

# Supporting teaching and learning level 3 certificate essay sample

[Education](#), [Learning](#)



1. 1 A TA's role within a school is to provide support during learning, with the main objective of broadening a child's knowledge, academically, emotionally and socially. This can be achieved with the assumption that each child arrives to school ready and able to learn, all the relevant resources are available for task and that as a TA you have the necessary subject knowledge or experience to effectively support in learning. In 1943 a psychologist with an interest in human motivation and development wrote a paper on the Theory of Human Motivation, his name was Abraham Maslow. He writes on his believes of the theory that as humans we have various needs which need to be accomplished in order to achieve self-actualization. If we are lacking in some of the most basic needs such as a safe environment, food or water it will ultimately have an effect on our physiological needs, therefore making it harder to reach our full potential. He put his findings in a Hierarchy shown below;

As stated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as a school we should provide a number of things that will help a child feel motivated and be able to accomplish the most. I have broken these down: Psychological.

At school children should be given healthy meals or encouraged to have healthy pack lunches, have access to water via fountains and be provided with clean toilets. A factor that also needs to be encouraged by a school is that every child should have a certain amount of sleep each night. These are your foundation for an optimal learning environment.

Safety.

Every child should feel safe and confident in their environment. For a school to achieve this they need to enforce school rules based on reason and morality, have a strong anti-bullying policy and a clear and persistent behaviour policy. Every adult that works in a school has to have a CRB check; therefore this ensures children are safe within schools. Playtimes also need to be monitored by a midday or teacher as that's where most social aspects of school take place. Every school has a first aider and some have school nurses if a child is injured. At our school we have a letter box in each class so that if a child is feeling unhappy or scared for any reason, they can write it in a note to the teacher. We also have an open door policy so that no child feels lonely and knows there is always someone to talk to.

Love and affection.

Schools should have an inclusive atmosphere with a variety of clubs on offer for all children's interests. Learning should not always be independent as it is important to engage the class in group discussion. It is also extremely important that each child feels equal to one another and that the school's ethos is achievable by all.

Esteem.

Children will naturally react well to praise as it will boost their self-esteem and give them the urge to progress further in their learning for this continued accountability. All targets set to children must be achievable as this will engage and encourage continued development for each child. Children should always be praised for achieved work and good

behaviour; this can be done with stickers, displaying their work, reward charts, star of the week or a mention in school assemblies. Most schools now have a school council made up of pupils who will put forward other pupil's ideas or suggestion on improving their school environment. This gives the children a sense of maturity and equality, therefore increasing their self-esteem. If a school provides all of the above it sets a healthy foundation for achievable motivation form pupils. As a TA you will actively help to achieve this in each pupil by understanding all school rules, ethos and following them through with every child and contributing to lesson planning, teaching and assessments of the tasks at hand.

During teaching or assisting teaching there are a number of factors that need to be considered to provide optimal learning experience; Encourage children and praise them for good work.

Ensure there is a constantly high standard of behaviour.

Differentiate your style of learning, remodel or translate the instructions accordingly to each child. Ensure choice of resources are specific to task.

Provide individual attention where necessary.

Encourage children to work independently to increase their self-esteem and stimulate their minds. Provide a safe warm environment to work in.

If lessons weren't planned it would be chaos and not much learning would take place. There are 3 types of planning which are involved in the schools;

Long term - This will be the curriculum framework and will show the summary of the subject which is to be covered.

Medium term - This will be termly or half termly. It will co-exist with the long term planning but will show an overview of the activities/topics to be undertaken in order to meet the curriculum. Links with the National Primary Strategy. Short term - This provides a more detailed breakdown of the week's lessons and can also be broken down day by day indicating the required LO's. These plans will include Activities, differentiations, provisions for SEN, whether a TA is requested in class or with individuals, required resources and allocation of time. There will also be space on this planning sheet for evaluation of the task.

A TA will work closely with the teacher to discuss and record children's progress and any improvements that need to be addressed. With this you will have a broader knowledge of each child's ability, therefore enabling you to differentiate your teaching methods and provide the relevant resources for them to progress. It is a joint partnership between a teacher and a TA when it comes to planning as knowing the children's abilities will help to provide the relevant resources and support. It is also a requested standard during Ofsted inspections as they will want to see evidence of joint planning.

There is a recognised planning cycle that takes place when teaching or assisting teaching.

## PLAN

Firstly the lesson is organised in the form of a lesson plan. This plan will show the initial Learning Objective to which the children need to meet by the end of the lesson, resources that will be needed in order to fulfil the LO and any

differentiations. A TA must have the correct subject knowledge and pupil knowledge in order to fulfil the LO. If a TA does not know the LO of the lesson then it would be impossible for the pupils to meet and the TA would not have supported the children correctly. Differentiation of learning is really important in lesson planning as it will enable the teacher and TA to set the LO to the ability of each child, thus all pupils can achieve similar if not the same outcomes during the lesson. During lesson a teacher or TA may set a task that is achievable for each groups ability but still achieving the LO, they may use different dialogue to speak to children so they understand, there pace of speech may be slower or faster to individuals or they may offer more support to some pupils and homework that is set will be appropriate for each level group.

Differentiation is categorised in two ways; By outcome. This is where individuals answer questions at their own level of ability and often open ended questions can be asked. By resource. Assuming that some pupils will work more effectively with different types of resources to understand the LO and achieve the same outcome. For example, a numeracy lesson on Time you may use large clocks with time breakdowns shown on them for a lower ability group but for a higher ability group you may want to use smaller clocks with no numbers or breakdowns at all. Differentiation can be used among all levels of ability, those on a lower level through to those that are gifted and talented (any SEN or provisions). A TA will play a huge part in this planning as they should have knowledge of the children's abilities if they have them for additional learning outside of lessons, with this a TA should be

able to provide the correct support and resources for each task. A TA may also contribute to planning of lessons by suggesting tasks specific to individual needs and suggest their own role within the classroom in order to be used most effectively.

## TEACH

After all the planning, the teaching takes place according to the plan that has been set. The lesson plan will enable you to have all resources and any differentiation in place before the lesson begins, providing an effective learning environment. For an effective lesson there are certain strategies that need to be in place. As a TA you will firstly need to help to create a positive environment for learning then you will need to ensure you provide encouragement for pupil's efforts and behaviour. You may need to re-model language or translate for any EAL pupils, you may need to provide assistance with fine motor skills such as holding a pencil correctly, you will be expected to give individual attention to those whom require it and you will need to differentiate your learning as stated above. When supporting learning you will need to consider how social organisation and friendships may affect learning. If children have fallen out with each other but need to work as a group that lesson isn't going to go particularly well, so the best thing is to switch up the groups or get them to resolve their differences. You will also need to take into account developmental stages of pupils and academic abilities when grouping for tasks or even individual work. As to manage learning within your class a TA must ensure that the level of behaviour is consistently high and sanctions are in place if it isn't, you allow enough time for the task to be

completed, instructions are clear and given to pupils so they understand at their level and seek clarification that they are unsure on what is being asked of them.

### Assess

Assessment of Learning is then made as to whether or not LO's were achieved or where things need to be changed or addressed for future teaching. These observational assessments need to be accurate, objective and constructive and can be provided formally, informally, verbally or written. A TA should always provide feedback to the teacher on individual's progress as to set relevant targets that are achievable. If a lesson didn't work for a certain group they may need additional teaching and support for the next lesson. The teacher and TA will need to evaluate the task and decide why the LO wasn't met. Was it because; The activity - instructions not given clearly or not suited to pupil's ability. Resources - bad choice of equipment, broken equipment or maybe not enough. Environment - was it too noisy, too cold/hot or was it too cramped? Pupils themselves - Behaviour problems, low concentration, SEN or any other provisions. Once you have decided the problem it can be amended for next lesson.

1. 2 I am currently supporting in learning across 3, Year 4 classes. I feel I have a good relationship with my pupils, gaining respect and trust with them, thus making me feel like a valued member of staff and a good role model. I also have a good rapport with them, making learning fun but above all achievable. When I began I felt confident about my subject knowledge



until I was actually put in a lesson to observe what the year 4 pupils are taught. I was shocked that I didn't actually recognise some of the methods used during literacy and numeracy as they were taught to me a little different when I last learned them. This concerned me, as to be a competent TA I need to have the relevant subject knowledge in order to assist in children's learning, therefore I engaged in PDP and set myself a reachable target. I decided to refresh my knowledge and gained a clearer understanding of the curriculum that is set for year 4 by researching educational literature. I am now feeling confident that I can assist pupils in fulfilling their LO's however I have am aware that continued professional development is key in broadening my knowledge therefore I have asked to attend the next Inset day for more training. (Please see PDP attachment 4/unit 332)

### Outcome 3

3. 2 When organising group lessons or booster sessions there is more to consider other than resources or differentiations. Factors that could affect the lesson and the objective goals may be down to social organisation and grouping of pupils. If you are taking groups of children you will need to consider group dynamics that won't interfere with learning. If a group of children that you are about to teach have just had an argument in the playground then this could cause difficulty in teaching as the social aspect of the group is temporarily disrupted, therefore it may be an idea to either get them to address the problem prior to lesson or take them in separate groups if possible. Also consider developmental stage of pupils, it would not be

effective to have a small group session with a pupil of low level ability, EAL or those with a disability alongside one of higher level ability being taught in the same way.

This is because you would need to teach to each group in different ways by using different dialect, speed, and use of resources. If the grouping is not correct you cannot differentiate your methods of teaching to best assist each individual pupils needs. However during class group activities this is sometimes a good idea to mix up the abilities as it may trigger imagination of a lower ability as well as giving the higher ability the chance to explain and the pupils to become independent learners, thus promoting resilience. You may also want to consider the personalities of children when grouping as a chatty, fidgeting child next to a child with Asperger's or autism could be a recipe for disaster as the dynamics are polar opposite.

3. 6 When supporting learning activities there are a few factors than can have an effect on the outcome of the lesson. These include; Gender - Generally girls tend to be chattier in class and have more friendship breakups that last longer. Boys tend to have a lower concentration and get over arguments quick however the disputes may be more volatile. This is not fact, just opinion. Try to have an even ratio of boys to girls in groups for an even balance. Age and maturity - you may need to consider the pupils developmental ages and their ability to learn and concentrate as you will need to differ your teaching styles. Social/cultural background - unfortunately there can be children that come from families that don't offer much support at home when it comes to school life therefore you may have

pupils that have no interest in learning as it is not implemented at home. You may have a pupil that is pushed constantly to achieve academically and this could cause a child to worry or be anxious if they cannot produce the work during lessons. As a TA you need to offer the same amount of support and encouragement to pupils of all levels, social backgrounds and cultures.

Motivation/self-esteem - consider dynamics of grouping and the children's personalities. If a pupil is of a low ability they may not feel confident, therefore they may retract from activities. Try to encourage these types of children by asking open ended questions and reassuring them. Linguistic - a child with linguistic problems due to delay of speech or EAL will need extra support during tasks. Consider giving instructions slower and clearer, or even placing them at the front of the class in order for them to visually see the movement of your mouth during speech (lip sync). You may want to consider setting more reachable targets or taking them in smaller groups. Range of ability in class - the range of ability of children in one class may be very wide therefore you will need to differentiate your teaching to offer support to all. In lessons such as numeracy the children are often streamed into ability sets for optimal learning and achievable LO's for each group. Intelligence and creativity - consider that not every child has the same level of creativity or intelligence. You may have a child that is of higher ability with a writing level of 5, but they have no imaginative or creative skills. This will present a problem when that child has to partake in imaginative writing tasks or creative art. For this child you may want to consider using resources to assist

in visual imagination or even pairing them with a child who has a flourishing imagination.

Physical development - Main stream schooling encourages integration of all abilities including any disabilities or SEN. With this you may have a child with special educational needs or a child with a physical, emotional or social disability within the class. For instance a child with dyspraxia will find it hard to

Emotional factors - consider the fact that emotional issues such as friendships between peers can have a mass effect on learning. A child experiencing this may feel isolated, upset or angry. If this is the case, it's best to address the matter straight away by getting them to resolve the problem together or if this is not possible, mix up the groups temporarily.

Teaching environment - if you are teaching in a small, cramped room that is too hot or too cold, it doesn't provide a happy place for the children to learn. Ensure the space you use is comfortable, safe and quiet. This will enable the children to feel relaxed and ready to learn.

We all have the ability to learn something. There are different types of learning theories and 'schools' of learning that we use and sometimes we are more susceptible to one than the other. David Kolb believed that people learn in four ways and as they grow they are more likely to have one preferred style. He believes that the four learning processes are leaning through concrete experience, learning through observation and reflection, leaning through abstract conceptualisation and learning through active experimentation. He shows his theory in the Kolb learning cycle shown below.

## Multiple Intelligence Theory

The multiple intelligence theory was developed in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner. It suggests that traditional ways of testing for intelligence may be biased to certain types of individuals. Think back to the good old school days. Do you remember the girl who was always picked for the lead role in musicals? Who could forget the boisterous class clown? Or whatever happened to the boy who never stopped drawing detailed doodles of cars and planes? Much like then, the perception still exists that intelligence can be measured in relation to reading, writing and arithmetic skills alone, and a person's future success is judged accordingly. Gardner became one of the first to express how we should not judge others according to this narrow definition of intelligence and he strongly suggested that everybody has a different mind, and no two profiles of intelligence are the same. Therefore, the traditional concept of measuring intelligence by I. Q testing is far too restricted. From the 8 primary intelligences, an individual may excel in one, two or even three of these, but nobody's good at them all. Equally the same rule applies to a child prodigy or mentally/physically disadvantaged person. A brain damaged child could have a severely impaired use of language, but be able to paint or play music magnificently. Gardner's multiple intelligences are;

### Linguistic

People with high linguistic intelligence display a facility with words and languages. They are typically good at reading, writing, telling stories and

memorizing words along with dates. And they're also having the ability to effectively express themselves using language. Logical mathematical

The ability to analyze problems with logic, abstractions, reasoning, numbers and critical thinking. This also has to do with having the capacity to understand the underlying principles of some kind of system. Musical intelligence

This is to do with sensitivity to sounds, rhythms, tones, and music. People with a high musical intelligence normally have good pitch, are able to sing, play musical instruments, and compose music. Bodily-Kinaesthetic intelligence

The core elements of the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence are control of one's bodily motions and the capacity to handle objects skillfully. Gardner elaborates to say that this also includes a sense of timing, a clear sense of the goal of a physical action, along with the ability to train responses. People who have bodily-kinesthetic intelligence should learn better by involving muscular movement and be generally good at physical activities such as sports, dance, acting, and making things.

### Spatial

This area deals with spatial judgment and the ability to visualize with the mind's eye. Interpersonal intelligence

This area has to do with interaction with others. In theory, individuals who have high interpersonal intelligence are characterized by their sensitivity to

others' moods, feelings, temperaments and motivations, and their ability to cooperate in order to work as part of a group. Those with this intelligence communicate effectively and empathize easily with others, and may be either leaders or followers. They typically learn best by working with others and often enjoy discussion and debate.

### Intrapersonal intelligence

This is to do with introspective and self-reflective. This refers to having a deep understanding of yourself; what your strengths/ weaknesses are, what makes you unique, being able to predict your own reactions/emotions.

Learning style test can be conducted using a VAK test (Visual Auditory Kinaesthetic). Pupils will normally have a preferred style but may dip in and out of each from time to time. These styles are; Visual- pupils will prefer to learn through visualisation. Either by reading or looking. Auditory - pupils will prefer to learn through sound. Either by listening to instructions, speaking or discussing. Kinaesthetic - pupils will prefer to learn through hands on experience. By trying something for themselves and using tact.

Putting Gardner's theory and the VAK to test you may want to consider this as a factor that can have an effect on teaching. Every child and human being will have a preferred learning style and it is your job as a TA to try and stimulate all of these intelligences in order to maximise pupils, educational outcomes. Once you know a pupils preferred learning style you can adapt your teaching to provide the best support.

Behaviourist.

Behaviorism is a view that assumes a learner is essentially passive, responding to environmental stimuli. The learner starts off as a clean slate and behavior is shaped through positive reinforcement or negative reinforcement, in education cases this can be in the form of a sticker, praise or reward charts. Both positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement increase the probability that the antecedent behavior will happen again. In contrast, punishment (both positive and negative) decreases the likelihood that the antecedent behavior will happen again. Learning is therefore defined as a change in behavior in the learner. Supporters of this theory include Skinner, Pavlov, Watson, Thorndike, Guthrie, Hull and Gagne.

Cognitive

Cognitivism focuses on the inner mental activities - opening the "black box" of the human mind is valuable and necessary for understanding how people learn. Mental processes such as thinking, memory, knowing, and problem-solving need to be explored. Learning is defined as change in a learner's schemata. A response to behaviorism, people are not "programmed animals" that merely respond to environmental stimuli; people are rational beings that require active participation in order to learn, and whose actions are a consequence of thinking. Changes in behavior are observed, but only as an indication of what is occurring in the learner's head. Cognitivism uses the metaphor of the mind as computer: information comes in, is being processed, and leads to certain outcomes. Supporters of this theory include Dewey, Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky.



## Humanist

Humanism focuses on the human freedom, dignity, and potential. A central assumption of humanism is that people act with intentionality and values. This is in contrast to the behaviorist notion of operant conditioning and the cognitive psychologist belief that the discovering knowledge or constructing meaning is central to learning. Humanists also believe that it is necessary to study the person as a whole, especially as an individual grows and develops over the lifespan. It follows that the study of the self, motivation, and goals are areas of particular interest. A primary purpose of humanism could be described as the development of self-actualized, autonomous people. In humanism, learning is student centered and personalized, and the teacher's role is that of a facilitator. Affective and cognitive needs are key, and the goal is to develop self-actualized people in a cooperative, supportive environment. Supporters of this theory are Maslow and Carl Rogers.

## Outcome 5

5. 1 During each lesson, learning objectives or LO's set for the pupils. These are brief statements that describe what pupils will be expected to learn by the end of the lesson and ultimately why they are learning them. They are the interim academic goals that teachers set for pupils that sequence academic expectations across many developmental stages. Learning objectives are a way for teachers to structure, sequence, and plan out learning goals for a specific period, typically for the purpose of moving pupils toward the achievement of larger, longer-term educational goals. It is therefore extremely important evaluate learning activities in relation to the

LO's that are set as if a pupil is to academically progress further they will need to have met that specific objective, if not the next LO may not be as effective in relation to the last lesson. At the end of each lesson the teachers at our school will mark all work relating to the LO that has been set and if it hasn't the pupils will be set next steps in achieving this. This is where you may want to assess your lesson planning and decide where the problem may lie with the pupil/pupils not achieving the LO. Was it because; The activity - instructions not given clearly or not suited to pupil's ability. Resources - bad choice of equipment, broken equipment or maybe not enough. Environment - was it too noisy, too cold/hot or was it too cramped? Pupils themselves - Behaviour problems, low concentration, SEN or any other provisions. These observational assessments need to be accurate, objective and constructive and can be provided formally or informally, verbally or written.

#### Outcome 6

6. 1 I recently engaged in my own PDP and set myself SMART targets for improving my literacy and numeracy knowledge and the curriculum that is taught to year 4 pupils. (Please see attachment 4/unit 332) When I began as a TA I felt confident that I had the relevant subject knowledge however I soon questioned this when I was actually put to task during a numeracy lesson. I was shocked that I didn't actually recognise some of the methods used, as they were taught to me a little different when I last learned them. I felt a little embarrassed as I had to ask the teacher to explain the method to me before I began assisting a lower ability group. This concerned me, as to be a competent TA I need to have the relevant subject knowledge in order to

assist in children's learning, therefore I engaged in PDP and set myself a reachable target. I decided to refresh my knowledge and gained a clearer understanding of the curriculum that is set for year 4 by researching and practicing educational literature, not only for numeracy but also literacy as I was sure there was more for me to learn before I engaged in another lesson. I am now feeling confident that I can assist pupils in fulfilling their LO's during numeracy and literacy. As for ICT I am sure I have the relevant skills to assist in learning of this subject however I am aware there may be more to learn and am willing to train further in order to fulfil my full potential as a TA and assist pupils in achieving more.

6. 2 I recently engaged in my own PDP and set myself SMART targets for improving my literacy and numeracy knowledge and the curriculum that is taught to year 4 pupils. I have also contacted a team leader and asked to attend the next inset day which could be of relevance to me.