



## Planning a Lesson

Ralph Tyler's seminal work in curriculum and instruction offers four questions that are worthwhile to consider when planning for instruction. Consider the following questions while planning daily class sessions.

- 1. What is the purpose of the lesson?** The lesson's purpose is typically anchored back into one of the goals or outcomes for the course. Consider where this day's lesson situates students in terms of overall learning for the course; this lesson's learning should help put students on track to achieving a final outcome.
- 2. What experiences are necessary?**  
Think to yourself: In what ways do students need to practice? Remember that learning takes place through active behavior on the part of the student; students need to *do* something with the content in order to retain it.
- 3. How should the experiences be organized?**  
When planning experiences, you will want to consider the time involved in each experience, as well as the student deliverables that need to occur. Do students have homework they will be turning in during the class session? Is there required reading that needs to be processed? Is there an upcoming assignment that needs to be discussed during class? These things will affect the structure of experiences on any given day.

The following is an example structure of a 50 minute class session:

Timing	Experience	Topic and/or Method
5 minutes	<b>Introduction</b>	Process the homework/readings and related to today's key concepts
10 minutes	Lecture Segment	A key idea in today's lesson
5 minutes	Student Processing	Problem solving related to lecture segment
5 minutes	Debrief	Discuss misconceptions/best wrong answers/ key ideas
10 minutes	Lecture Segment	Adding on to the key idea
10 minutes	Further Application	Video Analysis
5 minutes	<b>Conclusion</b>	Restate key ideas or jot down muddiest point or relate to upcoming readings

\*The accompanying video explains this table in greater detail.



#### **4. What evidence exists that learning occurred?**

Throughout this lesson plan are many opportunities for checking student mastery.

- a. Walk around the room and pose questions to students as they are working or problem solving. Open-ended questions typically provide the best information.
- b. Conclude with a whole-class debrief session in which you can discuss struggles and successes with the tasks performed in class. Addressing these ideas at the present time—rather than waiting until the next class period or the next exam—ensures that students will be more confident and capable when practicing the material on their own.
- c. Ask students to leave feedback about their learning. You may ask them to write down the *muddiest point* or most difficult concept regarding that day's task, summarize the key ideas of the day's lesson, or various other Classroom Assessment Techniques (see related videos & PDFs).

Prior consideration of the purpose of the lesson, the order of experiences, and the strategies for checking student mastery result in a class session that puts students on target to achieving class goals.