

The Basics of Writing Lesson Plans for ABE/ESOL Classes

A written lesson plan:

- Describes how learning is to be organized and facilitated in the classroom.
- Documents specific plans for teaching.

To develop a lesson plan:

1. Determine what will be taught (both content and skills).
2. Formulate the learning objectives for the lesson (e.g., "at the end of the lesson, learners will...").
3. Match what will be taught to 1, possibly 2, of the most applicable benchmarks from the ABE Curriculum Framework (ELA, Math, or ESOL), and identify in the lesson plan. If continuing from a previously taught lesson, the benchmark could be the same as the prior lesson.

Lesson plans contain the following 5 components:

1. **Learning objectives:**
 - Develop clear, measurable objectives to guide what will be taught, how learners will be evaluated. Communicate objectives to students at the beginning of class so the purpose of the lesson is clear.
 - Identify 1 - 3 objectives outlining what learners will be able to know/do as a result of the lesson
2. **Materials and Resources:**
 - Choose authentic materials to the extent possible (e.g., employment application, prescription for medicine, library card application).
3. **Activities:**
 - Determine the steps of the activity and how long the activity(ies) will take.
 - Create activities that are clear in focus, engaging and relate to learner interests.
 - Use an introductory activity to get students engaged in the topic and connect to and assess their prior experience, and use that information to adjust the lesson if necessary.
 - Manage "teacher talk" time so learners are active participants throughout the learning process.
 - Make adjustments as needed for students' varied learning styles, learning issues/disabilities, or learners that may have greater knowledge/skill than classmates.
 - Use the Framework benchmark(s) to ensure the activity illuminates the learning objective.
 - Though brief, add enough detail so other teachers at the program might be able to use the lesson.

4. Assessment:

- Use to plan and adjust for what will be taught in following lessons, and provide feedback to learners.
- Must directly measure whether each learning objective was met, and/or how well it was met.
- Use a variety of assessment methods to capture learning, allow students with different learning styles to shine, and also so learners may monitor their own progress.

5. Wrap up and Reflection for Students (and Teacher):

- Devise a way for learners to capture the high points (e.g., what is the goal for learners to take away from the lesson?).
- Provide opportunities for learners to actively monitor their own progress.
- Build in discussion time and ask learners to summarize what they learned or apply what they learned to other contexts in their life. Ask learners to evaluate the class or activities; ask for ideas for the next lesson. Make sure to allow time for students to process questions and their responses.
- Reflect on the lesson: what worked well? Did any positive unintended consequences occur, to remember for the next time the lesson is used/adapted? What should be changed in the lesson to be more effective? What to remember about specific learners' needs/goals/accommodations for future classes.