



Jefferson Center for Education and Research  
Popular Education Conference 2004

# Popular Education Tool Kit





**JEFFERSON CENTER** FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

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November 20th, 2004

Dear Popular Educators,

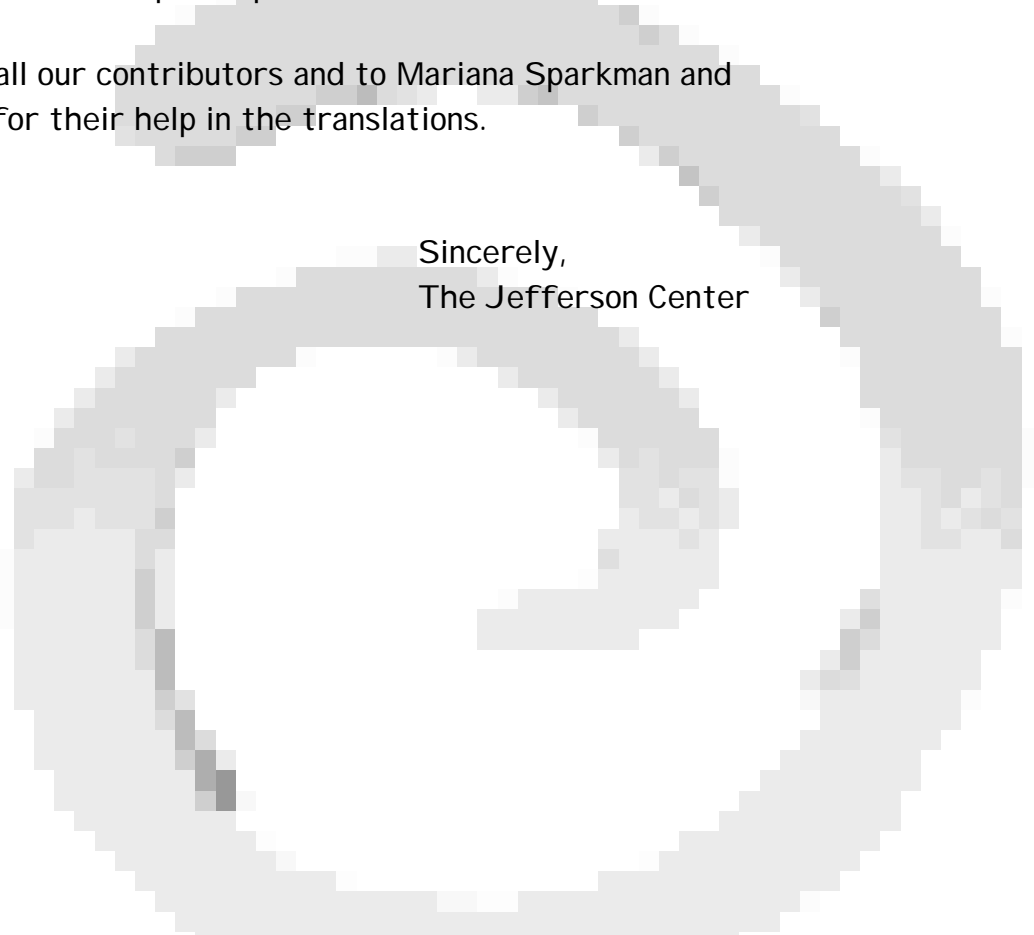
It's our pleasure to present you with this "Popular Education Tool Kit", a collection of activities, dinámicas, games, workshop ideas, etc. submitted by participants in the Jefferson Center's Popular Education Conference 2004.

Contributors to this tool kit are using popular education in a variety of settings and with diverse communities. We hope that their ideas and suggestions will be useful to you in your own work, sparking new ideas as to how to adapt each activity to your community's own reality and coming up with new ones all together!

We encourage you to add new ideas to this kit as you come up with them! Please send along additional submissions to: [sarahloose@jeffctr.org](mailto:sarahloose@jeffctr.org). We will do our best to pass them along to conference participants to add to their collection.

Special thanks goes to all our contributors and to Mariana Sparkman and Montserrat Linkletter for their help in the translations.

Sincerely,  
The Jefferson Center





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# Parent-School Forum

**Shelton Even Start/ Evergreen Parent Academy, Ellen Shortt-Sanchez**

**Objectives:** To facilitate parents leadership in planning school/parent communication forum.

**Description of Group:** Spanish-speaking parents at dual language elementary school in Shelton WA.

**Description of the Activity:** Parents agreed to meet 3 times to prepare for a 4<sup>th</sup> final workshop. Planning the forum used pop ed structure of beginning in a roundtable of introductions and shared experience, children's ages...and posing the question, "what do you need to know about your child in school, while you are not there?" The group looked at categories for the responses and info that they needed. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> session they proposed 4 questions to the school administration to bring back to the "Unity/Unidad" meeting.

The group discussed formats and requested that presentations be interactive.

*The questions were:*

How does the dual language model work?  
How do children learn reading in Spanish?  
How can we improve parent/school communication?  
What is the role of culture in the classroom?

*Presentation Format:*

Power point Eng/Span simultaneous  
Parents as learners - demonstration  
Roundtable discussion  
Panel of Latino teachers

**Outcomes:** This activity was successful in building a participatory experience for parent planners to share their life experiences as knowledge and to direct the information they wanted from the school as opposed to the school defining parent involvement as giving parents information the school felt they should have. The process moved the school toward working on cultural issues as a next phase in implementing a dual language model. The process created interactive parent/school dialogue that had not happened before. Parents are planning the second annual "Unity/Unidad" event now.

**Facilitator's Notes:** This project was very exciting as a "project" in a traditional environment, not a popular education organization. A number of challenges existed about introducing new formats. Traditional roles of teachers, parents, administrators were challenged within a traditional structure. The structure did not change from this activity. The action/outcome was isolated, but did expose parents and school to the process of popular education. Co-facilitators who did not have an understanding of popular education presented a challenge. They came with traditional social service and counseling backgrounds and were interested in "answering" parent concerns, without letting the process of parent sharing and self-identifying group issues, the first step of the analysis process.

# The Chain Letter

Juventud FACETA, Gloria Teresa Montes

**Objectives:**

1. To focus on a common theme in order to reinforce group skills.
2. To share responsibilities in order to complete a task.
3. To reflect on a group experience in order to better understand its dynamics.

**Description of Group:** This activity was used by Juventud FACETA during a leadership training. There were 15 youth and adults, females and males, Latin American in origin. It was done in Aldo's Lake during a weekend camp and participants knew each other with limits.

**Description of the Activity:** The group is divided into small teams 6-10. Each group chooses a leader who then prepares the group for this exercise. The Leader provides the first sentence of the open-ended story. Then, each member takes a turn and adds a sentence to the story. The story can be of any topic. At the end, the leader of each group read the story to the rest of the group.

**Outcomes:** The outcome of this exercise is that members work together. The dynamics, and member's roles may become more apparent to the leader. It can potentially be effective with groups that may need help with development of interpersonal skill

**Facilitator's Notes:** It works well because members discover their common knowledge as well as wisdom and life's experiences. It also challenges those members who are shy and introspected to open up and share with others their knowledge. One suggestion in trying to duplicate this exercise is to let the group members to encourage others rather than the leader or facilitator.

# Paco and Petra's Wedding

**Committee for Amnesty and Social Justice, Araceli Hernández**

**Objectives:** The purpose is to recognize the importance of organizing.

**Description of Group:** The activity took place in Seattle and was done in Spanish among a group of 21 Latin people, among which were men and women; some knew each others while others didn't.

**Description of Activity:** Three groups were formed. The first group was the groom's friends and family, the second group was the bride's friends and family, and the third group was the bride's guests. Each group had to decide on what kind of cake, drink, color of dress, kind of wedding, reception hall, etc.

1. Each group presented their decisions.
2. The facilitator asks how the decisions were made in each group, and whether all the participants are in agreement with their group's decisions.

Finally, the facilitator asks how they can organize the party, what is the decision that is to be carried out. The facilitator also raises consciousness about why they divided up and didn't join together to make one decision by everyone at once, instead of fighting among themselves to win their point of view in their decisions and dividing themselves into groups. What steps to follow to reach a goal and work together as a group are defined as well as how to get organized at work and make decisions. What is organizing? What is it that brings us together and what is it that we want to accomplish?

- a. agreement
- b. process of preparation (elements)
- c. The plan (strategic development, work plan)
- d. Implementation of plan

**Facilitator's Notes:** Everything worked really well since organizing the party was something fun and a very accessible experience for everybody, who could then transfer their experience organizing a party to take the more formal steps for the strategic work plan. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to do the same with a more formal example.

# Goat Silvopasture Workshop

**Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund,  
Pamela Madzima**

**Objectives:** The purpose of the event was to bring forestland owners from different parts of the Southeastern part of the United States to share their knowledge and their experiences with other landowners, as well as provide further information about their businesses. This workshop was important because it provided an opportunity for limited resource landowners to learn from other landowners who were successfully running Goat Silvopasture Operations, and were making a profit from doing so. We hoped that forestland owners, who attended the Goat Silvopasture Workshop, would learn about this opportunity from both the institutional experts and other already existing and experienced landowners, within the community.

**Description of Group:** The targeted audience included limited resource, distressed, minority forestland owners from the Black Belt South (Alabama and Mississippi). There were approximately twenty-eight forestland owners, from three different communities. Fifty percent of the participants were male. Most participants, twenty-two, were African-American (two Caucasians, two Africans, two Caribbean). Most of the participants knew each other because of partnerships and working relationships; however, there were new people in the group.

**Description of the Activity:** The event was a two day Goat Silvopasture Workshop and site visit. There were three main people involved in facilitating the workshop and bringing participants together. As one of the facilitators, I gathered information about the participants -- their names, the communities they came from, and contact information, which was later distributed to participants that wanted to network further. I started off by explaining the purpose and importance of the workshop, and then I introduced the event, and the speakers. In order to familiarize participants with background information about goat silvopasturing, I showed a video on a successfully run goat operation. Next, I called upon two already existing goat producers to share their first-hand experiences, challenges, and their accomplishments with their goat operation, as well as answer any questions other participants had about the video. After hearing from the experienced goat producers, we listened to an animal science professor. Next, we visited three successfully run operations within the community where goat producers were very excited about sharing their experiences with the visiting landowners.

This workshop is part of the outreach effort of the forestry program to provide educational workshops and training on land-utilization that maximizes profit. Part of the objective of the forestry program is to demonstrate how distressed landowners can diversify the use of their land in order to enhance their economic opportunities. We have demonstration sites on landowners' property in our surrounding communities. Since we work in a poor community with limited resources, we also try to capitalize the knowledge that exists in our community. The program tries to create linkages and networks that will facilitate change within the community.

**Outcomes:** The workshop was successful because it brought people from different communities together to network and form new relationships. Landowners who had many years of experience in the Silvopasture enterprise were able to share their experiences with landowners that came to learn about the goat business. As a result of the workshop, forestland owners from Mississippi and different parts of Alabama who were raising cows were also considering establishing a multispecies enterprise by adding goats to their operation. Most importantly, landowners who previously did not know each other were able to connect, share ideas and learn from each other.

Land ownership is a source of increased wealth and has been linked to greater participation in social, political and economic activities. Rural land ownership is a major stable economic resource that provides opportunities to create wealth and build sustainable communities. It is important to demonstrate to landowners how they can hold onto their land by utilizing it more effectively.

**Facilitator's Notes:** Landowners from surrounding communities were able to meet and network. More landowners wanted to attend, however, due to other obligations around their communities, they could not do so. In order to reach more people, it is also important to take this information to people's communities. In addition to hosting training workshops at our Rural Training and Research Center, we have found that it is also important to work with people in their own communities and on their own land. This brings about increased participation and involvement of the people we are trying to reach, because relationships and trust are built.



# Labor History Workshop

**Evergreen State College Labor Education & Research Center, Peter Kardas**

**Objectives:** For the past 3 years we have taught week-long labor history classes to apprentices in the Laborers' Union here in the NW. The objective of the class is to encourage participants to think critically about the development of U.S. labor unions in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and about what it might take to revive a union social movement. We use films, music, presentations by union staff and officers, and lots of group discussion to achieve this objective. Our hope is that graduates of the class will understand more about worker-to-worker solidarity and about what they might do to become more involved union members.

**Description of Group:** Classes usually have 10 to 20 participants. Most are young (18 to 30 years old), male, and white, and most are from Washington state, particularly west of the Cascades. There are occasionally Latino and African-American participants and usually a small number of women. A few participants know each other before coming to the class, but most do not.

**Description of the Activity:** One typical activity is to show a film (The Wobblies, for instance), then divide the class into groups of 4 to 5 people and have each group discuss a different question (instructors write the questions), come up with a collective answer, put the answer on a flipchart, and present their answer to the whole class. For all films, the questions will focus not only on something covered in the film, but also on something that we think is relevant to them as workers. Questions for The Wobblies, for instance, focus on the advantages and disadvantages of having workers in so many unions, advantages & disadvantages of contracts with management, unions being in leadership positions on issues of broad social concern (free speech fights, for instance), and the meaning of a "strike on the job."

**Outcomes:** It is hard to assess the impact. Many people tell us it's the best class they've ever taken, many are unmoved by it. Some of the graduates have gone on to become active in their local unions, most probably do not. All of them graduate with some experience having discussions with each other about sometimes very difficult topics, like racism or gender discrimination in the union, and all get a little bit of practice in making presentations in front of a group.

**Facilitator's Notes:** The students struggle to have discussions with each other. It's important on the one hand for instructors to cruise between groups to help jumpstart these discussions, while on the other hand not being too eager to intervene: sometimes by being left mostly alone students will find their individual and collective voices. It's almost always important for the instructors to have questions for the groups when they stand up in front of the class to make their presentations (the whole group is required to help make the presentation) so that a broader discussion can be initiated with the whole class. We focus on questions about controversial issues that will help participants think critically about those issues without coming to the conclusion that there's a pat answer to every problem. We are not afraid of conflict between participants, but do need to intervene as facilitators to make sure the conflict doesn't just turn into a shouting contest.

# Using Maps & Pictures for Public Involvement

## Crescent Lake Mushroom Monitoring Project, Forest Community Research, Katie Bagby

**Objectives:** The purpose of the activity was to engage diverse, low-income mushroom harvesters in dialogue and public comment on how they think the forest should be managed, particularly in relation to a major forest thinning project in areas where harvesters pick mushrooms on the Deschutes National Forest.

**Description of Group:** The activities took place at the Crescent Lake, OR matsutake mushroom harvest. The mushroom harvesters are primarily mobile and low-income and represent six different language groups: Hmong, Lao, Cambodian, Mien, Spanish and English. They are mainly 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation immigrants. They come from rural and urban areas in California, Oregon, Washington, and other states and countries. Most stay in an industrial Forest Service campground for 2 months.

The activities were hosted by the Crescent Lake Mushroom Monitoring Project, which promotes a sustainable harvest and helps mushroom harvesters bring their knowledge, experience, and concerns to participate in the decisions that affect their livelihoods and the health of the forest. Veteran harvesters work as “monitors,” walking the woods and talking with harvesters about issues that concern them and monitoring and documenting what is happening with the social and ecological aspects of the harvest. The project works to facilitate communication between harvesters, the Forest Service, local residents, and other groups interested in and affected by the harvest.

We did two activities: a smaller meeting/field trip followed by a large campground meeting. The first meeting was held in the tent of Kao and Khae Saechao, veteran harvesters from Oroville, CA. There were 12 harvesters (Mien, Cambodian, and Anglo), the project coordinator (Anglo), and a visiting anthropologist (Chinese American). 10 men and 4 women participated. Three of the harvesters were monitors. The meeting was conducted in English, Mien, and Cambodian, not with formal interpretation, but with side conversations and general interpretation. 6 of us then went on a field trip to various locations in the woods.

The second activity was a large campground meeting, held in Mr. Pheng’s noodle tent, a large gathering hall in the campground. Among the 47 participants were Laotian, Cambodian, Mien, and one Anglo harvester, the US Forest Service district Ranger (Japanese American), the project coordinator (Anglo), and a visiting anthropologist (Chinese American). Most of the large group conversation was conducted in English, with the small group conversations in Mien, Laotian, Cambodian, and English.

## **Description of the Activity:**

### **1. First Activity: small group meeting and field trip**

The small group meeting and field trip was led by the mushroom monitors, with facilitative assistance from the project coordinator. Harvesters talked about how they think a healthy forest should look. They described what the relationships should be between the diverse trees, the mushrooms, the sunlight, wildlife, fire, harvesters and land managers. They talked about how the forest should be treated when thinning is needed to prevent fire or disease. The project coordinator recorded their ideas. Then we went on a field trip and looked at a variety of areas in the woods, where harvesters commented on how they thought the forest looked, whether the area was good for mushrooms and why, and what should be done to manage that area. These included areas that had been previously thinned by the Forest Service. We took digital photos. Following the activity, the project coordinator prepared a sheet with the harvesters' ideas and printed color photos from the field trip and made 5 identical packets.

### **2. Second Activity: large campground meeting**

The following night, the project hosted a large campground meeting with harvesters and the Forest Service District Ranger to talk about the proposed thinning project and other issues. After the monitors opened the meeting in each of their languages, we broke into self-selected small groups with maps of the thinning project area and the photo packets from the field trip. Monitors, the project coordinator, and the visiting researcher helped harvesters write comments on the pictures about how they thought the different forest areas looked, and what they thought should be done or not done. Other harvesters drew on the maps, indicating important mushroom patches to protect. Discussion was lively and lasted quite a while. Then we came back into the large group and people shared what they'd talked about in the small groups. We reflected back the ideas from the previous days' meeting to check for comments and agreement on those. We recorded their new comments and areas of agreement on the flip chart.

In addition to concerns about the thinning/logging project, harvesters have many other concerns such as safety, permit prices, access to picking areas. Earlier in the week, a group of harvesters had gathered to brainstorm solutions to some of these issues. After the discussion on the logging project, we presented on a flip chart the small group's proposed solutions to these other issues. We checked for agreement and recorded other comments. The Forest Service District Ranger responded to the ideas, often affirming next action steps to accomplish them.

**Outcomes:** Both activities were successful because we were able to take ideas and knowledge generated from harvesters and prepare materials so that they and other harvesters could respond to these and offer their own wisdom. Having visuals – maps and pictures – of things that they have a tremendous depth and breadth of knowledge about helped harvesters present that knowledge in a public forum. It was perhaps the most active participation we've seen among harvesters in public discussions on land management actions.

The Forest Service district ranger took many notes and said that the information was something he could work with. He was impressed at how well prepared the group was. And he responded with affirmative answers and action steps to some of the solutions that harvesters proposed. These solutions addressed issues and concerns that harvesters have raised for years. This is the first time we have seen a response from the Forest Service that some of these could actually change.

**Facilitator's Notes:** These two days of activities represent only a snapshot in years of efforts from the mushroom monitors and non-profit partners working together to empower harvesters. These activities succeeded because the mushroom monitors had invested many hours of outreach, relationship building, information sharing, and documenting harvesters' concerns and opinions. They had held small, informal discussions about the proposed thinning project, helped harvesters read the project maps, and recorded their concerns about it. There was a small cohort of harvesters who were very invested in trying to address these issues. This helped the larger group engage.

Making sure everyone understands what's being said and feels comfortable speaking is always challenging in this context where there are multiple languages and levels of language competency. We continually need to work on improving our facilitation in this context. It really helped to have smaller group caucuses where people could self-select and gather with others who spoke the same languages. Pictures and maps that people could draw and write on were essential to get the conversation going, and providing particular and real topics to respond to.

# Analyzing Social Justice

## CASA Latina, Maru Mora Villalpando

**Objectives:** To analyze the terms social justice and education, and how to include social justice in the teaching of English as a Second Language in the education of immigrant adults.

**Description of Group:** Teachers, different nationalities, the majority of Caucasian origin: 20 people. A Social Justice and ESL workshop took place at the Summer Institute of OAL in Olympia, Washington at the Evergreen College.

**Description of Activity:** My colleague and I prepared cards with different words/synonyms of justice and education. We handed out more blank cards for each group. We asked each group to select the three words that best represented the definition of social justice. But they also had to write down three more that the group believed were not included. They had to present the definition to the group in any way they chose.

**Outcomes:** Each group presented in a different style. Some chose a presentation without saying anything, including a dance. Another group gave a theatric presentation through dialog. Another group made a drawing, and the last one chose to present it in the form of a list.

The best part was that we selected everything that matched each definition. And this way, everybody, without us asking them to agree on only one definition, noticed the similarities and started a discussion among themselves to agree on only one definition. This definition included a process and showed institutionalized racism at the ESL schools for adults.

In the end, everybody asked us for ideas on how to include these techniques and points of view in their classes in order not to have any problems with their institutions.

**Facilitator's Notes:** The fact that we brought the definitions worked out really well. On purpose, we used words that would generate discussion. Since we knew our audience in advance, we knew what would generate interest.

What didn't work out was the lack of time. This single activity took more than an hour and didn't allow us to examine more deeply the difference between social service and social change.

# The Human Knot

## Amigos de los Sobrevivientes, Itahi Diaz Cedillo

**Objectives:** This activity promotes team development, and it's called "the human knot."

**Description of Group:** This exercise has been used with a group of survivors of political persecution/violence when this group started, and the objective was to promote team work. The activity took place with more than 20 people (you can use small or big groups), it was done in Spanish with men, women, adults and young people from various Latin American countries. The people involved had just met.

**Description of the Activity:** The people form a circle, holding hands with their arms crossed. After the circle is formed, the people try to untie the human knot that was initially formed without letting go of the others.

**Outcomes:** This is quite a fun activity in which people must follow the instructions of a leader, someone who takes the initiative to lead the others. The activity was a success because the people practiced communication and leadership. Friendship developed among the participants and they learned by means of the exercise that there are several ways to resolve a given problem.

**Facilitator's Notes:** At first, many people were resistant to participation, because they didn't trust each other, but once the activity started, everybody felt comfortable. A suggestion for the facilitator would be not to give many instructions since the intent of the activity is that the people investigate among themselves how to resolve the problem.

# Dramatizations

## Juventud FACETA, Jorge Salic

### Objectives

1. To use visual aid to present information
2. To allow that members contribute their talents
3. To make participation fun

**Description of Group:** This activity was used in Mollala during Conoce tus Derechos training. There were 40 youth and adults, females and males, Latinos and Americans. Attendees to the weekend camp knew some very little others very well.

**Description of the Activity:** Group is divided into small groups. Members from each group present information to the global group in a form of a dramatization.

**Outcomes:** Latino Culture is passed on to us through legends, popular sayings and tales, because of that, using drama to inform others is an effective way. The dynamics of presenting information become more apparent to the audience. It can potentially be effective with groups that may need help with development of interpersonal skills.

**Facilitator's Notes:** It works well because members discover their talents. It brings the group together and it challenges those members who are shy and introspected to open up and share with others their knowledge. One suggestion to the facilitator is to stand by for questions and to motivate groups.

# Using Physical Models to Increase Consciousness

## The Community-Based Forestry Demonstration Program, Barbara Wyckoff-Baird

**Objective:** Sometimes it can be difficult to visualize the implications of a certain event, especially if the activity has never been previously witnessed or experienced. Without an understanding of the potential consequences of such an event, it is difficult – if not impossible – to make informed decisions or represent the best interests of the community. Physical models, generally constructed to scale, can be used to illustrate “what could happen” and afford people the opportunity for constructive engagement in decision-making. This activity is intended to provide an opportunity for participants to “see into the future” and, through dialogue and debate, develop informed decisions. To better illustrate this activity, it will be described through the telling of a story.

**Description of Group:** The Government had declared that it was going to dam the largest river in the country to generate electricity for over half of the nation’s population. The dam would block the flow of water, flooding an area of over 300 square miles and creating a huge lake behind the dam. In front of the dam, the flow of water would diminish, leaving behind dry riverbeds, dead fish, and no access to the ocean beyond. In order to obtain funding for such a large project, the Government had to undertake a social assessment of the impact of the dam and gain support of the local communities.

The Himba community living in the affected area is very isolated and primarily nomadic, traveling with their goats across miles of rocky terrain in search of food for their livestock and themselves. To the outsider, their travels look random, but to the Himba they are a network of specific destinations, family reunions, collection spots for medicinal plants and household materials, hunting areas, and visits to the graves of their ancestors. They do not have electricity, nor access to the things that use electricity – refrigerators, lights, machines, etc. The area covered by the Himba in their seasonal expeditions was the same as the area planned for flooding by the dam.

At first, the Government declared that no one lived in the area of the proposed flooding. After all, there were no villages, permanent structures, clinics, schools etc. However, as required by the funding source, the Government later identified the nomadic community as using the area and conducted meetings with the Himba headmen regarding the dam. The officials’ promises of electricity for all residents – whatever that meant – sounded great to the leaders and they were about to give their go-ahead for the construction of the dam when some outsiders arrived to facilitate a more in-depth – and informed – discussion among the whole community. The 100 community members were primarily Himba, illiterate, both men and women, and of all ages.

**Description of the Activity:** The outsiders arrived with a plaster model of the proposed dam and the surrounding area built to scale. First, the participants were asked to describe the landscape and to place themselves in the model. Where was the ocean? The river? The community? Where had their families come from? Once all of the participants were orientated to the model and could place themselves

in it, the community members (regardless of age or gender) were then given small paper flags representing resources and important places in the area. Participants were then asked to place in the model red flags where their ancestors were buried and their spirits lived, green flags for the rich grazing areas, yellow flags for hunting areas and important sites for plants for medicinal and other uses, and blue for water sources critical in their arid environment. When the model was full of flags, the participants talked about their lives, their travels, the things important to them, and their values. There was a feeling of positive affirmation and thankfulness for the lives the community led.

The outsiders then put the dam in place in the model and brought a bucket of water over, representing the volume of water that would be held back by the dam. The water was slowly added to the model, creating a huge lake behind the dam and covering all of the flags. It was also clear that there would be no water flowing to the ocean. The community was shocked, and suddenly very aware of the potential consequences of the dam. They would not be able to visit the graves of their ancestors, whose spirits were sure to drown under all of that water, their grazing areas would be gone, as would the plants and hunting areas.

**Outcomes:** Lively, and at times angry, debate followed, with the result that the headmen led a delegation to the capital, many for the first time in their lives, to protest the construction of the dam. In addition, the Himba started asking other questions. Why did some people have schools and clinics, and they didn't? Why were some people asked for their input into decisions taken by the government, and others weren't? Why did some people get help fighting disease among their herds of livestock, and they didn't?

**Facilitator's Notes:** Lots of things went well with this activity. Critical to the success was that the facilitators were well known and trusted by the community; they were believed. Important to this legitimacy was that the model and the volume of water that would be created was to scale. It was critical to engage the community with the model before adding the flags and water. After all, the model was also a new and different concept that the community had to become familiar with, if the activity was going to work.

There were also unintended consequences of the activity. The Himba leaders were propelled into a world of bureaucracy, politics, and power that they had never encountered before and were ill prepared for. Fortunately, the outsiders were committed to the process and the people and helped the leaders build the necessary language and skills to begin to level the playing field. There were also unintended perils for the outsiders, some of whom were deported from the country by the government. While not directly related to the activity, it is critical for facilitators and participants alike to think through and be ready for the consequences of fighting for social justice.

# Working with Harvesters

## Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters, Denise Smith

### Objectives:

- A) Educate communities about wildlife rehabilitation and local wildlife
- B) Community Based Organizing Projects

### Description of Group:

- A) All sizes, ages, gender, multiple languages
- B) A Community Based Organizing Project funded by the Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters: APSARA Mushroom Harvesters Meetings with Cambodian, Native American, and European American Mushroom Harvesters Men and Women and US Forest Service officials.

### Description of the Activity:

- A) I brought live non releasable native wild animals (usually raptors) and things to touch like feathers, eggs, shed skins, bones, pictures etc. to classrooms and to public events to usually groups of 30+. This was part of our public education which was part of the Humboldt Wildlife care Centers' overall Rehabilitation Program.
- B) Meetings were held at the Cambodian Community Center in Stockton, CA. The first meeting was with only Cambodian Harvesters and the next was with Native American and European harvesters to let the US Forest Service come and hear about the concerns of the harvesters. The multicultural group had translation and Forest Service was asked to wait to present until the group of harvesters was ready for them to give their input. This is empowering harvesters who are often afraid of the government intentions.

### Outcomes

- A) It gave an up-close, hands-on way for people to interact with nature. Once someone has had that experience they often are excited by helping in the future if they come across an injured or orphaned wild animal. The social change needed overall is feeling a part of nature and not separate than nature.
- B) The success from the time that such meetings started till now has been the empowerment of Harvesters. Especially the ones who attended the meetings.

### Facilitator's Notes

- A) Having things to see and touch crosses all languages and ages. Even elders in retirement homes have story upon story of life experiences with animals. Children are empowered by finding hands on things they can do and not do to help wildlife.
- B) Letting the meeting be run by harvesters with the support of the Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters.

# Where Do You Stand?

## Institute for Culture and Ecology, Kathryn A. Lynch

(Adapted by Kathryn A. Lynch, Institute for Culture and Ecology from Suzanne Williams, “Building Gender Awareness, Activity 20: Choose Your Spot” in the Oxfam Gender Training Manual. 1994. Oxfam UK.)

**Time:** Variable, at least 45 minutes

### **Overview:**

- This activity provides an opportunity for workshop participants to reflect on their position on difficult land management decisions. It is a useful way to get people moving around, to start discussion about key topics and to show differences of opinion within the group. In a workshop or classroom setting, this activity can also be used in an introduction to the material, (as a ‘pre-test’) to see where participants stand on these issues prior to in-depth exploration of the material and then again at the end (a ‘post-test’) to stimulate discussion if and how their knowledge, attitudes or behaviors have been changed.
- Different statements can be included, or replace the questions given below, according to the objectives and focus of your group. This activity was originally developed looking at issues of gender and development in developing countries.

**Learning Objectives:** By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Express their position on several current debates regarding nontimber forest products and forest management.
2. Understand where other workshop participants stand on these issues.

**Supporting Reading:** None required. For in-depth discussion on these issues, see Jones, McLain, and Weigand, eds. 2002. Nontimber Forest Products in the United States. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

### **Materials Needed**

- ❑ Flipcharts, markers and masking tape
- ❑ Five sheets of paper, each with a different face drawn on it, (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) to create a five-point Likert scale.

**Background Information:** The questions listed below are meant to be vague. You will find that in the discussion participants will bring up issues to make the questions more precise. This is what is wanted—for them to bring critical thinking, to dissect intentionally vague statements. Simply read the statement again and ask them where they stand on the statement as read. Then during the discussion, participants should bring up the issues they had with the question. Encourage them to make the questions more precise. In doing so, key issues will arise and the reasons why people are standing where they are standing will become clearer.

### Activity Description

1. On five sheets of paper, draw five faces: very happy face, happy face, neutral, unhappy face, very unhappy face. Tape the faces on the wall around the room, and make sure there is space to move around the room.
2. Explain to participants that the faces represent the options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Ask participants to listen to the statements as they are read and then think about how they feel about it, and go to the face that best represents their opinion. Stress that there are no right or wrong answers.
3. Once everyone has decided their stance on a point, go around the room and have participants share their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing. Ask for examples or concrete reasons, data, or experiences to support their positions. If a large group, you may have each group discuss among themselves why they are there, and then choose a spokesperson to share key idea from the group with everyone.
4. As participants share their reasoning, jot down key themes and issues that arise and use their comments to reinforce key points from the term.

### Where Do You Stand?

1. **In areas where Euroamericans constitute the majority of mushroom pickers, environmental justice issues don't really apply.** Discussion might bring up fact that although historically environmental justice issues dealt primarily with the inequitable distribution of environmental threats to racial and ethnic minorities, environmental justice has been expanded to encompass issues of class as well. Participants might also mention that EJ traditionally addressed impacts of industrial pollutants and the location of waste facilities, but now has expanded to include issues of access to natural resources in general.
2. **A participatory approach to managing nontimber forest products is a good idea.** Discussion might bring up reasons presented earlier for participatory approaches: obtain data, incorporate local knowledge, strengthen democratic processes, reduce law enforcement costs, value rural people's knowledge, promotes communication, reduces conflict, etc.
3. **Nontimber forest products have been neglected in modern industrial forestry because they are not really important.** Discussion might bring up issue of 'value'. There is economic value, but also other important non-economic values, such as quality of life issues. Being own boss. Working own hours. Working in the woods rather than in an office job. Maintaining rural lifestyle, not having to move into urban center. Developing small businesses as a political act- against Walmart and other big international corporations. Maintaining important family traditions and passing on family knowledge. Feeling of pride and joy in being able to provide family with own food, own medicine. The importance of this safety net, for many herbalists got involved when could not afford health insurance and health care- thus critical for many people but invisible benefits.

## Wrap-Up Discussion Questions

Q: Was this a difficult exercise? Why or why not? What was the most challenging part?

**Outcomes:** This activity has been very effective in bringing out strong views that might have otherwise been hidden and creating a space for open discussion. This was useful for all participants as well as the facilitator, to know where we were starting from, before proceeding into other activities/discussion.

When I used this activity in an undergraduate course on Ecofeminism (in which we were discussing the linkages between the degradation of the environment and oppression of women and other groups) one of the most exciting things that came out of this activity was that when students standing in opposition (some in strongly agree and others in strongly disagree) were given the opportunity to share why they were standing where they were, they realized that they actually shared many opinions and the reasons why they were 'opposing' each other were based on semantics (how the question was read) rather than deep-held beliefs. Or if there were differences, that they were manageable, they could still communicate with the others. Thus, the black/white, right/wrong, us/them dichotomy was dismantled to some degree.

## Some of the questions from the Oxfam book, used then included:

1. The most important goal of women's development is for women to attain economic autonomy.
2. Integrating women in development is important because it increases the efficiency of the project.
3. Domestic violence is a development issue that NGOs ought to address.
4. Supporting the development of traditional women's skills (sewing, cooking, etc.) is an effective strategy for empowering women.
5. Relations between men and women in the family and the community are cultural; foreign agencies should not challenge it.
6. We should target our development aid to the family. This is the best way to ensure that the benefits reach all members.

## Facilitator's Notes

- ❑ It is critical to stress that there are no right or wrong answers here.
- ❑ I have found that students have a harder time with the statements, wanting the facilitator to clarify what is meant; whereas in community situation that hasn't been such a challenge.

# Forest Fuels Treatments for the Long Term

## Collaborative Learning Circle, Jude Wait

*(Done in partnership with the Forest Guild and the Alliance of Forest Workers & Harvesters, and several other partners and local hosts.)*

**Event:** “Forest Fuels Treatments for the Long Term” -- A technical workshop for communities, community forestry practitioners, forest workers and other forest stewards. The workshop was designed to provide improved understanding of forest management issues related to forest fire and forest fuels, through the medium of management projects designed to support the twin goals of ecological and community sustainability.

**Objectives:** Address fuels reduction silviculture by bringing together numerous perspectives, generally forester/resource managers, community-based programs and worker/ implementation sectors of the “industry” in order to enhance peer learning and better integration of the approaches. Participants represented a broad diversity of backgrounds, including Registered Professional Foresters, restoration forestry practitioners, research, industry development, value added, agency, planner, and contractor, as well as workers & harvesters in traditional, ecological, monitoring and industry sectors.

**Description of Group:** Small groups of people knew one another well (among Foresters from the Guild, forest workers and community groups from the Trinity River and Southern Oregon areas, for examples), a few people knew most of the participants (organizers and old-timers), and within the small intimate groups there were individual cross-group friendships –a network of networks. Most people learned a lot more about relatively new information and/or different perspectives, especially the introduction of traditional/indigenous ecological knowledge to resource managers, and the gentle presentation and diversity seemed comfortable for people. There was a sense of diversity even though most participants were Caucasian male (and a few female). There was a consciousness of the latino workforce (they did not attend, mainly because they were working in a distant part of the region). Native American perspectives were strongly represented in the presentations and discussions.

We convened in Weaverville, California, the heart of mining and subsequent timber country. A local landowner (who is also a Forester, Planner, program manager, etc) led the field tour of his property and some public fuels reduction projects. Discussions addressed the options available for fuels treatment (thinning, hand-piling, choosing trees, native grasses and revegetation, etc), were sometimes critical of the practices, and led to some agreements about trying different approaches in the future where appropriate. Traditional indigenous, western forestry, science, equipment, value added production and sustainable ecological integrity were discussed, both in separate presentations and conversations, and in an integrated way as applied to certain conditions.

**Description of the Activity:** The workshop included formal presentations (power-point and slide show formats) in the morning, followed by a field trip in the afternoon: touring private land forest health, fuels reduction & burning, and wildlife structures.

## 1. Formal Presentations

- **Frank Lake (Oregon State University/USDA Forest Service)** An integrated, community-based approach to fire. Frank discussed ways to enhance the design of fuels treatments and forest restoration by addressing social, cultural, ecological, and economic needs and concerns of local communities. Frank also provided a historical perspective on local aboriginal fire use as a backdrop to the day's discussions.
- **Dennis Martinez (Indigenous Peoples Restoration Network)** Back to the Future: Fire, Indigenous Practices, and Trees: fuels treatments in an ecological restoration context. Dennis discussed ecological restoration efforts derived from traditional cultural practices related to fire in the forest landscape.
- **Marko Bey (Lomakatsi Restoration Project Director of Operations)** Restoration forestry and forest worker training. Marko presented slides/photos and discussed ecologically based fuels reduction treatments and prescriptions that incorporate restoration forestry practices & principals. He also discussed forest worker training in site specific ecological fuels reduction treatments.
- **Nick Goulette (The Watershed Center)** Post Mountain Stewardship Area: community-driven fuels treatments on national forest land. Nick discussed the variation in fuels treatments that take place as the focus shifts from community protection zones emphasizing life and property to forest stands requiring broader ecological restoration and the accommodation of fire.
- **Mark Lancaster (LanMark Forestry, Trinity County Planning Department)** Fuels thinning and long-term silviculture. Mark discussed forest management approaches that treat fire and fuels as part of a suite of activities that must be planned and implemented comprehensively to ensure sustainability.

**2. Field Trip to Dutch Creek** This site is undergoing extensive treatments for fuels reduction and restoration, as well as commercial production, under management by RPF Mark Lancaster. Mark was joined in the field by several Guild member RPFs from the area. Participants saw:

- created wildlife structures
- slash treatment
- precommercial thinning
- prescribed burning (conditions permitting)
- commercial thinning

**3. Evening Session** Richard Hart (Ecological Consultant): The Chewaucan Story: community-based bio-physical monitoring for forest stewardship on the Fremont National Forest in eastern Oregon. Richard discussed aspects of community engagement, including the role of local natural resources students and landowners in monitoring, and the rich lessons learned from an innovative approach applied in forest-based community in eastern Oregon. This session tied into a community meeting (7-9PM) to discuss the proposed Weaverville community forest on BLM land (that will fall under Stewardship Contracting authorities).

**Outcomes:** Worker, harvester, environmental, and traditional Native American individuals participated and presented information in a way that was respected by community, agency and professional foresters. The sharing across sectors seemed to promote a deeper level of understanding of the various perspectives – which can be empowering for each and all.

**Facilitator's Notes:**

- Collaboration has its challenges, meeting multiple perspectives and agendas at the same time. We applied an iterative process for the development and implementation of the workshop; we had to be flexible and adjust to change and new suggestions.
- The agenda was packed too tightly – lacking time for Q&A after, between and during presentations, as well as limiting networking time.
- We attempted to line up work for the latino work crew, in order to make their participation in the workshop be most applied to their work, give them the chance to apply new information and gain training in new skills and approaches. In addition, associated work is what makes the whole participation aspect more feasible – they need to be working for money to support their families – let alone justifying the travel and away-from-home time. To be more multi-cultural and bi-lingual, we would alter the presentations and agenda to accommodate the needs of workers and interpretation, which take a lot more time. We would address other aspects of different learning styles, like having more applied on-the-ground learning opportunities.

# Using Drama to Explore Themes

## Mason County Literacy, Jenny Blumenstein

**Objectives:** The objective of this activity was to explore with students in our English class the themes they wanted to study during the semester.

**Description of Group:** The group size was 30-40 people. We had enough volunteers that we could break the group into smaller groups of about 5 people each. We chose to group them according to their ability to use English so that we could have a conversation mostly in English with the intermediate/advanced students and a bilingual Spanish/English discussion with the beginner-level folks. The group was a mix of men and women, ages from 16-50 years old, everyone from Mexico or Guatemala.

**Description of the Activity:** Several of us had worked for some time with students from the Latino community in the context of a learner-centered ESL program. We had listened and heard from the participants over the years several common areas where they felt they needed English in their daily lives. We chose to highlight these themes in a 'play' or 'skit', and then use the skit as a prompt for a discussion about which topics were the most important for the people in the class at that moment. We had a lot of colorful props to help get the meaning of our skit across.

The drama was a day in the life of a new immigrant in Shelton. The main character came into town and asked for directions to a supermarket, then went to the store looking for something to eat for lunch. They stopped by a Mexican store and talked to a long-time Latino community member and asked about housing and where to find work. At times they had problems communicating with English-speakers and trouble understanding/being understood. After each scene we stopped to discuss in small groups. First participants described what had happened, then they identified if there was a 'problem' or 'difficulty' or 'need' in the situation. We discussed with participants if they had ever had that kind of problem, and elicited from them personal examples and more specific information about it.

Through the discussions we also left space for participants to suggest other topics and themes that we hadn't portrayed in the drama. As a follow-up, the participants prioritized as a group by voting for the 4 most important themes to them at that time.

**Outcomes:** People enjoyed the drama. It was funny at times, it was more interesting than just a list of words or static pictures. The small group discussions elicited a lot of detail about participants' experiences in the community using English. We as facilitators learned a lot from these discussions. This was rich information for later program planning. I feel students are more engaged in the program when they feel a part of the planning, and when they feel their opinions are important. They are more motivated to participate in the class when they know the topics will connect to their experiences in the real world.

**Facilitator's Notes:** It was important to stop and discuss after each scene so the issues raised by that scene could be captured (on paper). In our particular context we needed to have many facilitators so the discussion groups could remain small, and some facilitators needed to be able to speak Spanish. We wanted the scenes to reflect living in the U.S. so some of the dialogue was in English but we kept it simple and mixed it with enough Spanish and visual aids that everyone would understand what was happening.



# Participatory Review

## Mason County Literacy/CIDERS/PWCFC, Jenny Blumenstein

**Objectives:** This activity was a participatory review and categorization of all of the activities a community group had accomplished over the previous 8 months so that the group could reflect on where they were in their process.

**Description of Group:** The group was small, about 5 people, all men, all Latino, and they knew each other well because they had been participating together in regular meetings for a period of 8 months.

**Description of the Activity:** The facilitators gave some structure by suggesting several examples of categories of group work that might prompt the participants' memories of the previous 8 months. It was made clear that those categories could be changed if people wanted to change them. For example 'community events', 'capacity-building process', 'brush issues', were categories that were placed in a line on the wall. Participants had cards on which they wrote as many activities as they could remember, one on each card. They brainstormed and wrote individually and together as needed.

Then we started to tape the cards onto the wall under one of the categories, and the group negotiated where it should go, if a new category should be created, or if several cards should be combined into one b/c they were redundant and described the same thing. Facilitators prompted people's memories as needed.

Once everything was up on the wall and in an agreed upon place, the group looked it over and was able to see all that they had accomplished in their time together. They were then asked to reflect on how they felt about where they were in the process. What had gone well? What had been challenging? What work still needed to be done in each of the categories? Where should they focus energy? How did each person feel about continuing to participate in the group?

**Outcomes:** The activity was successful in getting group members to participate in creating a picture of what they had accomplished together. It gave the group a common set of information that had been generated from their experience and that they could reflect on. It helped people to remember details they might have forgotten. It helped them to analyze where their energy had been spent, and where it hadn't. It helped the facilitator check in with how participants perceived the group process to be working. This kind of reflection is an important way of 'checking in' and helps in setting the direction for 'where to go from here'.

**Facilitator's Notes:** The more people have some kind of written record, however simple, to go back to, the easier it is for them to remember what has happened, though some people do have exceptional memories.

# Puzzling

## CASA Latina, Pedro Jiménez

### Objectives:

- Analyze the qualities in a leader/leadership
- Analyze different social classes in the community

**Description of Group:** 30 organizers of different worker centers. They just met each other.

**Description of Activity:** This activity works by forming two groups of three to four people each, and consists in doing a jigsaw puzzle in which you find different living conditions. But the people who are doing the puzzle don't realize at that moment what it is about. Then, when they stop and end up holding different pieces in their hands without knowing what to do, the facilitators tell the participants that they have to exchange pieces with the other group. But before that, let me tell you that in the beginning you can't talk until the facilitators realize the person doesn't know any more.

That's when they tell him/her that he/she has to start talking with the other group. After they start exchanging pieces with the other group and finish doing the puzzle, the facilitators ask questions about what they were doing and what they saw once the puzzle was finished. They make different comments about the different life styles they saw, for example:

- A green area with parks and gardens
- An area where you can find only lower class people
- Another area where high-class people are
- There is also a commercial area

This activity consists of learning to differentiate through the use of the puzzle, what's the life style of your community and why each of the different life styles finds itself in its situation.

This activity should be timed every time you put a puzzle together in order to see the ability and development of the participant. The facilitators also do their part, since during the activity they notice which people start to assume leadership, and which person only finds himself giving an opinion which other remains confused. That's why the activity is timed to be able to set a time record and see if another group can beat the record established by the best group.

**Facilitator's Notes:** It worked out really well since it gave us an additional option about working individually or in teams. What didn't work out: Well, the fact that in the beginning we didn't know exactly what it was about. The suggestion I have based on this activity is to be more explicit, to be able to describe ideas about how to put together a puzzle.

# Who Am I?

**Maple Lane School Cultural Programs in community partnership with The Evergreen State Collage and Gateways for Incarcerated Youth, Linnea Elmer**

**Objectives:** Respond to fears surrounding self identity and build trust by sharing that information with others.

**Description of Group:** Primary population of class is a 2:1 ratio of incarcerated Maple Lane students to the Evergreen State College students.

## **Description of Activity:**

Class is one hour and 45 minutes long. There are multiple component activities that create the whole; this activity is the second half of a two-session workshop.

### **FIRST SESSION:**

Workshop consisted of students creating posters that expressed their self-identities; posters varied from collages of words and images pieced together using available publications to drawings and writings on the theme of “Who Am I”? and “Who Do I Want To Be In 10 Years?” Workshop began with group of 40 breaking into small groups of 5 to dialogue on the questions at hand in an effort to get to the essence of what makes us who we are, then to commit this to the page.

### **SECOND SESSION:**

This session developed in response to “I never tell this to people.” “I don’t know who I am.” “I don’t share this with anyone.” “I don’t want people to know who I am.” This activity is geared to help us move beyond our fears and be able to share and build trust within the group.

Guiding principle: the only time we can succeed is when we put ourselves in the position where we could fail, by taking risks. The difference between a hero and a coward is what they do with their fear.

### **Part 1: 15-minute “Buzz”**

Ninety percent of communication is non-verbal, so for this activity no words are allowed.

Facilitator calls out to the group, “Circle up!” Full group stands in a circle; participants are encouraged to create a movement or presentation with their bodies that will express who they are. Activity is improvisational; there is not a break time for developing the movements.

Examples: is the person shuffling across the space? Frowning? Smiling? Do they look like they are a seed sprouting into a flower? Do they have their fist in the air or close to their heart?

After everyone has introduced themselves to the group in this way, we return to our seats and facilitate large group feedback, for instance:

- “Hey Johnny, the way you expressed yourself made me think that you identify with \_\_\_\_\_. Did I interpret that correctly?”
- Yes/No
- “What other observations did people make of others in the group?”

## **PART 2: One Hour**

Number off into groups of 5 or 6.

Bring posters out from first session. Have each person discuss with the group which part of their self-identity they are most proud of; have each member:

- Describe an experience that was integral to its development;
- Shift focus from person who is sharing (storyteller) to those who are listening; those who are listening need to ask questions and reflect on what was shared to make sure they have an accurate understanding of storyteller’s shaping process.
- Make sure that everyone has been the storyteller before moving on to develop the portraits.

Small group listeners then demonstrate “We hear you, we see who you are” by developing a silent, gestural portrait/dinamica that listening group members display for storyteller; storyteller then has the opportunity to edit “portrait” by modifying gestures for more accurate depiction to share with the large group.

Proceed to develop a portrait for each small group member.

## **Part 3: 30 minutes**

After an hour has passed, “circle up” the large group for presentations. Group by group, make sure that each storyteller’s process portrait is performed. When all have had the opportunity to share, open the floor for feedback. Important questions for discussion:

- What was your experience?
- Could/How did you relate your experiences to the other group members’ experiences?
- Was this easier or more difficult than making the posters?
- Was the portrait more accurate when your peers acted it out or was it more accurate in your poster?

# POPULAR EDUCATION TOOL-KIT

*We don't expect that your answers will fit in the spaces provided!*

*Please use additional pages as needed.*

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Objectives of Activity (or event, dinámica, etc.):**

*Describe the purpose of the activity, what you wanted to accomplish, what you hoped participants would achieve after completing the activity, process, etc..*

## **Description of Group/Community You Used the Activity In:**

*Describe the community/group with which you used the activity including: size, language, gender, ethnicity, geographical location, how well participants knew each other, etc..*

## **Description of the Activity:**

*Describe what you did and how you did it, as precisely as possible. Also, if the activity was part of a larger activity and/or process, briefly describe the context in which it took place.*

## **Outcomes:**

*In what ways was the activity successful? What was its impact? How did it result in or contribute to the empowerment of individuals in working for social change/social justice?*

## **Facilitator's Notes:**

*What worked well? What didn't? What suggestions do you have for someone else trying to facilitate a similar activity?*