Getting to the Common Core with Project Learning Tree

**TIME:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  

**PLACE:** Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center, 79 Farmstead Lane, Wappingers Falls. Directions online at http://www.dec.ny.gov/education/1833.html.

**LUNCH:** provided

**GROUP SIZE:** 10 to 30

**AUDIENCE:** best for formal and non-formal educators working with youth K-8.

**CONTACTS:** Tom Shimalla, 518-402-8030, teshimal@gw.dec.state.ny.us, or Paul Adams, pda812@gmail.com, 845-242-8388

**OVERVIEW:** This field experience will incorporate lecture, demonstration, and group discussion, but will be mostly hands-on activities. We’ll combine the strengths and resources of Project Learning Tree® (PLT) and the Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center providing participants an opportunity to meet Common Core using a local natural and historic resource.

Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center has been a unique source of place-based learning since 1973. It includes over 1,000 acres of farmland, ponds, woodlands, meadows, and both cultivated and fallow fields. PLT provides educators with peer-reviewed, award-winning environmental education curriculum resources. All participants will receive PLT’s *PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide*, which will be the basis of our day’s work.

**SCHEDULE**

PLT Introduction and Place-Based Learning

ELA & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, & Technical Subjects (Reading Connections, p. 7)
- Anchor Standards for Reading, Activity 8: The Forest of S.T. Shrew (Grades 1-6)
- Anchor Standards for Writing, Activity 5: Poet Tree (Grades 3-8)
- Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening, Activity 56: We Can Work It Out (Grades 5-8)

Review of Literature Books

Mathematics (Nature Deficit – Intro page 5)
- Activity 25: Birds & Worms (Grades K-3)
- Activity 67: How Big is Your Tree? (Grades 4-7)

How to Use PLT Correlations to Common Core State Standards

Using the “Lesson Planning Worksheet” (pages 470-471)

Lunch
History and Tour of Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center

Every Student Learns Outside with PLT! (www.learnoutside.org)  
Activity 48: Field, Forest and Stream

Service Learning Activity 96: Improve Your Place

PLT Professional Development and Curriculum Connections (Intro pages 12-14)

Hike through the PLT Website, www.plt.org

Small Group Discussion
- How can PLT and SKFEEC be integrated into your school program?
- What additional EE resources would be helpful to you?
- What possible service learning projects might you propose for your school or community?

Wrap-up and Evaluations

GOALS
- Learn to use the PreK-8 PLT Environmental Ed. Activity Guide within the context of the Stony Kill
- Participate in selected PLT Activities noting relevance to the Common Core Learning Standards
- Develop plan for adding PLT activities and the Stony Kill Farm into your program
- Learn about the programs and unique features of the Stony Kill Farm Environmental Ed. Center
- Build knowledge of New York’s natural resources

PRESENTERS

Tom Shimalla is an environmental educator with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Project Learning Tree state coordinator. Tom has been in the environmental education field for more than 20 years.

Paul Adams is a retired NYS biology and environmental science teacher with 36 years experience. He is currently a naturalist intern at Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center and an education volunteer with the National Park Service at the Home of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Paul is also acting chair of the New York Project Learning Tree Steering Committee.