

I attended the annual [POD Network](#) Conference last year for professional faculty developers, and the most impactful session was one I attended on Object Based Teaching (OBT) conducted by [Jessica Metzler at Brown University](#). Those of us in the session met her in the Portland Museum of Art and engaged in some mindful observation of a medieval artifact, some object-based inquiry, and an illuminating discussion afterwards regarding what we learned and how discipline-specific learning objectives might be met through this process.

Though I've long practiced the technique of OBT in face-to-face and online classrooms alike, I'd never really looked into the scholarship behind it until this session. I'd also not really considered the pedagogical principles behind it, nor whether my pedagogy needed any scrutiny and modification. It turns out that there were some aspects of my practice I needed to modify. I'd recommend this reflective process to any teacher; we should routinely contemplate our own teaching methods and consider whether it goes by any other name as well as researching some of the pedagogies, design models, and practical applications that can be found in the very large body of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (commonly known as SoTL) that's out there.

Many scholars have expanded on OBT (also called object centered teaching, object centered learning, object inspired learning, and object based inquiry) to the extent that it overlaps into concepts like project based learning and active learning; because of this, you may find yourself in a quagmire of scholarship if you start looking into the practice of OBT. With that in mind, I've crafted a piece that contains a reflection of my own process of discovery and application as well as a sample lesson plan and numerous resources. [Read more on iTeachU.](#)

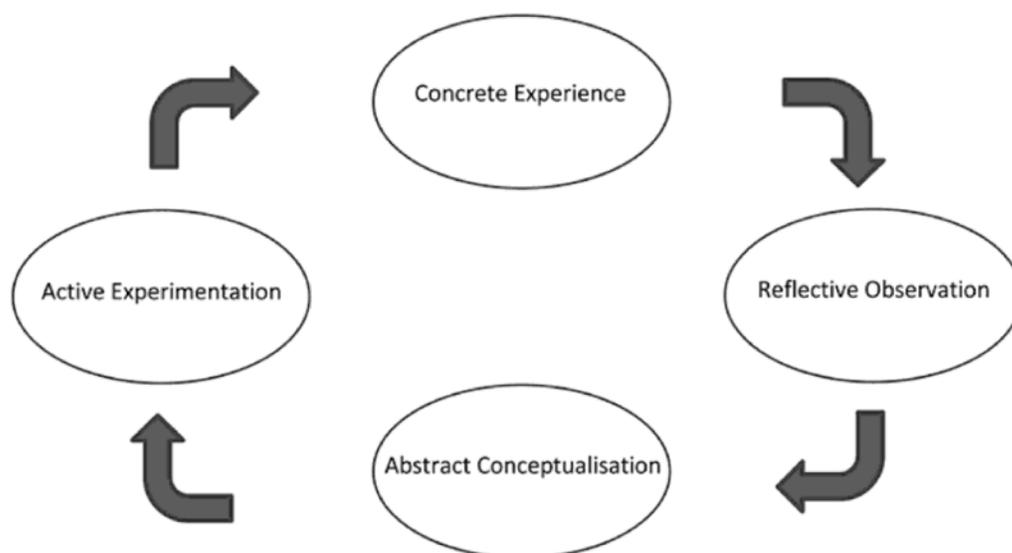


Figure I.1 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (adapted from Kolb, 1984)

David Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle from "Engaging the Senses: Object-Based Learning in Higher Education" edited by Helen J. Chatterjee and Leonie Hannan