
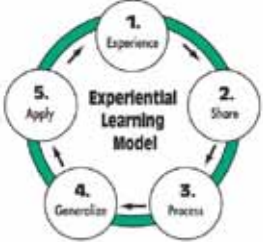



LESSON 8

Experiential Learning Model 



Miller, J.H., & Stoney, J.D. (1993). *Handbook for Facilitators and Trainers*.
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Boardman and Associates of Utah, 4000 S. State, Salt Lake City, UT 84143.

4-H Skillathons 

- Are participant centered
- Involve the steps of the Experiential Learning Model
- The learning is facilitated
- The process is facilitated
- Realistic tasks are expected
- Praise and recognition for learners is incorporated

LESSON 8

SKILLATHON GUIDELINES HANDOUT

Skillathon Guidelines

Set up the situation

- Give a broad overview of what will happen.
- Provide further instruction in small segments as the group progresses.
- Always keep the learning goals and objectives in mind.

Facilitate the process

- Maintain a supportive atmosphere.
- Give everyone something to do at all times.
- Become involved whenever possible.
- Monitor time.
- Let the group members assist with the process.
- Write directions for the group on a flip chart or Power Point slide.
- Be sure all groups stay on task.

Facilitate learning

- Turn whatever happens into a learning experience.
- Avoid discussions that lead the group too far off target.
- At each station, make the steps clear and complete.

Because of the learn-by-doing nature of 4-H projects, any single project or a combination of projects could be used to put together a successful skillathon. Normally, 6 to 10 stations make up a skillathon. However, fewer or more stations could be used depending upon the purpose and size of the group. When using combinations of projects, choose projects that have some relation to each other.

Things to Avoid

Over Instructing

- Giving too much detail.
- Excessive telling (versus listening or sharing).
- Pressuring people to participate.

Negotiating the Design

- Arguing over interpretations of what happened.
- Changing what will happen to meet the needs of one or a few of the group members.

Playing Psychological Games

- Ridiculing individuals.
- Deceiving people.
- Interpreting an individual's behavior.

Overloading

- Generating more data than can be discussed thoroughly.
- Repeating an activity until it works.
- Overanalyzing data.

Ending Without Closure

- Leaving with unresolved tasks.
- Leaving applications to chance.

LESSON 8 SKILLATHON GUIDELINES HANDOUT (CONTINUED)

Adapted from:

Pfeiffer, J.W. and Jones, J.E. The 1980 and 1986 Annual Handbooks for Group Facilitators, University Associates, Inc.

Experiential Learning in 4-H Project Experiences, Thomas D. Zurcher, Ph.D., Center for 4-H Youth Development, University of Minnesota.

Training Trainers to Teach, Cooperative Extension 4-H System.

Miller, M. State 4-H Youth Specialist, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri
University of Illinois.

LESSON 8

SKILLATHON STATION EXAMPLES HANDOUT

Skillathon Station Examples

1. Computer Science – Identifying computer parts.

Situation: You have been given a box of computer parts to improve your computer.

Task: Match the names with the parts.

Supplies: Computer parts, cards with name of parts.

Directions: Match the cards to the parts. Discuss and ask questions.

2. Theater Arts Adventures – Creating a puppet.

Situation: You have been asked to put on a puppet show for children.

Task: Make a puppet from supplies available.

Supplies: Scissors, glue, yarn, construction paper, paper bags, socks, felt.

Directions: Create a puppet to use in telling a story to children.

3. Photography – Composing a photograph.

Situation: You are asked to judge several photographs for competition.

Task: Place the photographs in order in terms of best composition.

Supplies: Four photographs and judging sheet.

Directions: Look at the photographs and place in order from best to worst composition. Give reasons for placement on judge's score sheet.

4. A Palette of Fun – Creating a sponge painting.

Situation: You need to make a picture for a class project. All you have are sponges, paints, and paper.

Task: Group sponges into shapes to design a picture.

Supplies: Sponges, paint, paper, paper towels, and water.

Directions: Dip sponges into paint, press onto paper to design your picture. Clean up sponges in water provided.

5. Mechanical Science – Repairing a bicycle chain.

Situation: The chain comes off your bicycle while you are riding.

Task: Replace the chain on your bicycle.

Supplies: Bicycle, chain and wrenches.

Directions: Demonstrate how you would put the chain back on.

6. Mechanical Science – Repairing an extension cord.

Situation: You pick up an extension cord and find the electrical wiring is loose.

Task: Rewire the extension cord, have it approved by the station assistant, and check to see if it works properly.

Supplies: An extension cord, knife and a screwdriver.

Directions: Let the members rewire the extension cord.

7. Mechanical Science – Measuring a board.

Situation: You are making a birdhouse. The plans call for a bottom board 8 inches square.

Task: Measure and mark an 8-inch square on the board making sure it is square on all sides.

Supplies: A 1-inch thick board, square and a pencil.

Directions: Mark an 8-inch square on the board and make sure that it is square on all sides.

8. Mechanical Science – Maintaining a spark plug.

Situation: The lawn mower is not running properly. You suspect that the spark plug may be fouled.

Task: Remove the plug, clean, space and replace it properly.

Supplies: Lawn mower, spark plug, spark plug wrench, feeler gauge and cloths to use for rags.

Directions: Unscrew the spark plug from the lawn mower; clean, space and replace it properly.

9. Food and Nutrition – Measuring dry ingredients.

Situation: The recipe calls for a cup of flour.

Task: Demonstrate how you would measure the flour.

Supplies: Flour, measuring cup, spoon or scoop, and knife.

Directions: Correctly fill a 1-cup measure with flour, sugar or another dry ingredient.

10. Food and Nutrition – Measuring liquid ingredients.

Situation: Amanda is making muffins for her grandmother. The recipe calls for 1/2 cup of water.

Task: Measure 1/2 cup of water correctly.

Supplies: Liquid measuring cup, water.

Directions: Correctly fill a liquid measuring cup to the 1/2-cup level.

11. Clothing and Textiles - Choosing fabric.

Situation: In front of you are several choices of different textures and weights of fabric.

Task: Choose three fabrics that would be appropriate in a quilt.

Supplies: At least six different types of fabrics.

Directions: Examine the cloth samples supplied and select the three that would be the best for a quilt top.

12. Arts and Crafts – Enlarging a design.

Situation: You received a birthday card that has a drawing on it you like very much. You want to enlarge the design and put it on a poster for your room.

Task: Select one of the designs and make an enlargement of it.

Supplies: Pencils, rulers, erasers, drawing paper and sample designs.

Directions: Select the design that you want to enlarge. Using a ruler, mark off squares over the design. Each square must be the same size. This makes a framework or grid. Make the same number of squares across the top and down the side of a sheet of paper the size you want your enlarged design to be. Draw into each square exactly what you see in your smaller squares.