

WRITING LESSON PLANS

The lesson plan is a very important part of working in a preschool. It will require time outside of class. Please plan on spending adequate time. The lesson plan is your outline for what will be done in the classroom on the day you are head teacher. If you have a complete, well-planned lesson plan, your lab will go much more smoothly. There is no set format for the lesson plan; however, it must be well organized and easy to read. This is a sample of a format that works very well for most teachers. (Show Transparency--"Lesson Plan Format")

1. Why write lesson plans?
 - a. Encouraging learning about oneself and others
 - b. Organizing the thoughts, activities and interests of young children helps to create a more enjoyable and successful environment.
 - c. Provides learning opportunity with clearly defined goals.
 - e. Helps meet the needs of children in your care.
 - e. To make sure children have a balance of inside and outside activities.
 - f. To provide the children the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities.
2. What topics should be used in working with children?
 - a. Choose themes (subjects or topics) or units of study that interest the children with whom you are working.
 - b. Keep the unit of study close to the child's comprehension level, yet challenge their cognitive skills.
 - c. Allow children to learn through their senses (sight, touch, sound, hearing and taste). It is the easiest and most enjoyable method for teaching children.
Read the following case study:

Mr. Sims wanted his preschool class to share in the joy he had while visiting a zoo. He began to describe the animals to the children. As he talked, the children quickly lost interest. They could not understand his descriptions of the various animals.

Discuss how the senses could have been more involved:

1. He could have shown bright pictures of the animals.
 2. He could have arranged for a visit to the zoo.
 3. He could play recordings and let the children try to identify the animals.
 4. He could bring stuffed animals and let the children discuss the difference between a stuffed animal and a live animal.
- d. Using a concept file is very worthwhile. By creating such a file, they have already chosen topics to teach and have developed ideas that will stretch the imaginations of the children with which they work.

3. How to organize a lesson plan.
 - a. When choosing a theme or unit of study, consider the time of year, the interests of the children and their level of comprehension.
 - b. Include the following areas into your lesson plan.

arts	math
crafts	large and small motor
science	creative movement
spatial awareness	nutrition
social studies	music
 - c. The theme must be organized into a lesson plan that enhances the developmental areas. Trying to identify all this information into a concise format may seem monumental. Keep in mind several activities may be included into large subject areas (transparency #6-3, "Developmental Goals").
 - d. Plan specific transitions for moving the children from one activity to the next. Transitions are the key to becoming a successful and organized teacher. They help you and the children move from one activity to the next in an organized manner. These are some ideas which can be used as children assemble for any group experience. Use a variety of activities each day to keep the interest of the children.
 1. SONGS: Most children enjoy simple songs. They also like to sing familiar songs. They particularly like songs which have their names in them.
 2. FINGER PLAYS: Children enjoy doing as well as seeing. Finger plays should be short and interesting to the children. They can also teach number concepts while the children dramatize the actions.
 3. EXERCISES: Exercise helps reduce some of the tension and physical needs of the children. Have them walk the way they think animals walk, or stand and pretend they are rag dolls. Do some exercises you know from gym class. Remember, when these are complete, they must be followed by something quieter in order to prepare for story time.
 4. RHYTHMS: Clap to the rhythms of the individual child's name. Use rhythm instruments. The teacher may clap a rhythms and have the children copy that rhythm.
 5. NURSERY RHYMES
 6. LISTEN TO MUSIC
 7. GUEST SPEAKERS: Children love to see real policemen, firemen, carpenters, dentists, etc. Give each guest speaker an introduction by showing the children an object which represents that occupation.
 8. INSTRUCTIONS: Take time to explain what will take place on an upcoming excursion. Give specific instructions for the next activity. Make organization into a game that the children enjoy.
 9. PUPPETS: Sack puppets, finger puppets, hand puppets, and stick puppets can easily be made and used by children and teachers.
 10. PICTURES: A teacher can show a picture to the children and stimulate responses from the children by asking questions.

11. **FEEL BOX:** Take a small cardboard box and cut out one side. On each side, make a hole large enough for the child to place his/her hands inside the box. The child closes his eyes while the teacher places an object in the box. The child then places his/her hands into the box and tries to identify the object using the sense of feel.
 12. **THINK BOX:** Provide a large box which is designated as the "Think box". The teacher asks questions about what the children think is in the box. The teacher gives clues regarding what it looks like or what you do with it. The children may be encouraged to bring things to put into the "Think Box".
4. Steps in writing a lesson plan.
 - a. Have a daily schedule of events or time frame established to teach each curriculum area.
 - b. Determine overall learning goals for students.
 - c. Establish a unit of study or theme.
 - d. Define important topics or goals relative to that unit.
 1. What do I want to teach?
 2. What will I need in order to teach this concept?
 3. How will I teach it?
 4. Are there new terms to introduce and define?
 5. Am I teaching true concepts?
 6. Are the concepts on the level of the children?
 7. What do the children already know about the subject?
 - e. Research interesting yet challenging activities to enhance growth and development and to meet goals.
 - f. Determine the best way to present the activities to the children.
 1. Small group: children are divided into groups of four or five and each group does the same activity.
 2. Whole group: the children all meet together, perhaps for the introduction of the concept.
 3. Rotating small groups: children are divided into groups of four or five. Each group does something different. The groups rotate to each activity until they have had the opportunity to participate at all stations.
 4. Learning centers: the children are allowed to choose the center they desire to participate in and may change any time they want to do so.
 5. Field Trips: take the children to an actual site and let them see firsthand what you are discussing in class.
 5. Styles of lesson plans.
 - a. Calendar method--This method is simple and concise. It depicts the learning of the day. Caregivers can keep this calendar in a lesson book or post it on a bulletin board for parents.
 - b. Daily lesson plan. Show students samples of daily lesson plans. Review the steps in writing a lesson plan as you refer to these sample lesson plans.