

## Key Resource: Planning and preparing your lessons

### Why planning and preparing is important

Consistently good lessons have to be planned. By planning and preparing well, you are concentrating on:

- what your pupils need to know in order to progress;
- how you are going to teach this in a way they understand;
- how you judge what they have learned at the end of it.

So planning is a continual process that helps you to think and prepare what is needed to help your pupils respond well to you and the content of what you teach. For your pupils to learn from your lessons they need to be:

- interested – if they are not, nothing of any value will take place;
- very clear about what you want them to do and achieve.

### Planning lessons

First of all, think of the curriculum you need to follow, and begin by breaking up subjects and topics into sections that can fit into a lesson time. One topic may take up four lessons, but another only two. Now you need to use your skill to make these topics into lessons your pupils find interesting. To do this, you need to be clear about what you want to do. Learning objectives and learning outcomes will help you.

All lessons need learning objectives, that is, what is it that pupils should know/understand/be able to do/be aware of at the end of the lesson. A learning objective is a statement about what you aim to do. For example: At the end of the lesson the pupils will...

- have made their own clay pot.
- know how to recognise parts of a particular plant.
- understand how and why river meanders occur.

Lesson plans also need a learning outcome, that is, 'How do I know that pupils have achieved the objectives I set them?' For example:

- Are the pots complete?
- In what ways will I judge how much they know about the plant?
- How will I measure their understanding about meanders?

A successful lesson will show you can assess how much your pupils have achieved and that both you and they know what they need to tackle next.

## Preparing lessons

Preparing lessons concentrates on what you need to do to achieve the learning outcomes. Think of preparing your lessons in three parts. These parts are:

- Introduction
- Main part of lesson
- Checking on learning (often called a plenary session), in which you and your pupils find out what has been learned.

### Introduction

At the start of a lesson, explain your learning objectives in a way your pupils understand so that they know exactly what is expected of them. Get them interested in what they are about to do by allowing them to share what they know already.

### Main part of the lesson

In this section, you will explain new information and develop activities that help pupils to develop and confirm their own learning. These activities can be brainstorming, group work, problem solving, experimentation etc. Whatever you choose will be aimed at helping the pupils to achieve your original objectives in the most effective way. As well as the content you have prepared, the resources you use and the way you make use of your classroom space will influence how successful your lesson will be. Variety is an important part of lesson planning and preparation.

### Checking on learning

Always leave time at the end to find out how much progress pupils have made. Refer back to the learning objectives. Summarise the lesson by highlighting its key points. Also summarise what they have done already and what they will be doing next time. Allow time for pupils to tell you and each other about their learning so that you know what to plan next.

Finally, ask yourself if you are clear about the progress pupils have made. What did you do well to help them understand and what could you have done a bit better?



*TESSA (Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa) aims to improve the classroom practices of primary teachers and secondary science teachers in Africa through the provision of Open Educational Resources (OERs) to support teachers in developing student-centred, participatory approaches. The TESSA OERs provide teachers with a companion to the school*

*textbook. They offer activities for teachers to try out in their classrooms with their students, together with case studies showing how other teachers have taught the topic, and linked resources to support teachers in developing their lesson plans and subject knowledge.*

*TESSA OERs have been collaboratively written by African and international authors to address the curriculum and contexts. They are available for online and print use (<http://www.tessafrica.net>). The Primary OERs are available in several versions and languages (English, French, Arabic and Swahili). Initially, the OER were produced in English and made relevant across Africa. These OER have been versioned by TESSA partners for Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, and translated by partners in Sudan (Arabic), Togo (French) and Tanzania (Swahili) Secondary Science OER are available in English and have been versioned for Zambia, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. We welcome feedback from those who read and make use of these resources. The Creative Commons License enables users to adapt and localise the OERs further to meet local needs and contexts.*

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*As well as the main body of pedagogic resources to support teaching in particular subject areas, there are a selection of additional resources including audio, key resources which describe specific practices, handbooks and toolkits.*



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