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How to Write a Lesson Plan: A Teacher's Guide

Lesson planning is a necessary first step in implementing curriculum themes. Creating a lesson plan with clearly defined learning objectives, goals, and a metric for measuring progress toward these goals is vital to ensuring students benefit as much as possible from weekly lessons. Ask questions of yourself that pertain to the structure and benefits of your lessons as well as the needs of your students. Some things to ask when creating your lesson plan are

- **What is the goal/learning objective of this lesson?**
- **What materials are necessary to teach this lesson effectively?**
- **What types of activities will best help my students learn this lesson?**
- **Which group sizes are best for each activity and will best aid students in their learning processes?**

Consider your class's collective and individual learning styles and needs. Are your students more responsive to finding their own research texts than the textbooks and websites you provide? You may have many hands-on learners who need physical activities to help them process information. Be mindful of any special needs or barriers students may have that will require additional materials or assistance to allow them to participate in activities and lessons. Your lesson plan should also be clearly written, concise, and easy to follow and implement. By writing lesson plans in this manner, you'll be able to provide a road map for any substitute teachers in your room to follow in your absence.

Key Components of a Lesson Plan with Examples

Your lesson plan should include:

- **An objective or statement of learning goals:** Objectives are the foundation of your lesson plan. They should be clearly stated and should outline which skills, knowledge, or understanding students are expected to gain as a result of the lesson (ex: "At the end of this lesson, students will be able to observe and identify all 50 United States.") Be mindful that your objectives are realistic, measurable, and in compliance with the educational standards of your school and/or district for your grade level.
- **Materials needed:** Make a list of all necessary materials and ensure they are available well in advance of the lesson. If your lesson requires use of shared materials or spaces (such as computer labs or shared electronics), make sure you reserve these spaces and confirm their reservation. Keep materials together in a secure space and labeled for your lesson, and have extra available. Include any links or media that are necessary for your lesson, as well as materials needed. Ensure your sites are bookmarked and playlists are compiled in advance.
- **The procedure and instructions:** Create detailed notes on both the process for the lesson or activity and on how instructions are to be given. Maybe there is certain information you don't want students to be told upfront, but you want them to discover it throughout the course of the lesson. Your lesson plan should be detailed enough that anyone who reads it will have all the same information and ability to effectively teach the lesson.
- **Group sizes for lessons and activities:** It is best to use a mix of groupings for the activities within your lessons, including individual, pairs, small group, and whole class work. When planning your activities, contemplate which groupings will work best for each activity or if students will have the option of choosing which group sizes work best for them. Consider materials needed and the availability of those materials/resources for each activity.
- **A method of assessing student progress toward objectives:** How will you determine if your lesson plan accomplished its goal of achieving learning objectives? In your lesson plan, detail your process for assessment (oral quiz, written quiz, project, etc.) and get feedback on what worked and didn't work for students. Determine what values will be used to define your lesson's success (ex: students are able to display knowledge comprehension in line with the learning objective 80% of the time).

- **Any homework assignments** relevant to the lesson to extend learning.

Aim to have lesson plans completed no later than the Thursday prior to their implementation. Allow time to observe progress toward the current week's objectives, and determine if extending the lesson into next week is necessary. Give yourself sufficient time to gather necessary materials as well. Some schools and districts require the use of lesson planning books and templates for creating lesson plans. If yours doesn't, you can create your own weekly lesson plan template or download one from a website. Find great lesson plan samples of teacher-created templates. With some guidance and practice, you'll be on your way to learning how to make a lesson plan of your own.

Lesson Planning for Effective Classroom Management

Lesson planning plays a huge role in providing students with the stable classroom environments that best support their learning. No matter the age group, students respond best to predictable routines in which they are involved and aware of the process and are able to anticipate what comes next. Post your lesson plans in multiple visible places where students, substitutes, and parents can all see them and easily stay caught up on your curriculum. Have students alternate reading the next day's activities, materials, and required homework as an exit ticket.

A lesson plan for teachers that takes into account students' learning styles and interests goes a long way to promoting student engagement and classroom involvement. Encourage your students to give feedback on lessons, either throughout the week or at the end of a completed lesson, and take note of which elements brought out the best and worst responses.

Looking for Additional Lesson Plan Ideas and Inspiration?

Like any skill, creating a good lesson plan format gets easier the more you do it. It might start off seeming like an intimidating feat, but if you're consistent after a while, you find your rhythm. The most important part of the process is to always be considering the needs of your class, and that includes you as a teacher. Creativity in lesson planning is important, but stay mindful of your budget and time restrictions, and don't overextend yourself.

If you're searching for ideas on how to create a lesson plan, check out these links for insights about Edtech trends, introducing technology into your classroom for the first time, and ways to capture students' attention:

- <https://blog.goguardian.com/3-trends-in-educational-technology-to-watch-in-2019>
- <https://blog.goguardian.com/want-to-provide-better-education-dont-compromise-on-classroom-management>
- <https://blog.goguardian.com/how-teachers-can-integrate-technology-in-the-classroom>
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