

TEACHER CONSIDERATIONS IN LESSON PLANNING

[a final project]

FOR:

EDUC 351A: INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN & ASSESSMENT
TAUGHT BY PROFESSOR JANINE DAVIS

AT:

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BY:

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INTRODUCTION:

THERE EXIST two major facets of being a pre-service teacher at the University of Mary Washington. One of those facets is experiential learning in the form of a practicum, in which education students are placed inside nearby classrooms to gain real-life educational experience. The other facets occur on campus in the form of a variety of education courses that are dependent on a pre-service teacher's endorsement and grade-level.

I am a second-year student at Mary Washington with an endorsement in social studies seeking a Masters' in Secondary Education. I am currently enrolled in EDUC 351A: Instructional Design and Assessment with Professor Janine Davis. Throughout this course, my fellow students and I have learned about the interplay of educational methods, of which there are many, with lesson planning and grading.

Throughout the semester, we read from a few key textbooks, including;

- *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* by Dean C.B. Hubbel, E.R. Pitler, and B.J Stone
- *Instruction: A Model's Approach* by T.H. Estes and S.L. Gunter
- *Classroom Assessment: Principles and Practice for Effective Standards Based Instruction* by J.H. McMillan

...all of which have been used in culmination with class notes and lectures for this final project.

The purpose of this final project is to outline the basic steps teachers must follow in lesson planning, as well as to highlight a variety of considerations that will vary based upon the given classroom environment.

The following text is not any official guide to lesson planning, but rather, the compilation of my experiences as a preschool and kindergarten lead, a practicum student, and a second-year education student. All of the following material is derived strictly from my own experiences as a future educator!

As with any guidebook, the following suggestions are of course subject to bias. The amount of detail and preparedness which works for me as a future educator may not be what works in another teacher's classroom. 😊



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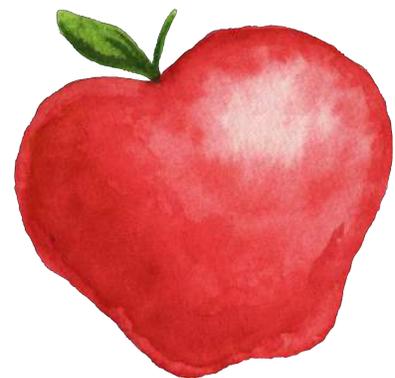
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SECTION ONE: PRE-PLANNING

PRE-PLANNING refers to the act of compiling all the necessary information you need in order to create the best possible lesson plans to lead your students to success. Elements of pre-planning include understanding the timeline you are working with, such as your school's bell schedule or grading periods, identifying any standards that must be met, such as SOL or district-wide standards, creating and outlining a grading scale that includes summative and formative assessment, and arguably most importantly, understanding your classroom rationale.

Understanding your classroom rationale requires a personal connection with your students – this is one of the ways in which you are a *teacher*, and not merely a *facilitator*. Successful teachers know that different students have different needs, and applying an age or grade-based generalization may not be appropriate in your classroom setting. Understanding the different needs of each of your students, including but not limited to students with disabilities and exceptionalities is key in creating lesson plans that will *challenge* and enrich student learning – without hindering it.

Let's get to pre-planning!



1A: UNDERSTANDING YOUR CLASSROOM RATIONALE

YOUR CLASSROOM RATIONALE refers to the diversity of students that you are in your classroom. While there may be similarities between sections, no individual classroom is ever the same. Below are some of the different factors that will affect your classroom, including whether or not they are within your control. While some things, such as a student's family background, are not within your control, adaption and differentiation are within your control.

But what is the bottom line within all of these considerations? That with the right tools and motivation, all students deserve opportunities to succeed coupled with the unchanging believe that they *can* succeed.

BLUE

= *OUT OF TEACHER CONTROL*

AGE AND GRADE LEVEL

- Age, grade level, and even the curriculum level (EG, Inclusion, Standard, Honors, AP/IB) will dictate what materials are and are not appropriate
- This includes length of lecture, variation in activities, expectations for note-taking, and the format of formative and summative assessments

SEX/GENDER + RACE/ETHNICITY

- Cultural backgrounds are a great opportunity to discuss diversity within the classroom
- This may be seen in student-student relationships

GREEN

= *WITHIN TEACHER CONTROL*

PERSONAL INTERESTS + HOBBIES

- Take the time to get to know your students in order to learn what they do *outside of the classroom*, such as in extracurricular or other hobbies. You may be able to incorporate some of these elements into lessons!

READING LEVEL + ANALYTICAL ABILITY

- If you detect that your students are reading under a level that is appropriate for your grade level, don't avoid reading! Determine the grade level that some students are reading at, and see if you can provide challenging methods for improvement throughout the year
- DON'T "under challenge" your students because it is easier.

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- If you detect that students are reading above grade level, provide additional challenging materials, such as in the forms of assigning greater nightly readings that tie into course content (but not busy work!)
- In Social Studies and English, consider assigning works to be read and analyzed throughout the class
- Working with different reading levels provides excellent opportunities for differentiation

DEMONSTRATED INTEREST IN COURSE MATERIALS

- If your students seem to be disinterested in previous lessons, this is a sign that something must be changed
- Consider adding variation: Lecture for a small portion of the classroom, or include a warm-up discussion on assigned materials in the place of a lecture. Assign dynamic materials that will engage students, and don't be afraid to get "off task" during lessons



Don't let this be you! Adapt to the needs of your students while still maintaining high expectations.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

- In some instances, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds may struggle to have the tools they need for success, such as school supplies, transportation, or even family support. These students may need a bit of additional support, however, they are just as capable of the same success that everyone else is!
- Students from higher socio-economic backgrounds may have increased opportunities for success and increased parent/family involvement
- Socio-economic status is a factor of education, but it does not need to be a determining factor. In a successful classroom, all students can succeed if they put their mind to it and have a strong support system

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

- If a student's parents are concerned about their educational success, it is more likely that the student will grow to be independent-concerned with their educational success. These students may have more assistance with homework and classwork, however, be aware if parent involvement is hindering a student's ability to succeed on their own!
- Ask yourself whether or not you want parent involvement in your classroom? Would parent volunteers for certain events/lessons be useful? Generally, this is most useful in an elementary setting.
- Have you worked with a sibling, cousin, or other relative of your current students before?

CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION + BEHAVIOR HABITS

- This is one of the aspects you are most in control of in your classroom. If you notice that classroom participation is lacking, consider using more immersive educational methods.
- Create a good classroom environment from the get-go. Not only should you verbally communicate to students your expectations, but also, you should follow

- up on these expectations. Treat your students with respect, and respond to disciplinary issues in a serious but compassionate manner
- Consider variation in the form of independent, small, and large group projects to give students opportunities to work in a variety of settings
- Utilize “controlled chaos” – vibrant discussion is great, even if it is a little loud, as long as students are on task!

“ALRIGHT. I HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT AND NOW UNDERSTAND MY CLASSROOM RATIONALE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?”



AT THE beginning of each grading period, or even unit, write down a one-two paragraph description of your classroom rationale and keep it with your planning materials. This should be used in reference to every lesson, especially if you are planning lessons for different sections.

MODIFY your rationale as needed! Has the behavior of students changed? Have their needs changed? Has their reading level or analytical ability improved? Do you have a new student?

Now, let's move on to developing a timeline!



1B: DEVELOPING A TIMELINE

YOUR TIMELINE will be based on your bell schedule, that being the amount of minutes you have during each class period, along with any grading period goals that have to be met. These goals may be determined by your county or district, your school, or your professional learning community, (PLC) if you have one.

CREATE A UNIT that is in accordance to this timeline. When planning, it helps to have an idea of how many days you will have in each unit, and how much time you will have for each lesson. When analyzing the standards, which is the next step of planning, you will have an idea of how detailed or concise you can be in each unit.

personal timeline checklist...

- Is there time in my units for contextual material, such as additional readings, videos, or projects?
 - Will I be able to include a student-driven, independent project or assignment throughout my unit?
 - How much time will I generally have for lecturing and assigning material?
 - How will homework play into this timeline?
 - What goals, such as state standards or summative assessments must be met? What are the deadlines that I have to help my students meet?
 - Am I prepared for unexpected changes, such as snow days, natural disasters, sudden changes in scheduling needs, or having a substitute teacher?



1C: IDENTIFYING STANDARDS

THERE ARE a variety of standards that have to be met in your classroom, which will serve as foundational, guiding forces in your lesson planning! Standards come from a national, state, local, and small-scale level. While you will have some professional freedom to interpret these standards any way you see fit, you are responsible for ensuring that standards are all met by your students. So, what are the standards you will encounter?

TYPES OF STANDARDS:

SOLs (and other state-standards)

- The Commonwealth of Virginia uses the Standards of Learning, or SOLs, as a form of statewide assessment. While the SOLs do show whether or not a student has met or not met basic learning requirements, they are not the end-all-be-all for learning!
- Students may score a "pass advanced," "pass proficient," or "failure" on an SOL test. It is your job as a teacher to ensure that all students pass proficient or pass advanced if you are teaching an SOL-test based course.
- Most subjects have SOL standards, however, *not all courses have an SOL test*

Country/District Wide Standards

- Are there any specific initiatives/programs held by your specific county/district/city that you must meet? If so, be aware of these!

School-Wide and PLC Standards

- Are there any specific initiatives/programs held by your specific county/district/city that you must meet? If so, be aware of these!
- These standards are more likely to change year-to-year than other standards, and are generally more focused on the needs of the specific students. For example, your school may have an initiative that "80% of students or more should be able to verbalize the importance of what they are learning if asked at any given moment"

Your OWN Standards + Student and Parent Expectations

- What do YOU value? What do your students value? What do their parents value? What does your COMMUNITY value? Is anything missing in instruction?

National Standards

- These may be benchmarks that all states have to meet in order to receive federal funding towards education

1D: CREATING A GRADING SCALE

A **PREDICTABLE, CONCISE, FAIR, AND EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND** grading scale is key to any lesson planning! Your grading system may be the same as your fellow teachers within your subject area, or even within your school! Your grading system refers to the number of formative and summative assessments per unit, their weight, and the way in which independent-response questions, such as short answers or essays are graded. Here are a few example questions to ask yourself when creating a grading scale.

“What percentage of student’s grades is the end-of-unit assessment? What percentage are formative assessments?”

“Will there be retake or extra credit opportunities? If so, how much will they count for?”

“Will points be deducted for late work? Will late work be graded?”

“Is class participation graded? If so, by what criteria?”

“Are there students with **EXCEPTIONALITIES** or IEPs who have different grading criteria or allowances? If so, how will these be included in planning?”

“How is homework graded? Is it graded for completion or accuracy?”

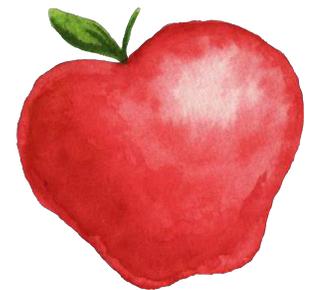
“What will my rubrics assess?”

SECTION TWO: CREATING A FRAMEWORK

CREATING A FRAMEWORK refers to outlining the key information that will be utilized in your lesson planning. This includes planning the end-of-unit summative assessment, (if you choose to do this at all) developing the lesson objectives, or “KUDs,” (what students will **KNOW, UNDERSTAND,** and be able to **DO**) selecting a model, and planning the outline for a day based on bell schedules. Essentially, a framework can be considered to be a set of **LEARNING OBJECTIVES.**

WHEN CREATING A FRAMEWORK, BE SURE TO TAKE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO MIND, such as your classroom rationale and ways in which differentiation can be added into the classroom. Be sure to create a strong framework that includes major lesson objectives *before* deciding upon the activities that students will participate in each day. Additionally, be sure to include a few key facts on your lesson plan, such as the grade level, class period, and applicable SOL standards!

Let's create our framework!



2A: CREATING A SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

A SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT is a form of assessment that occurs typically at the end of a period, such as the end of a chapter, unit, or selection of units. It is used to measure the sum of student knowledge and skills at the end after a series of lessons. Generally, a summative assessment is compiled from lesson objectives, or KUDs, which will be describe in detail on the following page. planning lessons, as this will serve as your “goal” or “end point” for a unit, making lesson planning easier and more deliberate for teachers, and giving students an answer to the “why is this important?” question.

IF YOU ARE TEACHING an SOL-tested course, or any course with an end-of-year standardized exam, such as an Advanced Placement test, it is generally wise to mirror the format of these exams in your summative assessment. For example, a good form of summative assessment for an Advanced Placement United States History course would be a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.



KEEP IN MIND THAT SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS can be done in a variety of ways. Assessments can be taken in-class, online, or as take-home assignments. Assessments can feature a variety of assessment methods, such as matching or short answer questions, or they can be in the form of a presentation or creative project. No matter what form of assessment you decide to give to your students, it is important that it assesses learning objectives in a fair and measurable way, and make sure that it is planned before the planning of individual lessons!

PREPARE your students for the summative assessment throughout the unit! It is not a surprise! For many students, teacher-produced or teacher-guided study guides can be very helpful tools in preparing for assessment.

CHECK WITH your school or PLC to see if there is a preferred method of summative assessment! For example, it would be wise to include an essay question on a test if your school has an initiative to measurably improve student's writing skills. In other cases, your PLC or fellow teachers may have specific forms of testing that are preferred. If you are using the same tests year after year, be sure to check and revise as needed them to ensure that they are the best possible tools to measure student success!



2B: DEVELOPING K.U.D.S

WHAT ARE K.U.D.S?

“K.U.D.” is an acronym that stands for “know, understand, and be able to do.” It refers to the basic, guiding lesson objectives that are to be clearly stated at the beginning of each lesson plan, and are typically derived from a combination of state standards, schoolwide standards, and teacher knowledge of the subject area. Having strong and clear K.U.D.s are one of the most important elements of your lesson plan. In addition to being merely written in a lesson plan, K.U.D.s should be listed clearly around the room for all students to see! Listed below are explanations and examples for K.U.D.s, as well as in what order they should be planned.

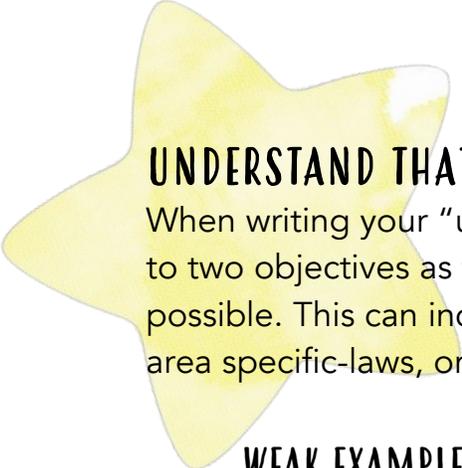
BE SURE TO CLEARLY STATE K.U.D.S AT THE TOP OF YOUR LESSON PLAN AND AROUND THE CLASSROOM!

STUDENTS WILL...

KNOW THAT... This refers to three to five key facts from your lesson plan. These are generally specific to your lesson plan. This can include vocabulary, dates, places, and names.

WEAK EXAMPLE: Students will know that the American Revolution was important.

STRONG EXAMPLE: Students will know that the American Revolution was caused by a series of events, including the founding of the colonies, a series of taxes, growing unity among the colonies, and the first Continental Congress.



UNDERSTAND THAT... This refers to broader, “big picture” concepts. When writing your “understand” objectives, it is best to stick to only one to two objectives as to keep your lesson as organized and clear as possible. This can include concepts, macro-concepts, principles, content area specific-laws, or statements of truth.

WEAK EXAMPLE: Students will understand that the American Revolution ended in 1783 with the Treaty of Paris.

**Note, while the above is true, it is not a concept! It is merely a fact, and would work best as a “KNOW” objective.*

STRONG EXAMPLE: Students will understand that the American Revolution resulted in an American success due to strong American leadership paired with aide from foreign countries.



BE ABLE TO... Finally, this refers to the skills that your students will be able to demonstrate. These skills may be specific to your subject area, or applicable to other subject areas. These can include thinking skills, planning skills, collaboration skills, fine and gross motor skills, or analytical skills. Remember, when writing “DO” objectives, use actions words, such as “list,” “demonstrate,” or “produce.”

WEAK EXAMPLE: Students will be able to know that George Washington was the first president of the United States.

**Note, while it is important for students to know this, it is not an action!*

STRONG EXAMPLE: Students will be able to work collaboratively in small groups to identify and list the first five presidents of the United States.

YOUR K.U.D.S ARE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF LESSON PLANNING! DON'T CONTINUE WITHOUT THEM!

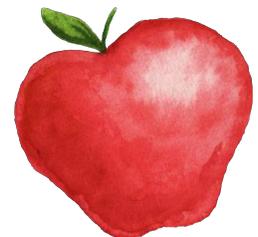
SECTION THREE: PLANNING DETAILS

ONCE YOU HAVE CREATED YOUR LESSON OBJECTIVES in the form of K.U.D.s, it is time to plan the details of your day, including formative assessments, step-by-step plans, and the creation of educational materials! This is also the point in which you may select an instructional model to base your lesson off, or add areas for differentiation in order to accommodate a wide variety of learners.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS guide your lessons, and provide a framework for teaching. The most common form of instruction is “direct instruction,” in which the teacher lectures or demonstrates a skill that students will then work on independently. This works well for many classes, however, it can get boring! Feel free to research different instructional models to see what works best for your classroom. For example, more talkative students might benefit from the “jigsaw” model, in which students learn material from each other in “expert groups” and “learning groups” – with less teacher involvement than in the direct model of instruction. Not every model works for every lesson or classroom rationale however, so be sure to do your research and modify aspects of the model as needed! When selecting a model, be sure to consider whether or not your district, school, or PLC encourages the use of specific models!

IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE AS DETAILED AS POSSIBLE! Write your lesson plans in a way that anyone, including a substitute teacher or student, would be able to understand what is! Your lesson plan should read like a recipe – including every necessary detail, right down to time estimates.

Let's plan our day!



3A: PLANNING YOUR DAY & CREATING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

PLANNING YOUR DAY AND CREATING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS go hand-in-hand. Before you can write step-by-step instructions for your day, you have to know what your day will include! Take a look back at your K.U.D.s and classroom rationale to guide you, and consider what sort of formative assessments you want to include. When planning your day, consider the shape of a bell curve. Include a warm-up activity, a lesson, and a wrap-up activity. Below are some examples!

Daily Warm-Ups:

A warm-up can easily count as a formative assessment, especially if it involves some sort of homework check! Warm-ups typically last only five to ten minutes, and serve to either refresh student on the previous days' materials, or to prepare students for the lesson ahead. Warm-ups can be in the form of homework quizzes, homework checks, discussions on current events, or a quick review of essential content!

Lectures + Visual Aids:

How do you want to teach the bulk of your content? Are lectures presenting new material, or are they reviewing assigned homework, such

as in a backwards-designed classroom? Do you want to review for the whole time, or a portion of the time? If you have younger students, it is best to lecture for only a small portion of the time! Further, what visual aids are you using? Do you need to create PowerPoints, or are they already created within your PLC? Are there any videos you would like to include? How will you encourage student participation and involvement during your lecture?

Student Note-Taking:

Note-taking is generally an extremely crucial element of any lesson, as it allows students to be actively engaged with material while creating personal review materials.

Consider your classroom rationale when deciding how you want to encourage note-taking. Will students be taking guided notes from teacher-produced materials, or will they be taking notes on their own paper? If so, are they free to record any information they so choose, or is there a format you would like students to follow? Note-taking can also be turned into a formative assessment if you choose to check student notes! Be sure to instruct students in a way that makes lesson objectives clear!

Independent and Small Group Work:

If you are using the direct model of instruction, time must be allotted for independent student work. After you lecture, decide what you want students to do. Is there a graphic organizer, such as a cause and effect sheet, journal entry, or timeline you would like them to work on? Should this be done alone, or in a small group? How will you be involved, if at all, during this segment of the class? How will you grade and provide feedback on these activities?

Homework:

While educational theorists may disagree on to what extent, if at all,

homework is valuable, it is certain that all homework, when assigned should be purposeful, and that teachers should always provide some sort of feedback. The purpose of homework is to give students extra practice to learn materials.

Homework may or may not be assigned every day, but note that *busy work* should never be assigned. Homework is a classic example of a formative assessment. Reviewing homework may serve as a good warm-up for each class period.

Don't forget about DIFFERENTIATION!

Differentiation is the act of recognizing or ascertaining that each student has their own differences, and that these differences must be included in the process of learning. For example, rather than assigning all students the same reading materials, it could be beneficial to assign slightly different readings to students who are at different reading levels. Differentiation is not unfair, as it involves giving each student what they need to succeed. While the process may differ between students, the outcome should be the same!

3B: WRITING A STEP-BY-STEP DAILY PLAN

ONCE YOU KNOW YOUR K.U.D.S AND HAVE A VARIETY OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS planned for the day, it is time to write down all of these activities! Keeping your bell schedule in mind, write down, in order, every activity that will occur during each lesson. This constitutes the bulk of your lesson plan! This step-by-step plan should be so detailed and specific that *anyone* should follow it – especially if you are a new teacher! What should be included in a good step-by-step daily plan?

Time Stamps:

Include an estimate of how many minutes each portion of the lesson will include, such as “10:15 to 10:30” or “roughly 15 minutes” While you might not follow these exactly, they serve as an excellent guide, and can prevent you from over planning a day

Reference any Materials/Worksheets You Need:

All lessons require materials! Include the name of these materials, such as “warm-up PowerPoint” or “Cause and Effect Sheet” as well as the number of them that need to be printed/created. (EG, “Print, create, and pass out 30 graphic organizers.) Also include whether or not these materials are already in the possession of students!

Step-By-Steps Can NEVER be too Detailed!

Eventually, veteran teachers will reach a point where they have each day’s step-by-steps in their head, but standards and needs of students are subject to change. Creating step-by-step descriptions allow new teachers to think critically about the content of a lesson.

Include a “Plan B”

As well as including areas for differentiation, you should also have a “Plan B” in mind if your lessons do not go as planned. What if you run out of time? What if you finish early? What if students are completely disengaged?

3C: CREATING EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS refer to all of the materials that you will use to aide you in your lesson each day. This can include PowerPoints, worksheets, reading materials, and more. Your PLC or class textbook may already have materials they prefer you to use, but it is often best to create your own! That way, materials will follow a format that is unique to the needs of your class. Below are a few considerations of creating educational materials for your lessons, as well as examples of the sorts of materials you will create.

WHAT MATERIALS MIGHT I NEED?

- ✓ Reading Materials
- ✓ Homework Materials
- ✓ PowerPoints, Visuals, and Videos
- ✓ Graphic Organizers and Review Sheets
- ✓ Rubrics
- ✓ Answer Keys
- ✓ Writing Utensils + Art/Craft Supplies



Who is making all of the materials?

Are you making all of the materials for your students, or are you working with your PLC to make materials for every class in a specific field? Further, are there materials already available from years prior? Do they need to be modified?

When will materials be disseminated to your students?

Do you prefer to pass out materials at the beginning of class, or as needed? Are there any materials that students already have? Is there anything that students can provide themselves?

What format is best for your class?

Lower-level classes may need large print and easy-to-read fonts with simple directions. Upper-level

classes will benefit from more detailed information on worksheets.

What directions need to be included on materials?

Will all directions be included on materials, or will they be included elsewhere?

How many copies of each material need to be made?

Always print extras! Some students may be absent, make a mistake, or have a tendency to lose their work. It is generally wise to print 3-7 extra copies of any given material.

Are there ways to save paper?

Can students produce materials using their own paper? Can materials be uploaded online to a classroom website? Will students be using technology such as computers, tablets, or smartphones in the classroom?

STOP: IS YOUR WORK SAVED?

Don't forget to save all of your work! That way, materials that have not been uploaded to a classroom website can be shared with students who need them. Further, saved materials can serve as a template for future materials!

A FUN TRANSITIONAL TIP:

If your lesson requires many transitions, embed a video of a timer/countdown into your PowerPoint to display for the class! That way, students can keep track of time, and less time will be spent on transitioning!

EXAMPLE: Place a one-minute timer on the board every time that you want students to switch activities, such as in the form of getting out new materials. Eventually, this could be faded out when students learn the "rhythm" of the class. This is also great for when students need to get into pairs, or small groups!



SECTION FOUR: EXECUTION AND REFLECTION

ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR PLANS WRITTEN DOWN, find an organized space for them! This may either be in the form of a binder, folder, or on your school website! This section will review lesson execution, post-planning considerations, and reflections that will help you improve future lessons. Listed below is an example from EDUC 351A of how lesson plans can be organized!

Date:

Lesson Plan Template [School and Teacher Name]

Lesson Title:

Grade Level:

Time Frame:

Designed By: [Include your name + resources + additional help]

Class Rationale:

Materials:

Essential Questions/Big Ideas:

SOL Standards Met:

Learning Objectives:

Students will **UNDERSTAND** that:

Students will **KNOW** that:

Students will **BE ABLE TO**:

Assessments:

Formative Assessments:

Summative Assessment: (This is likely be the same for every lesson in the unit)

Step-by-Step Activity Procedures:

Appendices (Handouts, PowerPoints, and other materials will follow this plan)

Let's finish up!

4A: GRADING AND PROVIDING FEEDBACK

ONCE THE DAY IS DONE, grading can begin! Remember that grading scale and format you worked on before you began lesson planning? This is where that comes into play! After all necessary materials have been turned in to you, use the rubrics you have created to grade work. Assigning formative assessments such as quizzes or discussions online makes grading easy, however, some students may not have reliable internet or computer access – so be sure to check first!

TAKE NOTE OF ANY TRENDS YOU SEE WHILE GRADING, such as exceptionally high or exceptionally low scores. What looks right to you? Should all students be receiving As or Bs on assignments, or is it normal to see Cs and below? For students who are struggling, what can you do to help them? What can they do to help themselves? For students who are consistently making exceptionally high marks, is there any supplemental material that can be given to them to enhance their learning experience? Further, are your scores in line with state or schoolwide standards? If not, what can be changed? Keep in mind that success is a group effort, and for students to be successful, a strong support system must be in place!

ASSIGNMENTS ARE USELESS IF THERE IS NO FEEDBACK. Even if the assignment is small, you should always provide additional feedback for areas of strengths or areas of improvement. Make this a portion of your rubric, and do your best to pass back materials in a timely manner! Providing clear and constructive feedback on materials is key in assessing and measuring student progress. Without clear feedback, many students would not be ready for the summative assessment. Aside from individual feedback, keep track of what trends you see in your class. Does a portion of a lesson need review? Does something need to be explained again? How can you help your students? Without feedback, assignments become *busy work* – which is a waste of everybody's time!

Once grading is done, let's work on evaluating student success and reactions!

4B: EVALUATING STUDENT SUCCESS AND REACTIONS

AT THE END OF A LESSON, especially one that was experimental or atypical in format, it is important to take a moment to reflect. Below are examples of questions you should ask yourself after teaching a lesson!

Were students engaged?

Even if you *personally* enjoyed teaching the lesson, did your students? Were students engaged with the material and participating with activities, or were they bored or confused? If so, how can this be prevented in the future?

Don't forget about students who have exceptionalities! This is where differentiation comes into play. If you found that these students were not engaged, why? Was material too challenging? Too easy? Were they not engaging in small or large group activities?

Were students able to demonstrate working knowledge?

Even if the lesson was fun and enjoyable for students, did they *learn* anything from it? Take a few minutes out of the end of the class period to wrap-up with your students to check their working knowledge. Were the majority of students able to answer questions that were in line with the K.U.D.s?

Did the lesson fit within the timeframe?

Always keep your bell schedule and class rationale in mind!

Was it all "worth" it?

Were the activities of the day worth repeating? Did the instructional model or variety of activities you selected work well with your class? Was it too chaotic? Too boring? Did it require only a moderate amount of resources, or should that model be saved for a "special circumstance?"

Were students with exceptionalities accommodated for?

Take the time to write down these reflections on your lesson plan, add them to your classroom rationale, or share them with other teachers! They will guide you in future lesson planning.

4C: CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANS

LESSON PLANNING is a long process that takes time and practice. The more lessons you plan, the easier and better the process will be! Lesson planning is not a robotic activity. It involves actively considering the varying needs of your classroom and each individual student, alongside school and statewide needs.

CONSIDER YOUR PAST LESSONS WHEN CREATING FUTURE LESSONS.

After you have graded and evaluated materials and lessons, take a look back at your thoughts on what worked well and what didn't work will. Remember that the most important facet of lesson planning is creating plans that will provide your students with the knowledge and tools they need to succeed, and that the measure of success is typically a few steps beyond the state and schoolwide standards. Different students have different needs, and don't be afraid of "controlled chaos" in your classroom! Consistency in expectations alongside variation in instruction is often a successful formula within classrooms. While there are *many* things to consider as a teacher, taking lesson planning one step at a time and working from the "top down" generally makes the process easier.

Good luck, and thank you for reading!

