

Evaluation of three lesson plan templates for elt

[Education](#), [School](#)



Teaching English as a Second Language (ELT) is a demanding job that is currently experiencing too few teachers to fill the jobs out there. As more and more foreign students enter United States Schools, experienced teachers will be needed to fill these slots. Thus, training ELT teachers is of the utmost concern for education departments in colleges and universities throughout the country. Clearly, tools, strategies and support must be made available to these new teachers so that they can focus their time on teaching the students. A good lesson plan template will go a long way in easing the burden on the ELT teacher.

This essay will focus on the three lesson plan templates submitted for instructing ELT classes. These templates will be analyzed and evaluated for the following components: 1) identification of lesson and objectives 2) strategies and methods, 3) equipment and materials needed, 4) use of technology, 5) reinforcement and enrichment, 6) structural format, 7) overall efficiency of use.

These criteria are important in the development of a viable lesson plan and will aid new ELT teachers in preparing thorough and appropriate lessons. After that, the lesson plans will be assessed based on their strengths and weaknesses followed by some overall suggestions for improvement for both the individual lesson plan templates and for all three templates together.

General Description

Visually this lesson plan provides a large writing space with topic indicators down the left hand margin, except for the date and time in the upper right hand corner. This lesson identifies the basic class/date/time information.

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Then it provides a spot for aims and new lexis. It then provides a spot for needed equipment, materials and preparation before class begins. Then the plan gives a two columned table for the method of the lesson and the time it will take. Finally, the plan gives a spot for the homework and comments on the lesson.

Strengths

The strengths of this lesson include its inclusion of the new words to learn, which is important to the ELT classroom and the initial mention of the aims, which we can assume are the objectives. The timing out of each part of the lesson on the table is also important. One of the most valuable parts of the plan is its reflection section at the bottom. Comments on the lesson are vital to reworking it for the next presentation.

Weaknesses

This lesson plan is spaced oddly. It does not provide enough room for the method section. Organization seems a bit off as well. The equipment and materials separate the method of the lesson from its aims and new words of study. It is hard to tell from the methods section what exactly will be happening; this leaves a lot for the teacher to write in on a daily basis.

Suggestions for Improvement

I would move the Methods section up under the Aims and New Lexis subheadings. This way, the entire lesson is presented as a unit rather than broken up by the materials and equipment needed. I would also consider

moving the Before the Class heading to the top, so that it can be completed the day before. After that, the lesson is still linear. Also consider this – if the lesson always contains a section for, say, oral repetition of new words followed by visual images of the words, these two subheadings could be typed in to save time in writing out the lesson plan.

General Description

This lesson plan template uses six horizontal boxes. The first contains basic information like class, room number, date, time and length of lesson. The second box is dedicated to the aims of the ELT process and includes four categories of these aims: functional, structural, phonological and skills aims. Then, the third box lists materials; the fourth box lists aids; and the fifth box provides for an evaluation of the procedure.

Strengths

The physical layout is very attractive and appropriate for showing clear divisions in the plan. The separation of the lesson aims into categories is important and reminds the teacher that each lesson needs to meet each of these four components in order to make sure the ELT student fully grasps the concept being taught. Again, a spot to evaluate the lesson, or components of it, is vital for future planning, and ample space is given for the teacher to do so in this particular lesson plan template.

Weaknesses

This lesson plan seems to misappropriate the use of space. It seems that the largest amount of space should go to describing the lesson aims and method, but this does not happen here. In fact, there is not place listed to describe the actual process and procedure of the lesson plan itself. There is nothing to indicate what will be happening specifically during the class. I am not sure how the word aids differs from materials, so this might be unnecessarily repetitive and take up space from other necessary information.

Suggestions for Improvement

This lesson plan must add a section for specifying each activity and the anticipated time for it. Without that, there is no way to evaluate how well the lesson went and what changes might be made to it. The first box is way too large. That can be condensed by half.

General Description

The third lesson plan template takes the form of five vertical columns. Above the columns are spots for the general data of class, overall aim, date and time. Beneath the columns are spaces to list homework and an evaluation of the lesson. The six columns are labeled as follows: Activity, Materials and Aids, Time Needed, Skills to be Practised, and Problems Anticipated.

Strengths

The vertical columns suggest a very linear organization. Each activity listed in the first column can be tracked across each column, leaving no question

as to the distinct identity of each separate activity. This is the only lesson plan to do this. Also, the spot to anticipate problems is also very insightful, as lessons rarely go as expected. Once again, the teacher has a place to evaluate his or her lessons.

Weaknesses

Again, I think the order of the presentation is a little inefficient. A reordering of the columns is suggested below. Also, only one spot is given for an overall aim. However, most lessons have additional, more specific goals and objectives as well.

Suggestions for Improvement

I would order the columns in the following way: Time Needed, Activity, Skills, Materials, and Problems. This seems to flow natural and will keep the teacher from backtracking. I would also add a spot for more lesson-specific objectives in addition to the larger, overall aim.

Overall Evaluation

All of the lesson plans present are an excellent start in preparing a template to use in the ELT classroom. However, a few additions might improve all of the lesson plans. As a matter of housekeeping, it is a good idea to have a spot for students who are absent. That way, make up materials can be collected and distributed very easily without the need to cross check the lesson plan with the attendance book.

Next, I would suggest that a spot be added to each lesson plan for reinforcement and for enrichment. It is entirely possible that some students will need additional work on the basic goals and aims while others master them quickly. Thus, the reinforcement activities can re-teach the lesson to those slower to grasp it while the enrichment activities can give more challenging work to those that picked up the material faster than others. Everyone will stay busy while the teacher focuses on those that are struggling.

Most educators suggest reserving a spot at the beginning of the plan for review of previous material and again at the end of the plan to review the day's lesson and preview the next day. It is easy to forget these things; they can be very easily written into the plan. One glaring omission in all three of the lesson plans was the omission of the use of technology.

While this might be listed under materials, I believe that technology use, especially in the ELT classroom, is an integral part in lesson planning. Audio lessons, video lessons, even lessons on PowerPoint or computer programs used by the students are all significant strategies for students learning a second language. It is a flaw to omit this design in the lesson plan as many teacher evaluation and certification instruments specifically seek them.

Finally, it is always best to have as much space available as one can to write in. I would suggest that the teachers widen the margins on the documents to that more information can be written in the spaces. While the lesson plan is best kept to one page, the more writing that the teacher can neatly

put on that one page, the better. It is better to have too much information on the page than not enough.

Organization is the key to success for all teachers, and especially the teachers of ELT. Once the children enter the classroom, there is now time to try to make sense of a confusing or poorly written plan. Not every plan will work for every teacher, so it may take some time to hit upon the very best template.

The best advice is to have a space to write in things you do every day, such as review, homework, preview, reflection etc. That way you will not forget to include that segment in your lesson. It is important to keep track of time so that the class time will never be wasted. Finally, the more specific the plan is, the easier it is to teach. Each of these three plans is certainly on track and with a few minor modifications, they will be ready to use in the classroom.