



EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING TECHNIQUES

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

Summary

This facilitator's guide is intended to help the facilitator(s) lead a four-hour workshop for trainers or future trainers on experiential teaching techniques. Each participant receives the 'participant' version of this booklet, and participants and trainers move through the guides together throughout the training.

The need: In addition to staff, the farmers that we work with have vast and diverse skills experiences and knowledge that they could use to train other farmers and gardeners. This training is intended to help emerging farmer mentors, as well as new program staff and volunteers, gain skills in teaching others what they know. Participants learn the basics of creating a positive learning environment, some background on experiential education, and how to design a workshop.

Who made this guide?

Collaboration and Testing

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: This teaching resource was developed by Aley Kent of the International Rescue Committee's New Roots program, in partnership with the Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED Solutions). Refugee farmer training programs across the country provided feedback on this lesson, which is now integrated throughout the guide. From 2015 to 2017, ISED partnered with twelve refugee farmer training programs through a USDA BFRDP educational enhancement grant, to support the design and testing of new and shareable teaching resources for culturally and linguistically diverse farmers. To learn more about this project, or to access the whole list of newly developed teaching resources for refugee farmer training programs, see the [New American Resource Library at https://nesfp.org/new-american-resources](https://nesfp.org/new-american-resources). For more in-depth explanations of the teaching approaches and activities used in these materials, please see the ['Refugee Farmer Teaching Handbook'](#). While these resources were designed with refugee audiences in mind, they can be adapted and used in any farmer training or incubator setting.

VARIATION:

Throughout this guide, boxes (like this one) contain variations and adaptations that serve varying programs and farmers. They are suggestions and reflections from other programs based on how they made this workshop work for them.

TEACHING TIP:

Throughout this guide, boxes (like this one) contain teaching tips to help you better facilitate farmer learning. Most come from other programs who have tested and reflected on using this lesson.

DEVELOPER'S NOTE:

Throughout this guide, boxes (like this one) contain notes from this guide's developer that provide insight into how a lesson is typically taught at the developer's program.

ICONS: You will find the icons below throughout this guidebook. They are there so you are prepared for the activity and can get an idea of what it will bring at a glance.



SIGNS/CARDS



TALKING POINTS



DISCUSSION



WORKBOOK



WHAT TESTERS SAY: “This is a clear, stepwise approach. I also had never considered leading a workshop like this to our staff, so even the idea is helpful.” -*Southside Community Land Trust*

“The most helpful aspect to this resource would be the staffing/teaching burden that would be alleviated with the ToT rather than all education coming from non-profit employees. This is a great resource; I look forward to using it with the staff of our program.” - *Maggie, the Refugee Response, Cleveland OH*

“I am thinking about using this with a small, mixed group (different native languages, different cultures, etc), so I’d probably have to reduce some of the written components. I would probably include more oral reflections and maybe involve some sort of kinesthetic component.” - *Lauren, the Nashville Food Project, Nashville TN*

“This guide helps those of us who are stuck in less than stellar teaching practices by showing us -or having us experience- how to design classes which maximize students’ experiential learning.” - *Linda, Global Garden Refugee Training Farm, Chicago IL.*

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- In this activity, participants brainstorm topics for their simulated workshop planning activity, and create learner-centered goals to drive their workshop.

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- In this activity, participants add detail to their workshop, design a panorama, and share out.

Audience and Objectives

Adaptable except where noted.

INTENDED AUDIENCE: This was designed for refugee farmer training staff and farmer leaders to help equip them with knowledge and skills to run effective T&TA sessions. Farmer leaders could be higher language and literacy farmers who are moving into a leadership, mentorship or teaching role in the program where they deliver T&TA, guide newer farmers etc.

TIME: 4 hours (including a 15-minute break)

LANGUAGE / LITERACY: This is intended for advancing and fluent English speakers. It can be made accessible to participants who are fluent in their own language through an interpreter, and all activities can be made accessible to non-English speakers.

STAFF / INTERPRETER: **1-2 facilitators**
If there are English language learners in the group, provide an interpreter for every language needed. (As needed, appropriate.)

DEVELOPER'S NOTE: This training has been adapted from a lengthier training, and was adapted with culturally and linguistically diverse audiences in mind. Therefore, while many of the segments still rely on some level of participant literacy, other elements are intended to be more culturally accessible and all activities can be used with non-English speakers through an interpreter.

Resources Needed

Adaptable except where noted.

STAFF / INTERPRETERS: 2 Staff Members and 1 Interpreter

LOCATION: Classroom

- Tables and chairs (set up so that participants can easily form small groups)
- Wall space (either white board or sticky wall so that participants can post or stick their notes)

- SUPPLIES:**
- Sticky wall and tape or blank flipchart pages and large post-it notes
 - Participant workbook (one per participant)
 - Markers for tables and pens or pencils for all participants
 - Colored stickers (for forming groups)
 - Images (from page 4) cut outs for “positive learning environment” activity
 - Learning Heads poster
 - Props for Learning Heads role-plays
 - Experiential teaching methods images
 - Dolls, artifacts, pipe cleaners, corks, etc. for “snapshot of workshop in action”



TRAINING WORKBOOK

Welcome

1

TIME: 20 minutes

OVERVIEW:

In this activity, participants introduce themselves and lay the groundwork for the training by sharing a memory of learning from someone (a parent, friend, teacher, community leader, religious leader).

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Sticky wall and tape or blank flipchart pages and large post-it notes (for all activities)
- Participant workbook (one per participant) (for all activities)
- Markers for tables and pens or pencils for all participants (for all activities)

DEVELOPER'S NOTE:



Working with interpreters. Coordinating with interpreters is key to making this training accessible to farmers who speak languages other than English. It is important to review the whole training and explain your overall objectives to the interpreter beforehand, so that they can communicate these ideals to farmers to the best of their ability. You can also identify any specialized or new vocabulary in the training and introduce it to interpreters beforehand so that they can find the best word for it.



STEP 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

1. Welcome participants
2. Conduct a “get-acquainted” activity: Ask participants to think about a memory from their favorite teacher. It could be a teacher from anytime in your life, in a school setting or another place.
3. Give directions for introductions: Introduce yourself (name and organization), and share your favorite teaching memory.
4. Model a response: “My name is _____ and my favorite teacher was Miss Farmer in the fifth grade. I remember going on hikes with her in the park.”
5. Go around the room to encourage all participants to share their name and favorite memory. See page 2 for prompts.

VARIATION:

One reviewer suggested that the emphasis be on “learning, not the formal institution of school” to make this more culturally accessible. For farmers from a non-formal learning context, this introductory question should be modified to something like: “Who did you learn from? What is a favorite memory from this experience?”

STEP 2: COURSE CONTEXT

- Background: Training of Trainers Philosophy and development (from the participant handbook). Explain how this is relevant and adaptable for demonstrations and presentations.
- Introduce Course Goals, Agenda, from the ToT participant manual – questions?
- Bathrooms, food/snacks, timing, and other logistics.

TEACHING TIP:

Do not write this up for farmers who do not read, instead, explain verbally why you are here, and explain the times, even writing the time of breaks and when the training will be over on the board.

Good Learning Environment

2

TIME: 30 minutes

OVERVIEW:

Participants use images and symbols to describe what a positive learning environment means to them. Participants share out what this means for how they want to teach.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Colored stickers (for forming groups)
- Images (from page 4) cut outs for “positive learning environment” activity

STEP 1: MAKE SMALL GROUPS

Ask participants to find a colored dot on their folder or nametag and create a pair or small group with others that have the same color dot. Open your books to page 2.

VARIATION:

You can group by languages spoken etc. instead of color dots if necessary.



STEP 2: ACTIVITY IN PAIRS OR SMALL GROUPS

- In your (different) pair/group, take 10 minutes to think about the favorite teacher you mentioned. What made this learning experience so positive or memorable? Have a discussion about what helped to make this learning experience a good one.

VARIATION:

This can be any learning figure or learning experience for farmers from diverse educational backgrounds, again focusing on learning as opposed to the institution of school.

- Distribute images that illustrate positive learning environment themes (can also be images/symbols that aren't literal but might jog someone's memory, or help them make a connection).

TEACHING TIP:

Photos (rather than drawings) may be more accessible for farmers from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. While symbols and drawings could work with groups from a western educational backgrounds, they could be unfamiliar to farmers from a pre- to low-literate background.



- Ask participants to pick up and describe one symbol each and talk about it in their team.
- When they report back, they can put the images on the sticky wall, or on a group poster to present.
- Report back and discussion: 10 minutes. Discuss the themes that come out of this. Facilitator (or a volunteer) can write a list of what people synthesize from hearing everyone's contributions. These are what make learning positive and effective!
- Short discussion: 5 minutes. How does this relate to what you want to teach? What is this telling us about our jobs as trainers? When we want to teach someone something, what kinds of things can we remember to do?

Remembering What We Learn

3

TIME: 40 minutes

OVERVIEW:

Participants learn about 'learning heads' and apply this idea by coming up with an example of learning at each of the different stages. Participants will say what they will want to incorporate in their teaching to achieve optimal learning and engagement.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Learning Heads (page 3 in the workbook)

STEP 1: OPENING

*Tell me, and I will forget.
Show me, and I may remember.
Involve me, and I will understand.*
- Confucius (c. 450 BC)



STEP 2: LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION AND ROLE PLAY

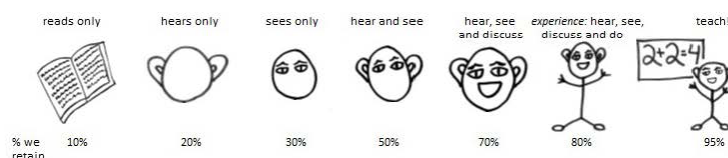
The beans or beads will stand in for our weeds - pour them in the basin and mix them thoroughly in the soil.

STEP 3: DRAW

Introduction (5 min): The following Learning Heads chart illustrates the relationship between how much information we retain and the type of learning activity. Start on the left and ask for examples of ways educators use each of these learning activities. For example, when people HEAR someone talk about something, they generally remember 20% of what they've heard. These "learning heads" are also on page 3 in your workbook.

VARIATION:

For farmers from different language and education backgrounds, you can model and role play the different learning heads to make sure the meaning is understood before starting the role play. In addition, you can model the role play to elaborate on your verbal directions for the activity.



STEP 4: ROLE PLAY

Ask for volunteers to come up and lead mock demonstrations for 3 minutes or less on **one topic from the group – Seed starting** using each of these methods. Start by asking for one person's topic, and demonstrate "reads only" and "hears only" for this topic to ensure understanding of the task, and go from there. Assist each volunteer in delivering a short example for each progressive learning head.

STEP 5: LEAD A SHORT DISCUSSION

- Which demonstrations were most engaging? Which examples do you remember most?
- Ask participants to **CIRCLE THE IMAGE** above where they learn the best. (There is no "correct" answer!)
- Which "head"/level is easy to teach? Which was most difficult?
- What insights do you have about these Learning Heads and the workshops you may lead?
- How will you use these learning heads to design the workshop you will give?
- What is **ONE THING you want to do in your workshop** that will help people remember what they learn? On page 4 in your workbook, draw a picture or write some notes.

VARIATION:

It is important to add in time to help each participant choose something that they will teach. This topic will run throughout the following activities where they are asked to envision and form their own lesson or workshop. If participants are actually teaching something in the near future, it will be optimal for them to choose this! You can come back to this as you explain concepts in the following activities, and it will help to ground the material.

How We Learn

4

TIME: 40 minutes

OVERVIEW:

Participants learn about the experiential learning process of 'do, review, plan' and about the teachers role in experiential education to 'experience, reflect, plan'. Participants will discuss activities at each stage of the process.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- DO REVIEW PLAN (page 5 in the workbook)
- Teacher's Role in Experiential Education

STEP 1: THE THREE STEPS OF "EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION"



STEP 2: OPENING PRESENTATION

Now that we have talked about the importance of experience in learning, let's look more at the reasons some of these approaches work.

STEP 3: PAULO FREIRE

Introduce Paulo Freire and relate his work to what we have learned so far about education. In Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Paulo Freire presents two contradictory stances: one he calls **"banking"** education, the other he calls **problem-posing** education or dialogue.

He says: "Education is suffering from narration sickness...[it] becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher offers communiqués, and makes deposits, which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the "banking" concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits.... In the last analysis, it is the people themselves who are filed away through the lack of creativity, transformation, and knowledge... For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis*, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other" (1973).

* Paulo Freire uses the term "Praxis" -- Praxis is action with reflection on the action. In praxis, practice with dialogue or reflection based on a theory must occur. The cycle of praxis is: 1) do, 2) look at what you did, 3) make a change, and 4) do. . .

TEACHING TIP:

To include farmers who are not from a formal educational background in this training, you may have to provide context on western education for this quote to hit the mark.

VARIATION:

One reviewer suggested adding in a discussion of power dynamics between teacher and students and how to overcome these, if time allows.

STEP 4: HOW WE LEARN: THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROCESS

Introduce the idea that often when we do something new, we think about how this fits with what we already know or have experienced, and try to figure out the best way forward. (see page 4 in your books):

TEACHING TIP:

For farmers from diverse language and education backgrounds, you can include a photo that represents the three different stages of the process.

How We Learn – the “Experiential Learning Process”

- For example, how do we learn how to cook? How do we learn to walk when we're babies? Or how do we learn to do our jobs well? Ask the group to talk about how they learn (i.e. by reading about it, by doing it, by talking to people about it, by spending time thinking about their previous experiences, etc).

- Ask participants to draw in their books a memory of a time when they learned something using this process. Who in the room learned something in this way recently? Ask volunteers to share. (15 min for drawing and sharing)

**STEP 5: THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION**

Going back to the Experiential Learning Process...we as teachers want to help learners to go through this natural DO – REVIEW – PLAN process. (page 5 in your manuals)

Teacher's Role in Experiential Education

How it works:

- **Engage learners in an experience:** Here, a trainer uses an activity or other teaching method to get learners to practice a new skill or observe an activity or event.
- **Analyze the experience:** After the Do-ing, trainers help learners to learn from this new experience and connect it to prior knowledge and experiences they have had before: What worked well? What was difficult? How is this different from what you have done before?
- **Plan next steps:** The goal here is to help learners to plan how they will use their new knowledge in the future: What will you do differently now? How can you prepare? What does support look like?



Activity in pairs: (5 min + 10 min reflection)

- Ask participants to turn to a neighbor and brainstorm activities you could use during a cooking workshop for each of these stages. Ask for ideas from the room; 1-3 suggestions per stage. “So if I were to engage learners in ‘DO’-ing something, what could that be for a cooking workshop?”

TEACHING TIP:

If working with a group of farmers, you could change the cooking activity to a farming related activity.

- Ask a few questions to help the group digest this Experiential Learning Process:
 - What seems clear? What are you confused about?
 - How is this similar or different from how you have planned workshops in the past?
 - How can this model help you when planning and leading your own workshops?
- Mention that this model does not need to be followed exactly for every learning activity, but that it is a path that can be used to help you plan your activities. Also, if you follow this path, you can be sure that your students/ participants will leave your workshop with a plan for action – this will not be left up to chance.

Learner Centered Goals 5

TIME: 40 minutes

OVERVIEW:

In this activity, participants brainstorm topics for their simulated workshop planning activity, and create learner-centered goals to drive their workshop.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Space to 'draw a picture' (page 6 in the workbook)



STEP 1: INTRODUCTION

Do a go-round asking people to state one thing they want to teach. **“What’s one skill or knowledge you have that you want to share with others?”** (Jot them down on a flipchart as you hear them.)

STEP 2: WORKSHOP GOALS

Now that you have a clear idea of what you want to share, **what is an example of what you want your students to be able to do** after coming to your workshop? There might be a few things. For example, if I’m teaching a cooking class, I might want my students to be able to shop for the right ingredients, or know when it’s time to add some more ingredients to a pot. What are some other examples from the room? Allow people to answer, help them out if they have a difficult time describing it. We are going to start planning the workshops each of us will give, and the place you begin is with the “workshop GOALS” – or, what you want people to be able to do after your training.

STEP 3: GROUPS

Group people according to similar topics here, especially if you think they will be able to come up with goals better as a team.



STEP 4: DRAW

Turn to Page 6 in your workbook, and in the space, **DRAW** a PICTURE of a student after they have taken your class – that is, show them **DOING** something that they can now do because they learned something from you. You have five minutes to make this drawing.

TEACHING TIP:

This kind of abstract thinking may not be for everyone. An alternative could be to have a farmer tell a facilitator what they want the participant to be able to do, and the facilitator can then draw it. Modeling this may be enough to then send people out to do it on their own, and for others, this may be the best way to help them access this activity.



STEP 5: SHARE

Ask volunteers to share (optional). (5 min)

STEP 6: ASSESS

- OK, so what are the “goals” that we can describe from these pictures? Get contributions, help out if needed.

STEP 7: WRITE

(15 min) On the lines under the picture, see if you can **WRITE some workshop goals**. Use phrases that begin like this: **“Participants will be able to...”** **“Participants will have...”** **“Participants will leave the workshop knowing...”** etc. You can write in your own language, or develop your ideas in a group that will teach similar things.

TEACHING TIP:

If they do not write, participants can share with facilitator who will write it up for them. Write out goal simply for literacy level farmers, and repeat back to them orally.

STEP 8: POST/SHARE SOME WORKSHOP GOALS ON THE WALL:*

a. For a “seed saving” workshop

1. Participants will be able to clean both wet and dry seeds.
2. Participants will have shared seeds and seed stories with each other.
3. Participants will have a plan of action for protecting the seed resources in their community.
4. Participants will be able to incorporate seed saving into their garden planning this coming year.

b. For a workshop on “cooking”

5. ... (write
6. ...
7. ...

* Alternately, have a list of potential goals in your back pocket to discuss.

Envisioning Your Workshop

6

TIME: 40 minutes

OVERVIEW:

Participants take the next step in designing their workshop from Activity 5 and add more detail by completing a diorama of the workshop and thinking through the experiential learning process. The process will end with reflection questions and sharing out.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- WORKSHOP PLANNING QUESTIONS with example answers (PAGE 7 in workbook)
- For Diorama: Dolls and artifacts (or things like corks, cardboard shapes, pipe cleaners, aluminum foil, yarn, etc), or pictorial representations of people, tools, etc.
- Experiential Learning process document (PAGE 8 in workbook)



STEP 1: INTRODUCTION

Explain that the details are very important to consider when setting up your workshop. You should know the following before you do anything else! A training on water usage course is used as an example to answer the questions. Read this section aloud (5 min). PAGE 7 IN WORKBOOK.

Envisioning Your Workshop

WORKSHOP PLANNING QUESTIONS with example answers*

Who? (Participants): 7 new members of a community garden

Why? (the Situation or Goal): To teach them essential skills to manage water at this site and in an arid climate in general

When? (the Time Frame): Thursday, September 10th, 5-6pm.

Where? (the Site): Cross Connections Farm, Glendale, Phoenix

What? (the Content): Farm water usage and water saving strategies

What for? (Achievement-Based/Learner-Centered Objectives):

By the end of this training session, the participants will be able to:

- Be able to use the irrigation for the farm
- List two things they can do to reduce water waste

When participants walk away, they will have:

- Experienced water loss from soils with varying amounts of organic matter
- Constructed a row cover
- Practiced using the farm irrigation
- Built relationships

How? (Tools of a Training Session):

- Lesson Plan
- A few different soils, paper towels, trowels, row cover and ties, timer



STEP 2: DIORAMA OF YOUR WORKSHOP

- Now think about how this might look for you when you give your workshop – how many people will be there? Where will it be? (Inside? Outside?) What materials will you use?
- Pass out dolls and artifacts (or things like corks, cardboard shapes, pipe cleaners, aluminum foil, yarn, etc), or pictorial representations of people, tools, etc, and ask participants to **ARRANGE** an **IMAGE** of their workshop: “this is a snapshot of me giving my workshop.”
- Take a picture!

TEACHING TIP:

Another way to do this would be to ask farmers to set up the room or a part of the room as if they were to give their workshop, and do a limited simulation or role play so they can test it out. Alternatively, model the diorama activity for farmers that may be less familiar with these kinds of activities.



STEP 3: EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING ACTIVITIES

- Explain: So now that you can picture yourself giving a workshop, look again at the three-step learning process.
- Walk through each step in your workshop and either **DRAW** or **WRITE** answers to the questions about what you will do to help learners learn. That is, plan your workshop activities. **PAGE 8 IN WORKBOOK**



ACTIVITY:

Pretend you are leading a cooking class.

How can you help learners **DO** or try something?

How could you help learners **REVIEW** their experience?

How can you help learners **PLAN** to practice what they learned?

STEP 4: DEBRIEF THE ACTIVITY

How did this go? Where are you feeling good? Where were you stuck?



STEP 5: CLOSING DISCUSSION

- What was most memorable for you about this Training of Trainers course?
- What gave you courage? Where are you intimidated? What was inspiring?
- What new insights do you have after going through this workshop?
- Pair and Share: Ask participants to turn to their neighbor and share one or two ways they will use skills and knowledge they gained through these classes to give their own workshops.
- Ask volunteers to share.