

## Lesson Planning

It's two weeks into the school year, you've rehearsed procedures until you and the students are lining up in your dreams, and you're ready to teach. But suddenly a new question wakes you in the night: now that you've got them all in their seats, quiet, attentive, and ready to learn – what exactly do you *do* with them? When you have to consider federal, state, district, school, UofL and KTIP standards, as well as the latest education theory, scaffolding, cultural competence, CATS testing in the Spring, and a classroom full of unique students, each with their own talents and challenges, where do you even begin? We include this section in order to lighten some of the burden of this enormous task, and to hopefully quell some of your fears about testing.



[www.educateddoubt.com](http://www.educateddoubt.com)

*In this initial section, Sarah Yost has created a detailed outline that teachers can follow step-by-step in order to plan effective lessons that both meet standards and the needs of your students. Beginning by delving into the steps of backwards planning that matches standards and assessments, continuing onto the specifics of daily lesson plans, this outline is meant to serve as a guide, but is not, however, meant to be exhaustive. Annotated units and lessons created by Ms. Yost and Ms. Gerson follow.*

## **The Importance of Backwards Planning**

### ***1. Backwards Planning is Essential to Effective Lesson Planning***

- a.** First, it is crucial to plan a **Standard's Based Unit of Study**, or an **SBUS** (include annotated sample lesson)
  - i.** You can find the Program of Studies and Academic Expectations **Standards** for your content area on the KED website:  
<http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/default.htm>
  - ii.** These Standards are legally mandated by the state and you **MUST** teach them to your students; they also determine on what the students will be tested during CATS
  - iii.** Determine which standards you will teach to for the unit you are planning (i.e., students do not have to learn all Standards in *every* unit, but rather, over the course of the year.)
  - iv.** An SBUS is usually six weeks in length, because that is the length of the grading period in JCPS. You can of course vary the length however you desire to fit your own needs.
- b.** In your SBUS, it is critical that you consider Core Content as determined by JCPS.
  - i.** You can find the **Core Content Guide** (or CCG) on the JCPS website:  
<http://www.jefferson.k12.ky.us/> (go to Employees, Employee Groups, Teachers, CCG, and choose your content and level)
  - ii.** This content is what your are legally bound by your contract as a JCPS employee to teach throughout the course of the year. You do not, however, have to follow the sample lesson plans unless you so desire.  
*How* you teach the material is ultimately up to you.



- iii.* Prepare a Summative Assessment: this may be either a CATS-like multiple choice test with an ORQ, a project-based assessment, or a writing assignment taken through the final stages of the writing process.

## **2. After Creating an SBUS, You're Ready to Develop Effective Lesson Plans**

- a.* It is ideal to go week-by-week when creating effective lesson plans, in order to ensure continuity and fluidity between lessons. It is also most efficient if you want to take one weekend day to prepare the week's lessons and minimize your time spent planning during the week.
- b.* Determine what **Standards** from your SBUS you will be working with that week, and specifically, each day of your lesson plans.
- c.* Determine which of the **Guiding Questions** you will present to your students and encourage them to explore that week, and specifically, each day of your lesson plans.
- d.* Next, create a list of three to five **Objectives**, or measurable goals by which you would like to track your students' progress.
  - i.* All Objectives should begin with a "power verb" or an active imperative such as "Identify", "Write", or "Analyze".
  - ii.* All Objectives should also be easy to quantitatively measure or assess.
- e.* From the Objectives, develop your **Formative Assessment**.
  - i.* Determine how you will measure or assess whether or not your students attained the goal of the objective.
  - ii.* Formative Assessments can be formal (quizzes, quick writes, graded exit slips) or informal (oral checks for understanding or brief glances at exit slips)
- f.* Based on all the work you've done thus far, you are now ready to create your **Agenda**, or the day's activities, in order to determine *what* you will do with your students to effectively bring them to your day's Objectives
  - i.* A **Hook**: This may be the most important part of the lesson. It is the way in which you will introduce your lesson to your students, prove to them that you are worth their time and attention, and thus effectively "hook"

them. Music, video, current events, and pop cultural references are all effective means of “hooking” your students.

**ii. Instruction:** Now that you’ve got their attention, it’s time to teach them. Following Fred Jones’ model in *Tools For Teachers*, it is my opinion that the most effective method of instruction is “See Say Do.” In this model, the teacher briefly instructs the students, models the skill, works with the class as a whole as they slowly complete the skill under the teacher’s direction, then individually works with students following the “Praise Prompt and Leave” model as students independently work to attain the skill to the level of automaticity.

**iii. Other Components of Instruction to Consider when Planning Activities:**

- Graphic Organizers
- Collaborative Learning
- Journaling or Learning Logs
- Hands-on Learning
- Enrichment
- Differentiated Instruction for Struggling and Advanced Learners
- Read-Alouds in ALL Content Areas
- Independent Reading
- Group Discussion
- Writer’s Workshop

**iv. Anchor Activities:** This is an important part of the lesson during which time students should be given an opportunity to synthesize learning with prior learning or be given an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned and their own metacognition.

**3. *With All of these Components Present in Your Lessons, Your Students will no doubt Develop Strong Skills and Be Prepared for State and Federally Mandated Tests in the Spring!***

## Glossary of Terms: Lesson Planning

- **Anchor Activities** – The closing activities of a lesson used to ground or “anchor” students to the most important points, and possibly provide them with time for reflection and building their schema.
- **Assessment-Lesson Correlation** – The importance of tying your lesson objectives and activities to your formative and summative assessments.
- **Backwards Planning** – The method of unit and lesson planning in which you isolate the standards and plan the summative assessment before moving onto developing student activities.
- **Blooms Taxonomy** – Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain, from the simple recall or recognition of facts, as the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels, to the highest order which is classified as evaluation. Such levels include: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. *See Higher Order Thinking.*
- **Collaboration** – Working with members of your team, colleagues in your department or other teachers in the district to create effective lesson plans that may have cross-curricular content. *See Cross-Curricular Planning.*
- **Cooperative Learning** – An alternative to individual or whole class activities, in which students work in small groups of three or four to solve problems, conduct research, conference on writing, read in literature circles, or conduct another learning activity.
- **Core Curriculum Guide (CCG)** – Prescribed lessons and state-standards based units in Jefferson County, which outline what teachers in specific content areas are expected to teach their students in order to be successful on state standardized tests.
- **Cross-Curricular Planning** – Designing units and lessons that incorporate more than one content area. *See Collaboration.*
- **Curriculum Coach** – A veteran member of the faculty in a given department who is responsible for guiding instruction in that department.
- **Differentiated Learning** – Teach to specific students at their specific levels or by maximizing their specific learning styles so as to ensure success for all students. *See Scaffolding.*
- **Essential Question(s)** – One to Five identified questions, which comprise the fundamental unit themes, goals, and objectives.
- **Higher Order Thinking** – Leading student instruction to the higher, or more abstract levels of cognition on Bloom’s Taxonomy. Can be observed in verb use in objectives. *See Bloom’s Taxonomy.*
- **Hook** – The beginning activity of a lesson, or an issue of high interest embedded within the first activity, which is meant to grab students’ attention and ensure engagement for the remainder of the lesson.

- **Graphic Organizers** – Instructional tool by use of which students can visualize material in a variety of spatial arrangements. For example, Venn Diagrams, Webs, Flow Charts, etc.
- **Guiding Question** – Questions that are meant to organize and guide a unit, while illustrating the authentic connections for students.
- **Objectives** – Skills or knowledge bases your students ought to attain or understand by the end of the lesson. Tested by formative assessments.
- **Scaffolding** – Method of instruction in which teachers start with the simpler skills or concepts and move toward more difficult skills and concepts at a pace appropriate for the individual student.
- **Sponge** – The initial activity teachers prepare for students that is meant to “soak up” the time that is often spent off-task as students enter the classroom and prepare to work. Especially helpful for activating prior knowledge and initially engaging students.
- **Standards** – State, district, and school mandated objectives.
- **Standards Based Unit of Study (SBUS)** – Unit of study that is tied directly to state standards and the district’s Core Content Guide.
- **Time Management** – Consciousness of the amount of time lesson parts will take in order to effectively teach students.