# In the slam zone - teacher's notes

You're the teacher – choose whatever methods you think best and apply them in each of these examples.

But having said that I have some clear preferences and the commentary is written in the context of these preferences.

We introduced basic 4-ace Blackwood as part of the beginner course.
Always emphasise that Blackwood is not the only way to bid a slam, and even when it is it will only rarely be your first port of call, but **a version of RKCB** should be introduced at some stage with the emphasis on locating honours in the trump suit. My preference is 1430. (5♣ = 1 or 4).
Note that 4NT will be Blackwood following suit agreement or when it is a jump bid agreeing the last bid suit, excepting the balanced sequences such as those cited below.

**Balanced hands should be bid based on quantitative raises.**
This includes direct raises of natural no trump bids including 4NT, and also 4NT in sequences such as 1NT, 2♣, 2♥, 4NT or 1NT, 2♦, 2♥, 4NT. If you happen to like the response to the Stayman enquiry or transfer bid then you must find some other way of agreeing the suit first.

**4 of a minor will never be Gerber** (there are much better uses for the bid) except when played as a direct raise of that minor when it should be played as a forcing key-card ask.

**But, when possible the slam interest should be established at below game-level** thereby creating additional space to investigate.

1 Major, 2NT is played as game-forcing Jacoby agreeing the suit, but it is important to agree a set of continuations (see MJBridge.info/openers rebid1lev/page74.html).
1 minor, 2NT is played as natural (10-12 balanced with no change of suit available) for the moment. In due course I will recommend a Baron 2NT, but probably not at this point of time.

A double jump in a new suit is played as a game-forcing splinter agreeing partner's suit.
For the moment I shall play this as wide-ranging, but in due course you might choose to take the stronger splinters through the Jacoby route and limit the strength of the immediate splinter.

And if none of these routes exist remember the 'slow route' option of bidding the fourth suit and then reverting to a bid you could have made earlier to force to game and express at least a mild slam interest.