

# LESSON PLANS

Plan | Apply | Present

## Scope:

The plan should be a lesson or activity designed for *one* class session of a writing workshop. The total time allotted for this lesson should be 45-60 minutes. The plan should provide instructions for all steps and materials needed.

## Format

The format for submitting lesson plans to UtahLink is very specific. Please refer to the categories in the sample lesson plan. The plan should be clearly organized and should use precise, specific and concrete language. I recognize that the lesson plan template for UtahLink is by no means the only possible format for writing a lesson plan. It may not even be the best. But for those using the database, ease of information access is greatly enhanced by providing a uniform platform.

## Purpose:

Many of you have already prepared lesson plans for other elementary education classes. Typically, these assignments concentrate on helping you work through some of the pedagogical skills and principles focused on in that particular class or subject area. They are meant to go into a personal file of lesson plans and the intended audience is usually yourself and the instructor. In contrast, while this lesson plan assignment is also interested in seeing you put into practice some of the specific skills and methods of writing instruction we have been focusing on, it also asks that you communicate these instructions to a *broad audience*. Along with reflecting on specific teaching objectives for elementary school writing, you should approach this assignment with the specific intent to learn how to present any process-based information clearly and efficiently. A technical writing assignment of sorts, this exercise requires you to consider the basic problem of writing complex directions for others to follow.

## Audience:

As you prepare your lesson plan, remember that though you may know very well what to do, and although you may have already used your lesson plan to great success, your reader can become confused if you fail to present the instructions clearly and completely. While you can condense some instructions when your audience is very familiar with you and with your field of reference, you need to be more thorough when your audience broadens. Just remember, the broader the audience, the less common ground you can assume. I am requesting that you use the lesson template for UtahLink and that you assume your audience consists of educators throughout the state of Utah who use this database.

## Rubric

### Content: (40%)

- Focuses on a meaningful aspect of writing instruction
- Is pedagogically sound
- Is adapted to appropriate age-level
- Reflects clear and reasonable objectives
- Links procedures to desired objectives
- Is practical
- Is creative, engaging and meaningful

### Composition: (30%)

- Signals a narrow and specific scope (for a 30 minute session)
- Presents steps logically, sequentially and efficiently
- Breaks larger steps into smaller steps
- Includes all steps

### Language: (30%)

- Is detailed, concrete, specific and clear
- Observes conventions of Standard American English for style, grammar, punctuation and mechanics

### Possible Genre Areas:

- Journal Writing—1<sup>st</sup> grade
- Poetry—2<sup>nd</sup> grade
- Narrative—3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- Expository Writing—4<sup>th</sup> grade
- Biographical Writing—5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Persuasive Writing—6<sup>th</sup> grade

### Context:

The Utah State Government has given five million dollars to fund UtahLink, an internet forum for sharing lesson plans based on the state's core curriculum. But according to the State Office of Education, most of the plans submitted for UtahLink cannot be posted because they are poorly written. BYU-Public School Partnership has asked that the English 313 classes provide some practice in writing lesson plans using the UtahLink template. Below you will find the general template for UtahLink lesson plans. I highly recommend that you review this site on the Internet before preparing this assignment: The URL is:

<http://www.uen.org/k12educator/corelessonplans.shtml>

### Content:

To prepare for this assignment, work as a group to decide on a specific teaching *objective* for a unit of writing workshop sessions, then develop original teaching applications (a short lesson or activity or combination of the two) that will meet your desired objectives (Every student will be creating their own lesson plan). The lesson should focus on a specific grade level, and your objectives and methods should reflect the developmental needs of that grade level.

Here are a few possible angles: (1) model a useful method of prewriting, revision or peer conferencing; (2) reinforce a specific punctuation principle; (3) employ the reading/writing connection to emphasize an important aspect of a genre such as expository writing, poetry, narrative, etc.; (4) create a writing application that emphasizes writing across the curriculum—using writing to learn—such as using writing in science, math, history, etc.

Be creative and have fun. Keep in mind that the plan should be practical and pedagogically sound (something a real teacher would do with a real class given the time and resources available to most teachers.) For help with ideas, it may be helpful to look at the core curriculum as specified for language arts under the grade level you are focusing on.

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## PRESENTATION CRITERIA

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1. Keep the presentation to twenty minutes. You will need to narrow the scope of your presentation to one that can be treated adequately in this time frame. For example, a whole unit on narrative that deals with plot, setting, characterization, point of view and theme would be too much to deal with in a thirty-minute presentation. An activity dealing with characterization, however, would be just right. Once again, your job isn't to highlight all the information in the lesson plan, but to flesh out a meaningful application.
2. Involve each member of the group in both planning and presenting.
3. Create a presentation that is cohesive and clear. Avoid creating what seems like three or four separate mini-presentations. It should be clear how each individual's part ties in logically with the whole.
4. Clearly emphasize main ideas.
5. Use visual aides to enhance the quality, clarity and interest of your presentation.
6. Appeal to the senses. Children (and adults) remember best when they are involved. Sight, sound, touch, movement, emotion, interaction can add to the learning experience. Presentations allow us to use more than the written word, so feel free to be creative.
7. Provide a one page written handout summarizing your **rationale** for the lesson /activity your group designed.

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## UtahLINK Template

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**Author:** Your name

**Title:** Provide a descriptive title for your plan.

**Abstract:** Provide a brief but specific description of what will occur in the mini lesson or activity and a brief statement of goals for the lesson. Readers should be able to tell at a glance what the actual lesson consists of and whether the plan is close enough to their needs that it is worth their while to read on.

*[The next five categories will require only a short response or list. Information here need not be presented in complete sentences.]*

**Grade Level:**

**In-class Instruction Time:** Let your reader know how long this lesson or activity will take.

**Group Size:** Specify whether the plan is directed at individual students, the entire group, a particular group size, or a combination of group configurations.

**Life Skill:** Specify the skill or skills this plan will teach that will be valuable to the students. (Once again, review some actual plans on UtahLINK.) This section will consist of a short list of one-word or short phrase classifications; i.e. effective communication, complex thinking, collaboration, integrated process skills, responsible citizenship, life long learning, etc.

**Teaching Style:** Describe the teaching method or methods employed. This section will also consist of a short list of one-word or short phrase classifications; i.e. discovery, collaborative learning, lecture, group discussion, hands-on learning, written, inquiry, pictorial, social interaction, reading/writing connection, etc.

**Intended Learning Outcomes:** Identify specific and measurable learning outcomes intended by this lesson or activity. This entry will differ from the abstract in that it will omit the brief description of activities involved and will more carefully describe the intended outcomes. For example “(1) Students will understand that poetry isn’t just about rhyming, (2) they will have a broader understanding of the formal variety in poetry, and (3) they will gain a desire to write and experiment with different kinds of poems.”

**Background:** Identify the specific information students must receive or the experience they must have to be prepared for the activities in the lesson plan.

**Materials:** Specify the materials required to carry out your plan.

**Instructional Procedures:** Provide a step-by-step outline of the procedures a teacher should use to carry out this plan.

STEP 1:

STEP 2:

STEP 3: ...and so on.

The template allows for flexibility in this area. For example, rather than listing 12 steps of a procedure, cluster the steps into 4 general categories of steps with 2 or three sub-steps in each category. This will help your reader break down the procedures into more manageable units.

**Bibliography:** List, in APA format, any sources you used in coming up with this plan.