

# Learning in Small Groups

**Michael Barone MD, MPH**

Joseph Cofrancesco Jr. MD, MPH

Rachel Levine MD, MPH





# Objectives

- Identify effective facilitation strategies for small group teaching/learning
- Compare and contrast small groups vs. large groups in learning and teaching activities
- Engage in online/virtual activities and teaching methods that can be applied in small group facilitation

# Agenda: Small Group Facilitation

*(75 minutes)*

- Opportunities and Challenges in different teaching/facilitation settings
  - Small Group and Large Group
- Engage in Facilitation Strategies
  - Social
  - Process
  - Overcoming challenges

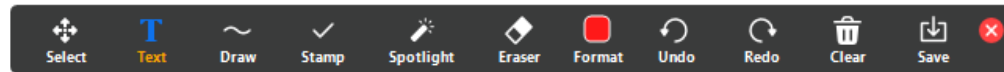
# Exercise – White Board

- Reflect for a minute (on your own).
- Think about experience you have had as a(n) instructor/learner in a **large** group learning format / lecture.

*What were some challenges / disadvantages?*

*Jot them down on the Zoom White Board  
First Search at top of Screen for “View Options”*

Then Look for...



# What constitutes a small group?



Respond using Zoom Chat feature!



# Types of Small Group Learning

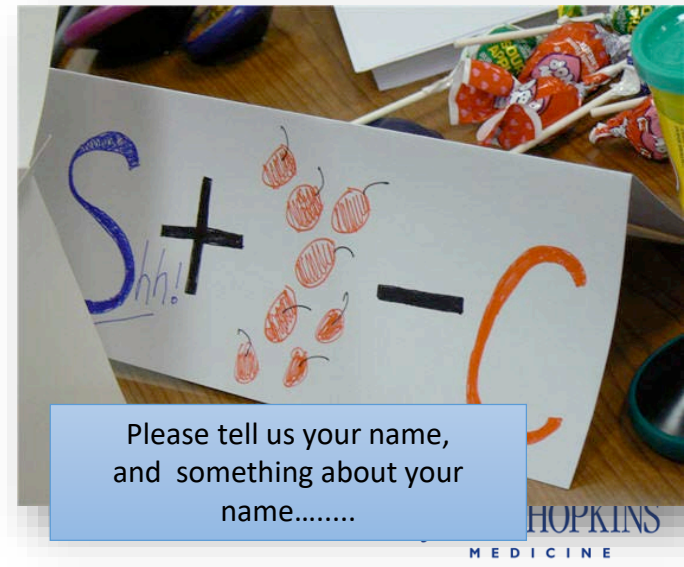
- Problem Based Learning
- Case Based Learning
- Team Based Learning
  
- Tutorials
- Seminars / Journal clubs
- Discussion Groups
- Workshops

Defined methods/ pedagogical approaches

Less defined methods / pedagogical approaches

# Learning about Small Groups .....in Small Groups Zoom Breakouts

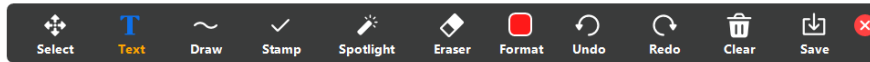
- Social
  - How do relationships impact learning?
  - Introductions and use of Icebreakers





# Icebreaker –White Board

Whiteboard - Zoom



Please share

-Your Name

-Role

-One positive thing you have experienced in the pandemic



Michael Barone  
Medical Educator  
I'm not missing the travel!

**Social/Relational**

*aspects of  
small group  
learning*

# Brainstorming Technique: Example: Setting Ground Rules

- What kind of group do you want?
  - What should we expect of one another?
  - Self Governing...

**Use Zoom Chat**  
**feature**

*All ideas*

*Quantity*

*Group agreement*



# Benefits of Small Group Learning

**Snowballing  
technique ---->**

Members of a pair discuss a question / issue  
Then pairs link with pairs ( $2 \times 2 = 4$ ) and so on...

IEE Virtual session adaptation:  
Start with 3 volunteers, then add 2-3 more, etc...



## Question

**What are some of the  
benefits of Small Group  
Learning?**

# Small Group Learning



Allows for active and collaborative goal setting and learning

learners can master higher order skills



Involves and stimulates self directed learning



Gathers around a purposeful activity



Creates and maintains a safe and supportive learning environment



Encourages self assessment and feedback

# Small Group Learning

Can more effectively build on prior knowledge / experience

- Can apply more directly to real life experiences

Involves cycles of action – reflection

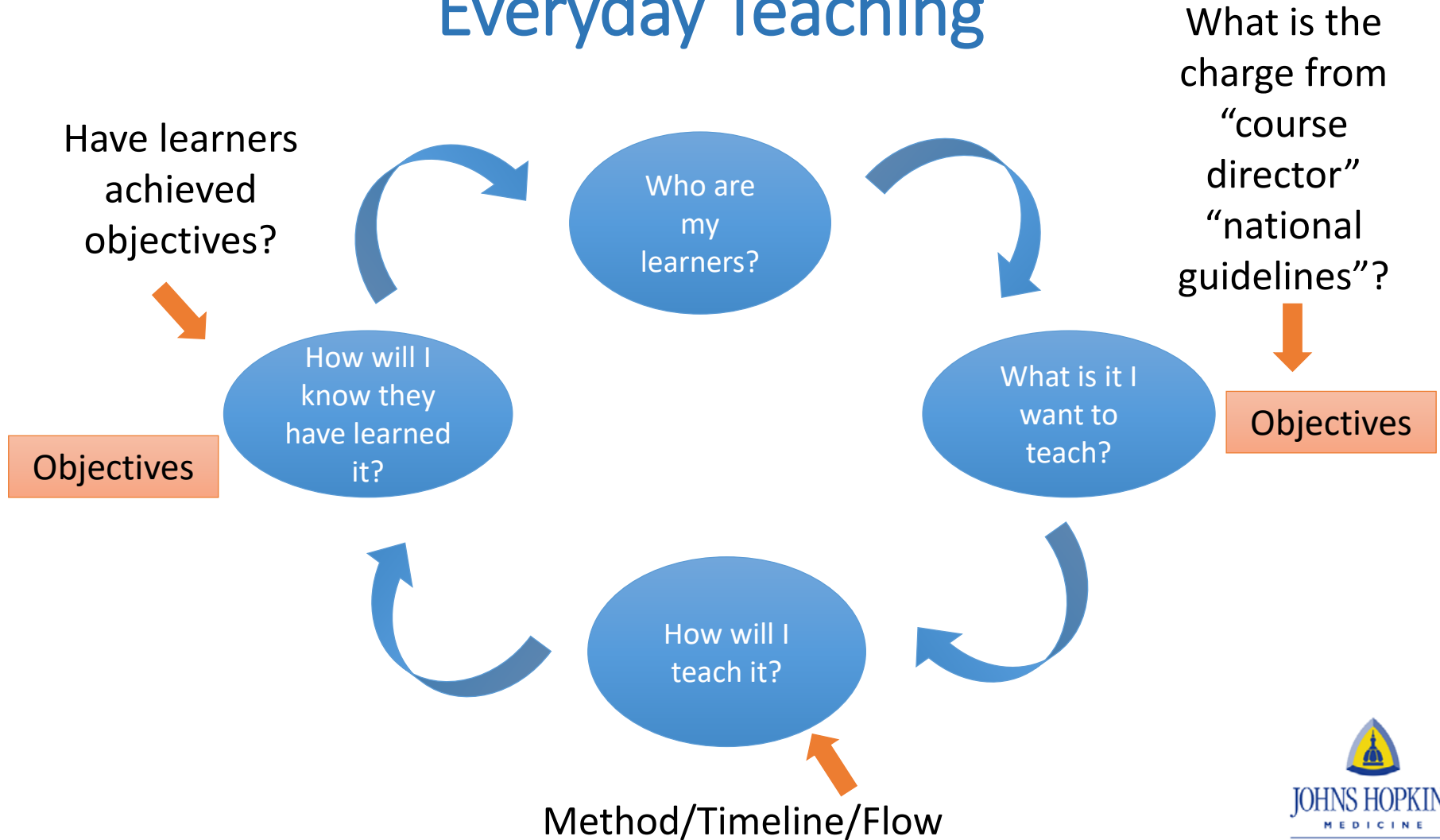
- Reflection in action
- Reflection on action

Promotes responsibility / accountability to the “profession”



IEE Improve Your Teaching Website

# Everyday Teaching



# Linking Objectives to Learning Outcomes

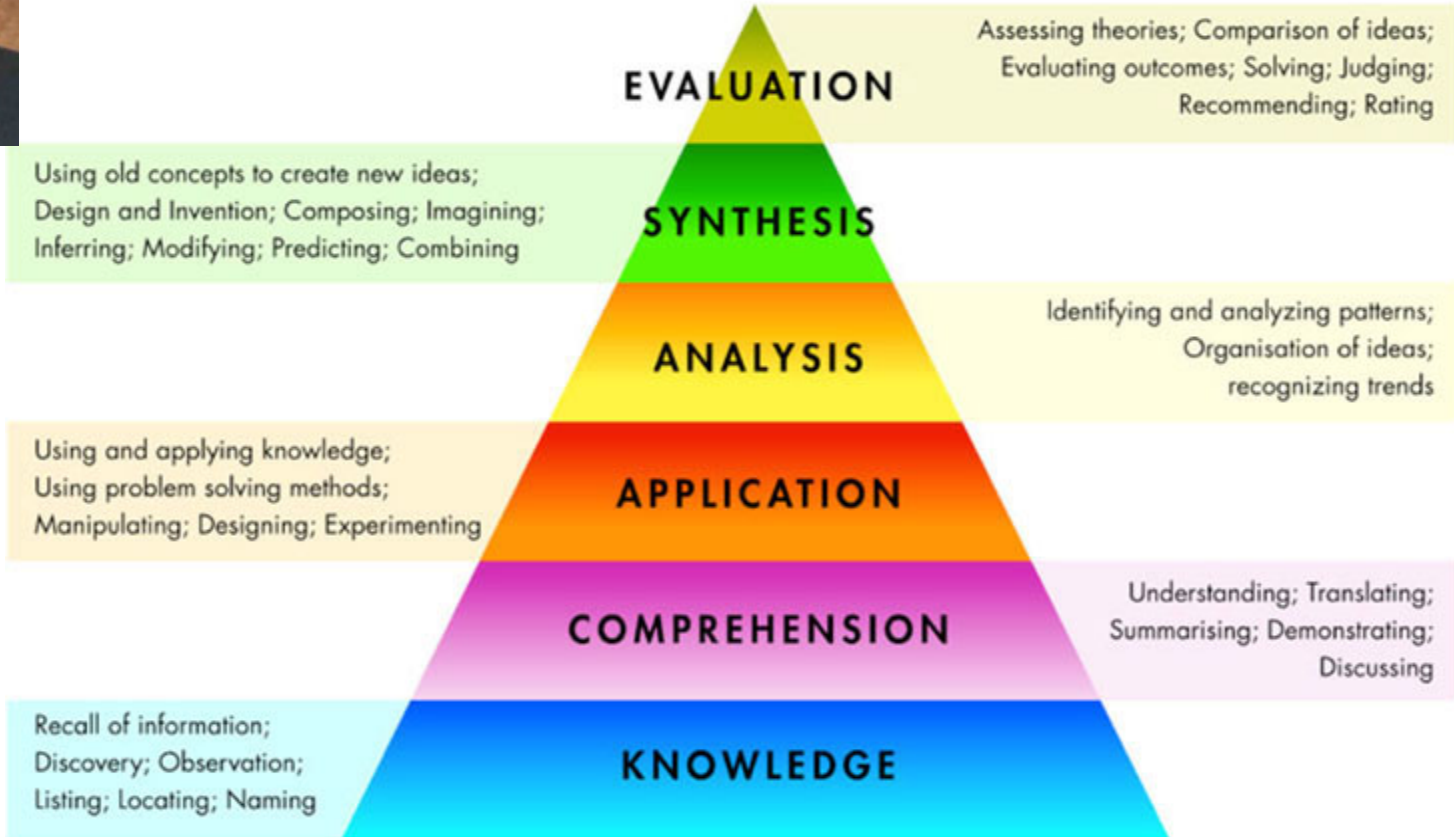
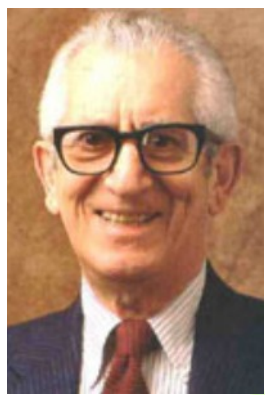
- Learner level objectives
  - What do you want learners to know, or be able to do?
  - What is the outcome?

*Who will do how much of what by when?*

*SMART*



# Blooms Taxonomy



# The Power(s) of Small Group Learning

- Consider a lecture on “Use of PPE in COVID-19 care”
- End of Lecture objectives might be:
  1. Know the components of PPE
  2. List the various types of masks and their levels of protection

These are Lower levels of the Taxonomy...

***Now....let's think about learning PPE, and how it could be more effectively done in small groups.***

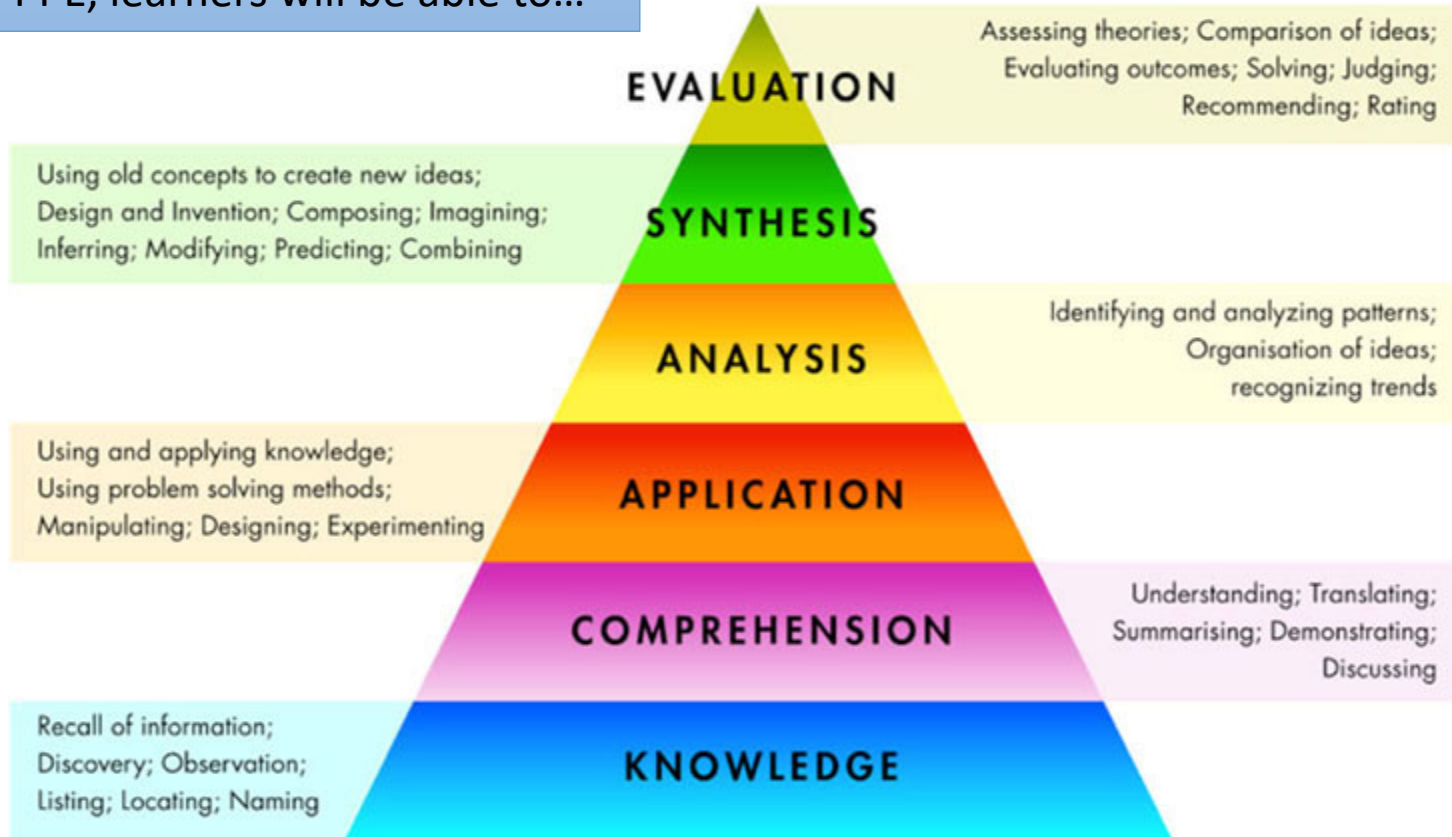
(Consider Bloom's taxonomy – higher levels)



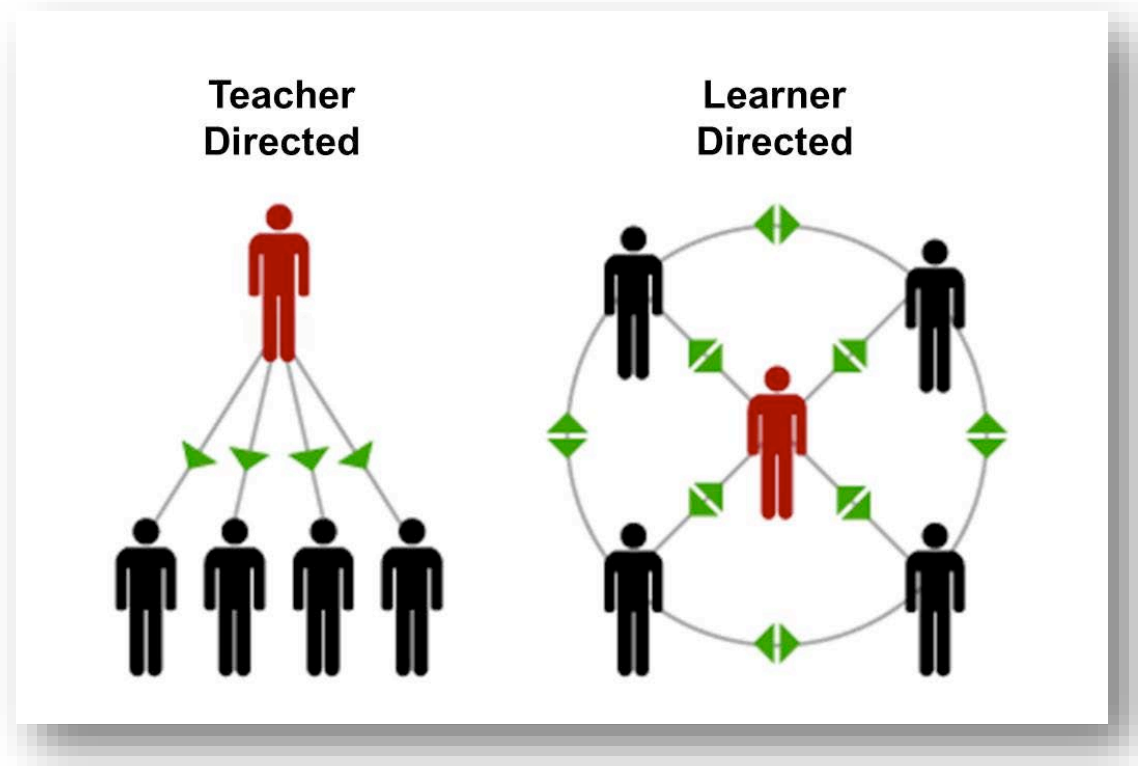
Phase 1 – brainstorm “what could you do with a small group vs a large group?”

Phase 2 – Zoom white board: offer 1 objective. By the end of the small group session on PPE, learners will be able to...

# Blooms Taxonomy



# Facilitation Plan



<https://aaronwolowiec.com>

# Interim Review

- Use of:
  - Reflection – on personal experiences - sharing
    - Think-(Pair)-Share **Zoom White Board**
    - Relational Learning (Social / Relationships; Ice Breaker)
      - **Zoom White Board**
  - Brainstorming
    - Ground Rules **Zoom Chat Feature**
  - Snowballing **Zoom Breakouts**
    - Benefits of Small Group Teaching
  - Active Learning (Creating Learning Objectives)
    - **Zoom White Board**

# Facilitating Learning in Small Group Settings

## Use of Curious Questions

- Examples:
  - *What* other experiences or events have shaped your understanding of this situation?
  - *How* did you decide to what to do in that situation?
  - *Why* are you concerned about what happened in that situation?



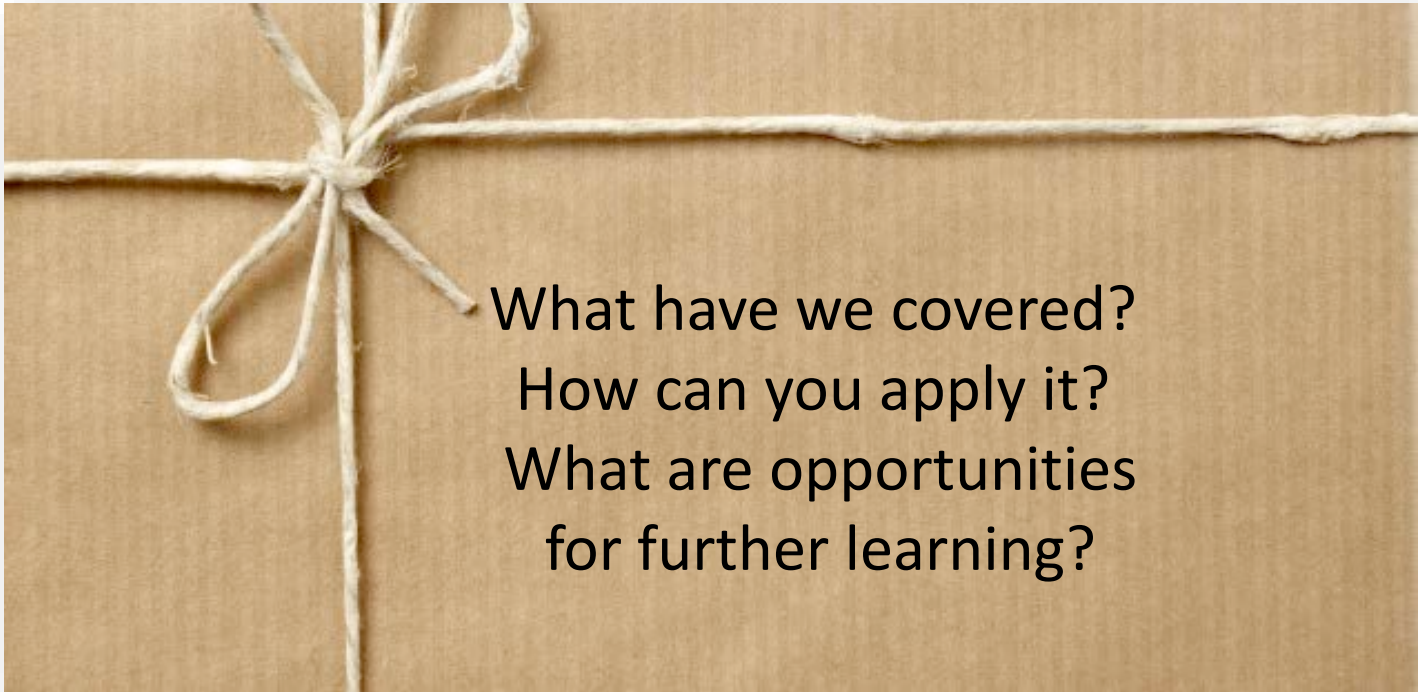
# Facilitation Challenges

- Write your biggest worry / perceived challenge re: teaching in a small group setting?
  - Example, “The disengaged learner.”

Use ZOOM Chat feature to submit them – [Just to Me](#)

- Group think / Group problem solve
  - Think about resources
    - Small Group Facilitation Guide
    - Ground Rules – Self governing, etc.

# Wrap Up



What have we covered?  
How can you apply it?  
What are opportunities  
for further learning?

