

Developing Tutoring Lessons

Questions to Consider Prior to Lesson Planning

To better understand the perspective of the learner, think about your own feelings about formal learning when you begin to plan instruction.

- What do you want to know when you participate in an educational program?
- What motivates you to participate?
- How much input do you want to have in what and how you learn?

What are the educational goals for tutoring?

- What are the learning objectives for this and other lessons?
 - What concepts or skills does the learner have to master to accomplish the learning objectives?

What do you need to consider when planning lessons?

- Where do you need to start based on the learner's needs?
- What are the learner's motivations, learning needs, and preferred learning styles?
- How can you capture the learner's attention?
- How can you motivate the learner to stay on task?

What do you expect of the learner?

What should the learner expect of you?

Lesson Format

Parts of a lesson plan:

- *Pre-lesson activities* can include a review of the last lesson and homework, a warm-up activity to activate the learner's prior knowledge, and/or a preview of the topic and new vocabulary.
- *Presentation and modeling of new material* includes how you are going to present, explain, and model new skills and concepts, as well as a description of the learning tasks and instructional materials you plan to use.
- *Guided practice activities* should be planned to provide you with an informal assessment of how well the learner understands new material.
- *Independent practice activities* can be planned for the tutoring session or as homework.
- *The lesson closing* should include a summary of the lesson's key points, a Q&A to check for understanding, and a preview of the next lesson. It may also include instructions for homework.

Lesson Plan Template with Tips

Lesson Components	Time	Lessons should be between one and two hours in length, with a 10 minute break after an hour
Learning objectives		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State what you want the learner to know or be able to do after the lesson
Pre-lesson activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of past lesson Warm-up activity to engage learner in new material Link new content to learner's prior knowledge Preview new material or text Teach unfamiliar vocabulary
Presentation/ modeling of new material		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of how you will explain, demonstrate, or model new concepts and skills Description of learning activities List of materials needed
Guided practice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity designed to informally assess learner's understanding of new material
Independent practice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "On their own" activity that learners can complete during the lesson or as homework
Lesson closing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of key points from the lesson (most effective if learner does the summary) Learner's questions Suggestions for review and practice at home Overview of next tutoring session

Learning Objectives

A learning objective states *what learners will be able to do* when they have completed the lesson. Each lesson should be guided by learning objectives that state the desired knowledge or skills that a learner should be able to demonstrate at the end of the lesson. Learning objectives focus on specific knowledge or skills that are steps toward the attainment of short-term tutoring goals and a long-term and more overarching educational goal.

Learning objectives will:

- Give learners a clear picture of what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Help you plan a sequence of lessons that build on each other.
- Help you select content.
- Help you decide on instructional strategies and materials.
- Form the basis for evaluating adults' learning gains.

When writing a measurable learning outcome, it is important to:

- Focus on learner behavior: *The learner will be able to ...*
- Use simple and specific action verbs, such as *define, name, order, recognize, list, describe, identify, discuss, explain, demonstrate, solve, use, calculate, analyze, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, infer, and summarize.*

- Select appropriate informal assessment methods to assess the learner’s ability to perform the skill or understanding of the concept.

A learning objective should include the *conditions* under which learners will demonstrate proficiency and the *criteria* that will be used to assess proficiency.

- **Conditions:** The conditions refer to any instructions, materials, tools, supports, or other resources learners will have access to when demonstrating proficiency, such as a specific passage of text, dictionary, or a calculator.
- **Criteria:** You need to state the criteria you will use to determine proficiency. For example, the objective can include a score on a rubric for evaluating learners’ writing, a reading accuracy score, or a percentage of correct math answers.
- **Performance or proficiency:** An objective needs to describe what the learner is expected to know or do. The verb you use to state what the learner is expected to know or do needs to describe a measurable behavior. Some verbs, such as *understand* and *realize*, are not measurable. Google “verbs for measurable learning objectives” for lists of appropriate verbs.

Examples:

- Given a passage of 150-200 words at the learner’s instructional level, the learner will be able to read the passage aloud at an appropriate reading rate for one minute with a reading accuracy score of at least 95 percent.
- Given 20 problems that require converting fractions to decimals, the learner will be able to make the correct conversions with a score of 90 percent or better.

Check Questions

Check your objectives to make sure you have addressed the following:

- Does the objective meet the real needs of learners and contribute to achievement of learners’ goals?
- Is the objective realistic and attainable by learners?
- Is the objective measurable and how will it be measured?
- Does the objective convey a clear understanding of what the learner should be able to do?
- Does the objective focus on learners’ performance, as opposed to your performance as a tutor?
- Are appropriate materials and other resources available to make the objective achievable?

Assessment

Although it may seem backward, it is most effective to develop the criteria to assess learners’ proficiency before you identify the techniques and resources you will use to deliver instruction. Assessment needs to be directly connected to the performance described in the objective.

Integrating Assessment and Feedback

Assessment provides evidence that the learner has met his/her learning objectives and goals. Assessment is usually done by gathering a learner’s work and using some kind of grading rubric that is based on lesson objectives.

- Assessment should be an integral part of tutoring and learning and should involve the learner in an assessment of his/her own learning.

- Assessments can replicate some of the activities practiced as part of the lesson, without providing the same level of guidance as during the lesson.
- Assessment can also be quizzes on various concepts and problems.

Ask yourself:

- How will you provide feedback to learners to correct their misunderstandings and reinforce their learning?
- How will you review and assess learning gains with learners?
- How will you guide learners in reflecting on what was accomplished during the lesson?

Learning Activities

- Design learning activities that include a variety of educational approaches and activities.
- When possible, include activities that use a real-life context to make learning relevant and meaningful.
- Design activities to involve a variety of approaches, including visual, auditory, reading, writing, and hands-on methods.
- Ask yourself the following questions:
 - What do you need to do to facilitate learning and manage the various activities?
 - How can new material be presented to ensure the learner will benefit from the learning experience?

Presenting and Guiding Instruction

- Use instructional strategies that appeal to the learner's preferred learning style, but also use other methods to keep learning interesting and to maximize learning outcomes. Take into consideration what adults are learning – is it a new skill, a rule or formula, a concept, a fact, or an idea? Choose one of the following techniques to appropriately present the new material.
 - Demonstration/modeling – the learner will observe you as you perform the steps while thinking aloud.
 - Explanation – you will present the information clearly, using examples and visuals.
 - Discussion – you will begin with key questions to initiate and guide a discussion with your learner.

Practice

- Ask yourself: Is the learner actually practicing what you taught?
- Model new concepts and allow learners to rehearse what they are learning.
- Be sure to provide learners with the opportunity to practice on a regular basis, starting with a guided practice.
- Provide learners with an opportunity to practice applying new skills in new settings.
- Never introduce new material while learners are practicing newly learned material.

Materials

Provide learners with a variety of materials including contextual support such as audiovisual aids and supplemental readings.

Concluding a Lesson

Provide positive closure.

- Think about what you will use to draw ideas and concepts together for learners at the end of the lesson.
- End by summarizing important points of the lesson, assigning homework, and previewing the next lesson. Guide and encourage application of new knowledge and skills.

Evaluate the Lesson

- Decide how you will evaluate whether or not lesson objectives were met.
- Think about what activities you might suggest for enrichment and remediation.

Lesson Plan Evaluation Rubric

Lesson Components	Not satisfactory	Proficient
Learning Objectives	Objectives not stated	Stated objectives with reference to what students will know and be able to do at the end of the lesson
Pre-lesson activities (state purpose as relates to goals, activate prior knowledge, pre-teach new concepts and/or vocabulary, review previous lesson)	No pre-lesson activities	Well thought out pre-lesson activities
Presentation and modeling of new material	Presentation confusing	Clear explanation with examples; modeling with thinking aloud
Instructional materials and resources	No instructional materials and resources evident	Instructional materials and resources were relevant and appropriate for adults
Learning tasks and assignments	No learning tasks or assignments	Learning tasks and assignments encourage active learning and critical thinking
Guided practice	No guided practice	Guided practice reflected instruction and included close monitoring and constructive feedback
Informal assessment integrated into the lesson and used to inform instruction	No evidence of assessment	Informal assessment integrated into the lesson and used to inform instruction
Independent practice opportunities	No independent practice	Independent practice opportunities built into the lesson
Lesson closing	No lesson closing	Key point(s) summarized, questions asked to check for and enhance understanding, next lesson previewed

Things to think about:

As you plan lessons, consider the following questions:

- How will you introduce the ideas and objectives of this lesson?
 - Does learner know what he/she will learn and be able to do after this lesson?
- How can you connect lesson objectives to learner interests?
- How can you build the content of this lesson on adults' prior knowledge and past lessons?
- What criteria will provide the basis for satisfactory attainment of lesson objectives?
 - Does learner know how goals will be assessed and how he/she will demonstrate knowledge of the material?
- Is the lesson plan flexible?
- Is there a change of pace every 10 minutes?
- Is multi-sensory instruction included?
- How will you continually check for learner understanding?
- How will you reinforce wait time?
- How will you use questions?

Connect this lesson to further learning:

Think about what lessons might follow as a result of this lesson.

Tips for Planning and Delivering Lessons

- Place emphasis on learning, not teaching.
- Promote active learning; avoid passive learning situations.
- Orient lessons toward learners' interests. Help learners focus and stay on task.
- Focus on the strengths of learners and build on their previous knowledge and strengths.
- Begin with the known and move to the unknown; start with the simple and move to the complex when presenting new material.
- Help learners understand their learning process and their own learning style, then adapt teaching methods to match learners' learning needs and styles.
- Encourage discussion by asking learners open-ended and stimulating questions instead of asking "Do you understand?"
- Actively listen to learners and encourage them to think independently.
- Guide learners in problem-solving; if necessary, clarify the task, but avoid over explaining.
- Don't answer questions too quickly; allow learners time to think through questions, figure out answers, and develop and test their own conclusions or solutions.
- Define the amount of time to be spent in tutoring activities and homework.
- Plan for only short periods of concentrated work.
- Have reasonable expectations, create reasonable challenges, and encourage supervised risk-taking.