

APPLYING SESSION TO INSTRUCTION

The session is not over! A critical phase of learning anything new is application, when the learner takes new knowledge and applies it. The Learning Cycle, in particular, can be challenging to figure out how to apply to instruction. Participants need multiple follow-up opportunities for supported application of the Learning Cycle to different contexts. There is some application included in the session, but with all professional learning for instructors, the rubber meets the road (or trail) when the instructors apply what they've learned to their instruction, and when they keep thinking about it and discussing it with their peers. If you want your instructors to try out "new" activities/approaches, program leader support is crucial. Even if they are excited by new ideas, it is easy for instructors, especially veteran instructors, to keep doing what they have been successfully doing already and not try out new activities/approaches. Below are a variety of follow-up activities and discussions to dig deeper into the topic, and help you facilitate thoughtful implementation.

- **Staff brainstorm of what can be done to encourage incorporation of the learning cycle.** After the session reflection, your staff will have already written ideas they have about implementation into their instruction. You can tap into these, as well as other ideas, through a brainstorm of what they plan to do, and how you can support them in doing it.
- **Discussing Implementation of Lichen Exploration.** Assign your staff to each try Lichen Exploration during their next student program, and write in their journal about how it went. Then, lead them in a discussion of the activity at the end of the program. Here's some suggested questions to focus a reflection or discussion on:
 - **What impact did the activity have on your students' ability to make observations, and to engage with nature?**
 - **What was successful about the activity?**
 - **What might you do differently the next time you lead it and why?**
 - **How did you incorporate the routine into students' other field experiences (e.g., journals, sit spots etc.), and what ideas do you have about incorporating it in the future?**
- **Instructor Observations.** If you do observations of instructors, discuss how you might incorporate elements from this session into the observations.
- **Continuing a discussion.** If there was a topic that came up during discussion that you had to cut off, and it seems like your staff is still interested, set aside some time to continue the discussion.
- **Whole group reflection.** Ask instructors to try out conducting some short Learning Cycle experiences with students, write about their experiences in their journals, then share them in a whole group meeting and discussion.

- **Have a discussion in pairs and in the whole group of the following questions (or other relevant questions):**
 - **What might be a Learning Cycle-based approach to studying tide pools?** A stream? A pond? What might be a non-learning cycle based approach?
 - **What might be a Learning Cycle approach to planning an entire week of program?**
 - **Which existing activities seem learning cycle-based?** Which don't? How might you make an activity more learning cycle-based?
- **Have teams of instructors each focus on one student activity, and make it learning cycle-based.** Then have them share their plan with others, and try it out with students.
- **When your staff has developed some experience in applying the Learning Cycle, ask each to write up a learning cycle-based activity, then share with others for critique and suggestions, then re-write it.**
- **Lead the following extended application activity, *Planning a Long/ Extended Field Experience (whole hike) Learning Cycle*, on the next page.**
- **Watch any of the BEETLES Student Activity How-To Videos and discuss how the learning cycle was applied.**

