
The Plan 1

A journey of a thousand miles begins . . .

Confucius

How should we plan? Is there a “one size fits all” approach? How many steps are involved? Is the process the same, regardless of content or grade level? The answer to all these questions is the same: Successful teachers have a plan. They may not follow it exactly, but they have a plan. For the teacher in Room 102, it may be a ten-step plan, and for the teacher in Room 216, it may be a five-step plan. But make no mistake, regardless of how effortless it may appear, the successful lesson is the planned lesson.

THE HUNTER MODEL

I have worked with many accomplished teachers who are advocates of Madeline Hunter’s ten-step lesson plan. In this format, the ten steps of a lesson are planned and then delivered in the following sequence:

Hunter’s Ten-Step Lesson Plan

Terminal Objective

Anticipatory Set

Telling Objective

Purpose

Input

Modeling

Checking for Understanding

Guided Practice

Closure

Independent Practice

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In this model, the teacher decides what to teach (Terminal Objective/Telling Objective), how to motivate her students to learn (Anticipatory Set), how to define the ultimate justification for the objective (Purpose), which teaching strategies to enlist (Input, Modeling, Checking for Understanding, and Guided Practice), in what manner to end the lesson (Closure), and finally how the student will work with the new skill/information (Independent Practice). It is an excellent teaching model that provides the novice teacher with a practical, concrete example to follow.

THE GENERALIST MODEL

On the other hand, I have worked with other, equally accomplished, educators who use a five-step lesson plan. I refer to this group as the Generalists. Their model is based on five broad steps.

Generalist's Five-Step Lesson Plan

Decide on Content/Skill to be Taught

Prepare the Materials

Teach the Lesson

Assess the Results

Reteach (if necessary)

The planning template used for the lessons presented in Chapter 4 is based on a version of Hunter's Ten-Step Lesson Plan and the Generalist's Five-Step Lesson Plan. A close comparison of the two plans indicates that they have much in common.

<i>Teacher 1 Hunter Model</i>	<i>Teacher 2 Generalist Model</i>
Terminal objective	Content/skill to be taught Prepare the materials
Anticipatory set	
Telling objective	Content/skill to be taught
Input	Teach the lesson
Modeling	Teach the lesson
Checking for understanding	Teach the lesson
Guided practice	Teach the lesson
Closure	
Guided practice	
Independent	Teach the lesson
	Assess the results
	Reteach (if necessary)

THE LACROIX MODEL

The two approaches share eleven components that will be included in our new lesson design template. There are four elements—Anticipatory Set, Prepare the Materials, Reteach, and Closure—that the two approaches do not share. Which of these merit inclusion in our new model?

The Generalist's second step, Prepare the Materials, is not specifically itemized in Hunter's model. Experience has taught me that we cannot assume all teachers will simply know to take this critical step. It is not a natural by-product of the planning process, and if not specifically addressed it can seriously affect the success of the lesson. Even our teacher with the big picture, the Generalist, has taken the time to itemize this step, reinforcing the necessity of preparing materials for the lesson. This step will be included in our new lesson design model.

The Hunter model includes an Anticipatory Set, a way to hook the students, to incite them to learn. Is this step important? Absolutely. Simply put, it has often been said that enthusiasm is contagious. Certainly, we have all been moved or called to action by the words of a keynote or motivational speaker, been caught up in the excitement of a playoff basketball game (even if we had little interest in the team during their regular season), or quite simply experienced a better day because of a smile offered by a stranger. In each of these cases, another person, an entity outside of ourselves, often an individual we hardly know, has been able to move us to action—to change an attitude, an allegiance, or even a lifestyle. Enthusiasm, it has been said, can move mountains. If a speaker, a fan, or a stranger we pass on the streets can bring about a change of attitude, certainly it is possible for the teacher to assume the same role in their classroom. Teachers, through their own excitement for learning, can ignite the same passion in their students. This “hook” into learning new content is achieved by tapping into the student's prior knowledge, relating the content to the student's interests, or presenting the content as information that will be useful to the student. The planning of an anticipatory set becomes critical to the success of the lesson and will be included in our new model.

Closure, a planned strategy for ending a lesson, is included in the Hunter model but not the Generalist model. Research has shown that a review of new concepts before moving on to further lessons can be tremendously beneficial when transferring concepts from short- to long-term memory. This step will also be inserted into the new model.

The concept of reteaching is included in the Generalist's model, but not in Hunter's model. Hunter teachers do not include this piece because they may consider this step an outlier, one that is apart from the lesson they are currently planning. In this instance, and as previously stated, the reteach is included in the formulation of the terminal objective for the following lesson. Advocates of the Generalist's model, however, would contend that this step is so critical to the process of learning that it must be included and specifically addressed in each lesson plan. They would argue also that, faced with the breadth and complexity of the content teachers are urged to “get through” in an academic year, they may well feel the pressure to move on and cover ground rather than return to, and reteach, what they have unsuccessfully taught the first time. Therefore, it

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is critical that teachers understand that reteaching is not enlisting the same methodology (same method of input, same models, same procedure for checking for understanding), with the expectation that the results will change. It is, rather, a mandate to teach again, using other methods, models, materials, and so on. Therefore, we will include this step in our new model as well.

In the LaCroix model, the twelve critical steps involved in lesson planning are grouped together under three major headings: the Setup, the Lesson, and the Wrap-Up. Additionally, our format becomes circular, rather than linear, emphasizing the flexibility that must be inherent throughout our lesson and highlighting our belief that assessment and independent practice guide our steps as we begin to build our next lesson.

KEY RESOURCE 1.1

The LaCroix Model

