

Workshop Resources



Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence

Environmental Educator Knowledge and Skills: Guidelines for Excellence – Workshop Resources is part of a continuing series of documents published by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) as part of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education. The project is committed to synthesizing the best thinking about environmental education through an extensive process of review and discussion. A previous version of this guide was written by Bora Simmons and Elizabeth Schmitz, with contributions from Lisa Herrmann, Renee Strnad, Sally Wall, and Brenda Weiser



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NAAEE is the professional association for environmental educators in North America and beyond.

Education We Need for the World We Want

Workshop Resources

Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence

Workshop Overview

In this workshop, participants will be introduced to a set of competencies for educators preparing to teach environmental education in a variety of job settings. They will have the opportunity to complete a self-assessment against these competencies. If you follow the module as outlined, **the workshop will take approximately 6.5 hours to complete, not counting breaks and lunch.**

Workshop Background

This workshop introduces participants to *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*. These guidelines outline a set of recommendations about the basic knowledge and abilities educators need to provide high-quality environmental education. The guidelines are designed for:

- faculty in preservice and in-service education programs who design and teach courses across disciplines and across the human lifespan (from early childhood to older adults)
- environmental educators—from novices to veterans—who want to grow professionally and develop their knowledge and skills
- those who offer professional development or organize professional learning communities for educators who will work in formal, nonformal, and informal educational settings
- educators who don't necessarily have environmental education in their title, but weave it into what they do
- supervisors of those who provide environmental education administrators of environmental education certification programs

Workshop Objectives

- Participants will describe a set of environmental educator competencies
- Participants will assess their own level of preparation and need for professional development in environmental education using the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*

Materials Needed

- ✓ Projector and PowerPoint presentation (optional)
- ✓ Chart paper, markers, tape
- ✓ Copies of *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence* for each participant (Note: These guidelines are currently out of print. However, a PDF is available for free download at <https://eepro.naaee.org/resource/guidelines-excellence-series>)
- ✓ Journals for each participant (e.g., blue books, notebooks, sheets of paper stapled together)
- ✓ Copies of handouts
 - Handout #1: Summary of the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*

- Handout #2: Environmental Literacy Self-Assessment
- Handout #3: Comparing Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development
- Handout #4: Scenario: Dos and Don'ts for a Civics Teacher
- Handout #5: Observation Rubric
- Handout #6: Self-Assessment for Environmental Educators
- Handout #7: Workshop Evaluation

Welcome, Introductions, and Logistics

15 minutes

Icebreaker

45 minutes

Use Draw an Environmental Educator (below) or pick one of your favorite icebreakers. If possible, use the icebreaker as both an opportunity for participants to get to know one another and to begin the process of thinking about what it means to be a well-prepared environmental educator.

Activity: Draw an Environmental Educator

This activity gets participants talking about the characteristics of an environmental educator. It can be used as an icebreaker activity or as an engagement activity. In small groups, participants are asked to illustrate an environmental educator.

Materials

- ✓ Chart paper and a variety of colored markers or crayons
- ✓ Copies of Handout #1: Summary of the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*.

Procedure

1. Divide participants into small groups (three to five participants per group).
2. Give each group a large piece of chart paper and a variety of colored markers or crayons.
3. Ask participants to illustrate an environmental educator. It is best not to clarify your instructions. You want the group to be as creative as possible.
4. Give the participants a time limit (it typically takes about 20 minutes for them to draw their environmental educator) and tell them that they will be asked to share their illustration with the other groups.
5. When all the groups have completed their illustrations, ask each group to describe it to the others (approximately three minutes per group).
6. Ask the groups to focus back on their own illustration and ask them to annotate their drawing to further explain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions (motivations, attitudes, beliefs) illustrated.

Wrap-Up

1. Hand out a one-page summary of the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence* to each participant (Handout #1).
2. Ask participants to read through Handout #1 and mark which elements of the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills Guidelines* were illustrated by their group's

drawing. What was missed? If you were given the opportunity to change your illustration and its annotation, what would you change?

Reflection—Journaling

Look back at your illustration. What are your strengths as an environmental educator? What would you like to work on most to improve your practice?

Project Background

15 minutes

- ✓ Provide a short overview of NAAEE, the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education, and the purpose behind the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*. What is NAAEE? What is the National Project for Excellence in EE? Why were the *Guidelines for Excellence* series developed? How were they developed? Why were the *Educator Guidelines* written?

Getting Started—Jumping into the Educator Guidelines

10 minutes

Activity: A Walk through the Guidelines

- ✓ In this activity, take a few minutes to orient participants to *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*.

Materials

- ✓ Copies of *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence* (PDF) for each participant [at this time, there are no printed copies available]

Procedure

Hand out photocopies of *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence*, if available. Otherwise, ask participants to download the PDF.

1. Walk the participants through the guidelines and how they are organized. Give participants one to two minutes to become familiar with the publication.
2. Tell the participants that the guidelines are organized around three categories of knowledge, skills, and dispositions and seven Key Characteristics each with a set of essential guidelines. Guidelines are further described through indicators (p. 12). Today, we will spend time exploring each Key Characteristic.

Getting into the Seven Key Characteristics

Key Characteristic #1

30 minutes

Environmental Literacy describes the understandings, skills, and attitudes associated with environmental literacy. Educators understand that becoming environmentally literate is a journey that depends on developing awareness, appreciation, and knowledge of the interrelationships of the natural environment of which we are part. This literacy includes essential skills that enable individuals to make informed decisions and act on those decisions both individually and collectively. Educators understand the importance of the relationships among ecosystem health, community wellbeing, and long-term sustainability.

Activity: Environmental Literacy Self-Assessment

Using Key Characteristic #1: Environmental Literacy as a set of potential benchmarks, participants reflect on their own environmental literacy competencies.

Materials

- ✓ Handout #2: Environmental Literacy Self-Assessment

Procedure

1. Distribute Handout #2: Environmental Literacy Self-Assessment to each participant.
2. Ask participants to read through Key Characteristic #1 (p. 19). Point out that although spending time on the information boxes may be tempting, ask them to focus their attention on the six guidelines.
3. Once they feel they are generally familiar with the guidelines, ask them to complete their Self-Assessment.

Wrap-Up

Ask participants to share one of their strengths. Which of the six guidelines do you think you are strongest in? Why? Were any of their results surprising? Which of the six Key Characteristics could use further development? What's one professional development activity you identified?

Reflection—Journaling

Using your journal, take some time to reflect on your own environmental literacy. Using Key Characteristic #1 as a reference, think about your own preparation. How environmentally literate are you? Which of the six guidelines do you think you are strongest in and why? Which could use further development?

Key Characteristic #2

40 minutes

Foundations of Environmental Education - Educators critically evaluate the goals, theory, practice, and history of environmental education. The results of this evaluation provide a solid foundation on which educators can build their practice.

Activity: Comparing Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development

Environmental education did not evolve in isolation. It has built from and contributed to the evolution of a number of education fields. Understanding how EE is similar to and different from these fields can be instructive. In this activity, participants will compare two fields, environmental education and education for sustainable development.

Materials

- ✓ Handout #3: Comparing Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development

Procedure

1. Tell participants that environmental education did not evolve in isolation. There are a number of associated fields of education.

2. Ask the group: Given your experience, what are some associated fields of education that relate to environmental education? Turn their attention to Resource #3 Educational Movements Related to EE (p. 98). Ask them if there are educational movements that they would add to the list? Are there any they are not familiar with?
3. Point out the Did You Know? Box (p 10) that outlines definitions for environmental education, environmental literacy, and education for sustainable development.
4. Tell them that in this activity they will be comparing environmental education and education for sustainable development (ESD).
5. Form small groups and distribute Handout #3 to each group. Tell participants that they will be using a simple chart (below) to compare environmental education and education for sustainable development. Point out the characteristics that apply to both environmental education and education for sustainable development should be written in the middle/overlapping column of the table.

Characteristics of Environmental Education	Characteristics of Both	Characteristics of Education for Sustainable Development

Wrap-Up

Ask participants to share some of the characteristics of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development. What characteristics do they share? Did any surprise you?

Reflection—Journaling

Look back at Resource #3 Educational Movements Related to EE (p. 98). Which educational movement do you identify yourself with the most? Why?

Key Characteristic #3

40 minutes

Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator - Educators understand and accept the professional responsibilities associated with practicing environmental education. As educators, they maintain consistently high standards for instruction and professional conduct.

Activity: *Dos and Don'ts for a Civics Teacher*

In this activity, participants will discuss their professional responsibilities while facilitating discussions about controversial issues. Distinguishing what's in-bounds and out-of-bounds when considering controversial issues often results in a lively discussion. Because it impacts conceptions of professional roles and responsibilities, it deserves a thorough discussion.

Materials

- ✓ Handout #4: Dos and Don'ts for a Civics Teacher

Procedure

1. Distribute Handout #4 to each participant. Tell them that they should read the scenario about a civics teacher.

Scenario: Dos and Don'ts for a Civics Teacher

A public middle school civics teacher in a politically polarized community is preparing to teach a unit about political parties during an election year. The teacher wants to include a discussion of public policy stands on controversial issues such as abortion, immigration, and the death penalty. This teacher will need to discuss these current issues with students and how different candidates approach those issues.

If you were giving some guidance to civics teachers, what would be on your “dos” and “don'ts” list for high-quality instruction?

2. Working individually, each person should create a list of dos and don'ts for the teacher.
3. When most of the participants have completed their lists, ask them to share their dos and don'ts with a partner.
4. Come back together as a whole group and ask pairs to share one to two items from their list. Continue around the room until most groups have contributed.
5. Give members of the group a chance to ask questions of each other and comment on list items.
6. Working at their table groups (or as a large group), ask participants to finish this sentence: The role of a civics teacher is to _____.
7. Now, tell the participants that we are going to shift the discussion to environmental education and concerns around the role of an environmental educator.
8. Working at their table groups, ask participants to revisit their list of dos and don'ts. How might their list change for an environmental educator? What would you add? Delete? Edit?
9. Come back together as a whole group and ask groups to share one to two new/changed items from their list.
10. Ask participants if they have any comments or general impressions. How might they finish the sentence: The role of the environmental educator is to _____?

Wrap-Up

1. Ask the participants if they think there are bright lines between what's in and what's out? As an environmental educator, when might there be conflicting roles?
2. Ask them to look at guideline 3.2: Environmental information, misinformation, and disinformation and guideline 3.3: Facilitation of critical thinking and action skills. Also, review Key Characteristic #1: Environmental Literacy. Do these give you any additional guidance in thinking about the role of an environmental educator?

Reflection—Journaling

Before moving on to the next Key Characteristic, remember that an essential component of an environmental educator's professional responsibilities include guideline 3.4 Reflective and reflexive practices and ongoing learning and professional development (Guideline 3.5). Consider for a moment your list of dos and don'ts for environmental education. To address this list to the best of your abilities, what skill areas would you like to improve? What skill areas would you like to share with others? List at least two concrete actions you want to take in the near future.

Key Characteristic #4

40 minutes

Commitment to Community, Collaboration, and Fairness - Educators understand and accept that instruction with a focus on community, collaboration, and fairness is crucial to environmental education.

Activity: Foster a sense of belonging

Guideline 4.2 focuses on collaboration and belonging and suggests that educators are responsible for creating learning environments that foster a sense of belonging. In this activity, participants will explore ways of creating learning environments that foster a sense of belonging.

Materials

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

Procedure

1. Remind participants that the previous Key Characteristic focused on a commitment to professional responsibilities. With this next Key Characteristic, we are extending that thinking to include a Commitment to Community, Collaboration, and Fairness (p. 51). Part of this commitment includes fostering a sense of belonging.
2. Ask the participants to think for a moment about the term 'belonging.' Ask them to jot down the first ideas that come to their minds. What is belonging?
3. Ask for volunteers – participants willing to share what they think about when someone talks about belonging.
4. In their small groups, tell the participants that their job is to design a poster for display in a teacher's lounge or education classroom. This poster's goal is to help educators think about what it means to be committed to collaboration and belonging.
5. Give the groups approximately 15 minutes to design their poster.

Wrap-Up

Post the posters around the room and conduct a short gallery walk. As you move around the room, discuss the findings and open the discussion up for questions. After participants have visited most of the posters, ask them if they would change anything on their poster. Were their considerations that surprised them?

Key Characteristic #5

40 minutes

Planning Environmental Education suggests that environmental educators must combine the fundamentals of high-quality education with the unique features of environmental education to design effective instruction. This will involve being able to provide the

interdisciplinary, experiential, investigative learning opportunities that are central to environmental education.

Activity: Deconstructing instructional planning

In this activity, participants will consider steps in the instructional planning process. Participants will design a checklist of instructional “to do” items.

Materials

- ✓ Chart paper and markers

Procedure

1. Explain that we are going to think about all the preparation that needs to go into planning instruction.
2. Read the following **scenario** to the participants:
Imagine that you have decided that your nature center wants to host a field day for your local community. You will be focusing on local water issues. The field day will take place at the local high school. You will set up ten stations around the high school football field; each station will offer a hands-on activity for field day participants. There is a lot of work to be done before the community members arrive.
3. Tell the participants that they will be working in small groups, focusing on what it takes to design the ten activity stations. Their assignment is to design a checklist of instructional planning “to do” items, beginning with the day you decide you want to launch this program through to the arrival of the first participants.
4. After the groups have been working for about **20 minutes**, bring them back together.
5. Ask each group to share one or two items on their checklist. After all the groups have shared, ask the participants to compare their checklist to Key Characteristics #5: Planning Environmental Education (p. 57).

Wrap-Up

- What guidelines did you include in your checklist? Which ones were missed completely or neglected?
- What did you include that was not included in the guidelines?
- Did your checklist seem to focus on one element of instructional planning more than another?

Reflection—Journaling

Think about instructional planning. What tasks do you do well? What tasks often seem to fall through the cracks?

Key Characteristic #6

50 minutes

Implementing Environmental Education - suggests that through their instructional practices, educators create supportive, safe, relevant, and responsive learning environments that are welcoming to the whole learning community. Educators maximize active learning about the environment and environmental concerns. They facilitate the investigation of environmental concerns and exploration of possible solutions and actions in a manner

appropriate for their learners, their context, and their community. Educators provide opportunities for action taking of the learners' choosing.

Activity: Fostering Learning

In this activity, participants will develop a rubric or teaching observation form for each of the guidelines listed under Key Characteristic #6: Implementing Environmental Education.

Materials

- ✓ Handout # 5 Observational Rubric

Procedure

1. To introduce an exploration of successful instruction, ask the participants to quickly reflect on their favorite teacher or learning experience. What made it so special?
2. After a few participants share their reflections, form small groups and assign each group one of the guidelines [6.1 – 6.6]. If you have fewer than six groups, select the guidelines that seem most appropriate for the participants.
3. Ask each group to imagine that they are mentoring novice environmental educators. As a mentor, they want to observe the novice educators' teaching and provide constructive feedback to them on the degree to which they are addressing the criteria established in Key Characteristic #6: Implementing Environmental Education.
4. Ask each group to create a rubric or teaching observation form that could be used to gauge the novice educators' ability to address their assigned guideline.

Wrap-Up

Once the group has completed their task, ask each group to share their work with the rest of the participants.

Reflection—Journaling

Take a moment or two to think about your own teaching and the teacher observation forms or rubrics you just created. If you observed one of your typical classes, how would you rate? What are your strengths and what areas need improvement?

Key Characteristic #7

50 minutes

Assessment and Evaluation - Educators possess the knowledge, abilities, and commitment to make assessment and evaluation integral to instruction and programs. Educators are familiar with tools for assessing learner progress and evaluating the effectiveness of their own programs.

Activity: Thinking about Assessment and Evaluation

This activity draws on participants' knowledge and past experiences with assessment and evaluation.

Materials

- ✓ Handout # 6 Educator Self-Assessment

Procedure

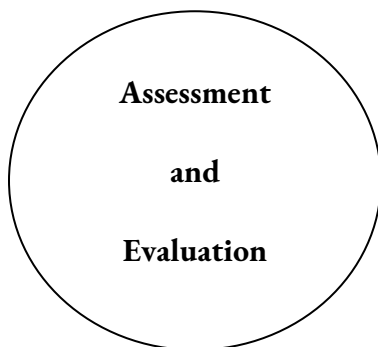
1. Tell the participants that we are going to move on to a new topic: Assessment and Evaluation. Introduce the topic by asking if anyone can provide a quick definition of evaluation? Who can provide a quick definition of assessment?

Definitions

Assessment—Evaluation of skills and knowledge acquired by learners during a learning experience.

Evaluation—A process designed to determine if planned outcomes have been achieved.

2. Now, ask if any of the participants have conducted an evaluation? Ask them to describe their experiences briefly. Who uses assessment? Ask them to describe their experiences briefly.
3. Draw a circle map on the board or a large piece of chart paper in the front of the room. A circle map starts off with a frame (square) and a circle in the middle of the frame. Write the words Assessment and Evaluation in the middle of the circle:



4. Ask participants: What are some of the benefits of assessment? Write a phrase or two that captures their responses inside the frame. What are some of the benefits of evaluation in environmental education? Write a phrase or two that captures their responses inside the frame. Continue their brainstorming session by asking questions like these: What are some ways you can incorporate assessment into environmental education instruction? What are some ways you can incorporate evaluation into environmental education instruction?
5. Continue probing the participants until they have touched on most of the key points outlined in Key Characteristic #7 and the four guidelines:
 - 7.1 Outcomes: Plan with the end in mind
 - 7.2 Learner assessment that is part of instruction
 - 7.3 Program evaluation
 - 7.4 Improving instruction, program design, and materials

Wrap-Up

Turn the participants' attention to Key Characteristic #7: Assessment and Evaluation (p. 79). Give them a couple of minutes to review the four guidelines. As a culminating exercise, and an example of assessment, ask participants to reflect further on all seven Key Characteristics and their own capacities as an environmental educator.

Hand out copies of the self-assessment tool to the participants and give them about 15 minutes to complete. Discuss their reactions. You may want to focus on any insights into the creation of a professional development improvement plan.

Note: You can have participants complete the self-assessment during the workshop or send it home with them as a way of continuing the lesson. Consider offering a follow-up conference call, webinar, Google Hangout, or other virtual environment to discuss their self-assessment and the plan they developed because of their self-assessment. This would assist with developing a stronger learning community and sustain professional learning.

The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) has a resource-based website called eePRO. eePRO allows you to set up an individual profile, connect to groups focused on a certain topic (including a Guidelines for Excellence in Environmental Education group), and more.

Final Thoughts, Questions, and Workshop Evaluation 20 minutes

Materials:

- ✓ Handout #8: Workshop Evaluation

Handout #1
Summary of *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills:*
Guidelines for Excellence

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

Environmental educators work actively to develop their environmental literacy.

Key Characteristic #1: Environmental Literacy

Educators understand that becoming environmentally literate is a journey that depends on developing awareness, appreciation, and knowledge of the interrelationships of the natural environment of which we are part. This literacy includes essential skills that enable individuals to make informed decisions and act on those decisions both individually and collectively. Educators understand the importance of the relationships among ecosystem health, community well-being, and long-term sustainability.

- 1.1 Awareness and appreciation
- 1.2 Earth processes and systems
- 1.3 Human systems
- 1.4 Application of systems thinking
- 1.5 Action strategies and skills
- 1.6 Personal and civic responsibility

FOUNDATIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND COMMITMENT

Environmental educators understand the history, philosophy, ongoing development, professional responsibilities, and commitments of environmental education.

Key Characteristic #2: Foundations of Environmental Education

Educators critically evaluate the goals, theory, practice, and history of environmental education. The results of this evaluation provide a solid foundation on which educators can build their practice.

- 2.1 Fundamental characteristics and goals of environmental education
- 2.2 Environmental education practices
- 2.3 Evolution of environmental education

Key Characteristic #3: Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator

Educators understand and accept the professional responsibilities associated with practicing environmental education. As educators, they maintain consistently high standards for instruction and professional conduct.

- 3.1 Exemplary environmental education practice
- 3.2 Environmental information, misinformation, and disinformation
- 3.3 Facilitation of critical thinking and action skills
- 3.4 Reflective and reflexive practices
- 3.5 Ongoing learning and professional development

Key Characteristic #4: Commitment to Community, Collaboration, and Fairness

Educators understand and accept that instruction with a focus on community, collaboration, and fairness is crucial to environmental education.

- 4.1 Community-centered
- 4.2 Collaboration and belonging
- 4.3 Fairness

DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION

Educators build on their understanding of the history, philosophy, ongoing development, professional responsibilities, and commitments of environmental education to plan and implement high-quality programs.

Key Characteristic #5: Planning Environmental Education

Educators combine the fundamentals of high-quality education with the unique features of environmental education to design effective instruction. Educators plan interdisciplinary, experiential, investigative learning opportunities that are central to environmental education.

- 5.1 Instructional planning
- 5.2 Knowledge of learners
- 5.3 Environmental education materials and resources
- 5.4 Settings for instruction
- 5.5 Curriculum and program planning
- 5.6 Tools and technologies that assist learning

Key Characteristic #6: Implementing Environmental Education

Through their instructional practices, educators create supportive, safe, relevant, and responsive learning environments that are welcoming to the whole learning community. Educators maximize active learning about the environment and environmental concerns. They facilitate the investigation of environmental concerns and exploration of possible solutions and actions in a manner appropriate for their learners, their context, and their community. Educators provide opportunities for action-taking of the learners' choosing.

- 6.1 Instructional methods
- 6.2 Collaborative and welcoming learning environment
- 6.3 Inquiry-based
- 6.4 Exploration of worldviews and perspectives
- 6.5 Promotion of civic engagement and action
- 6.6 Flexible and responsive instruction

Key Characteristic #7: Assessment and Evaluation

Educators possess the knowledge, abilities, and commitment to make assessment and evaluation integral to instruction and programs. Educators are familiar with tools for assessing learner progress and evaluating the effectiveness of their own programs.

- 7.1 Outcomes: Plan with the end in mind
- 7.2 Learner assessment that is part of instruction
- 7.3 Program evaluation
- 7.4 Improving instruction, program design, and materials

Handout #2

Environmental Literacy Self-Assessment

Using Key Characteristic #1: Environmental Literacy (p. 19) as a set of potential benchmarks, carefully reflect on your environmental literacy competencies.

Key: L...Lacking B...Basic P...Proficient D....Distinguished

	L	B	P	D
1.1 Awareness and appreciation				
Educators build an appreciation that Earth is one living, dynamic community.				
COMMENTS:				
1.2 Earth processes & systems				
Educators develop an understanding of Earth processes and systems (e.g., atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, and biosphere) and how these systems interact with one another.				
COMMENTS:				
1.3 Human systems				
Educators develop an understanding of human systems (e.g., social, economic, political, and cultural) and how individual and group action affects the long-term sustainability of Earth systems.				
COMMENTS:				
1.4 Application of systems thinking				
Educators apply systems thinking to understand how human activities cause and mitigate environmental change and how environmental change affects long-term environmental sustainability at varying, interconnected levels (e.g., local, state/provincial, regional, tribal, national, and global).				
COMMENTS:				

1.5 Action strategies and skills	L	B	P	D
Educators apply skills for analyzing and investigating environmental concerns.				
COMMENTS:				
1.6 Personal and civic responsibility	L	B	P	D
Educators build an understanding that everyone, individually and collectively, can make a difference and contribute to environmental solutions.				
COMMENTS:				

Pull it all together!

Now that you have completed your initial self-assessment, what do you know? Take a few minutes to review your results. What can you say about the strengths and weaknesses of your own environmental literacy? Begin to outline a professional development plan:

Areas of Strength:

Areas that Need to be Enhanced/Strengthened

Specific Action to Address this Self-Assessment

Handout #3

Comparing Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development

1. As a group, think about the field of environmental education. What are its characteristics? What are we trying to accomplish with environmental education? What are its purposes?
2. Now, think about the field of education for sustainable development. What are its characteristics? What are we trying to accomplish with environmental education? What are its purposes?
3. What do environmental education and education for sustainable development have in common?
4. Take notes using the table (below).
5. Review the following:
 - a. definitions of environmental education, education for sustainable development, and environmental literacy (p. 10)
 - b. sustainable development goals (p. 15)
 - c. Resource #2: Historical and Founding Documents of Environmental Education
6. Revisit your table. What would you like to add, edit, or delete?

Characteristics of Environmental Education	Characteristics of Both	Characteristics of Education for Sustainable Development

Handout #4

Scenario: Dos and Don'ts for a Civics Teacher

A public middle school civics teacher in a politically polarized community is preparing to teach a unit about political parties during an election year. The teacher wants to include a discussion of public policy stands on controversial issues such as abortion, immigration, and the death penalty. This teacher will need to discuss these current issues with students and how different candidates approach those issues.

If you were giving some guidance to civics teachers, what would be on your “dos” and “don'ts” list for high-quality instruction?

Handout #5 Observation Rubric

Which Guideline were you assigned?

Procedure:

1. Read your assigned Guideline (e.g., 6.1, 6.2, 6.3) and review the rubric. This rubric, when completed, is designed to be used as an observational tool.
2. Read the example and consider how the criteria, Organizing physical space, is elaborated across four levels (Highly Effective to Does Not Meet Expectation).
3. Determine what criteria should be used to gauge the novice educators' ability to apply your assigned guideline during instruction. Write at least three criteria in the left-hand column.
4. Taking one criterion at a time, write a description for each of the four levels, each describing a different level of success.

Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Improvement Necessary	Does Not Meet Expectations
Example: Organizing physical space	The classroom environment is safe, and learning is accessible to all participants, including those with special needs. The educator makes effective use of physical resources, ensures that the physical arrangement is appropriate to the learning activities. Participants contribute to the use or adaptation of the physical environment to advance learning.	The classroom is safe. Participants have equal access to learning activities. The educator ensures that the furniture arrangement is appropriate to the learning activities and uses physical resources effectively.	The classroom is safe. Essential learning is accessible to most participants. The educator makes modest use of physical resources. The educator attempts to adjust the classroom furniture for a lesson or, if necessary, to adjust the lesson to the furniture, but with limited effectiveness.	The classroom environment is unsafe, or learning is not accessible to many. There is poor alignment between the arrangement of furniture and resources, including computer technology, and the lesson activities.

Criteria	Highly Effective	Effective	Improvement Necessary	Does Not Meet Expectations

Self-Assessment: *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills*

Using the *Environmental Educator Knowledge & Skills: Guidelines for Excellence* as a set of potential benchmarks, carefully reflect on your competencies as an environmental educator.

Key: L...Lacking B...Basic P...Proficient D....Distinguished

#1 Environmental Literacy	L	B	P	D
Awareness and appreciation				
Earth processes and systems				
Human systems				
Application of systems thinking				
Action strategies and skills				
Personal and civic responsibility				
COMMENTS:				
#2 Foundations of Environmental Education	L	B	P	D
Fundamental characteristics & goals of EE				
Environmental education practices				
Evolution of environmental education				
COMMENTS:				
#3 Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator	L	B	P	D
Exemplary environmental education practice				
Environmental information, misinformation, and disinformation				
Facilitation of critical thinking and action skills				
Reflective and reflexive practices				
Ongoing learning and professional development				
COMMENTS:				
#4 Commitment to Community, Collaboration, and Fairness	L	B	P	D
Community-centered				
Collaboration and belonging				
Fairness				
COMMENTS:				

#5 Planning Environmental Education	L	B	P	D
Instructional planning				
Knowledge of learners				
Environmental education materials and resources				
Settings for instruction				
Curriculum and program planning				
Tools and technologies that assist learning				
COMMENTS:				
#6 Implementing Environmental Education	L	B	P	D
Instructional methods				
Collaborative and welcoming learning environment				
Inquiry-based				
Exploration of worldviews and perspectives				
Promotion of civic engagement and action				
Flexible and responsive instruction				
COMMENTS:				
#7 Assessment and Evaluation	L	B	P	D
Outcomes: Plan with the end in mind				
Learner assessment that is part of instruction				
Program evaluation				
Improving instruction, program design, and materials				
COMMENTS:				

Your overall strengths:

Areas in need of improvement:

Plans for improvement:

Workshop Evaluation

Thank you for your interest in the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education! Your responses will be used to improve this, and other programs supported by NAAEE.

What grade do you give this workshop?

A B C D F

Why did you give it that grade?

How strongly do you disagree or agree with the following? Circle one for each.

	Strongly Disagree		Unsure			Strongly Agree		
I will recommend this workshop to colleagues or other professionals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
This workshop was much better than other workshops I have participated in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
Within the next year, I intend to								
... improve my EE efforts by using the <i>Guidelines</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
... share what I learned with colleagues and other professionals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Describe three ways you can use the *Guidelines* to improve your own or others' EE efforts:

How can this workshop be improved to better meet your EE, professional, or other needs?

What is your current profession? *Check all that apply.*

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Pre-K–12 teacher | ☐ College or university Instructor | ☐ Conservation or natural resource professional |
| ☐ Preservice teacher | ☐ Resource developer | ☐ Other _____ |
| ☐ Nonformal educator | ☐ Program director | |

Who do or will you teach? *Check all that apply.*

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| ☐ Preschool | ☐ 9–12 | ☐ Nonformal educators | ☐ Conservation or natural resource professionals |
| ☐ K–2 | ☐ Teachers | ☐ College or university Instructors | ☐ Families |
| ☐ 3–5 | ☐ Preservice teachers | ☐ Program directors | ☐ Other _____ |
| ☐ 6–8 | ☐ Other college or university students | ☐ Resource developers | ☐ Not applicable _____ |

Number of years you have been an environmental educator: About _____ years

Number of students or participants you typically teach or reach per year: About _____

The students or participants you primarily work with come from: *Check one.*

- ☐ Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Rural ☐ Tribal ☐ Mix of areas

THANK YOU!