

A PLAN FOR DAILY PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the school year can be a disturbing experience. **Charm** and personality of the teacher are not enough to mesmerize the students. All too soon the serene days of September unravel into "Ugly October" and the succeeding thirty Monday mornings become a year of unhappiness.

Daily planning is a preventive measure. An adequate lesson plan reduces the anxieties of a teacher and increases productivity in the classroom. While a written daily plan is important for every teacher, it is essential for the beginning teacher.

RATIONALE

A lesson plan is simply writing what it is that the teacher **proposes to** achieve with a given class during a given period of time. A lesson plan is a specific way of planning to involve students in the learning process as well as a guide for determining what has been accomplished.

Planning, "like all of Gaul" is **divided** into three parts. They are

- (1) What the teacher wants to accomplish
- (2) How the teacher is going to accomplish it
- (3) How the teacher knows that the lesson has been accomplished successfully.

Or, to put it another way...

- (1) What is the purpose of the lesson?
- (2) How will the students participate?
- (3) How will the success of the lesson be ascertained?

It is the teacher's responsibility to create, direct, and provide the happenings, the learning experiences, in the classroom. The teacher is the key agent for bringing the planned course of study to the students. The written plan is valuable because it enables the teacher to visualize what should happen in the classroom.

Daily lesson plans, should include the purpose of the lesson as required to answer the first key question. The introduction to the lesson, the materials to be used, the learning activities by means of which the purpose of the lesson is achieved and the ending of the lesson are important parts of the second key question. The evaluation and planned next steps are the parts embodied in the third question.

All of these subparts of the three main questions

- (1) Purpose of the lesson
- (2) Introduction/Motivation
- (3) Materials
- (4) Learning Activities
- (5) **Ending a lesson**
- (6) Evaluation
- (7) Next steps

will be dealt with in the following pages.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH
OR
THE PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

The first step of a written daily lesson plan is to identify the purpose of the lesson. What is it that you want to accomplish? What is your goal? Early in the lesson the teacher should establish a clear sense of direction for the students. This may be as simple as

"Today we shall draw a map showing the relationships of several countries."

or...

"How can we learn to measure the speed of sound?"

or as complex as

"In order to trace a history of the locale we should plan the various steps and decide on the committees that we will need to compile whatever data we think is important."

The sense of direction has been more formally stated as an operational objective which Robert F. Mager defines as "an intent communicated by a statement describing proposed change in a learner or statement of what the learner is to be like when he has successfully completed a learning experience."*

For example: If the student to be able to write a good sentence as the end result of the lesson, the following would be an operational objective:

'Having read correct sentences, having analyzed what are the necessary parts of a correct sentence, and having discussed the importance of using correct sentences, the student will write correct sentences patterned over the sample sentences. Then the student will write several correct sentences together telling about something of interest!'

The purpose or sense of direction is written for a specific class and for a specific time. It should be "elastic" enough to provide for the student

* Mager, Robert F., Preparing Instructional Objectives, Fearon Publishers Inc., Palo Alto, California, 1962

with special problems or with special questions, yet "directed" enough for the student to be able to move from the initial step to whatever step is necessary for the student to feel a sense of accomplishment.

Special effort should be made by the teacher to avoid using weak verbs in the statement of the purpose. "To think", "to appreciate", "to see" does not suggest student learning activities. "To read", "to discuss", "to analyze", "to write", "to compute", "to test in the laboratory" directs with more precision the activities of the students and guides them to a definite point of conclusion, hence accomplishment.

Now you are ready to plan the second part of the lesson plan.

HOW WILL YOU ACCOMPLISH THE LEARNING
or
THE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Now that you have written a strong directed purpose of the lesson, you can literally select those action verbs with which to create the class activities. These learning activities are the actions, interactions and reactions that the students and teacher engage in during the class period.

To begin-How Will You Introduce the Lesson? Carefully select the story, the anecdote, the demonstration, the report of research or the picture (to suggest a few ideas) that will focus the wandering attentions of all the learners. Establish a clear starting point for the lesson* The teacher may be the chief performer in selling a new idea or in moving an idea on to the next stage. The teacher may be the director of an activity in which the students will identify problems that require learning action for solution.

In the process of motivating students you must be sensitive to classroom interactions. Keep alert to the ways that you encourage students. Become aware of the tone of your voice as you accept answers or cope with the less than serious participants. Think about your own activities that produce the kind of responses you wish from students to help develop the lesson.

Having introduced the lesson, what pivotal questions can be asked in

- (1) analyzing the content
- (2) defining the problem (s)
- (3) identifying key words

* For detailed ideas about introducing a lesson consult Bruce, Matthew H. Establishing Pre-Instruction Set (EPIS),...For Teachers, Feasterville, 1977.

- (4) reading for information
- (5) notetaking for reference
- (6) testing for accomplishment

Phrase and rephrase your questions until the questions perform the function for which you created them.

Learning activities require clear, specific directions to help students understand what they are required to do. The way you give directions can encourage the student, clarify the next step needed by a confused student, or make more apparent an easy way for a slow student.*

It is perfectly acceptable for a class to practice what has been learned. Some teachers call this drill, others claim it is repetition for reinforcement. Whatever you care to label it, plan to use an interesting educational activity at an appropriate point in the lesson that will enable students to use what it is you desired them to learn. During some daily lessons you may wish to have what is to be learned to become more meaningful. Have the students help each other, or learn from each other. Part of your plan should include how you will pair them (or group them in fours) with the least physical movement. Think carefully how you will explain the activity to your class, how you will establish the purpose for the activity, how you will give clear, specific directions,*and of most importance, how you will maintain leadership. During the whole process you must be confident and at ease. This type of lesson will be all the more successful if you plan it in advance.

*For detailed suggestions about giving directions see, Krulik, Stephen and H. Bernard Miller, Giving Directions (GIDI),...For Teachers, Feasterville, 1977.

Learning activities should produce a need for intellectual, social and physical skills in the students. Being able to use an idea may establish a path of cooperation for a student. Learning how to share space and materials may be the key to developing more social beings and more sensitive and caring adults. It is surprising how a student's status is raised when he learns how to put together a piece of apparatus that functions or how to physically manipulate material objects. In providing well-rounded learning experiences for the students you should become aware of these teen-age needs and capabilities.

ENDING A LESSON
or
TYING THINGS TOGETHER

The end of the lesson is a time for tying everything together. This may occur at the end of a lesson, end of a day, end of a week, a unit, a topic or in a daily lesson plan during the middle of a learning experience. It is appropriate whenever the teacher believes there is a need to pull a class together because they have either accomplished their purpose or their purpose has become vague. At this time, ideas are drawn together, mission is clarified and next steps are projected. A satisfaction or a sense of accomplishment needs to be established. This should not occur as an after thought but as part of a daily lesson plan.

Plan in advance how summarization will take place. Who will do the summarizing. Plan how you will help the students identify the pitfalls of the past hour and how they will project the action for tomorrow. In this way, your students will leave the lesson with a sense of well-being and a positive attitude for returning to class the next day.*

* For detailed procedures refer to Bruce, Matthew H. Closure,...For Teachers, Feasterville 1977.

HOW WILL YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?
or
EVALUATION

If you have planned both a purpose to the lesson and a means of achieving the purpose, the third part of a lesson, planning how to determine if the lesson was successful, becomes somewhat easier.

Measurement of learning may be as simple as observing behaviors (skills) that have been acquired and are in use. A more complex measurement of learning may be noted by student responses to well formed questions which require collation of information and analyses of related material. A well-written summary by a group or an individual can be a measure of learning.

An evaluation of accomplishments can take the form of a creative bulletin board which is the work of a committee of students. It may also be a presentation by a panel of participants.

Evaluation may also be the more traditional process of a paper/pencil test consisting of either a quick quiz to reinforce a particular point or a longer more complex examination.

No matter what form the evaluation takes, the teacher should plan the evaluation in advance with the purpose of the lesson clearly in mind. Remember that an evaluation of any kind does not ensure or reveal that all students have learned all the material on all the aspects of the concept at the same rate and to the same degree.

A FURTHER WORD

Your daily lesson plan should be visual on a single sheet so that the total lesson can be grasped quickly. A good test for an adequate plan is to ask whether someone else looking at the plan can understand the purpose and activity of the lesson. Page numbers alone are not sufficient. cursory plans, such as page numbers, lack purpose, direction, motivation and learning.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Date

Class Level

Content

1. Purpose of the Lesson

2. Activities

Motivation

3. Summary

4. Evaluation

5. Next Steps

SUMMARY

Students enjoy a feeling of accomplishment when there is something planned for them to do. When they learn that the teacher cares enough to plan the very best, the students will look forward to coming to class. They will come with a positive attitude toward work.

Teachers enjoy a feeling of accomplishment when their students do something that indicates they have learned what the teacher has taught them. Careful daily planning increases the chances for successful class periods. The teacher, very much like the students, will come to class with a positive attitude toward the class.

The development of a daily lesson plan is a series of written steps that free the teacher to concentrate on the student, on management problems, on classroom emergencies or on schedule changes. The teacher can mold or modify a daily plan to include the greatest number of students for the most productive learning once the daily plan is written. However, in the absence of pre-planning, sudden changes wreak havoc.

A FINAL WORD

A planned lesson is most successful if the classroom environment is conducive to positive thinking and productive work. Plan in advance to provide a wholesome atmosphere. Make sure there are enough chairs, desks, books, papers for your students. Light, heat, air contributes to a positive learning environment. Have all equipment previewed, and pretested to allow the lesson to be unhampered. Be sure the limits (class rules) that are necessary are clearly understood so that a group of people might share time, space and materials cooperatively. This too, is part of planning ahead since you are anticipating what is needed to make your lesson succeed.

When teachers and students enter into a work situation where time is well used, there is a sense of well-being experienced by everyone. The teaching day passes quickly as a happy, productive experience. This does not occur by magic. It takes planning.