



Preparing a Lesson: Part 1

The best college instructors enter class each day with a well-developed lesson plan. A clear vision of the lesson's learning objectives provides benefits to both you as the instructor and the students in your course. The key to good planning is having goals for each class session; know your end destination, and plan accordingly.

Consider the following questions while planning daily class activities:

1. What is the purpose of the lesson?

Think to yourself: What should students know and be able to do as a result of today's lesson?

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?

Think to yourself: How should the lesson be structured so that students gain a holistic view of the content? Novices tend to silo or view new content as separate and discrete pieces of information. As much as possible, we want to organize experiences in ways that force students to make connections.

4. What evidence exists that learning occurred?

Think to yourself: What sense will I have that students have mastered what I wanted them to master? This evidence is occurring in real time—I don't want to wait for exam six weeks from now—how do I know this today?

Thinking through these questions in advance will help guide the decisions you make in a classroom on a daily basis, causing the process of teaching and learning to become more transparent and meaningful to both you and your students.