

Preparing Lesson Plans

By [Learning Curve](#) | Sep 28, 2018

If real learning has to happen in children in the classroom, a good preparation on the part of the teacher is a must. We teachers need to know what kind of preparation is necessary. It's always better to think 'How does the child learn?', rather than thinking 'How to teach the child?', because the child learns only when he is ready to learn by himself. There is no end to learning, education is a continuous process. While learning in school is one stage, adopting the same in life is another stage. Later on, life itself will continue to teach one lesson or other to every individual. The education we impart to a child in school should be the foundation of his/her future life which will flourish according to the foundation laid. This being the case, pre- determining our role to prepare the child to learn and the kind of activities and resources we can use is the essential ingredient for learning to take place. To achieve this, one of the most important steps is preparing a proper lesson plan.

Before preparing a lesson plan, we need to answer the following questions.

1. What should a child learn? (Concept / theme)
2. Why should this subject be learnt? (Purpose)
3. How does a child learn? (Activities)
4. How can I assess the learning level of a child? (Evaluation)
5. What is my role in it?
6. What are the resources that can be used?

When we say that the teacher has to give personal attention to each and every student while teaching, it means that it is not enough for us to be experts in teaching but we need to be highly sensitive to the needs of the students who fall behind in learning. We should have the capacity to encourage students who lag behind in learning, so that they learn in a pace equal to that of the other students. Also we should be capable of using innovative activities and methods in teaching them. The prepared lesson plan should not be a common lesson plan applicable to the whole class, but it should be planned and adopted according to the level and pace of learning of each child.

My experience

When I was working at the Brilliant School of Talikote, I used to teach Kannada through the lecture method, after that I would dictate answers to questions and conclude teaching of that lesson. But when I came to Azim Premji School I learnt that it was necessary to develop the four key skills in the children. Then when I started working on it, I encountered a lot of problems, but I was also learning many new things which kept me motivated to continue.

Teaching from the learning level of the child

When I went to class with a common lesson plan for the whole class I had to face different kinds of problems. Some children were causing lot of trouble, while other children would not participate in any of the activities. This would disturb the rest of the students. When these problems came to light during an interaction with the children, I realised that each child's learning level in the classroom was different. I started working with understanding that it is proper to assess each child's learning level and the way they would learn. For this, I first worked closely with the children and observed that when they were given different work (suitable to their learning level) they were doing it with full interest. This made me learn many things and we tried to help children learn in accordance with the pace and level of their learning.

From last year, we made teaching reading and writing skills in Kannada as sub steps and we prepared suitable learning activities and work sheets for them. Thereafter, we assessed the children according to their learning ability, identified their level of learning and started teaching them from that level. We found the children engaged in working continuously. I also learnt a lot from this exercise.

Preparing the learning steps

The creation of reading and writing skills as sub- steps was done by referring to Kalika Saamrthyagala Kaipidi (Manual of Learning Abilities) published by the Government of Karnataka, ' and the textbooks prescribed from 1st standard to 6th standard.

It was easy to develop steps for reading and writing skills, but there were many issues while developing steps for listening and speaking. I had discussions with my colleagues to overcome these issues and prepared the steps as per their suggestions. But even after these steps were prepared, I had to make some changes while working in the classroom.

Preparing the worksheets took more time. In order to determine the way, every activity was finalised having every child in mind and worksheets were prepared focusing on the fulfillment of our objectives and the felicity and interest with which the child can engage with it.

Initially we had prepared one or two worksheets for each step. These were changed while working in the class room and gradually many other worksheets were added.

Engaging Children in Learning

According to our plan we first evaluated the child's basic learning level (baseline) after which I prepared four or five work sheets to understand the baseline of children studying in 4th, 5th and 6th grades. Care was taken to ensure that the worksheets covered the assessment elements of all the steps. From this exercise, the learning level of some children is clear from the first worksheet, while for other children all the work sheets and dictations had to be looked into. When we understood the learning level of each child, we worked with them in the classroom. Different activities were carried out in the classroom: collective activities with all the children and individual activities starting from the learning level of each child. When children were given activities suitable for their level of learning, they would immediately start working with great interest. I would introduce the concept to children and then give the exercise to them to do and would move to the next child. The children were constantly engaged in their own work. Some children wanted help in the middle. This involved getting children engaged in activities in different groups and also in individual activities that generated interest, enthusiastic participation, and very good learning outcomes.

Some examples

In 4th standard, the required objective of the lesson Veeramaate Jeejabai's is 'acquiring the ability to write with punctuation marks following the instructions'. This was not achieved by all the students because of differing abilities. Every child needed individual lesson plan and activities. So the collective activity in each lesson was done collectively while the individual and worksheet activities of each child was from her own learning level. I could not give personal attention to all the children simultaneously, so I would help them over a few classes. I also took the help of 5th standard children to teach / assess the first standard. The activities and assessment should go on constantly and the reflections should be recorded daily basis at the end of the lesson.

Homework

In spite of all these methods some children were not doing the assigned homework. I realised it is better to give different types of homework, suited to the learning level of the child. I gave them homework in the form of worksheets, summarising work, reading, observation, enquiry, etc. and then discussed them on Saturdays. After starting this, about 60% -70% of the children completed their homework on time.

Advantages of these changes

- Children were constantly engaged in work.
- Since every step had new methods and worksheets it made the children work with greater interest.
- Learning was a bit faster, as the learning was happening at the learning levels of the children.
- It was a child-centric approach being driven by child's interest.
- It is easy to assess and record children's learning.

- It encouraged giving personal attention to each child.
- I am constantly encouraged to stay active and I was also learning new things every day.

Issues I encountered in this method

- Here I need more time.
- It meant extra work because I had to prepare all the worksheets myself.
- The worksheets sometimes did not fulfil the objective intended.

Learning levels of Children

These steps are designed to include the capabilities of standards 1-6. They are in ascending order, it assesses child learning continuously and making it easier to guide further learning. In this case, I have made up 4 steps and sub-steps, and activities for each step is prescribed.

Step 1: Writing - Neat and legible writing

1. Simple word
2. Spelling
3. Ottakshara (underletter conjugation) a. Same consonant ottakshara b. Different consonant ottakshara c. Mixed consonant ottakshara
4. Sentence formation a. Simple sentence formation b. Compound sentence formation
5. Neat and legible Writing
6. Orderly Writing
7. Writing on dictation using the most commonly used punctuation marks
8. Writing meaningful sentences about matters heard or read using appropriate punctuation marks

Step 2: Writing question and answers

1. Language learning
2. Dictation writing
3. Matching work

Step 3: Writing as directed

1. Constructing simple, dynamic, sentences comprehending language (grammatical) rules (on given data)
2. Orderly writing
3. Writing a report of excursion or celebration
4. Using Idioms, phrases and proverbs in own sentences

Step 4: Writing on their own/ Creative Writing

1. Writing independently informal letters, formal letters, travel articles and short essays.
2. Writing the matters narrated in the lesson, in story form, dialogues or as a summary
3. Our book 4. Short note
5. Independent Story Writing

6. Writing poems

7. Writing on looking at a picture

8. Converting spoken language (colloquial) to written language

After taking these steps and preparing activity- based exercises and worksheets, my classroom is where I learnt many things even from the problems I encountered. I prepared my further lesson plans based on these experiences.

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Category: Teacher Development

Subject: Views and Reflections

Board: All boards

Grade/Standard: Early Childhood Education

Class 1-2

Class 3-5

Class 6-8

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Class 11-12

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Source URL: <http://teachersofindia.org/en/article/preparing-lesson-plans>