

The purpose of a lesson plan:

To pinpoint what information and skills the student needs to learn
and how to get her to learn it.

Tutoring is an organized exercise in trial and error. There are no sure-fire methods of successful teaching – though some work more often than others; see the “Tutoring Techniques” resource sheet – beyond continually adjusting to the student’s style of learning and interests. To start out you will need to make an educated guess of what will be most effective for your student. That guess, put into practice in your first session, will give you valuable feedback on what works and what doesn’t. A lesson plan will allow you to evaluate these mistakes and successes and use them to concretely benefit your student. Remember, the key here is experimentation! The more you play around with different techniques, the more you’ll figure out what works.

There are **three parts** to a lesson plan:

- Where is your student now? • Where does she need to be? • How will you get her there?

Breaking these questions down into specifics gives you a definitive lesson plan. A sample is provided below from sessions with a second grade student named Arielle, who is working on her math skills.

Where is my student now? What was she doing well in our last session, and what was difficult?

Last session my goal was for Arielle to gain a deeper understanding of the borrowing technique used with subtraction. To accomplish this I experimented with representing a number physically, to give Arielle a physical sense of place value and what it means to take something from the ten’s column and move it to the one’s column. I was not able to ascertain the effectiveness of this technique because we ran into a major difficulty: Arielle couldn’t concentrate.

Where does she need to be? What skills does she need to gain? What information?

In order for Arielle to learn anything effectively she needs to be able to concentrate. This means both my learning to motivate her concentration and teaching her discipline so she can choose to concentrate on her own.

How will I get her there? What techniques will help her gain the skills she needs?

This is the final and most important part of your lesson plan.

See the next sheet for an example outline.

Lesson Plan

Tutor Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Activity:

Resources:

Plan:

Activity:

Resources:

Plan:

Activity:

Resources:

Plan:

Lesson Plan

Tutor Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Activity: Going outside.

Resources: An “outside” towel, located by main doors.

Plan.

Arielle will be allowed to jump around and do whatever physical activity she likes so long as she can prove that she is paying attention by answering my questions promptly. This will get her energy out, give the fidgety part of her brain something to focus on, and provide a reward for her ongoing concentration.

Activity: Hand manipulatives.

Resources: Reading Comprehension cubes, found in the reading manipulatives section by the games.

Plan.

Arielle will not be able to jump around while in a classroom setting, so she needs something more subtle to help her concentrate. The idea here is to give her something that she can use her hands to play with while she focuses on answering problems. We will do a worksheet while she tries this technique.

Activity: Story telling.

Resources: Character figurines, in the reading manipulatives section.

Plan.

Arielle loves telling stories so I want to motivate her to concentrate by doing an activity that excites her – this will also allow us to end on a good note. To work further on her borrowing skills, we’ll come up with a subtraction problem and then make up a story with the character figurines to solve it.