

Planning for Teaching

Effective planning is the basis of successful teaching. Planning begins with the goals of a particular teaching-learning situation; encompasses means of attaining those goals, including materials and activities; and terminates with effective procedures for evaluating the degree to which the instructional goals have been achieved. Good planning has the potential to build confidence, and make you feel more secure in lesson execution .

Types of plans. It is suggested that the mentor teacher acquaint the student teacher with the various types of plans during the first week. Basic types of planning include long-range plans for the year or semester, plans of units of work relating to the larger plan, and plans for each day's work -- all contributing to the accomplishment of the major objectives of education.

Cooperative planning. Although the preparation of actual plans is regarded as the primary responsibility of the student teacher, it must be viewed as a team effort action. Thus, the mentor teacher plays a critical role in planning for teaching. A wide range of activities may be included in the planning process, such as, the mentor teacher: serving as an exemplar of well-planned teaching; furnishing basic planning instruction; encouraging, and if necessary, insisting on planning being done; critiquing student prepared plans; recommending modifications; using the plans as a basis for objectifying observations; and helping the student evaluate his or her instructional efforts within the context of the pre-prepared plans. In other words, careful, cooperative planning involves instruction and offers the mentor teacher excellent opportunities for establishing good working relationships and guiding the growth of the student teacher.

Purposes. The purposes of planning include:

- clarification of the objectives to the pupils,
- provision for individual differences,
- development of means for stimulating interest,
- provision for a logical instructional sequence,
- provision for flexibility, and
- enabling the student teacher to teach with confidence.

Elements of planning. The following elements typically are included in plans:

- **statement of objectives**, which clearly shows what is to be taught and the outcomes to be achieved, expressed in terms of pupil learning;
- **statement of activities**, a logical step-by-step sequence of instruction, necessary transition, and an appropriately developed ending;
- **list of materials** to be used;
- **assessment**, including at least two types of assessment: assessment of pupil learning, and assessment of the teaching procedures.

It is a reality that experienced teachers often have plans in their head, use a modified form for planning, or jot down reminders in a weekly planner to guide their instructional objectives. However, your mentor teacher or supervisor should provide you with a model lesson plan format so that teaching expectations are congruent. The lesson plan format is to be viewed as a teaching tool.

The following elements of lesson design are applicable to any model of teaching whether deductive (direct instruction model) or inductive (concept attainment model). Simply knowing these elements when planning for instruction will not ensure that the lesson is implemented with artistry. However, deliberate consideration of these elements should provide you with a structure for reflection when planning instruction and if implemented artistically should increase the probability of student learning.