

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’s some application in the session, but, as with all professional learning for instructors, the rubber meets the road (or trail) when instructors apply what they’ve learned to their teaching 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 instructors are excited by new ideas, it’s easy for them, especially veteran instructors, to keep doing what they’ve been doing successfully and not try out new activities/approaches. Following are a variety of follow-up activities and discussions to dig deeper into the topic and help you facilitate thoughtful implementation:

- **Discussing implementation of journaling activities.** During your next outdoor science program, invite each of your staff to try out a journaling activity from this session or from the book *How to Teach Nature Journaling*. They could all do the same activity or different activities. Invite them to write in their journals about how it went. Then, at the end of the program during a meeting, lead them in a discussion of the activity. Here are some suggested questions for a reflection and/or discussion:
 - How did learners respond to the activity?
 - What was successful about the activity? What was challenging?
 - What might you do differently the next time you lead it and why?
 - How have you incorporated journaling into other field experiences and what ideas do you have about incorporating it in the future?
- **Redesigning your program’s printed journal.** After this session, while your staff is revved up on the topic, you might want to have a follow-up session in which they attempt to improve your program’s printed journal. BEETLES Model Field Journal Pages [<http://beetlesproject.org/resources/field-journal-pages/>] includes a range of different kinds of field journal pages that can be downloaded and incorporated into printed journals for your program. It can take time to choose a combination of journal pages that work well for your program. Consider developing a plan for testing different kinds of journals and journal pages with learners and bringing results back to the group.
- **Engage with content from the *How to Teach Nature Journaling* book or website.** Invite your instructors to read one or more pages or chapters of the book or website *How to Teach Nature Journaling* and discuss how they might integrate the information into their approach to teaching field journaling with learners. Some pages and chapters to consider reading include:
 - Why Nature Journaling? (pp. 4–8)
 - Managing the Outdoor Classroom (pp. 11–14)

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- How to Lead Journaling Activities (pp. 15–19 or https://howtoteachnaturejournaling.com/teaching_support/introducing-journaling-activities/)
- Supporting Student Engagement During Journaling Activities (https://howtoteachnaturejournaling.com/teaching_support/supporting-student-engagement-during-journaling-activities/)
- Adjusting Activities for Age and Experience (https://howtoteachnaturejournaling.com/teaching_support/adjusting-activities-for-age-and-experience/)
- Finding Phenomena for Journaling Activities (https://howtoteachnaturejournaling.com/teaching_support/finding-phenomena-activities/)
- Intentional Curiosity and Inquiry (pp. 88–89)
- Writing to Observe, Writing to Think (pp. 130–132)
- Observational Drawing (pp. 162–165)
- Numbers and Quantification (pp. 198–199)
- Developing Skills: Ideas, Practice, and Feedback (pp. 227–230)
- From Activities to Longer Lessons (pp. 233–235)
- **Staff brainstorm on how to encourage incorporating field journaling into your program.** The session reflection offers staff an opportunity to record ideas they have about integrating journaling into their instruction. Invite staff to share their ideas and have a conversation about what they plan to do and how you can support them in doing it.
- **Encourage your instructors to take up the practice of field journaling themselves.** In the introduction to the book *Field Notes on Science and Nature*, Michael Canfield writes, “The value of taking field notes lies both in the actual information that is recorded as well as in what is gained in the process of recording itself.” Field journaling on a regular basis is one way that instructors can build a rich rapport with the place in which they teach and gather knowledge of the local natural history of your site. This supports them in becoming more versatile instructors—better prepared to engage learners deeply in the study of flora, fauna, and phenomena. This also supports instructors to introduce journaling to learners from a place of authenticity; instructors might even share examples from their own journals. Offer *The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling*, by John Muir Laws, as a resource for instructors to guide their practice.
- **Continuing a discussion.** If there was a discussion topic that came up during the session that there wasn’t time to finish, and if it seems like your staff is interested in and would benefit from continuing the discussion, set aside some time to do so.



- **Assign your staff to read the Building Knowledge Through Nature Journaling chapter and the Focused Awareness chapter, both from *The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling* by John Muir Laws.**
 - Possible questions/prompts for discussion after the reading:
 - What ideas or phrases struck you?
 - Describe one thing you know through direct experience and one thing you know from being told by someone else. Does your “knowing” of those two things feel different?
 - Do you trust things you know through personal experience more than or less than things you know from books and other secondhand sources?
 - In your education, were you taught mostly through direct experiences that led to learning or through being given information? How do you think that affected you as a learner?

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