

IMPORTANCE OF LESSON PLANS IN TEACHING PROCESS.

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Planning ahead to identify a course of action that can effectively reach goals and objectives is an important first step in any process, and education is no exception. In education, the planning tool is the lesson plan, which is a detailed description of an instructor's course of instruction for an individual lesson intended to help learners achieve a particular learning objective. Lesson plans communicate to learners what they will learn and how they will be assessed, and they help instructors organize content, materials, time, instructional strategies, and assistance in the class-room. Lesson planning helps English as a second language (ESL), adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE), and other instructors create a smooth instructional flow and scaffold instruction for learners.

The Lesson Planning Process

Before the actual delivery of a lesson, instructors engage in a planning process. During this process, they determine the **lesson topic** (if states have implemented content standards, the topic should derive from them). From the topic derive the lesson **objective** or **desired results**—the concepts and ideas that learners are expected to develop and the specific knowledge and skills that learners are expected to acquire and use at the end of the lesson. Objectives are critical to effective instruction, because they help instructors plan the instructional strategies and activities they will use, including the materials and resources to support learning. It is essential that the objective be clear and describe the intended learning outcome. Objectives can communicate to learners what is expected of them—but only if they are shared with learners in an accessible manner. Instructional objectives must be specific, outcome-based, and measurable, and they must describe learner behavior. Heinich et al. (2001) refer to the **ABCD**'s of writing objectives:

- **Audience** – learners for whom the objective is written (e.g., ESL, ABE, GED);
- **Behavior** – the verb that describes what the audience will be able to do (e.g., describe, explain, locate, synthesize, argue, communicate);
- **Condition** – the circumstances under which the audience will perform the behavior (e.g., when a learner obtains medicine from the pharmacy he or she will be able to read the dosage); and
- **Degree** – acceptable performance of the behavior (i.e., how well the learner performs the behavior).

Learner assessment follows from the objectives. Based on the principles of *backward design* developed by Wiggins and McTighe (1998), instructors identify the lesson objective or desired results and then decide what they will accept as evidence of learners' knowledge and skills. The concept of backward design holds that the instructor must begin with the end in mind (i.e., what the student should be able to know, understand, or do) and then map backward from the desired result to the current time and the students' current ability/skill levels to determine the best way to reach the performance goal.

The WIPPEA Model for Lesson Planning

The WIPPEA Model, an acronym that stands for **W**arm-up, **I**ntroduction, **P**resentation, **P**ractice, **E**valuation, **A**pplication, is a lesson plan model that represents a continuous teaching cycle in which each learning concept builds on the previous one, serving as an instructional roadmap for instructors. The WIP-PEA lesson plan model is adapted from the work of Hunter (Mastery Teaching, 1982). Approximately 20 years ago, Madeline Hunter published her book, *Mastery Teaching* (1983), in which she described her seven-step lesson plan. This approach quickly became known as the “Madeline Hunter Method” or the “Madeline Hunter Direct Instruction Model.” This model is described in Table 1, and while accurate statistics are not available, it has been widely adopted in the United States in primary and secondary education

Table 1
The Madeline Hunter Direct Instruction Model*

Step	Description
1. Anticipatory set	Provide a “hook” for students to see the relevance of the learning or to otherwise become receptive to learning the subject matter
2. Objectives/Standards	Identify specifically what the student will be able to do, understand, and/or care about as a result of the lesson
3. Teaching & Modeling	Provide a model or example of what is expected as the end product of the learning
4. Guided practice	Students work on activities or exercises relevant to the subject matter under the teacher’s direct guidance
5. Check for understanding	Evaluate the students practice sets to make sure that they “got it”
6. Independent practice	Once students have acquired the learning, have them repeat the practice to provide reinforcement of the learning
7. Closure	Actions or words by the teacher that provide cues to students that they have learned the subject matter

*Various users shift some steps and/or divide one step into two and ascribe to 8 steps

Toward the end of her career, Madeline Hunter received as many as 500 requests a year to speak or do workshops on her method (Goldberg, 1990) As the adoption information denotes, the Hunter model was originally devised for a primary or secondary grade lesson plan context where the subject matter is concise and where the learning takes place in a relative short time period, perhaps a matter of 20 minutes or a series of short time periods covering a week or so. However, with a little imagination (and work), the model can be applied to higher education situations. In fact, Hunter (1985) claims that it is equally effective in elementary, secondary and university teaching. This paper describes how it is currently being used in an undergraduate marketing research class. This six-step cyclical lesson planning approach has learners demonstrate mastery of concepts and content at each step before the instructor proceeds to the next step.

Warm-up – Assesses prior knowledge by reviewing previous materials relevant to the current lesson. *Introduce an activity that reviews previously learned content (e.g., for a vocabulary lesson, the warm-up may be a quick matching exercise with words previously learned and their definitions), and also include an activity that focuses on the topic to be taught.*

Introduction – Provides a broad overview of the content and concepts to be taught and focuses the learners’ attention on the new lesson. *Introduce the purpose of the lesson by stating and writing the objectives for learners and discussing the lesson content and benefits by relating the objective to learners’ own lives. Assess learners’ prior knowledge of the new material by asking questions and writing learners’ responses on a chalkboard or flip chart.*

Presentation – Teaches the lesson content and concepts. *Create an activity to introduce the concept or skill (e.g., introduce new vocabulary by asking learners to work in groups to identify words related to taking medications) and then introduce information through a variety of modalities using visuals, realia, description, explanation, and written text. Check for learner understanding of the new material and make changes in lesson procedures if necessary.*

Practice – Models the skills and provides opportunities for guided practice. *Introduce a variety of activities that allow learners to work in groups, in pairs, or independently to practice the skills, concepts, and information presented. Integrate technology into activities as available.*

Evaluation – Assesses each learner's attainment of the objective. *Include oral, aural, written, or applied performance assessments. For example, ask students to fill in the blanks on a cloze activity using the four medicine warning labels that were discussed in class. For lower level learners, provide a word bank at the bottom of the worksheet. Omit the word bank for more advanced students.*

Application – Provides activities that help learners apply their learning to new situations or contexts beyond the lesson and connect it to their own lives. *Choose activities that learners can relate to or have expressed concern about. For example, have learners read the label of a medication they or a family member may use at home to make certain they understand the meaning of the words on the label. Gather feedback from learners in follow-up classes and help them assess what additional support, if any, they may require.*

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