

## Session 3: How Learning Happens

### Session Overview

This is the third *Foundation* session. This session probes deeper into how learning happens. The focus is on how learners construct an understanding of the world around them through experiences, social interactions, and making connections with their prior knowledge. Participants do an activity that offers them a shared experience upon which to reflect on the role of prior knowledge, social interactions and the use of models in their personal experience as a learner, by doing an activity that places them in the role of the learner. Participants consider the four foundational ideas on learning, and discuss the implications of the research on how to support learning as they present and design their activities.

### Session Objectives

In this session, participants:

- . Discuss the foundational ideas of learning.
- . Discuss strategies facilitators use to help learners learn.
- . Discuss the role of prior knowledge in learning.
- . Engage participants in a learning experience and a reflection on how their prior knowledge, the use of a model, conversations with peers, and facilitation by the instructor influenced that experience.

### Session Activities at a Glance

**Quick Write.** Participants reflect on last week's reading.

**Introduce: Foundational ideas on learning.** Participants review the four foundational ideas on how people learn introduced in Session 1.

**Activity: Phases of the Moon.** Participants engage in an activity to construct understanding of what causes the phases of the Moon.

**Discussion: Debrief Activity.** Participants reflect on the activity, and discuss how they constructed understanding and the role of prior knowledge in learning.

**Research Discussion.** Participants discuss in small and then larger groups the key ideas from research on how people learn.

**Application.** Participants are asked to gather and transition their thoughts from being in the role of learners to being reflective about the learning experience from an educator's point of view.

**Activity: Activity Carousel.** Participants browse through kits and choose activities to present on the museum for the outreach portion of course as instructors circulate and answer questions.

**Task: Choose concept & Find a partner.** Participants choose a partner and concept/topic to focus on in developing their own designed activity as they circulate around the room reviewing posted concept ideas suggested by their classmates.

**Homework.** Participants do a quick write on how the session has affected their ideas about teaching and learning. This reflection can be done in class or as the online discussion prompt.