

How to develop a lesson plan

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To begin, ask yourself three basic questions:

Where are your learners going?

How are they going to get there?

How will you know when they have arrived?

Then begin to think about each of the following categories which form the structure of the plan. While planning, use the questions below to guide you during each stage.

Goals

Goals determine purpose, aim, objective and rationale for what you and your learners will engage in during lesson time. Use this section to express the intermediate lesson goals that draw upon previous plans and activities and set the stage by preparing learners for future activities and further knowledge acquisition. The goals are typically written as broad educational or unit goals adhering to a scheme of work and curriculum standards.

What are the broader objectives, aims, or goals of the unit /curriculum?

What are your goals for this unit/area of learning?

What do you expect learners to be able to do by the end of this unit/area of learning?

Objectives

This section focuses on what your learners will do to acquire further knowledge and skills. The objectives for the daily lesson plan are drawn from the broader aims of the unit plan but are achieved over a well defined time period.

What will learners be able to do during this lesson?

Under what conditions will learners' performance be accomplished?

What is the degree or criterion on the basis of which satisfactory attainment of the objectives will be judged?

How will learners demonstrate that they have learned and understood the objectives of the lesson?

Prerequisites

Prerequisites can be useful when considering the readiness state of your learners. Prerequisites allow you to factor in necessary preparation activities to make sure that learners can meet the lesson objectives.

What must learners already be able to do before this lesson?

What concepts have to be mastered in advance to accomplish the lesson objectives?

Materials

This section helps tutors determine what materials, books, equipment, and resources they will need to have ready. A complete list of materials, including full citations of textbooks to be used, worksheets, and any other special considerations are most useful.

What materials will be needed?

What textbooks are needed?

What needs to be prepared in advance? (typical for science lessons and cooking or baking activities)

Lesson Procedure

This section provides a detailed, step-by-step description of how the lesson plan objectives will be achieved. This is usually intended for the tutor and provides suggestions on how to proceed with implementation of the lesson plan. It also focuses on what the tutor should have learners do during the lesson. This section is basically divided into four components: an introduction, a main activity, closure and follow up.

Introduction:

How will you introduce the ideas and objectives of this lesson?

How will you get learners' attention and motivate them in order to hold their attention?

How can you tie lesson objectives with learner interests and past classroom activities?

What will be expected of learners?

Main Activity:

What is the focus of the lesson?

What does the teacher do to facilitate learning and manage the various activities?

What are some good and bad examples to illustrate what you are presenting to learners?

How can this material be presented to ensure each learner will benefit from the learning experience?

Considerations:

Take into account what learners are learning (a new skill, a rule or formula, a concept/fact/idea, an attitude, or a value).

Choose one of the following techniques to plan the lesson content based on what your objectives are:

Demonstration - list in detail and sequence of the steps to be performed

Explanation - outline the information to be explained

Discussion - list of key questions to guide the discussion

Closure/Conclusion:

What will you use to draw the ideas together for learners at the end?

How will you provide feedback to learners to correct their misunderstandings and reinforce their learning?

Follow up Lessons/Activities:

What activities might you suggest for enrichment and remediation?

What lessons might follow as a result of this lesson?

Assessment/Evaluation

This section focuses on ensuring that your learners have arrived at their intended destination by revisiting the aims and objectives of the lesson. You will need to gather some evidence that they did. This usually is done by gathering learners' work and assessing this work using some kind of grading that is based on lesson objectives. You could also replicate some of the activities practiced as part of the lesson, without providing the same level of guidance as during the lesson. You could always quiz learners on various concepts and problems as well.

How will you evaluate the objectives that were identified?

Any planned instructional procedure or teaching method for a particular lesson should also address the following questions:

1. Does the lesson plan permit adjustment for learners with different learning abilities (Differentiation)?

There probably has never been a teacher who has a class of learners whose members were of equal ability. The instructional method(s) planned for a particular lesson must take into account individual learner ability. There is no substitute for doing this, as a lesson planner, you should at least have a serious awareness of this.

2. Does the lesson plan encourage the learners to become continually involved in the learning activities (Inclusivity)?

Instructional activities or procedures should not be static descriptions of what the teacher and learners will do. A good tutor will tell you that he or she makes adjustments in instruction based on feedback from learners. The idea is obviously to keep learners focused and involved in learning. For learners to be continually involved in learning activities will require resourcefulness on the part of the teacher, but it is a consideration important to the planning of any lesson.

3. Does the lesson permit for monitoring of learner progress?

Consider how you will monitor the progress of your learners during the lesson itself. There are ways to this, and these ways are collectively referred to in education jargon as formative evaluation. All this means is that you must determine how you will monitor the progress of your learners. The purpose of this monitoring is not just to collect information about learner progress. Rather, it is to have ways in mind about how to use this information to make instant changes in lesson procedures. Information about how your learners are progressing may indicate that some reconsolidation and reordering of the sequence of the lesson is warranted.

4. Does the lesson provide for adequate assistance for learners who do not learn from the initial input?

If only everyone "got it" right the first time! The reality is that almost no lesson is 100% reliable. That means some learners will fall behind. They "won't get it," and you need to think about what to do about that. The problem is compounded because you are confronted with the real problem of what to do with the learners who did "get it" while you are attending to those who didn't. The "got it" learners can be given some ancillary work, or some enrichment materials, extension exercises while you work with the learners who need assistance.

The preceding 4 descriptions are opinions. They are not truth. Anyone planning a lesson should at least keep in mind the 4 posed questions. Answering them for each lesson can improve the teaching and learning experience for learners.