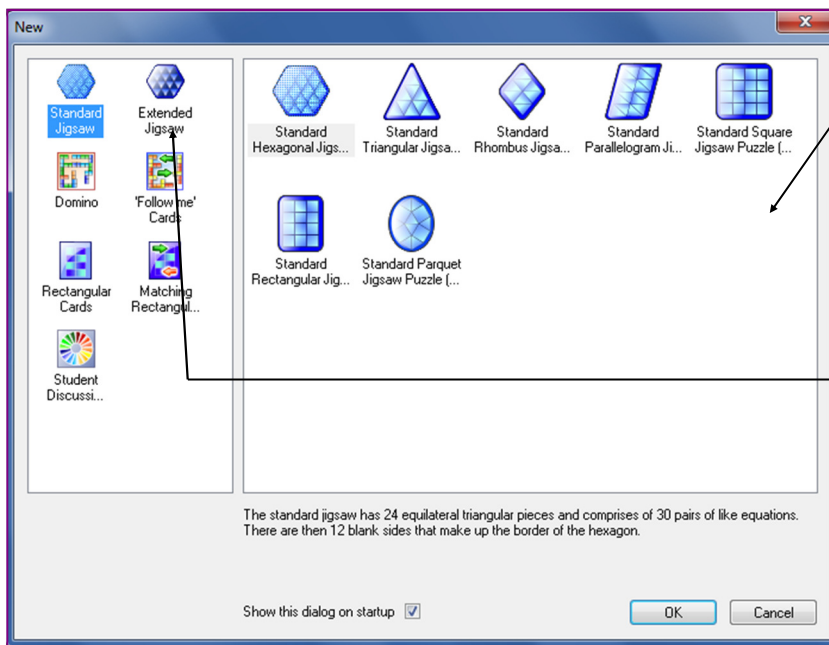
What is it ?

Formulator Tarsia is a free-to-download program, originally conceived for maths, which MFL teachers can use to create all kinds of shape puzzles quickly and easily.

Download the program from here <http://tinyurl.com/download-tarsia>.

Getting started

Open the program. The opening screen gives you these options from which to choose:



Standard Jigsaw: There are seven different shaped jigsaws, all with blank edges. When you click on one of the shapes it tells you how many pieces the puzzle comprises, how many pairs of words or phrases you will need and how many blank sides the puzzle will have.

Extended Jigsaw: Similar to the Standard Jigsaw, but they also specify the number of "unpaired" words or phrases that will make up the edges of the puzzle, thus making it more difficult.

Domino: Click the icons to find out how many pairs of words or phrases are needed for each game. Each game has a 'start' and a 'finish' square, and so this setting is more suitable for making Follow-me cards (see left).

Follow-me cards: These cards, when the puzzle is complete, will form one continuous loop and so this setting is more useful for making Domino games (see right).

Rectangular Cards: This setting makes cards with single words or phrases, and involves no matching.

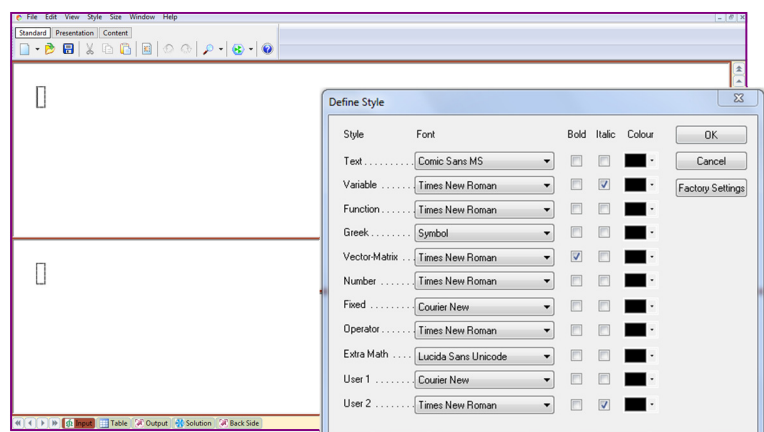
Matching Rectangular Cards: As for the rectangular cards above, but it randomises the cards for matching in pairs. A good setting for making Pelmanism cards.

Student Discussion Circle: This setting makes segments, each of which has a question on the top and an answer on the bottom, and which all join up to make a big circle. They are especially useful for group work, but use a lot of paper when printing and are harder to cut out as the pieces have rounded edges.

Making your puzzle

Once you've selected the puzzle you'd like to make, you'll see this screen. As you aren't a mathematician you'll need to change the settings to text and select a font. (The default font for Tarsia is Times New Roman Italic.)

To change to text and select a font:
Style > Select "Text"
Then: Style > Define, and for "Text" select the font that you wish to use.

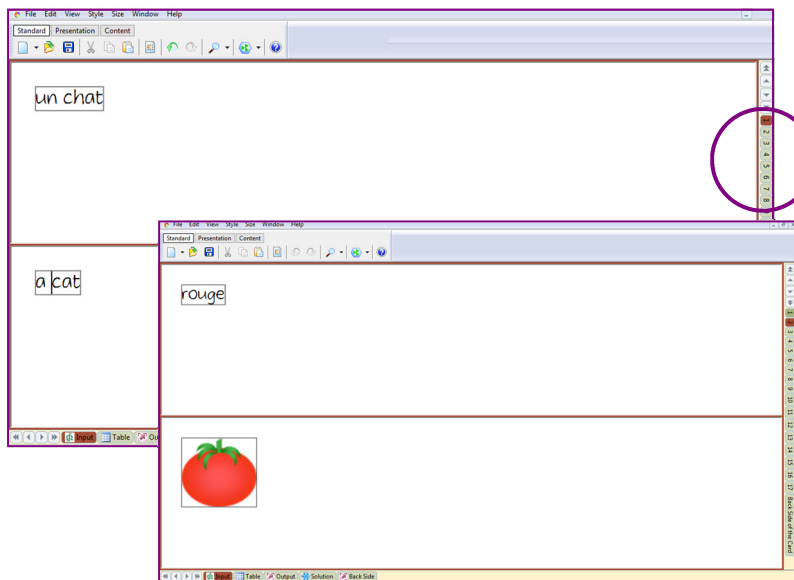


Inputting the pairs of words or phrases:

Type one of the pair into each box. You can use the ALT+number codes to type the accents.

You can also insert a picture in one of the boxes. To do this, click on Edit > Insert Image. The image can be .bmp, .jpg, .gif or .png format. Don't worry about the size, as Tarsia will resize it for you in the puzzle.

To advance to the next pair of words or phrases, click on the number of the next pair on the right hand side of the screen (circled). Continue until you have typed in all your pairs of words or phrases.



Output

Once you have typed in all your pairs of words or phrases, your puzzle will be ready. The button bar at the bottom of the screen allows you to see all the different outputs that Tarsia has created for you.

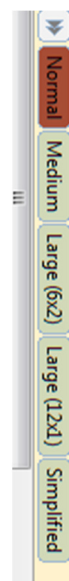
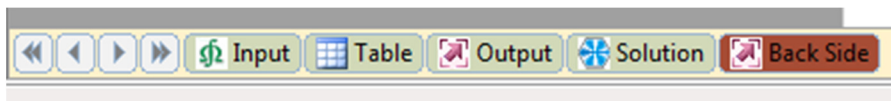


Table: as the word would suggest, a table of all the pairs in the right order.


Output: This shows what the puzzle pieces will look like. They are randomised ready to print out. You can change the size of the pieces by clicking "Medium" etc at the side of the screen. If you have a lot of big pieces running onto lots of sheets of paper, you can screen-capture and shrink them onto fewer sheets. You can change the size of the font on the pieces using this button

Solution: as you might guess, a copy of the solution to the puzzle.

Back Side: It is possible to have something on the reverse side of each piece.

It's possible to change your puzzle to another format without losing all your inputs by going to File > Properties


Table:

un chat	a cat
rouge	
je joue	I play
vert	green
surtout	especially
mais	but
un ordinateur	a computer
ma soeur	my sister
français	French
je m'appelle	my name is

Output:

cinquante	live in Sunderland	especially	and at	maître
un ordinateur	my bag	French	offits un	but
trois	green	surtout	to write	a pen
quinze	five	mon sac	français	écrire

Solution:

un chat	a cat	rouge	
un ordinateur	a computer	ma soeur	my sister
offits un	French	mon sac	my bag
trois	green	français	French
trois	green	mon sac	my bag
trois	green	mon sac	my bag
trois	green	mon sac	my bag
trois	green	mon sac	my bag
trois	green	mon sac	my bag
trois	green	mon sac	my bag

Saving

Tarsia puzzles save as *.xjsw files, which are not compatible with anything else and which can only be opened on computers where Tarsia is installed. To facilitate sharing, convert your puzzle and its solution to PDF format using a program such as CutePDF.