

ESL Lesson Planning

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Agenda

Intro and overview

Warm up

Determining the needs of your students

Developing a curriculum

Lesson Planning Demonstration

Lesson plan structure

Lesson Planning practice

Curriculum (content of lessons) should be:

- Flexible and responsive to the needs and goals of the students
- Reviewed and recycled over time
- A balance of new material and practice of previous
- A balance of skills: understanding, speaking, reading and writing

Principle #1 Conduct Needs Assessment

To develop individual lessons and curriculum around students needs and interests we first need to find out their goals and assess their ability in English. Some of these needs will emerge and change over time as you get to know your students better and they meet new situations. However, begin to assess your students' needs from the very beginning. There are both formal and informal ways to find out what your students need and want to be able to do in English to carry out their purposes and fulfill their roles.

Mapping Activities

A map gives you background information on your students lives. You can learn about their family, employment and community connections. They make good springboards for conversation as well as paint a picture of their use and exposure to English. After a mapping activity, follow up by asking in which of the situations English is difficult to understand, speak, read or write. This information gives you contexts to plan instruction that directly connects to when and where your students use English.

Mapping topics are:

- A typical day
- A map of a typical week
- The events in a typical year
- A day at work
- A floor plan of a house
- A map of the neighborhood
- A time-line showing past, current and possible future events
- A picture of the student's family or family tree
- A map of daily tasks at home

Programs assess English competency on entry and program coordinators will be able to share their local procedure and the information they gather. However, asking your students explicitly is always best as it makes learning transparent. Use some of the tools below.

- In a group setting, post pictures of community places and ask students to choose or prioritize the places they go and need help with English.

- Use a checklist
- Administer a goals/needs survey
- Do a brainstorming activity with the students about their needs in English
- Give students a picture dictionary and select up to five different pages that are interesting

Principle #2 Develop Curriculum around Identified Needs

Once we have some idea of the needs of our students we can start to plan the curriculum around these needs. The next step is to break each need or goal into smaller chunks that we can plan lessons around. A student may have the overall goal of wanting to find a job. Giving information about how to go about a job search is useful background information but students really need to learn and practice language that will be useful to them in their job search. Take each goal or need that you know and brainstorm the skills and knowledge necessary for your students to be able to handle that situation independently. Finally, pick and choose from the elements you have identified and create a teaching plan.

Goal/Need: _____

Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing	Culture/other

Principle #3 Plan Individual lessons around single objectives

Identify and select a component of the main goal you are working towards. It may take several lessons to meet all the elements in a particular area. For example, if students are seeking employment then you might have identified the components: requesting an application form, reading a job announcement, filling in an application form, writing a cover letter, interviewing for a job, etc. For each of these components there may be specific vocabulary and sentence patterns students need as well as proficiency in the 4 skill areas. For example, a learning goal of a job interview would include describing yourself, describing your work history, responding to standard questions, asking questions, interview etiquette, cultural expectations and so on. So an objective for one lesson is a smaller piece of the whole. Depending

on your student's prior knowledge and proficiency level, an objective for one lesson might be to read a job announcement and make a polite request for an application form.

Principle #4 Tailor the material to where the students are now

Students may have a specific goal such as finding a job, yet their language level is not sufficient to do that independently at present. You can work towards this goal. For example, you could provide a simplified application form that reduces the burden of new vocabulary. Replace specialized words such as *position*, *federal* and *prior* with more general words such as job and before and eliminate others. All forms have some common elements so focus on the parts that are within the students' reach. If you are going to an employment interview you need to be able to greet people and describe yourself. Describing yourself could be merely a few key facts that beginners could handle or a detailed description for more advanced students.

Principle #5 Create a lesson plan that starts with lots of repetition and modeling but transfers responsibility for output to the students.

If you only show and give examples of what to do or say, students are not yet ready to do that independently. It's parallel to watching someone swimming for a few minutes and then being asked to jump in! Learners need time and practice. Create a scaffold to support them while they are mastering new vocabulary, sounds and patterns. Move from teacher modeling to gradually giving the students more and more practice with diminishing help and increased spontaneity until they can perform with minimal prompting.

Principle #6 Use a lesson plan framework to reduce teacher planning and empower students

Having some regular routine and shape to your sessions allows you to plan specific activities for a certain goal within the big picture. Regular routines help students know what to expect and reduces time in planning. This ensures that you pace your lessons appropriately and recycles previous material with new which also helps assess progress.

Elements of a Lesson Plan

Warm up

This stage contains activities that all students can participate in. Often this is an informal or fun way to start things off to set a positive tone. This is a stage where you can preview what is to come by checking necessary vocabulary, structures or syntax. Talk about the topic you are doing in a general way to connect it to the students' experience and world knowledge. It's important to have pictures, videos and concrete examples at this stage to ensure that all the students understand the main idea. If you have an open-entry program, this time is helpful to assess and incorporate newcomers.

Activities: Games, 10 things, informal chat, sharing object/food/ craft/picture,

Review

Language from the previous lesson is practiced again using the same activity as before or a parallel one. If lessons are linked together, then activities in this stage are an essential building block of your sequence and practice. Students need repeated exposure over time to gain mastery with new language. Beginners'

benefit especially from review and repetition of basic patterning and vocabulary but all students benefit from review.

Opening Activity/Introduction of new language

This is a teacher-directed activity that introduces the topic and sets up later practice. This introduces the context of where the language will be used and for what purpose. For beginning students this may be simply modeling a dialogue that is picked apart and practiced later. For higher-level students this could involve reading texts, explanation of grammar and introduction of vocabulary. This stage provides exposure to language in natural usage in spoken or written texts.

Activities: Chalk talks, pictures, realia, listening activities including point and say.

Controlled practice

Controlled practice activities give initial oral practice of the lesson objective. They are controlled in that they focus on the language for that lesson only and the teacher focuses correction on this. In this learning step, a piece of the whole is being examined. In a job enquiry situation, you could limit the controlled practice to polite ways to request various things. Getting fluent with this part adds a lot of confidence to tackle the whole job enquiry situation. At the applied stage in the lesson, you add other components the students might already know such as saying hello and goodbye to round out a more authentic conversation. At least two different activities are used for controlled practice. In essence, many controlled practice activities are a form of drill where students get a chance to say the language but in limited contexts with lots of support both visual and oral. Teacher corrects accuracy during this stage of the lesson. The idea is to give students practice and confidence in hearing, reading and saying the target items.

Literate students also want a written record of new language, which can be provided at this stage.

Activities: Grids, information gap, structured dialogues, games, oral drills, picture stories.....

Applied Practice/Conversation/Assessment

This is a chance for students to engage in less-structured oral work. They use any English they know including but not exclusively the language introduced in the lesson. The purpose of this stage is to allow students opportunities to apply what has been practiced to a real or simulated situation. Activities in this stage get students putting language together for themselves to say something that has not been rehearsed in exactly that way. For low-level learners this stage might be very short. Other students engage in discussion or expansion of the material.

Error correction is limited but instructors can record errors that are helpful to inform future teaching and/or share corrections after the activity is completed. The teacher also helps to supply vocabulary as necessary. Applied practice builds assessment into the lesson plan.

Activities: Role plays, brainstorming, some games, mapping and drawing, ranking, rating

Closing Activity

This is the lesson wrap up to review the main content. A simple recall of new language will do but games can be incorporated too. Higher-level students may do some error correction based on utterances recorded during applied practice and they have opportunity to ask questions and get clarification.

It is helpful for students with lower literacy to have this final step of reflection and review. It is a chance to record information in some way. Literacy level students have little experience of organizing notebooks and papers and recording information in a systematic fashion.

Lesson Plan Example

Lesson Topic: Food likes and dislikes and Shopping

Lesson Objective: Students will be able to identify common food items ask for prices and state likes and dislikes.

Level: 2 (Beginning level)

Lesson Duration: 2 hours

Warm Up

Magazine pictures, supermarket flyers, photos of people shopping

Ask personal questions using a question hierarchy. Where, what, how often do you go shopping for food?

Identify and describe items in pictures to build vocabulary.

Review

Play bingo to review numbers used in food pricing

Introduction of new language (grammar, vocabulary, functional phrases)

Vocabulary: Teacher introduces names of food her family likes using a “Chalk Talk” (pictures on the board) and talks about shopping

Practice Listening: Teacher names 8 food items

Say and point (teacher says, students point to item)

Students listen to a dialogue

Dialogue: 2 Family Members are in a store

Mom: What do you want for dinner?

Daughter: I don't know. Please not fish. I don't like fish.

Mom: You know your dad likes fish. I love fish too and we never eat it! Do you like crab?

Daughter: Ok, Ok I like crab but not today. Get chicken. I like chicken and Bryan likes chicken.

Mom: All right then. How much is that packet of chicken wings?

Daughter: \$7.99

Check understanding:

Who likes fish and who likes chicken in this family?

Who is Bryan?

Who is happy? Are both happy?

What is the mom buying for dinner?

Highlight new Pattern: I like fish

I don't like fish

Teacher gives several more examples.

Controlled Practice

1. **Vocabulary:** Identify and match pictures and food words.
2. **Speaking:** Students ask and give each other food items. *Please give me the chicken, the fruit, etc.*
3. **Speaking:** Practice saying the dialogue line by line. First repeat after the teacher then practice in pairs.
4. **Model sentence pattern:** *Do you like_____?*
5. **Speaking:** Set up a grid to practice the Q and A *Do you like_____? Yes, I do. No. I don't*
6. **Model sentence pattern** Use the answers to drill sentences: *I like fish, I like Chicken, Ahmed likes fish, Bryan likes pizza.*
7. **Write** the sentences as necessary
8. **Reading and Writing:** Practice with the dialogue again- put the lines in order, remove some words and ask students to fill in
9. **Model sentence pattern** Set up a question and answer with numbers and items on the board or with objects. Practice as necessary.

Applied/Conversation Practice

Board game

When a food item is landed on students ask and answer do you like questions, how much questions or talk about their eating or shopping habits. Use whatever they can to communicate.

Bring in flyers from supermarkets.

Ask students to identify what they like and don't. Extend to family members as necessary.

Read prices on the flyers and find prices of selected food items.

Give each student in a pair a different flyer and ask them to share price information to find the cheapest

Lesson Wrap up

Review new vocabulary, and polish pronunciation.

Review any common errors heard in sentence patterning, spelling and pronunciation

A Lesson Plan Template

Warm Up

Introduction of new language (grammar, vocabulary, functional phrases)

Controlled Practice

Applied/Conversation Practice

Lesson Wrap up

