

## The Lesson Cycle

Teaching can be defined as a *constant stream of professional decisions made before, during, and after interaction with the student; decisions which, when implemented, increase the probability of learning.*

Regardless of who or what is being taught, all teaching decisions fall into three categories: (1) what content to teach next, (2) what the student will do to learn and to demonstrate that learning has occurred, and (3) what the teacher will do to facilitate the acquisition of that learning. When these professional decisions are made on the basis of sound psychological theory and if these decisions also reflect the teacher's sensitivity to the student and to the situation, learning will be increased. Should errors be made in any of these three decisions, student learning can be impeded. Consequently, it is important for teachers to consciously and deliberately identify the decisions needing to be made in each category and base their decisions on research-validated knowledge. Equally important is the teacher's ability to "read" signals from students and to assess the learning situation so that necessary adjustments will be made (Hunter, 1982).

The first professional decision to be made is the answer to the question, "What will be taught next?" While this first decision of teaching is based on content, the "what" of teaching, the second decision is directed to the student behavior that makes learning possible, the student's "how" of learning. What will the student read, discuss, listen, observe, or do? There is no one best way to learn, and using a combination of these input behaviors usually is more effective than relying on only one. Another teacher responsibility is to decide the perceivable output which will validate that learning has occurred and that students are ready to move on. If it is perceived that students have not mastered the learning, the teacher must reteach or extend practice of the current learning. The third decision in teaching is directed towards what the teacher will do to increase learning. If the teacher deliberately uses principles of learning that research indicates will accelerate student achievement, the teacher will have power to increase students' motivation to learn. Also, greater increase in the speed and the amount (rate and degree) of learning will be noticed. Student retention and transfer of knowledge requiring creativity and problem solving will be enhanced (Hunter, 1982). The Lesson Cycle is one model or way of teaching that research indicates will accelerate student achievement. The Lesson Cycle is a process by which the teacher selects activities, strategies, and materials that are appropriate for the learner to master the objectives.

Reference: Hunter, Madeline. (1982) *Mastery Teaching*. El Segundo, CA: TIP Publications.

## **Planning and the Lesson Cycle**

### **PLANNING “In Your Seat”**

#### **TASK ANALYSIS**

1. Select objective from curriculum sequence.
2. Identify all components of the objective.
3. Eliminate non-essential components.
4. Place essential components in sequence.

#### **DISTRICT-WIDE CURRICULUM**

A sequence of curriculum objectives based on TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) and local needs

#### **SELECT AND ANALYZE OBJECTIVES**

A process used to select an objective from the district-wide curriculum, analyze the components of the objective, and select the component at the correct level of difficulty for the learner

#### **PLAN LESSON**

A process by which the teacher selects activities, strategies, and materials that are appropriate for the learner to master the objective

### **TEACHING “On Your Feet”**

#### **Opening:**

##### **FOCUS**

An activity to cause a mental shift to the subject; an introduction that sets the stage for the lesson

##### **OBJECTIVE**

A statement of what the learner does to demonstrate learning

##### **PURPOSE**

A statement of why the learning is important for the students

**Direct Instruction:**

**EXPLANATION**

What the learner needs to know to be successful with the objective

**MODELING**

A visual presentation of the information and how to use it

**MONITORING**

Teacher observes as the learner demonstrates knowledge and/or understanding of the information given

**GUIDED PRACTICE**

A teacher directed activity where the learner is given step-by-step information  
[Students should be grouped with in classroom by task differentiation]

**ASSESS MASTERY**

A process used to determine if a learner needs to be retaught or can move to independent practice

**RETEACH (If Necessary)**

If the student still does not understand the concept, the teacher might use different materials or modalities to present the concept again

**INDEPENDENT PRACTICE**

The application of information presented without the assistance of the teacher  
[Students could be in differentiated groups]

**ENRICHMENT/EXTENSION**

An activity used to expand on basic learning

**EVALUATE MASTERY**

An activity used to determine the degree to which the learner met the objective

**Closure:**

**SUMMARY/REVIEW**

The review of main ideas and objectives learned

**LARGER CONTEXT**

An activity that relates objectives mastered to life experiences and/or future learning

## **Learning Should Be . . .**

**Collaborative** - Are students working together, perhaps in pairs or in small groups? Are they sharing ideas?

**Active** - Are students actively engaged in such experiences as using manipulatives, working on projects, or taking part in simulations or role-play activities?

**Integrated** - Are students involved in meaningful work within a relevant context? Are they engaged in tasks that encourage them to relate concepts and apply skills across content areas? Are they able to make connections?

**Reflective** - Are students asked to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own work? Are they asked to think back through how to solve a problem or work through a task? Do they think, talk, and write about their own ways of working and learning.