

# Secrets of preparing a lesson plan

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A lesson plan is a [teacher's](#) detailed description of the course of instruction for one class. A daily lesson plan is developed by a teacher to guide class instruction. Details will vary depending on the preference of the teacher, subject being covered, and the need and/or curiosity of children. There may be requirements mandated by the school system regarding the plan.

## Developing a lesson plan

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While there are many formats for a lesson plan, most lesson plans contain some or all of these elements, typically in this order:

- *Title* of the lesson
- [Time](#) required to complete the lesson
- List of required [materials](#)
- List of [objectives](#), which may be [behavioral objectives](#) (what the [student](#) can *do* at lesson completion) or [knowledge objectives](#) (what the student *knows* at lesson completion)
- The *set* (or lead-in, or bridge-in) that focuses students on the lesson's [skills](#) or [concepts](#)—these include showing [pictures](#) or [models](#), asking leading [questions](#), or [reviewing](#) previous lessons
- An *instructional component* that describes the sequence of events that make up the lesson, including the teacher's instructional input and guided practice the students use to try new skills or work with new ideas
- *Independent practice* that allows students to extend skills or knowledge on their own
- A [summary](#), where the teacher wraps up the discussion and answers questions
- An [evaluation](#) component, a test for mastery of the instructed skills or concepts—such as a set of questions to answer or a set of instructions to follow
- *Analysis* component the teacher uses to reflect on the lesson itself —such as what worked, what needs improving
- A *continuity* component reviews and reflects on content from the previous lesson.

## A well-developed lesson plan

A well-developed lesson plan reflects the interests and needs of students. It incorporates best practices for the educational field. The lesson plan correlates with the teacher's [philosophy of education](#), which is what the teacher feels is the purpose of educating the students.

Secondary [English](#) program lesson plans, for example, usually center around four topics. They are [literary theme](#), elements of language and [composition](#), [literary history](#), and [literary genre](#). A broad, thematic lesson plan is preferable, because it allows a teacher to create various research, writing, speaking, and reading assignments. It helps an instructor teach different literature genres and incorporate videotapes, films, and television programs. Also, it facilitates teaching literature and English together.<sup>[3]</sup> Similarly, history lesson plans focus on content (historical accuracy and background information), analytic thinking, [scaffolding](#), and the practicality of lesson structure and meeting of educational goals.<sup>[4]</sup> School requirements and a teacher's personal tastes, in that order, determine the exact requirements for a lesson plan.

*Unit plans* follow much the same format as a lesson plan, but cover an entire unit of work, which may span several days or weeks. Modern [constructivist](#) teaching styles may not require individual lesson plans. The unit plan may include specific objectives and timelines, but lesson plans can be more fluid as they adapt to student needs and learning styles.

## Setting an objective

The first thing a teacher does is create an objective, a statement of purpose for the whole lesson. An objective statement itself should answer what students will be able to do by the end of the lesson. Harry Wong states that, "Each [objective] must begin with a verb that states the action to be taken to show accomplishment. The most important word to use in an assignment is a verb, because verbs state how to demonstrate if accomplishment has taken place or not."<sup>[5]</sup> The objective drives the whole lesson, it is the reason the lesson exists. Care is taken when creating the objective for each day's lesson, as it will determine the activities the students engage in. The teacher also ensures that lesson plan goals are compatible with the developmental level of the students. The teacher ensures as well that their student achievement expectations are reasonable.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Selecting lesson plan material

A lesson plan must correlate with the text book the class uses. The school usually selects the text books or provides teachers with a limited text book choice for a particular unit. The teacher must take great care and select the most appropriate book for the students.

## Types of Assignments

The instructor must decide whether class assignments are whole-class, small groups, workshops, independent work, peer learning, or contractual:

- Whole-class—the teacher lectures to the class as a whole and has the class collectively participate in classroom discussions.
- Small groups—students work on assignments in groups of three or four.
- Workshops—students perform various tasks simultaneously. Workshop activities must be tailored to the lesson plan.
- Independent work—students complete assignments individually.
- Peer learning—students work together, face to face, so they can learn from one another.
- Contractual work—teacher and student establish an agreement that the student must perform a certain amount of work by a deadline.

These assignment categories (e.g. peer learning, independent, small groups) can also be used to guide the instructor's choice of assessment measures that can provide information about student and class comprehension of the material. There may be additional questions an instructor can consider when choosing which type of assignment would provide the most benefit to students. These include:

- What level of learning do the students need to attain before choosing assignments with varying difficulty levels?
- What is the amount of time the instructor wants the students to use to complete the assignment?
- How much time and effort does the instructor have to provide student grading and feedback?
- What is the purpose of the assignment? (e.g. to track student learning; to provide students with time to practice concepts; to practice incidental skills such as group process or independent research)
- How does the assignment fit with the rest of the lesson plan? Does the assignment test content knowledge or does it require application in a new context?