



Workshops

"Bringing Variety to Science Center Education"

Workshops in general

Workshops are important educationally, as they lend themselves to the introduction of a greater variety of sciences than is typically available in standard classroom education. This is a benefit to both the learner and the educator.

Through the offering of workshops, in addition to their operational exhibits and programming, science centers can provide an environment for learning. Typically educators feel ill-equipped to present materials not part of their standard curriculum, and they often feel insecure and isolated due to little or no opportunity to work with colleagues to try out new ideas. This is especially true of rural educators. These rural educators also lack the resources and mentoring that science centers should be able provide. Additionally, both learner and educator alike need quality science centers to provide a framework of connectivity to scientific literacy, something more than the mere learning of a specific fact or idea.

CESLA Workshops In Africa

Workshops presented to rural learners in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa offered scientific concepts not traditionally transmitted in the area schools. Therefore, these workshops had an effect on science literacy by introducing new subject matter as well as providing new options within the field of science and technology.

Workshops presented to date by CESLA are significant in many ways. In KwaZulu-Natal the rural Zulu learners have little or no knowledge of marine and coastal environments, even though they live close to the Indian Ocean. Environmental workshops and programs introduced these rural learners to the fragile nature of ecosystems in general and to how they themselves are part of a larger global ecological community. Introductions to paleontology and anthropology gave rural southern Africa learners insight into southern and eastern Africa as a keystone to these particular sciences and as to why sub-Saharan Africa is considered the "Cradle of Mankind." Before these workshops, most rural learners only considered math, physics, and chemistry as options for careers in the science and technology field. These workshop presentations not only added to the science literacy of the affected learners, but also viable future education and career options.

Southern Africa Workshops

The above Flash video is a series of photographs taken of workshops presented by Dr. Hutter. Since 2004, these range from Environmental Science, to Paleontology, to Anthropology, to Marine Science.