**5 Steps to Better Lesson Planning**

Learning to write a good, strong lesson plan is the backbone of confident teaching. Without a plan, you can bid goodbye to supporting your learners to succeed and your students will definitely suffer in the long run.

When we talk about writing a lesson plan, there are key components that need to be in place. It’s not an easy task. It’s going to take effort and you’re going to need to put some well developed thought into the process. Does this mean there can’t be room for successful learning? Of course not. It’s just that a poorly planned lesson, more often than not, will end up being a boring teacher.

The lesson planning process can be challenging, so let’s take a look at 5 effective steps to better lesson planning.

**1. Have an Objective**

The biggest mistake that some teachers make in a lesson plans for is that they hadn’t fully thought the lesson through. They had the textbook pages cited, pages to be read prepared, but they didn’t have their “eye on the main objective”. What we mean by that is…they hadn’t taken the time to ask themselves, “What are my students going to be able to know and be ready to do when this lesson is over?” It’s as if they’d grabbed all the ingredients off a recipe card, cooked a baipok hme, and then didn’t have a clue what it was supposed to look or taste like. Without having the end game clearly in mind, meaningful learning is not going to take place. All the parts of the lesson plan will come together if you’re careful to give that objective your full attention.

**2. Where are our materials?**

Now that you have that great lesson well planned, there’s no doubt that you’ll need a good materials list to accompany it. Your “materials list” is the one that that you’ll need to make your lesson shine. It’s important to organize everything you need prior to the lesson so that it can flow smoothly. There is nothing worse than walking into a classroom and observing a teacher struggling to grab this and that while teaching a lesson. Meanwhile, students become increasingly unfocused. Let’s set our expectations for ourselves high and not shortchange our students. Double check that all your materials are in order and available and be ready to launch! Consider asking the students to help you get things prepared and include them in that process.

**3. What’s your Hook?**

Lesson plan is a go and materials are ready! Now…how are you going to hook your student’s attention and keep it? Too many times, I see teachers launching right into the textbook or lecture part of their lesson without an attention-grabbing “hook.” Don’t your students deserve a little more time and focus on this area? The answer is: yes, they do! It doesn’t matter the grade level – all kids need to feel a connection to the lesson. You can bring that to them in your lesson lead-in via video, movie clip or challenging question.. Make it fun, creative, and surprising.

**4. Step through your Procedures**

Working up how to best proceed in your lesson is important. If we return to the BAIPOK hme recipe analogy, we have our procedures for adding the ingredients to the pot , but if we neglect to follow them, we might end up with a disaster. The same is true for our lessons. The majority of our lesson procedure must include, among other things: activation of students prior knowledge, teaching and learning activities, and questions to guide student thought. Are you making sure that this happens in all your lessons? You should be.

**5. It’s a wrap!**

The lesson was a huge success and students loved it! Or did they? How do you know if they “got it?” Did you ask important closing questions? Did you do a quick assessment as students left the room? You can use all kinds of varied activities to check for understanding that don’t include formal test taking. Remember to check in with students throughout the lesson. You’ll need to do this to see what your next steps might be, even as you are working within the lesson. Wrapping up the lesson by checking for understanding sometimes gets lost in the busy-ness of the day. Make sure you don’t let this important last step get lost in the shuffle.