

Session 6: Observation Exercise

Context: Introduction to Permaculture Design course

Duration: 90 minutes

Aims: To enhance students' observation skills and provide time for quiet appreciation of the landscape.

Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, students will:

- understand the importance of observation
- have had an experience of quiet observation & reflection
- have gained insights into our relationship with our environment

Method & timings:

10 minutes introduction & brainstorm: Why is observation important in design? Write this up on a mind map.

40 minutes individual exercise. Now explain to the students that the next 40 minutes will be spent as an individual exercise with 4 distinct phases and give them instructions on what to do. This is also all explained in the handout that you give them now.

20 minutes group discussion: Describe experience: reconvene the group and ask them what their impressions of the exercise was. Some students can find this quite a profound experience, especially those that rarely spend time outdoors, so it's good for them to have some time to reflect on and process what's just happened.

20 minutes brainstorm: Any new insights into how observation might inform design work? Add these new insights to the previous mind-map, using a different coloured marker.

Resources: Whiteboard/flipchart, enough handouts for everyone to have one, bell, horn or whistle to provide an audio signal to reconvene.

NOTES: