

### ***III. Supplemental Workshop Information***

#### ***Workshop Tips***

**Circles, Not Squares** - Whenever possible, arrange chairs (not desks) in a semi-circle. While we know people might be more comfortable behind a table where they can prop their elbows and have something to lean on, the semi-circle arrangement facilitates participation, which is all-important in the workshop. It also allows everyone to see everyone else's face and name tag. Everyone can hear better what others are saying. No one is looking at the back of someone else's head. Remember that we all learn from each other in a workshop, so it is important that all participants can see and hear everything that is going on.

**Murphy's Law** - Be prepared for the unexpected. For example, if you have chosen outside activities, be prepared to do them inside if it rains, or have an alternate activity prepared. You can never outguess what might happen, but if you have prepared carefully and stay flexible during your workshop, you can deal with whatever comes up.

**Numbers** - In general, you should require a minimum of 12 - 15 attendees for a PLT workshop. Because our activities are done in groups, it is difficult to do activities successfully for 10 or fewer people. A maximum of 35-40 attendees is the most you should try to handle. (If you get more than that, break them up into two groups and run two simultaneous workshops.) A good rule of thumb is to use one facilitator for every ten attendees.

**Pack Your Own Bags** - When you are putting your workshop equipment and supplies together, be sure to pack it yourself so you will know where everything is. Use a checklist! It's a good idea to put all your papers and workshop "goodies" out on a table when you first arrive. When you need them, they are right at your fingertips and you don't waste time or appear unprepared by searching through boxes. Another strategy is to pack everything you need for an activity in one container. Plastic storage bins are great for storing and keeping materials together from workshop to workshop.

**PLT Partners** - Never try to do a PLT workshop alone. First of all, what if you get sick or an emergency situation occurs? You lose the

workshop, and will probably never be able to get it rescheduled. Second, the standard for PLT workshops is that each workshop have at least one resource person and one educator as facilitators. Third, it is simply better for your attendees if there is a variety in styles, voice levels, and personality in the facilitators.

**The Spice of Life** - Arrange your workshop agenda so the active parts are interspersed with the "sitting and listening" parts. Also, be sure to select activities that reflect a variety of learning styles. Change facilitators from section to section to provide even more variety. If you have a partner or team with whom you frequently do workshops together, change roles from workshop to workshop so that each of you learns each part, and you don't get stale.

**Don't Preach to "Teach"** - Always treat your participants like the adults and professionals they are. Never attempt to tell them how or what to teach! Let them make their own judgements about PLT. Urge them to think about how they might use PLT in the context of what they teach.

**Be Not Afraid** - At the same time, there is no need to be afraid to work with educators. Your job is to provide them with a valuable resource, and to demonstrate its use.

**Name Tags - Use 'em** - Name tags are very important. Even if you are doing a workshop with teachers who all know each other, do you also know everyone? If you don't, you may find yourself pointing at people rather than using their names. Name tags can be of any variety, but should be large enough to read from the front of the room. First names are all that is necessary. It is best to have name tags made up ahead of time, but if this isn't possible, assign one person to make them so they are uniform and easily legible. If you ask people to make their own name tags, there will inevitably be some who write a tiny little name in the corner of the tag! Tree cookies are a great name tag idea.

**Talk Out, Not down** - Use common, everyday language that everyone will understand. If you're a forester, don't use forestry jargon unless you explain what you're saying. Use everyday names for trees. You don't impress anyone with your knowledge if they don't know what you're talking about. Remember that you are dealing with educators. Watch your grammar and your spelling!

**Can the Commercials** - When you conduct a PLT workshop, your only job is to train the educators in using PLT. Do not use the opportunity to try to influence your audience about forest management practices, your employer, or your own personal agenda. Introduce yourself and your professional affiliation and let that be it. The fact that you are there, and your employer allowed you to be there, speaks for itself. If you do attempt to influence the opinions of your audience, it will backfire on you every time.

**Teacher's Pets** - Don't hone in on one or two participants because you are drawn to their personalities. Treat everyone equally. Don't pick on participants either, not even in fun.

**Sex** - Now that I have your attention ... There is no place in a PLT workshop for any vestige of sexism or racism! Ever! Do not make remarks about anyone's sex, color or religion. Do not refer to teachers in general as female. Do not make off-color remarks, even in jest. Do not use expletives. PERIOD.

**Wrap Up, Wrap Up, Wrap Up!** - After an activity has been done in a workshop, if you just end it without an appropriate wrap up, you haven't done your job. The wrap-up should include questions about what subjects the activity could be used in (ask, don't just tell them) and ask for volunteers to tell how they might use it in the context of what they teach. Also ask for ideas for extensions or variations. The purpose of the wrap-up is to get your audience to think about their own use of the activity. To just stand there and say, "Can you use this activity?" or "Did you like this activity?" is not an appropriate wrap-up. Remember the key is to have everyone learning from everyone else.

**Questions?** - Create an open atmosphere right from the start. Ask them to stop you any time they have questions. Be sure to answer all questions, even if the answer is "I don't know." (It usually won't be, in this setting.) You can eliminate many questions by briefly going over your agenda at the beginning of the workshop. Tell them what they can expect of the day. If a question is: "I have to leave right after lunch. Can I have the Guide before I go." The answer is no. They will have to make up the portion of the workshop they missed.

**The Eyes Have it** - Use good eye contact when facilitating. This makes you more personable, and helps prevent nervousness on your part. It allows you to read the body language of your audience. Are

they yawning? They may be bored, or they may just be too warm. Are their arms crossed over their chests? They may be antagonistic, or they may just be cold! Watch the room temperature and watch the people temperature! If they are getting restless, change the pace.

**Evaluations** - When you pass out the evaluation forms, be sure to tell them that the evaluations are important both on state and national levels. They can omit their names if they wish, but they won't receive the newsletter, *The Branch*, unless we have a name and mailing address. Ask them to be honest in their assessment of the workshop, as we learn from their responses.

**To Thine Own Self Be True** - Be yourself. Don't try to adopt a workshop persona or mimic someone else's style. Use your own style and be comfortable with who you are.

**Have Fun!** – If you do, they will – and if you don't, they won't.

### ***Hike through the guide "at-a-glance"***

Tape, clip, or staple this to the back cover of the guide book to help you remember what to cover during the Hike Through the Guide...

## **HIKE THROUGH THE GUIDE TOPICS**

### **COPYRIGHT**

### **INTRODUCTORY PAGES**

opening remarks  
activity components  
story lines (PreK-8)  
acknowledgements

### **ACTIVITIES**

overview/background information  
getting ready  
sidebar  
end notes: assessment, related activities, references

### **REFERENCE PAGES**

glossary  
conceptual framework  
appendices  
additional resources  
bibliography  
indices: alphabetical, topic, grade, subject, time and skills (PreK-8)

## ***Co-Facilitating Worksheet***

As you begin to plan a workshop with a co-facilitator, think about questions such as these and share them with each other to help you clarify your roles.

Which parts of the workshop would you like to be responsible for? Which parts would you like your co-facilitator to handle?

What elements would you really like to include in the workshop because they are important to you, because they worked well in other workshops, or for another reason?

What signal could you use for interrupting when the other person is presenting?

How will you handle staying on task?

For each portion of the workshop, how will you field participant questions?

How will you make transitions between each of your presentations?

How will you get participants back from breaks in a timely manner?

Who will handle the creation and production of the agenda?

How will you manage the set up and clean up process?

Who will be responsible for collecting materials?

## ***Helpful Hints for Making Fliers***

### General Rules:

Define the audience and make sure the flier is geared to that audience.

Keep the flier simple. Give just the information needed and avoid distractions.

Make sure the style of the flier and the information given are consistent.

Add a "Please Post" notice if you want the flier posted.

### Things to think about when making a flier:

Who is the audience? What do they need to know?

What kind of heading will you use? How will it "catch the eye" and be recognized?

How will you inform? What is the right amount of information?

Be sure to include WHO to contact, WHAT to bring or expect (including lunch arrangements, dress for the day, etc.), WHEN to come, WHERE the workshop is to be held, and HOW to get there.

How can you group your information into chunks that inform and can be distributed nicely throughout the flier?

How do you want your audience to respond?

How will you format your flier? A symmetrical format is "calm" whereas an asymmetrical format communicates "action."

What typefaces will you use? Never use more than three different typefaces per piece — too many typefaces will look disorganized.

What art can you include? PLT logos are certainly good, and you can use "clip art" — non-copyrighted art available at art supply and book stores for cut and paste. Don't use others' art without permission.

## ***Adults as Learners***

One of the goals of PLT workshops is to help educators learn new ways of approaching their teaching tasks. Adults as learners are different than children as learners. The following characteristics of adult learners may help you plan and present your workshops.

### **Orientation to Learning**

Adults will commit to learning something when they consider the goals and objectives of the workshop to be important to them — that is, job-related and perceived as being immediately useful. Adults want to initiate their own learning and be involved in selecting objectives, content, and assessment.

**What you can do: State workshop goals early in the schedule** and add participant goals not listed. Be prepared to help participants see the need for learning something new. Encourage and nurture the seeds of understanding and change. Assume that each person wants to understand or learn. When possible, try to customize the workshop to meet the needs of your audience.

### **The Learner's Self-Concept**

Adult learning is ego-involved. Learning a new skill, technique, or concept may promote a positive or negative view of self. Adults may fear that others will judge them, which produces anxiety during new learning situations. Adults reject prescriptions by others for their learning, especially when what is prescribed is viewed as an attack on what they are presently doing.

**What you can do:** Provide an environment in which the participants feel safe to try something new or to consider new ideas. Never criticize participants, but be positive and affirm each person in some way. Admit your own short-comings and limitations to avoid projecting the image of "expert".

### **The Role of the Learner's Experience**

Adults come to any learning experience with a wide range of previous experiences, knowledge, skills, self-direction, interests, and competencies. This means that the richest resource for learning is often the group of adult learners themselves.

Adults will resist learning situations they believe are an attack on their competence, thus they may resist imposed workshop topics and activities.

**What you can do:** Accept and value participants as individuals with their own experiences, knowledge, and skills. Provide ways for participants to contribute to each other's learning through techniques like group discussion, problem-solving, and peer-helping activities.

### **Motivation**

Motivation is produced by the adult learner: all one can do is encourage and create conditions that will nurture what already exists in the adult.

Adult learning is enhanced by behaviors that demonstrate respect, trust, and concern for the learner.

**What you can do:** Show participants that you respect, trust, and are concerned for them. Do not blame participants who do not pay attention or are reluctant to participate, instead look for ways to adjust the workshop to increase interest. Consider questions like, "How would you do this in your setting? What would you see as some of the challenges of this activity? How would you overcome them?". Questions that acknowledge that each person comes with their own set of experiences and expertise help to value every workshop participant.

### **Resources:**

Knowles, Malcom. *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*, 3rd ed. Houston: Gulf Publishing Co. 1984.

Sergiovanni, Thomas J. "Human Resources Supervision." *Professional Supervision for Professional Teachers*. Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1975.

Withail, John, and Wood, Fred H. "Taking the Threat Out of Classroom Observation and Feedback." *Journal of Teacher Education* (30), January-February 1979, pp. 55-58.

## ***Agenda Highlights***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Time</b>
1. Welcome, introduce presenters, and give brief overview of the agenda and workshop goals.	10 minutes
2. Getting Acquainted Participants introduce selves and why interested in PLT Conduct icebreaker	20 minutes
3. Briefly discuss how PLT meets their needs (see the box "What Does PLT Offer Teachers and Students?" on page I-8).	15 minutes
4. Lead selected activities from PLT guide: Note match to local objectives, or ask participants to comment on this Ask how participants might adapt activity to meet needs Do one or two activities now and others later in workshop	2 hours
5. Distribute PLT guide.	5 minutes
6. "Hike" through the PLT guide: Point out themes Note activity components Demonstrate cross-referencing	15 minutes
7. Discuss other resources: Local parks, arboretums, conservation groups, etc. Reference books and children's literature	20 minutes
8. Small groups select and lead PLT activities (or facilitator leads additional activities).	1½ hours
9. Individual Classroom Planning: "How can I use PLT in my classroom?" Discussion format or individual planning sheets	45 minutes
10. Wrap-up Evaluation: Have participants complete Survey Form Hand out certificates of completion Feedback: Were needs met? Thank you to participants and follow up	20 minutes

## ***PLT Curriculum Planning Worksheet***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Subject(s) taught \_\_\_\_\_

PLT was designed to provide students with concepts, skills, and attitudes in environmental education. Students learn these things best when PLT activities are integrated with the ongoing curriculum, rather than taught as isolated activities. This worksheet is designed to help you think about how you will apply PLT to your existing curriculum.

1. The unit in which I could begin integrating PLT activities is:

2. List the skills or concepts you would like your class to learn from this unit. Then, for each skill or concept listed, select several appropriate PLT activities.

Skills/Concepts	PLT Activities

## ***School or District Curriculum Integration***

In one school on the west coast, a new student from the east coast explained how grateful he was to be studying salmon after years of repeatedly studying a particular east coast tribe several years in a row. The response of the students from the west coast was less than enthusiastic as they explained that this was the third year in a row one teacher at the school decided to use a salmon theme.

Trusting to constructivist theory, repeating activities at successive grade level ensures deeper understanding, But, as noted in the students' experience above, repetition, especially inadvertent repetition, can fade student's interest in learning. Had the students' teachers intentionally constructed various aspects of their salmon or cultural unit together, they might have been more able to keep students' attention and deepen their understanding

Curriculum developers agree that the most important part of the integration process is selecting an "**essential question.**" The essential question is used as a filter through which every lesson passes. It leads students towards success in creating a final project that shows evidence of their understanding by defining what needs to be known. Essential questions are based on timeless concepts so teachers and students naturally cross disciplines in discovering possible answers. They are open-ended questions that have more than one way of being answered. A healthy process for crafting essential questions gives teachers the chance to use their best teaching expertise and understanding of child development. The question facilitators often pose to teachers at workshops is:

How can our schoolyard be used as a study site so students gain knowledge and skill that will allow them to demonstrate their understanding of the environment?

Challenging teachers to use the schoolyard to develop essential questions (or informal educators to use themes) provide the group with a common task as they define a continuous curriculum for their school or environmental center.

(With regards to non-formal educators, their professional training has often presented the idea of the "essential question" in terms of "thematic interpretation." Interpretive Naturalists develop talks based on themes that are designed to connect visitors of all ages to the area of interest. The theme essentially provides a context through which

the audience can associate various, fact, stories and observations. They are broad overarching statements which provide visitors with a connection or "sense of place" as they explore a natural area, monument, museum, etc.)

Here is an example of a process used with a cross grade level group at one school during a 6-hour PLT workshop. An hour was spent in the morning asking teachers to place as much relevant information as they could into the Inventory Matrix noting environment-related units and activities (particularly PLT Activities). Once completed, teachers shared their ideas beginning with kindergarten and advancing through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The advantages of this kind of discussion include providing teachers with an opportunity to:

- ❑ See what teachers at other grade level are, or will be, teaching the same students with whom they work
- ❑ Recognize possible connections between each others units
- ❑ Prevent duplication of concepts and assignments at different grade levels
- ❑ Recognize background information and experiences students are bringing to their grade level

Another hour was set aside in the afternoon to develop essential questions, suggest a performance task and select activities that would provide students with experiences to help them be successful in completing the performance task. (See Essential Question Matrix)

For example, a teacher using a human body unit selected the concept of growth. Growth easily became the timeless concept for the essential questions, "How does the diet of a tree effect its growth and what kind of "healthy tree snacks" could students provide to help care for new trees planted at the school?'

The essential question explained the student would need to know about nutrients, sunlight, water and the process used by the tree to make food as well as how they would need to use that information to care for newly planted trees. Students learn a healthy diet for tree alongside their human nutrition unit. This kind of connection allows students to attach new information about tree health to what they are learning about their own health!

The essential question by definition points teachers towards the background knowledge (what the students need to know) and the performance task (what students need to be able to do with that

knowledge.) By using the essential question as a filter through which activities are selected, the activities selected for students become a reflection of the teachers' curriculum rather than an "extra" activity. Somewhere between 5-7 PLT activities usually provides enough background informant and hands on experience for students to successfully complete the task. Since students are aware of what they need to know, and be able to do from the essential question before completing the activities, the activities are more relevant, the connections between them more obvious, and the reason they are doing them is more clear. The index on page 388 -394 can be used to find activities that teacher related concepts as well.

The resulting overlap of activities provides an opportunity for teachers to explain their intentions in more detail and reach agreement about which activities they will use or how they might teach them in more depth so students' interest remains high.

When PLT Activities are selected around shared essential questions, teachers are encouraged to reflect on the students' entire learning experience at that school. It becomes clear what students will accomplish at each grade level, what they have to look forward to completing and how they can communicate their understanding to audiences who appreciate the real work they are doing with PLT.

As a student reflects over their elementary, middle or high school experience, they begin to recognize that teachers intentionally provided opportunities for them to gain knowledge and apply their skills using the environment in a variety of ways.

The student in the opening story might have explained,

"At this school, we study the environment in every grade. In kindergarten, we make bug collections and do experiments. In first grade, we looked at the wetlands behind our school and made graphs of the types of organisms we found in the fall, winter and spring. Here's the tree that I planted in 2<sup>rd</sup> grade. To be healthy, it needs, nutrients, sunlight and water. Last year, our class made models of watersheds for the fall open house. The tree roots in mine held the soil together! I have the new teacher this year so I am not sure what we will do. I hope it will be outdoors near the creek. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, we get to write and perform a play about the forest floor. The mural from last year's play is on the wall. In middle school, we will get to make a video about the forest behind our school and share with students on a field trip from the city just like last year. I can hardly wait! "

## ***The Learning Cycle***

Learning is a cyclical process that builds on the learner's previous experiences and knowledge. By paying attention to the following phases of the learning cycle, you can help participants maximize their own learning, and in turn, the learning of their students.

**Experiencing.** The learning process usually starts with experiencing. The learner becomes involved in an activity by doing, observing, or saying something.

**Processing.** The processing phase involves learners in thinking about and sharing what happened. Learners first share their reactions, and then discuss and evaluate their reactions with others. Questions to help processing include: What was \_\_\_ like for you? What were your reactions to \_\_\_? How did others react to \_\_\_? What do you think the consequences of \_\_\_ were?

**Generalizing.** In this phase learners explore what they learned from the experience. They may also try to abstract generalizations from it. Questions to help generalizing include: What did you learn from this? How does this relate to other experiences? What was the most enlightening part? What would you do if you could do it again?

**Applying.** Building on the knowledge they have gained, learners in this phase confer personal meaning into the abstracted learning. Questions to help applying include: How could you apply or transfer that? How could you repeat this again? How will you use this activity when you get back to the classroom?





## **Visual Aides Compared**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>	<b>Tips for Use</b>
<b>Flip Charts</b>	<p>Can store and use repeatedly</p> <p>Can use for display after presentation</p> <p>Can be prepared ahead</p>	<p>Bulky and awkward to handle</p> <p>Not legible for very large groups</p> <p>Time consuming to produce</p> <p>Paper can rattle, crease, rip, or smudge</p>	<p>Make charts simple to read and understand.</p> <p>Have them in correct order and set up ahead of time.</p> <p>Keep the number of charts to a minimum.</p> <p>Write information reminders or key points lightly in pencil on the chart.</p> <p>During the session you will be able to read these, but they won't be visible to participants.</p> <p>Cut pieces of masking tape beforehand for taping charts to walls.</p>
<b>Hand-outs</b>	<p>Good for reinforcement and review</p> <p>Good for presenting ideas for discussion</p> <p>Can eliminate necessity to take notes</p> <p>You can copy and use them again</p>	<p>Must prepare in advance</p> <p>Distribution can be distracting</p>	<p>Design handout clearly to promote understanding.</p> <p>Number the handouts beforehand, in case you want to refer back to a particular handout.</p>
<b>Videos</b>	<p>Compel attention, making presentation dramatic</p> <p>Room need not be darkened, permits note-taking</p>	<p>Don't work well with large groups</p>	<p>Set up beforehand and check machine operation.</p> <p>Brief participants — give them something to watch for.</p> <p>Preview thoroughly.</p>
<b>Over-head projector</b>	<p>Can use under normal lighting</p> <p>Can maintain eye contact</p> <p>Materials are easily prepared</p>	<p>Requires practice</p> <p>Facilitator may have difficulty seeing the projected image.</p>	<p>Set up equipment beforehand and check.</p> <p>Practice using overhead: Don't stand in front of image, don't look behind you at screen, and don't move the transparency.</p>
<b>Chalk-board</b>	<p>Familiar and convenient</p> <p>Allows spontaneity</p>	<p>Lettering may be hard to read</p> <p>Can lose eye contact when writing on board</p> <p>Bad for large groups</p> <p>Chalk dust is dirty</p>	<p>Plan use of space in advance — especially if you have drawings or charts.</p> <p>Write heavy and large.</p> <p>Use colors, if possible.</p> <p>Try writing some things on the board ahead of time, and covering until use.</p> <p>Keep the group talking while using — ask follow-up questions.</p>
<b>Computer/LCD projector</b>	<p>Allows easy transfer of electronic documents</p>	<p>Technological expertise required</p> <p>Expensive</p>	<p>Set and practice the presentation ahead of time.</p>