

PLT Facilitator Responsibilities

Role of the Facilitator

Being a PLT facilitator means that you are not really a teacher nor are you a leader. A facilitator serves as a guide, helping workshop participants gain a better understanding about the PLT program, its use, and potential impacts on children's environmental awareness and understanding.

The role of the Project Learning Tree workshop leader is to help the participants make their own observations, interpretations, and conclusions about PLT, and to assist the group in discovering and realizing the potential PLT holds for them.

As a facilitator, you set the stage for learning and encourage participants to explore and develop as professionals. See Appendix A for a list of facilitator skills. The PLT facilitator is responsible for:

- Structuring a positive, hands-on experience that allows each member of the group to participate in activities, and as much as possible, achieve his or her reason for being at the workshop.
- Modeling the PLT philosophy of "awareness" (what is PLT, and what does it contain) to "action" (participants make plans for use of PLT, then return home and use it).
- Motivating (through an enthusiastic presentation) and assisting the participants in developing applications of PLT for their own settings.

A PLT workshop facilitator also *must* put his or her biases and interests aside. This is particularly difficult since many of the issues we talk about and many of the PLT activities we work with touch important aspects in our own lives. For more ideas on this topic see "Two Hats" on page 377 of Appendix 2 in the PreK-8 Activity Guide.

Conducting Workshops

As an active PLT facilitator, you are typically expected to plan and conduct a minimum of one six-hour workshop each year, (*this requirement may vary from state to state*). We encourage you to team

with other facilitators and resource specialists, and we welcome alternative workshop styles.

Other Ways to Become Involved

In addition to conducting workshops, consider becoming involved in PLT in other areas such as promotion, networking, and recognition. For example, you might:

- **Encourage the use of PLT and the development of additional PLT workshops in your region.** Possible settings might include booths or displays at conferences, fairs, and other gatherings. These are good opportunities to promote workshops in your area.
- Serve as one of PLT's resource people in your region. **Help find participants for workshops and promote media coverage of PLT events.**
- Enrich your state PLT program by sharing your ideas, techniques, resources, and other information in your facilitator newsletter, and in the national PLT newsletter, the *Branch*. **Send your ideas to the State Coordinator.**
- Help us recognize important contributions made to PLT. **Share your recommendations to the State Coordinator for nomination of individuals and organizations for PLT recognition.**
- **Follow up** with a team of teachers to integrate PLT activities across grade levels with a particular school or district.
- Support a teacher in writing a **GreenWorks! grant** by offering feedback or a letter of support.
- As a certified Project Learning Tree facilitator you may be asked to make a presentation to a local school board, a teacher's meeting or other informal gathering as to what PLT is, what it offers, and how it may be helpful to educators. Listed below is a suggested agenda for such an occasion. Remember, it is only a suggestion, feel free to alter or change it to fit the group you are speaking to.

Suggested Agenda for a 1-2 hour Presentation:

- *Introduction and Get Acquainted:* You might have people introduce themselves (if necessary), and have each person name one thing in which a conservation education program could provide for them. Make a list of their needs (you may want to refer to this later).
- *Explain what PLT is and describe the guides.* Distribute a promotional brochure and copies of the *Branch*.
- *Do a PLT activity with the group.*
- *Give an overview on selected PLT activities.*
- *Refer to the needs they expressed earlier and see how PLT may fit their particular needs.*
- *If time permits you may want to do another PLT activity.*
- *Explain how they can schedule a PLT workshop.*