

## 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. There is some application included in the session; however, as 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’re excited by new ideas, it’s easy (especially for veteran instructors) to keep doing what they have been doing and not try out new activities/approaches for which they’re not as skilled. Below are a variety of follow-up activities and discussions to dig deeper into the topic and to help you facilitate thoughtful implementation.

- **Staff brainstorm of what they and you can do to encourage incorporation of discussion strategies.** In the session reflection, your staff recorded ideas they have about implementation into their instruction. You can tap into these and other ideas through a brainstorm of what they plan to do and how you can support them in doing it.
- **Staff discussion about how you teach decomposition.** Although the subject of this session is assessment, all the examples in the session were related to teaching and understanding decomposition, which can get instructors thinking about this topic, too. After the session, you might want to have instructors work individually, in pairs, and/or with the whole group at reimagining how they teach decomposition.
- **Analyzing student work with your staff.** Now and then, ask an individual field instructor to bring a set of written student responses to a prompt for your staff to analyze, using the same discussion structure featured in this session. You might also have a group of instructors collect student work related to the same prompt to analyze together. This is a great way to get instructors to be more reflective in their practice and to cultivate a learning community among your staff.
- **Interview individual students.** Encourage instructors to set up times to interview volunteer students about a concept (such as decomposition) during break time or when someone else is leading a group. It’s important during these interviews to ask broad questions, to listen carefully, to ask follow-up questions, and to not judge answers as right or wrong in the moment. Many students enjoy having an adult pay attention to their thoughts, and sometimes the experience can be eye-opening for instructors. This can also be a valuable exercise for program leaders.
- **Print out and discuss *Assessment for Learning: 10 Principles* poster.** Print out the PDF file for your staff ([http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/SBA/HKDSE/Eng\\_DVD/doc/Afl\\_principles.pdf](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/SBA/HKDSE/Eng_DVD/doc/Afl_principles.pdf)), assign pairs or small groups to read through and discuss each component of assessment shown on the diagram, and then share out in the whole

group. You might then want to post it in your staff prep room to refer back to.

- **Read and discuss about stereotype threat.** The book *Whistling Vivaldi and Other Clues to How Stereotypes Affect Us*, by social psychologist Claude Steele, is a very accessible read about stereotype threat and the underperformance of minority students in higher education. “Stereotype threat widens achievement gap” (American Psychological Association, 2006) is a short article on the topic. Assign staff to read the article or the first chapter of Steele’s book (or the whole book) and then gather as a group to discuss the implications for your teaching situations.
- **Examining our own unconscious biases.** When we become more aware of our unconscious biases, we can be more equitable in instruction, curriculum planning, and running programs. Below are resources to use to become more aware of unconscious biases.
  - The Avarna group has a free resource for educators to check their own unconscious biases, titled “Instructor Bias Assessment”: <https://theavarnagroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Instructor-Bias-Self-Assessment.pdf>
  - The Teaching Tolerance website has an article on biases, as well as a link to the Project Implicit online test that individuals can take to reveal hidden biases: “Test Yourself for Hidden Bias” <https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/test-yourself-for-hidden-bias>
  - Zaretta Hammond’s book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, has a chapter titled “Preparing to Be a Culturally Responsive Practitioner” that walks the reader through unpacking their own biases and other challenges that may interfere with working with students from different backgrounds, race, class, language, or gender.
- **Discussing Implementation of Mind Pie, Decomposition Mission, or Walk & Talk.** Assign each of your staff to try one of these activities during their next student program. Then, lead a discussion of the activity at the end of the program. Here are some suggested questions on which to focus a reflection or discussion:
  - What student ideas surprised you?
  - Were you able to adjust instruction based on what you learned through embedded assessments? How?
  - What was successful about the activity?
  - What might you do differently the next time you lead it and why?
  - How have you incorporated embedded assessment into other field experiences and what ideas do you have about incorporating it in the future?