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*RESEARCH PAPER*

*‘Strategies for Effective Lesson Planning’*

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**Introduction**

"Even the most talented dancer in the New York City had to work hard to succeed" Talent alone is not enough.

"Good teachers are born, not made" but teachers can improve (Pinsky, Manson, & Irby, 1998, p. 207).

One of the important factors in a teacher's improvement and professional development is "Reflection" (Pinsk & Irby, 1997). Particularly, anticipatory reflection is crucially important for teaching and it includes all sorts of preparation prior to teaching such as organizing the content, selecting materials and teaching strategies, and preparing instruction according to the needs of a particular group of learners.

A lesson plan is the instructor’s road map of what students need to learn and how it will be done effectively during the class time. Before you plan your lesson, you will first need to identify the learning objectives for the class meeting. Then, you can design appropriate learning activities and develop strategies to obtain feedback on student learning. A successful lesson plan addresses and integrates these three key components: • Objectives for student learning • Teaching/learning activities • Strategies to check student understanding Specifying concrete objectives for student learning will help you determine the kinds of teaching and learning activities you will use in class, while those activities will define how you will check whether the learning objectives have been accomplished (see Fig. 1). Fig. 1. Key Components of Lesson Plan Design (L. Dee Fink, 2005)



**How to Create a Perfect ESL Lesson Plan**

I have a story for you that should sound familiar.

A blank sheet of paper had to become 45 minutes of constructive ESL teaching.

No one can ever claim that they know how to write the perfect lesson plan! Lesson planning can be stressful. Perfection isn’t possible. You’ll never get it completely right, and that’s normal. With that truth in mind, let’s dive into how to make ESL lesson plans.

Before making a Lesson Plan, ask yourself a few questions. Knowing the answers will save you time.

1. Will you review what the school is teaching the students? Or will you create new learning goals? If the target language will be new, be sure it’s appropriate for the students’ level.

2. Will you focus on speaking, reading, writing or listening? Or a combination?

3. Will you teach alone or will you have help? The simplest games, for example, can be difficult to teach without translation unless you’re very prepared.

Let’s get started: 5 Great Resources for ESL Lesson Planning

Whether we teach in person or remotely, there are tons of amazing places to find ESL audio and video resources as well as ready-made ESL worksheets online. Audio-visual materials and practice worksheets are essential tools for ESL lesson planning.

Here are a few of the resources which will come in handy over and over again as we plan our lessons.

1. *ESL Library* <https://ellii.com/blog/black-lives-matter-mini-research-project> ESL Library is an incredibly accessible resource with a well-rounded and extensive catalog of activities ranging from ready-made ESL classes to digital homework activities. They also maintain a regularly updated blog focused on contemporary issues and trends in the ESL world.
2. *English Speeches* (Youtube) <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLyr-hfWVCKHcZjV5fg3jbw>

We’re at a time when public debate, discourse and interaction have never been more relevant. Many ESL students don’t just want to learn English but are generally seeking more profound means of communication with people from around the world. The English Speeches YouTube channel compiles historical and [contemporary speeches](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBBB-vJZB50)that are often moving, motivational or entertaining. Each speech is captioned with large lettering, and the speeches are categorized by English accent.

1. [***Linguahouse***](https://www.linguahouse.com/) <https://www.linguahouse.com>

Linguahouse provides a wide range of ESL worksheets that are ready to use in class. The worksheets are divided into general, business, elementary and exam preparation, meaning you can utilize these resources for a specific class. You can also tailor the worksheets to suit the needs of a particular student or classroom. Access is free, and the website provides over 1,000 resources.

1. [***Film English***](https://film-english.com/)<https://film-english.com>

Film English is run by award-winning speaker, writer and educational trainer [Kieran Donaghy](https://film-english.com/about-2/). The content is based around (you guessed it) English films and short films. There are many well-prepared classes all devised around a particular video that can be downloaded. The lessons follow a very simple step-by-step format, and many of the topics are related to the themes of relationships, emotions and current issues.

1. [***Open Culture***](http://www.openculture.com/) <https://www.openculture.com>

 Open Culture is a large-scale platform packed with educational and cultural content. The site is designed to be open-source, and you can draw from a deep well of specific topics and knowledge bases. The [ESL section](http://www.openculture.com/free_english_lessons) provides many audio and visual resources that can be easily adapted into an engaging and entertaining lesson plan.

***How to Create a Perfect ESL Lesson Plan in 6 Easy Steps***

Step 1: Decide on Your Lesson Plan Objectives

This is the daunting part, but it’s crucial that you know this from the start. Step one is the foundation of everything that follows. Your focus could be:

* a [song](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/learn-english-through-songs-music/) or a [movie](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/learn-english-movies-film-esl/) (be sure that your school permits this and that it won’t disturb neighboring classrooms). Remember that audio must be played loudly for students to understand it since it’s in a different language.
* a [specific grammar point](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/esl-english-grammar-mistakes/), such as forming questions or practicing the present progressive. Young or beginning learners might need to focus on the conjugation of only one specific verb such as “to be.” More advanced students could practice multiple irregular verb conjugations.
* a general exercise such as understanding a [short passage from a “Harry Potter” book](https://www.eslprintables.com/cinema_and_television/movies/movies_for_kids/harry_potter/).
* a vocabulary group. For example, you might teach cooking, [colors](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/english-color-idioms-improve-english/), medical terminology or animals.

Step 2: Outline Your Lesson Plan

Remember that every lesson plan should include individual work. To keep things organized, my outlines included the estimated time spent on each section. For example, a movie outline could be this:

1. Waiting for students to arrive and for the class to calm down (teenagers never arrive on time) — 1 minute

2. Welcome/quick review of previous week/[ask students questions](https://www.ef.com/wwen/blog/teacherzone/great-esl-icebreakers-and-warmups/) — 3 minutes

3. [Pass out movie worksheets](https://moviesheets.com/) — 1 minute

4. Play preview of movie — 2 minutes

5. Introduce vocabulary needed to understand movie scene — 5 minutes

6. Individual practice of the vocabulary on student worksheets — 3 minutes

7. Giving answers to worksheets — 2 minutes

8. Listening exercises with the movie (includes playing the movie scenes several times, then going over the answers and letting the students watch the scenes a third time) — 20 minutes

9. Free watching of the movie (always a class favorite, but get permission from your head teacher first) — 6 minutes

10. Wrap up the class by asking vocabulary review questions — 2 minutes

It’s important to balance classroom organization vs. time for the unexpected. Be ready for the unanticipated questions that can throw off your timing.

Step 3: Choose ESL Activities to Accomplish Your Lesson Plan Objectives

Variety is the spice of the ESL classroom. Everyone learns differently. You need activities for visual and audio learners as well as doers.

* Use games in the classroom. I believe in games in ESL classrooms. Used correctly, [games](https://www.fluentu.com/english/educator/blog/fun-esl-games-students-kids-teenagers-classroom/) let students test what they’ve learned in a relaxed, exciting way. The key is to make sure everyone participates. Without proper management, weaker or lazier students will quietly sit back and do nothing. In a 45 minute class, a game shouldn’t be longer than 12 minutes. Watch your motivations. There’s a big difference between playing Charades to review animal names vs. playing Hangman to let the teacher relax.
* Consider the pros and cons of individual vs. group ESL work.No lesson is complete without individual work. Everyone needs time to practice material on their own. These activities also help [shyer students](https://www.fluentu.com/english/educator/blog/fun-esl-games-students-kids-teenagers-classroom/), who can work quietly without the pressure of a spotlight. Group work, on the other hand, is useful too. Students can practice a dialogue with each other and learn from stronger partners. Team activities are often fun and give everyone a chance to relax a little. The drawback of group work, though, is that more advanced students tend to dominate the action. The right mix is essential.
* Repeat recent ESL activities. You can repeat activities. How often depends on how popular the activity is. One of my classes insisted on reviewing vocabulary by playing *Pictionary* every week. For classes that meet once a week, it’s best to recycle activities once a month if you can. Otherwise, your students might start to lose interest – and perhaps you will as well.

Step 4: Create ESL Materials and Worksheets

It’s true that the internet has a lot of free worksheets. By all means, use them. Time, however, is your greatest enemy. You first must know where to find quality ESL material. (The list above is a great place to start.) Until you have a few favorite sites, searching for worksheets on the internet will take a lot of your time. You’re not done there. You still have to tailor it to your class’s level.

Here are some tips that could make things go faster:

* Reuse workbook materials. Photocopy exercises from a textbook, white-out the answers and let students complete the questions as a review.
* If you do make your own materials, remember to include two sample questions with answers at the very beginning. Kids and low-level students always need a clear model to look at before doing individual work.
* For each grammar point, include five to seven questions.
* Include pictures on the worksheet. No one likes to look at straight, boring text.
* Puzzles of any type are fun and can help to quiet down an energetic class. “Boggle,” word searches or riddles (make sure they aren’t too hard) are always a welcome challenge.

Hang onto your ESL materials for future classes. Do it. Especially if you stay at the same school for more than one year, you’ll be able to reuse your materials. Buy a good binder and stick nice copies of your materials in it. It pays to keep your hard work on your computer as well as a USB drive.

Step 5: Create Stellar Visual Aids for Your ESL Classroom

You’ll need visual aids that add depth and interest to your class. It could be a PowerPoint presentation, a restaurant menu from home or things from your kitchen. Whatever you choose, make sure it enhances your lesson.

* Decide: Is a PowerPoint presentation necessary for this lesson? In class, PowerPoint presentations are good time savers. They can show answers to questions, saving you the trouble of using the blackboard. You can also use them to show interesting pictures. Try to minimize using them, however. They take a lot of time to create, and it’s possible that your projector won’t work that day. What would you do then?
* Weigh the pros and cons of using videos in ESL classes. With today’s technological world, [videos are a must](https://www.fluentu.com/english). They quickly gain the attention of the class and are a sure hit. On the flip side, you must be very careful in selecting your videos. Even Disney movies have language that’s sometimes too difficult for low-level students. Background music, multiple people talking and jokes that don’t transcend cultures are all traps to avoid. You must always have a back-up plan for class in case technology fails and suddenly there’s no movie.
* Find creative ways to add visual aids to your ESL class. [Newspapers](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/learn-english-news/) are an interesting prop. Even if the articles are too difficult, students can find the date, place of publication, price and the weather forecast. Jazz up a food vocabulary class by bringing a banana and an apple. For more advanced students, bring a colander, grater, bottle opener and other cooking items. Pass around currency from other countries.

Look at your lesson’s target language and see if anything already in your home applies. Try not to buy too much. It’s not necessary to spend a lot of money on this.

Step 6: The Final Stages of Lesson Planning

You’ve made it. Believe me, I sincerely congratulate you. Before you head into class, do a few things first:

* Get advice from other English teachers. Show your coworkers your ESL materials. Especially if you teach in a foreign country, their advice is invaluable. They understand your students better than you do and they’ll see gaps in logic, things that are too hard and cultural pitfalls. Take their advice and change your materials.
* Don’t stress about the outcome of the first class. Nobody’s perfect, and you won’t be either. On the first day, make copies for only that day. You’ll probably come back to your desk with a few things to change for tomorrow. Save trees by not making copies that’ll only go in the recycle bin.

***Managing the Classroom***

All teachers have to find a classroom style that they are comfortable with, and experience is the only tried-and-true way to do this. Meanwhile, here are a few practical pointers that may make managing a classroom a little easier.

Seating

There are two primary considerations in seating. First, you want students sitting fairly close to each other when they are engaged in pair or small-group work. Physical proximity tends to make students more willing to talk to each other because it helps create a sense of group affinity and closeness. The second main consideration is that you want to be able to get as close as you can to as many groups as possible so that you can see and hear what they are doing and interact with them easily and naturally.

Eye Contact

Good eye contact is one of the main ways to establish and maintain a sense of student involvement in the lesson, especially when speaking to the whole class.

Your Speech and Voice

One of the most helpful things you can do for students—and one of the most important ways to maintain a degree of control and order in the classroom—is simply to speak loudly and clearly enough for students to hear you easily. A related issue is that of how quickly you should speak. When attempting to put a point across in class (e.g., giving instructions), you want to make sure that it is understood. You may therefore be tempted to make your speech as easy as possible to understand. Speaking slowly and clearly (though not unnaturally) when necessary, and a little more normally at other times in order to challenge students’ ears.

Instructions

One of the most common reasons discussion activities don’t go well is that instructions are either too complicated or are not presented clearly. Basic tips for ensuring that instructions are understood include the following:

1. Keep instructions as short and simple as possible. Lower level students, especially those with poor listening comprehension, are easily thrown by complicated instructions.

2. Make instructions as specific and clear as possible. Vague instructions such as Talk about . . .don’t give a clear direction. Discussion starts faster and moves with more purpose if you assign students a more specific task, such as making a list, making a decision, or designing a plan. (For more on tasks, see chapter 8.)

3. Repeat the instructions, using the same (or almost the same) wording.

4. Write down your instructions in your lesson plans, even verbatim. This permits you to repeat instructions more than once using the same words.

5. Speak more slowly and clearly than normal when giving instructions.

6. Check students’ comprehension of instructions by having them repeat the instructions back to you. (Asking “Do you understand?” is generally of little use because the instinctive human response to this question is to nod your head whether or not you have any idea what the teacher is talking about.)

7. Check to see if students are actually doing the activity as you instructed. Often students appear to have understood the instructions, and they may well have thought they did, but when they begin the activity, it becomes clear that they either didn’t understand all the instructions or misunderstood some of them.

Movement

 One way to establish better rapport with students, as well as to maintain better control of the classroom, is to step out from behind the podium (or teacher’s desk, or whatever) and move closer to the students. Physical closeness tends to create a feeling of emotional closeness, and students will tend to feel closer to you emotionally if you are near them during at least some of the lesson.

Question and Answer

 You will greatly enhance the effectiveness of a question asked to the whole class if you pause before calling on someone to answer; this ensures that everyone has the time and the motivation to think through an answer.

Establishing a Good Rapport

Perhaps the single most important step toward establishing a good rapport with the students is learning their names.

***Conclusion***

To conclude, lesson planning, like teaching-learning, is complex and requires interacting with factors like the knowledge of the teacher, the nature of the subject, the teacher’s beliefs about the subject and its pedagogy, the socio-cultural context of the classroom and the lesson plan format. However, when lesson planning is treated sincerely and done thoughtfully, it can lead to a richness of learning within the classroom and provide intense, fulfilling and powerful learning experiences to teachers and students.

To be effective, the lesson plan does not have to be an exhaustive document that describes each and every possible classroom scenario. Nor does it have to anticipate each and every student’s response or question. Instead, it should provide you with a general outline of your teaching goals, learning objectives, and means to accomplish them. It is a reminder of what you want to do and how you want to do it. A productive lesson is not one in which everything goes exactly as planned, but one in which both students and instructor learn from each other.

**Reference**

1. <https://www.fluentu.com/english/>
2. Theory and Practice, 17 (4), 399-416. Pinsky, L. E.,& Irby, D. M. (1997)."If at first you don't succeed": Using failure to improve teaching. Academic Medicine, 72 (11), 973-976. Pinsky, L. E., Manson, D., & Irby, D. M. (1998).
3. SUSI Educators2022 program guidance

**Lesson Title**

*Write your lesson title above*

**Intended Audience:**

*Describe what level (e.g. high school, or higher education), what age range and what subject area this lesson is intended for.*

**Estimated Length of Time:**

*Indicate how long (in minutes) you foresee this lesson plan to take.*

**Objective(s):** By the end of the session, you will be able to:

*You may consider performance objectives and behavioral objectives*

**Materials needed:**

*List any necessary materials, worksheets, assessments, classroom supplies you need to conduct your lesson*

**Warm up/Do-now:**

*This might be in the form of a do-now; it might be the “hook” to peak students’ interest; or it might be something you do with students to review the previous day’s content if you are building on the previous day’s lesson.*

**Activities:**

*What will you have students do in effort to guide them to achieve the lesson’s objectives? How will you move students to higher order thinking skills (think about Bloom’s Taxonomy)?*

**Follow up:**

*Closing activities (how will you assess if students have met the objective?*

*Homework assignments?*

**Rationale for teaching approach:**

*Questions to consider:*

*Why are you teaching this material? How does it relate to your students’ lives? What skills will students practice?*

 *Why are you teaching the lesson this way? Why did you choose the specific activities you did?*

*Is your lesson reflective of a critical pedagogical approach? How so?*

**The role of Abraham Lincoln in the abolition of slavery; The Civil War**

**Intended audience**: 11th grade, high school

**Estimated length of time**: 3 lessons

**Objectives:** By the end of the lesson students should be able to:

1. Knowledge
2. explain the causes and consequences of the Civil War
3. describe the role of A.Lincoln in the abolition of slavery
4. outline the effects of war on the North and South, understand why there was tension between the North and the South

 B. Skills

Students will be able to

1. improve their listening and reading skills
2. develop their critical thinking
3. master topic vocabulary

**Materials needed:**

* laptops
* a projector
* a scrapbook
* a blackboard

**(Lesson 1)**

**Warm-up/ Do-now**

Students see three photos on the screen, and are asked what the people are thinking about in bubbles. (5 min.)

What phenomenon we see in these photos, explain them, describe what you think.(5 min.)

**Activities:**

1. Jigsaw activity ( Have students divide into groups- expert and home groups, to research into a. causes, b. the role of A. Lincoln, c. effects of war on the Southern and Northern states)(15 min.)
2. Each of the 3 groups is to single out the main points in their reading passages, then return to their home groups, sharing the knowledge obtained from each other, some putting down the ideas in the scrapbook. (5min.)
3. After that each home group is to present the principal ideas of the passages read and discussed together.(10min.)
4. For homework(5 min) - a. Write on ‘ A letter of an ex-slave to his free child’, b Read, analyze, putting down some notes. A. Lincoln’s first inauguration speech.

**Lesson 2**

1. <https://youtu.be/-trUqkdOKcg> (12 min), before watching it, tell students to write down the main ideas they get from the movie recap. Let them exchange ideas, asking them guiding questions.(10min.)
2. *Lincoln and the 13th Amendment to end slavery*. Before reading the passage, look through new words, explain them, and have a little contextual discussion with students. Then listen to the pronunciation, give them some time to digest the information(in case there’s some misunderstanding concerning the text), afterwards go to Question Set to check their knowledge. <https://www.readworks.org/article/Lincoln-and-the-13th-Amendment-to-End-Slavery/70e443e0-5453-42af-b96a-29758993c3b7#!questionsetsSection:574/articleTab:content/>) (10 min)
3. Divide students into groups for vocabulary (division is done on an odd-even-number basis). Both groups make up definitions for specific words, and the other should guess the word.(10min)
4. For home assignments (3 min)-a. Write on “ How you envision the answer of the ex-slave to his former master…” -a text on a sheet will be given to them. b. Read A. Lincoln’s second inauguration speech.

**Lesson 3**

1. Juneteenth flag craft/ photo. You ask students whether they guess what they’re going to study that day, If everything went smoothly after the 13th Amendment. (10min)
2. Emancipation Proclamation - prereading vocabulary activity. Read, then listen to the passage, paying attention to the vocabulary A.Lincoln chooses to impact people<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation> .<https://www.readworks.org/article/Slavery-Civil-War-Reconstruction---The-Emancipation-Proclamation/e6bf71e6-3d4a-43e2-b36a-b3e121da09d2#!articleTab:content>/ (10min)
3. <https://youtu.be/inNBpizpZkE> song (3.10 min.)
4. Dialogue with students: Black Lives Matter (photos). Have we managed to eliminate the phenomenon of slavery in our minds and lives? Do we still witness segregation alive among us….(10min)

**Follow up:**

1. Teacher observations noted throughout the discussions and whole group lessons.
2. Computer-based questions
3. Sheets-Pre/Post-Civil War test( circle the correct answer)
4. Student performance self-evaluation form

Pre/Post Civil War test (12 min)

Circle the correct answer

1. The economy of the North was mainly a.agricultural b. technological c. industrial d.political
2. The economy of the South was mainly a.agricultural b. technological c. industrial d.political
3. An agricultural economy means
4. factories
5. farms

 4. An industrial economy means

1. factories
2. farms

 5. Why did the South feel they ‘needed’ slaves to survive?

1. They were lazy.
2. They were too busy to be bothered with farming jobs.
3. They often traveled.
4. They needed the labor for the large plantations.

6. People who opposed slavery were called:

1. Anti-slaves
2. Administrators
3. Abolitionists
4. Overseers

7. The main cause of the Civil War was

1. Slavery
2. State’s rights
3. Economic differences
4. All of the above

8. What were the northern states called?

1. The Union
2. The Libertarians
3. The Confederacy
4. The Blue

9. What were the southern states called?

1. The Union
2. The Libertarians
3. The Confederacy
4. The Rebelites

10. About how many lives were lost in the American Civil War?

1. 50,000
2. 100,000
3. 300,000
4. 600,000

11. What year did the Civil War begin?

1. 1776
2. 1850
3. 1861
4. 1865

12. Who was elected President of the United States in 1860?

1. Thomas Jefferson
2. Abraham Lincoln
3. Jefferson Davis
4. Robert E. Lee

13. What was the South's main source of income?

1. Cotton
2. Slaves
3. Manufacturing
4. Peanuts

14.Which side was against high tariffs?

1. North
2. South

15. Prior to the Civil War what was the Federal Governments chief source of income?

1. income tax
2. property tax
3. sales tax
4. tariffs

16.What was the main motivation behind Lincoln making the abolition of slavery a war aim?

1. To win the media battle amongst the middle class
2. Because they needed another cause to keep the war going
3. To keep Great Britain and France from recognizing the Confederacy
4. To get freed slaves to join the army

17. "What document stated that ""Slaves of any state...in rebellion...shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free""?"

1. Declaration of Independence
2. US Constitution
3. The Freedom Pact
4. Emancipation Proclamation

18.What amendment was added to the Constitution after the war that freed slaves?

1. 5th
2. 9th
3. 13th
4. 18th

Self evaluation sheet

**Rationale:**

This material is still relevant even nowadays. With Emancipation Proclamation, 1863, yet, we still have inequality and lack of complete freedom of speech present in our life because of racial and gender discrimination. We see we can’t exercise our basic freedoms authorized to us by Constitution. With so many materials available and such abundant lessons learned from the past, still, a great number of people, let alone students, are unaware of the origins and consequences of abolishing slavery, the role of A. Lincoln in these processes. We teachers should expand students’ knowledge by providing them with multiple resources to enhance their critical thinking.

I have used a number of teaching strategies, e.g. inquiry-based learning by helping students think all through the process; jigsaw approach-“think-pair-share” improving their social skills through cooperative work and critical thinking; brainstorming.

As times change,educational methodologies transform simultaneously in order to meet the demands. With these fast developing techniques/ advances in every field of life, we should adjust ourselves to a more flexible and effective way of teaching. And to my mind, critical pedagogy is essential to apply in teaching-learning processes enabling students to acquire knowledge in a different light. By teaching them this skill they will start using it not only in class but in other fields of their social life. Once they realize they can get engaged in critical thinking processes, they get self-empowered and excited,resulting in their more confidence and success beyond schooling, which is the core of any fortunate person’s life.

Brainstorm, group work, critical thinking pedagogical technique.

Answer sheet

1. c. industrial
2. a.agricultural
3. b. farms
4. a. factories
5. d.They needed the labor for the large plantations
6. a. anti-slaves
7. d. all of the above
8. a. The Union
9. c. The Confederacy
10. d. 600,000
11. c. 1861
12. b. Abraham Lincoln
13. A: Cotton
14. b. South
15. d. tariffs
16. b. South
17. d.Emancipation Proclamation
18. c. 13th