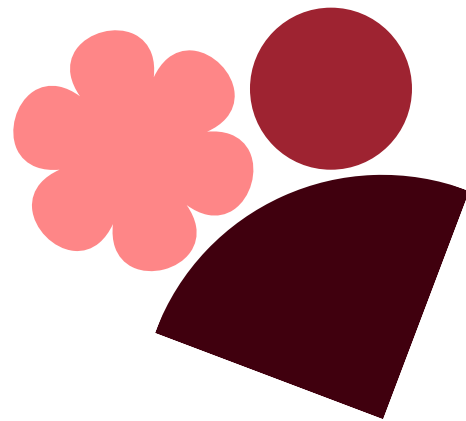


Values Discovery: From Objects to Action



Class size: 15-40 students

Level: Undergraduate/postgraduate

Time: 90 minutes total

Class setup: Large room with space to move around, tables for small groups

Materials needed: Boxes filled with diverse objects, notebooks, and access to online values assessment, flipchart paper, and markers



How This Embodies Teaching Otherwise

This session moves students from embodied discovery to conscious reflection to practical application. Rather than starting with abstract values lists, students encounter evidence of what they actually prioritise through material culture, then develop language and frameworks to understand and act on these discoveries.

The progression honours different ways of knowing - first through instinct and physical choice, then through analytical tools, finally through application to professional contexts. This builds capacity for recognising how values actually operate in complex situations rather than how we think they should work.

Students develop both clarity about their core values and awareness of how those values behave under pressure - essential preparation for ethical decision-making in organisational contexts where perfect choices don't exist.



Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Archaeological Dig (25 minutes)

Brief (3 minutes): Explain that students will discover evidence of their priorities through physical objects before intellectual analysis. Position yourself near the object boxes. Tell students they have 15 minutes to explore the boxes silently and choose three objects that draw them for any reason - don't think about why. Emphasise this is individual discovery work, not discussion. Trust instinct over analysis.

Silent excavation (15 minutes): Students work alone, moving between boxes. Your role is to maintain the container - walk quietly around the room, ensure silence is maintained, avoid commenting on choices. If students look uncertain, quietly remind them to "trust what draws you." Watch for overthinking (students standing back, analysing rather than touching objects) and gently redirect to physical engagement. Some will choose quickly, others will deliberate - both approaches are fine.

Object witness (7 minutes): Call time and ask students to find individual spaces to arrange their three objects. They write in notebooks: first, briefly describe what drew them to each object (observation, not explanation). Then, looking at all three together, they write what this collection might suggest about what matters to them. Give time warnings at 2 minutes and 1 minute remaining. Circulate to ensure students are describing rather than analysing.

Step 2: Values Mapping (25 minutes)

Individual Assessment (15 minutes): Direct students to the online values assessment at [Personal Values](#). Explain this is a series of "this or that" choices between different values - they'll click on whichever value feels more important to them in each pair. At the end, they'll receive their top 5 core values. Emphasise choosing based on gut reaction rather than overthinking each choice. Tell them to save or screenshot their final results showing their top 5 values. Circulate to help with any technical issues, but avoid discussing results during this phase.

Object-values connection (10 minutes): Students examine their objects alongside their top 5 values results. Ask them to write: Where do you see connections between your objects and your identified top 5 values? What do your objects reveal that doesn't appear in your top 5? What surprises or tensions emerge between your embodied choices and your assessment results? This is individual reflection, not discussion. Remind students there are no right answers - contradictions are data, not problems.

Step 3: Values in Action (25 minutes)

Small groups (3-4 people) (20 minutes): Form groups of 3-4 students. Each person shares one object (show it, explain what drew them to it) and one value from their top 5 results. After everyone shares, groups discuss: How do these values show up in your daily decisions? Where do you experience conflicts between different values? What makes it challenging to live these values consistently? Your role is to move between groups, listen for rich discussion, and redirect if conversations become too abstract by asking for specific examples.

Workplace application (5 minutes): Ask each group to identify one common challenge about values in professional contexts based on their discussion. Examples might include: when personal values conflict with organisational demands, when efficiency pressures override value-based choices, when team members have conflicting values. Have groups write their challenge on flipchart paper. This sets up the next phase.

Step 4: Practical Commitment (15 minutes)

Individual reflection (10 minutes): Students work individually to identify one specific way they want to better align their actions with their values this week. Emphasise making commitments concrete and achievable rather than aspirational. Provide prompts: What's one small change you

could make to your daily routine? What's one decision you could make differently? What's one conversation you could have? Circulate to help students move from vague intentions ("be more sustainable") to specific actions ("bring reusable cup to coffee shop every day this week").

Commitment partners (5 minutes): Students find one other person (not from their small group) and share their specific commitment. Partners exchange contact details and agree to check in with each other mid-week about progress. Explain this is about support and accountability, not judgment. Give them a simple structure: "My commitment this week is..." and "I'll check in with you on [day]."



What to Expect

Archaeological phase: Curious engagement with objects, some initial confusion giving way to genuine selection based on attraction rather than logic.

Assessment phase: Focused individual work as students discover language for things they felt during the dig. Moments of recognition and some surprise at results.

Group sharing: Animated discussion as students make connections between their discoveries and others'. Growing awareness of complexity and commonality in values experiences.

Commitment phase: Thoughtful energy as students translate insights into actionable steps. Some struggle to make commitments specific enough to be meaningful.



Common Issues and Fixes

"My objects don't match my values assessment"

Response: That's interesting data. What might your objects be revealing that the survey categories can't capture? Values often operate in more complex ways than we expect.

Groups getting stuck in abstract discussion

Response: Bring it back to specific examples. "Tell me about a time when this showed up in your life" rather than discussing the value in general.

Vague commitments in final phase

Response: Help students make it specific. "Instead of 'be more sustainable,' what's one actual change you could make to your Tuesday routine?"



Extension Options

Follow-up session: Students return next week to share how their commitment went, identify what supported or hindered their values-based choices.

Organisational application: Use personal values insights to examine company values statements - where do you see alignment or tension with your own discoveries?

Case study analysis: Apply values framework to business scenarios, exploring how personal and organisational values interact in decision-making.



Success Indicators

- Students make object choices based on genuine attraction rather than rational explanation
- Rich connections emerge between embodied discovery and analytical assessment
- Honest discussion about challenges of living values in practice
- Specific, achievable commitments that bridge insight with action
- Recognition that values operate in complex, sometimes contradictory ways

This session develops both self-awareness about personal values and practical understanding of how values operate in real-world contexts. Students learn to recognise their authentic priorities and understand the complexity of values-based decision-making, preparing them for ethical leadership in organisational settings where competing values and pressures shape every choice.