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ENHANCING STUDENTS' LEARNING THROUGH EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANNING

BY

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Abstract

This paper examines the roll of a lesson plan in meeting students learning objectives. The paper defined a lesson plan as essential tool used by the teacher to organize, prepare and deliver a lesson effectively. The paper further points out the various components of lesson plan to include learning objectives, instructional materials, lesson presentation, evaluation technique and conclusion/assignment. Then the paper highlights the numerous benefits of lesson plan, such as improved time management, focused instruction, improved students learning outcomes, boost teachers' confidence among others. The paper discussed the steps involved in lesson plans which includes: Identification of learning objectives selection of content, selection of resource materials creations of a realistic timeout, creation of interaction activities, assessment in lesson planned and closured. The paper outlines the challenges facing lesson plan such as time constrains, limited resources, problems of evaluation among others. The paper outlines the prospects of lesson planning which includes increased teachers 'effectiveness personalized learning, improved students' learning and collaboration. The paper further showcases a sample lesson plan that will guide teachers in using Processes and well-structured lesson plans. The paper concludes by stating the importance of lesson plans in achieving efficient classroom teaching and learning. Finally regular teacher training, incorporation of digital tools and collaboration among educators are suggestions for improvement.

Keywords: Teaching, Class control, Lesson planning and Students' learning

Introduction

Lesson plans are an essential tool for teachers, as effective teaching necessitates meticulous preparation. Lesson plans that are well-structured guarantee that pupils obtain a thorough education and that learning objectives are accomplished. The curriculum gives a general overview of the subjects that will be studied and the learning goals for each one. Effective teaching and learning require a well-designed curriculum, according to research (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). A clear and simple curriculum, for instance, helps teachers stay focused on the learning objectives and guarantees that pupils receive a thorough education, according to a study (Voogt et al, 2016). The link between the syllabus and curriculum is hierarchical; the syllabus deconstructs the curriculum into specific, actionable components for a given course or subject, while the curriculum provides the overarching structure and goals.

According to Fink (2013), a syllabus is a succinct and straightforward document that outlines the objectives, expectations, and prerequisites of a course. However, Nilson (2010) viewed it as a blueprint for the course that outlines the content, learning objectives, and methods of evaluation. Kader and associates. The relationship between the syllabus and the scheme of work is similar to that of a parent and child. The syllabus outlines the general topic, while the scheme of work breaks it down into smaller, more digestible pieces that specify what will be taught when and how. A more thorough arrangement that divides the course into digestible sections is called the scheme of work. A scheme of work, for instance, enables teachers to efficiently manage their time, prioritize learning objectives, and make sure that all required material is covered, (Mitchell, 2019). The overarching structure that leads to the lesson plan that provides the specific day-to-day implementation is guided by the scheme of work. A lesson plan is a detailed outline or guide created by educators to structure and organize learning experiences for

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students. It specifies what will be taught, how it will be taught, and what students are expected to learn or achieve during a particular instructional period. The outline includes class, subject, topic, sex, age, duration, date, behavioral objectives, teaching method, instructional materials previous knowledge, presentation, evaluation, summary and conclusion.it is indeed a roadmap that provide direction and clear structure of classroom interaction Moses and Ajayi (2022) defined lesson plan as systematic and organised arrangement of a teacher's including the objectives, methods instructional materials evaluation techniques among others tailored towards a specific duration.it acts as a framework that helps the teacher to effectively prepare and deliver instruction in alignment to the instructional objectives. In other words, it is a step by step guide and outlines of what the teacher intend to teach and how they intend to teach it during the classroom interactions.

The benefit of lesson plan cannot be over emphasized. A lesson plan ensures that teaching remains focused purposeful and align with design learning activities. It enables teacher to address Students' needs and responses. Lesson plan also supports effective time management by allocating specific durations to each activity. It increases instructional efficiency and consistency. It serves as a reference point for substitute teachers. It allows teachers to prepare suitable teaching aids, it boosts teachers' confidence and finally it help in monitoring students' progress and making timely adjustment from the above lesson planning is indispensable effective classroom management and instructional delivery. A lesson plan is the teacher's blueprint for what the students should learn and how it will be accomplished in class. After that, you create suitable learning exercises and devise methods to get input on the pupils' progress (Iqbal et al., 2021). Despite the importance of a lesson plan it faces some challenges of poor infrastructural facilities, poor policy implementation, lack of instructional materials, time constraints and so some many more but it not all bad news as a well-planned lesson plan as the prospect of improving national building capabilities and industrial developments (Nwadiokwu, 2018). Lesson planning is a crucial aspect of teaching that involves designing and organizing instructional activities to achieve specific learning objectives (Johnsen, 2018).

Components of Lesson Planning

Effective lesson planning involves several key components that work together to create a cohesive and engaging learning experience for students. The following components are essential for successful lesson planning:

1. Learning Objectives: Clearly defined learning objectives specify what students will learn and achieve (Bloom, 1956). Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).
2. Instructional Materials: Relevant and engaging instructional materials support student learning and achievement (Kizlik, 2018). Materials should align with learning objectives and cater to diverse learning styles.
3. Teaching Strategies: Effective teaching strategies promote student engagement and learning (Hativa, 2013). Strategies should be selected based on student needs, learning objectives, and content.
4. Assessment and Evaluation: Assessment and evaluation strategies measure student learning and understanding (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Assessments should be aligned with learning objectives and provide meaningful feedback.
5. Closure and Follow-up: Closure and follow-up activities reinforce student learning and provide opportunities for further practice and application (Johnsen, 2018).

Benefits of lesson plan

A well-structured lesson plan according to Havita, 2013, Johnson, 2018 and Kizlik, 2018 is essential for effective teaching and learning with several advantages highlighted below

1. Improved student outcomes: It can lead to improved student outcomes, as research has shown a positive correlation between well-planned lessons and student achievement. Studies have consistently demonstrated that teachers who plan effectively are more likely to achieve their desired learning outcomes.
2. Boosts teacher confidence: When teachers feel well-prepared, they are more likely to deliver instruction effectively, leading to a more productive learning environment. Research supports the idea that thorough planning enhances teacher confidence, resulting in better teaching and learning experiences.

Efficient Use of Time: Another benefit of effective lesson planning is the efficient use of time. Well-planned lessons enable teachers to manage their time more effectively, ensuring that instructional time is used productively. This, in turn, contributes to improved student learning outcomes.

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Steps Involved in Lesson Planning

Effective lesson planning involves several key steps that help educators create engaging and meaningful learning experiences for their students. Identification of learning objectives, selection of relevant content, selection of resources and materials, creation of interactive activities**,** creation of interactive activities, assessment in lesson planning, create a realistic timeline and plan for a lesson closure.

1. Identify learning objectives:

According to research, successful teaching and learning require well-defined learning objectives (Killen, 2015). Biggs and Tang (2011), for instance, discovered that clear and quantifiable learning objectives assist educators in concentrating their lessons and guaranteeing that students get the intended learning results. Before planning a lesson, identify clear learning objectives that specify what students will know or be able to do after the lesson, written in straightforward language that's easily understood by students and directly tied to broader program outcomes. The table below contains the characteristics of a clear learning objectives:

Characteristic	**Description**
Clearly stated tasks:	Use clear and simple language, specifying concrete tasks that can be accomplished, such as: Describe, Analyze, Evaluate Compare and Summarize
Avoid using vague or ambiguous terms like:	Appreciate, Understand, Explore, Learn and Know. This clarity helps ensure tasks are well-defined and achievable.
Important learning goals:	Specify the critical learning outcomes that students must attain, focusing on key concepts and skills. Ensure these outcomes are: - Realistic and attainable within the given timeframe supported by sufficient resources. This approach helps prioritize essential learning and sets achievable goals.
Demonstrable and measurable	Learning outcomes should be Measurable, Observable and Assessable. This means students' achievement and the quality of their work can be clearly evaluated and demonstrated.
Fair and equitable:	Learning outcomes should be Inclusive and accessible for all students, including those with disabilities. - Aligned with the course, program, and institutional goals. This ensures that outcomes are fair, relevant, and contribute to broader educational objectives.

2. Select of Relevant Content:

According to research, choosing pertinent material is essential to successful lesson planning (Tomlinson, 2014). For instance, a study by Kivunja (2018) discovered that teachers are more likely to get the intended learning outcomes when they choose content that is pertinent to both the learning objectives and the requirements of their students. When organizing learning activities, take into account assignments that foster the necessary knowledge and abilities and align them with learning goals. Students should be able to participate, practice, and get feedback on their development through these activities.

When planning, allocate time for every task, strike a balance between application and explanation, and create methods for assessing comprehension. To make sure pupils accomplish the learning objectives, this may entail lengthy conversations or abrupt switches to new challenges.

- What will I do to explain the topic?
- What will I do to illustrate the topic in a different way?
- How can I engage students in the topic?
- What are some relevant real-life examples, analogies, or situations that can help students understand the topic?
- What will students need to do to help them understand the topic better?

3. Selection of Resources and Materials:

Research has shown that the selection of relevant resources and materials is critical for effective lesson planning (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). For example, a study by Harris et al. (2017) found that teachers who select resources and materials that are relevant to the learning objectives and the needs of their students are more likely to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

ISSN 2736-0091
E-ISSN 2737-0107

4. Create a Realistic Timeline

It is unrealistic to have ten learning objectives; instead, focus on the two or three main ideas, concepts, or abilities you want your pupils to acquire during the class. You may make quick decisions and modify your lesson plan as necessary with the aid of your list of learning objectives that have been prioritized. The following techniques can help you create a chronology that is realistic: Calculate how long you think each task will take, then allow additional time for it. When you are creating your lesson plan, note the approximate duration of each activity. Set up a short period of time at the conclusion of class to address any last-minute queries and to highlight important ideas. Create a follow-up task or conversation starter. Be flexible – be ready to adjust your lesson plan to students' needs and focus on what seems to be more productive rather than sticking to your original plan.

*5. Creation of interactive activities***:**

Research has shown that engaging activities are essential for effective teaching and learning (Prince, 2004). For example, a study by Freeman et al. (2014) found that interactive and engaging activities help students to stay motivated and focused, leading to improved learning outcomes. Many activities can be used to engage learners. The activity types (i.e. what the student is doing) and their examples provided below are by no means an exhaustive list, but will help in thinking through how best to design and deliver high impact learning experiences for the students in a typical lesson.

Activity Type	**Learning Activity**	**Description**
Interaction with content Students are more likely to retain information when they actively engage with the content, rather than just passively receiving it.	Repetitive exercises	A problem or task is assigned to students, who then provide a solution or answer, with the assessment being either time-constrained or open-ended.
	Lecture	Deliver information through verbal explanations, often supplemented with visual aids like slides.
	Quiz	Assess student understanding through various question types, such as multiple-choice, short-answer, or essay questions.
	Student presentation	Students present research findings orally, often taking on a specific role or perspective, to share insights and engage in discussion.
Interaction with digital content Students make choices in virtual environments and see the resulting outcomes, experimenting with decision-making in a simulated space.	Game	Interactive challenge in a virtual setting that fosters teamwork or competition, driving engagement and achievement.
	Simulation	A model or mockup of real-world situations, allowing students to explore and understand connections, contexts, and ideas.
Interaction with others Connections and interactions among students, as well as between students and teachers, that provide support and influence learning experiences.	Argumentation	A discussion or presentation where multiple perspectives on a topic are debated, with arguments for each viewpoint.
	Deliberation	A guided discussion where the instructor encourages students to share and build on their

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		thoughts and ideas in response to a topic or question.
	Feedback	Constructive comments or insights from instructors or peers that help individuals understand their performance or grasp of a concept.
	Expert guest	An expert or guest shares their insights, perspectives, and experiences on a specific topic, offering unique viewpoints and knowledge.
Problem solving and Critical thinking Presenting students with a problem, scenario, case, challenge or design issue, which they are then asked to address or deal with provides students with opportunities to think about or use knowledge and information in new and different ways	Case Study Concept Mapping Real-world projects	A narrative, either real or imagined, that students closely examine to uncover key themes, morals, or principles embedded within the story. A visual map or diagram that connects related ideas, concepts, or information, showing their relationships and links. A structured assignment or project with specific objectives, timelines, and constraints, requiring coordinated effort and completion within defined parameters.
Reflection: Students reflect on their existing knowledge and experiences related to a topic, then analyze their thought process, identifying underlying assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs that shape their understanding.	Reflection journal	Regular reflective journals where students document their thoughts, feelings, and reactions to a topic, tracking their progress and insights over time.

Robert Gagne's 9-step instructional framework helps plan lesson sequences.



Figure I: Gange's Nine Events of Instruction

6. Assessment in lesson planning:

Assessment is an integral part of lesson planning, enabling educators to measure student learning and understanding. Effective assessment strategies improve instruction, promote students' engagement and enhance learning outcomes. There are three types of assessment, namely; formative, summative and authentic assessment. Research has shown that assessment strategies are critical for effective teaching and learning (Black & Wiliam,

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2018). For example, a study by Heritage (2018) found that formative assessment strategies help teachers to identify areas where students need additional support, leading to improved learning outcomes.

Assessment techniques are essential for successful teaching and learning, according to research (Black & Wiliam, 2018). For instance, a study by Heritage (2018) discovered that formative assessment techniques increase learning outcomes by assisting teachers in determining which areas require more assistance from students. Tests, papers, and performances are examples of assessments that give students a chance to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities in relation to learning goals. Additionally, these assessments allow teachers to give pupils focused feedback that directs their future education. Determining the quantity and kind of activities that best reflect student learning, setting precise standards and criteria, and outlining the roles that students play in the process—including peer and self-evaluation—are all essential components of effective assessment planning. Instructors must also clearly communicate to students how separate assignments will be weighted and how they will be combined to achieve a final grade. Assessments also help teachers improve their teaching strategies and give students feedback on how they are learning. Teachers can modify their teaching methods by using assessments to see whether students are fulfilling learning objectives. Teachers can thoroughly evaluate students' development by combining different assessment kinds, such as formative and summative assessments. In order to guarantee consistency and openness in evaluation decisions, rubrics are essential.

7. Plan for a lesson closure:

Lesson closure is a valuable opportunity to reinforce student learning, benefiting both instructors and students. By wrapping up a lesson effectively, instructors can: Check students' understanding and adjust teaching strategies, highlight key information, address any misconceptions, and preview upcoming topics. For students, closure helps them: Summarize and review main points, solidify their understanding of key concepts, connect new ideas to existing knowledge and apply concepts to new situations. There are several ways to conclude a lesson, including: Summarizing main points yourself, asking students to summarize on the lesson having students write down key takeaways

Challenges of Lesson Planning

1. Time Constraints: Teachers often struggle to find sufficient time to plan engaging and effective lessons (Kizlik, 2018).
2. Diverse Student Needs: Meeting the needs of students with varying learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds can be a significant challenge (Tomlinson, 2014).
3. Limited Resources: Insufficient resources, including textbooks, technology, and infrastructure, can hinder effective lesson planning (Hativa, 2013).
4. Assessment and Evaluation: Developing valid and reliable assessment tools can be a challenge for educators (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

Prospects of Lesson Planning

1. Improved Student Learning: Effective lesson planning can lead to increased student engagement and achievement (Hativa, 2013).
2. Increased Teacher Effectiveness: Well-planned lessons can enhance teacher confidence and effectiveness (Johnsen, 2018).
3. Personalized Learning: Lesson planning allows educators to tailor instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners (Tomlinson, 2014).
4. Collaboration and Professional Development: Lesson planning can facilitate collaboration among educators and promote professional growth (Kizlik, 2018).

SAMPLE OF A LESSON PLAN

Name of teacher:
School:
Class: SS2
Subject: Mathematics
Theme: Geometry
Topic: Properties of Triangles

ISSN 2736-0091
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Duration: 60 minutes
Date:
Behavioral Objectives: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:
1. Define hydrocarbon
2. Mention the types of hydrocarbon
3. State the examples of hydrocarbon

Teaching method: Inquiry/guided discovery
Previous knowledge: students have learnt about elements compounds and Mixtures
Teaching skill emphasized: explanation and repetition skills
Instructional Materials: molecular model kits or ball- and – stick model for representing hydrocarbon structures, periodic table

PRESENTATION
LSSON PRESENTATION

Contents Development	**Teachers activities**	**Learner activities**	**Teaching skill emphasize**
Introduction (10 minutes)		The Students gives answers to the questions	Set induction
Step 1	The teacher asks the students to define acid and base The teacher guides the students to define hydrocarbon	The students attempts to define hydrocarbons are organic compounds that are entirely made up of only two kinds of atoms. -carbon and hydrogen. Typically, hydrocarbons are colorless gases that have very weak odors	Participating and questioning skills
Step II	The teacher guides the students to mention the types of hydrocarbon	The Students attempt to mention the types of hydrocarbon. The students arrived at the types of hydrocarbons as follows I. Saturated hydrocarbon II. Unsaturated hydrocarbon III. Aromall hydrocarbon	Participation and questioning skills
Step III			Participation and questioning skills
STEPS IV Evaluation	The teacher evaluate the lesson by asking the students the following questions i. Define hydrocarbon	1. The students answered the questions. If the teacher is satisfied with the students	Closure

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	ii. Mention the types of hydrocarbon iii. State the examples of hydrocarbon	answer, he/she will go ahead with the summary otherwise he/she will reteach the lesson	

Conclusion: the teacher summarizes the lesson by using the chalk board or white board as the case maybe.
Assignment: the teacher gives the following assignments to the students

i. Explain the types of Hydrocarbon
ii. State the examples of Hydrocarbon

Lesson planning is the foundation of effective and purposeful teaching, serving as a blueprint that guides the teacher through each stage of instruction. It enables educators to organize their thoughts, structure learning activities, and allocate time effectively. A well-prepared lesson plan aligns learning objectives with instructional strategies, ensuring that lessons are focused and goal-oriented, It also helps teachers anticipate challenges, address the varying needs of learners, and incorporate differentiated instruction. By mapping out content .materials, and assessments in advance, teachers can maximize student engagement and ensure better retention of knowledge. Lesson planning also promotes confidence and preparedness, reducing classroom anxiety for both teachers and students. Through consistent use, it enhances classroom management and supports the achievement of curriculum standards. Importantly, effective lesson planning incorporates core characteristics such as clarity, flexibility, and coherence. Teachers who regularly reflect on their plans and seek feedback from peers are more likely to improve instruction quality. This reflective practice leads to continual growth and innovation in teaching. Ultimately, lesson plans become dynamic tools that empower teacher to create meaningful, impactful learning experiences that drive student success.

Suggestions for Improvement

1. Use apps and software for interactive lesson planning.
2. Encourage review of plans among teachers for feedback.
3. Allow students to contribute ideas for activities.
4. Teachers should attend workshops to improve planning skills.
5. Teachers should document outcomes of each lesson to improve future plans.

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