

Lesson 3: Tips for Lesson Planning

Start planning your lessons with these tips and activities.

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The last lesson gave you a foundation for building your lesson plans. This lesson expands on that with practical tips and games you can use in the building process.

Tips for Lesson Creation

When developing your projects and lesson plans, try not to get overwhelmed by too much information. Keep the ideas simple and manageable. Here are some tips for creating your lessons:

- » Make a list of key tasks prior to the apprenticeship.
- » Base your first lesson on building students' trust. Set community ground rules, get to know the students' interests and opinions, and allow students to make a decision.
- » Offer a few but varied projects for students to choose from for their WOW. Be prepared to support any project the students choose.
- » Create activities in each lesson. Learning by doing is an important concept for youth. Come up with an interactive way to get your point across.
- » Add variety to each activity. Options are important to kids. Try not to spend more than twenty minutes on one activity—unless the kids get really into it. Create stations so that students can rotate through different tasks instead of assigning one static task to each student.
- » Use a ritual such as a game or activity at the beginning of each session. (See below for a list of games.)
- » Keep track of each student's progress toward WOW. Give the students long- and short-term goals to look forward to.
- » Model your best work by bringing in professional examples related to what your students are working on. This is a good way to motivate students and to become their role model.
- » Allow time for peer interaction through small-group work and team competitions.
- » Introduce experts in the field by bringing in guest speakers.
- » Expose students to authentic settings through field trips.

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Examples of Games and Activities

Use these games and activities at the onset of each session and throughout the session to develop relationships and to encourage learning:

HUMAN BINGO

Get to know one another with this game. Draw a grid on a sheet of paper. In each square, write something different, such as “someone who is wearing blue” or “someone who has a sister.” Have the class go around and fill in as many boxes as possible.

NAME GAME

Ask everyone to sit in a circle, say his or her name, and then answer one question. The questions can deal with anything, from favorite books to hobbies. If possible, bring the topic back to the apprenticeship.

NAME ASSOCIATION

Have students sit in a circle and say their names and one thing they like that starts with the same letter as their name. For example, “I’m Bobby, and I like bowling.” Each student says the previous person’s name and association before his or her own.

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Have students think of two true statements and one untrue statement about themselves. Tell students to do their best to make the untrue statement believable. Everyone takes turns telling their three statements, and the group guesses which statement is untrue. Make sure everyone gets a chance to have a turn.

A BIG WIND BLOWS

Arrange chairs into a circle with one fewer chair than the number of people playing. Everyone sits except for one student (the instigator) who stands in the center of the circle and initiates the game. The student starts by saying, “A big wind blows for anyone who . . .” and then says a characteristic that is true about himself or herself, such as “has a little sister.” Students who share that trait get up and find a new seat. While this is happening, the instigator switches places with another student, who then continues the game. You can use this game to review content by asking the instigator to answer a question or perform a skill before the big wind blows again.

HUMAN PRETZEL

Arrange students in a circle. Ask each student to hold hands with two other students—one across the circle and the other with anyone else. The group tries to get untangled without releasing hands. Make this more challenging by setting a time limit or by not allowing students to speak.

COUNTING GAME

Ask the group to count from one to ten. Only one person can talk at a time; if two people speak at once, the group must start over. There should be no designated order, and no one person can say two consecutive numbers. If students get good at it, try having them do the game while their eyes are closed.

Examples of Games and Activities (continued)

IMPULSE

Divide the group into two teams, and put a ball in between them. Each team should stand in a straight line, shoulder to shoulder, facing the other team. Sit at the back of the lines and flip a coin so that only the last person in each line can see it. If the coin lands on heads, the students watching send an impulse down the line by squeezing the next person's hand, without talking. When the impulse reaches the first person in the line, that student grabs the ball and moves to the back of the line. The game begins again with a new coin flip. If team members make a mistake—such as sending an impulse on tails—the team must send the person from the back of the line to the front. Whichever team rotates through all of its members first wins.

GUESS THE WORD

Write words or messages on pieces of paper and tape them to the backs of students. The students then try to guess the word or message on their back by asking each other yes-and-no questions. You can use this as a game to help with vocabulary related to your topic.

TELEPHONE

Start with a word or phrase important to the lesson. Whisper the phrase to the first person in a line (or circle) of students. That student then whispers the phrase to the next person, and so on to the end. The last student in line announces the word, and the first person tells the original word and what it means. You can also play this with drawings. Ask the first person to draw something based on your topic. The next child has ten seconds to look at the drawing before making a replica. At the end of the line or circle, compare the before-and-after drawings.

VOCABULARY

Build vocabulary words by asking students to think up words related to your topic that begin with the last letter of the previous word said. For example, in a business apprenticeship, you could begin with, "A is for assets. S is for security"

GAME SHOWS

Use a popular game show to present your topic, such as *Jeopardy*, *Family Feud*, or *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. For example, play photography *Jeopardy* in which all the categories and questions relate to photography.

M&M'S GAME

Hand out small bags of M&M's to each participant. Ask students to estimate and write down the following without opening their bags:

- » The number of blue and brown M&M's in their bag and in the entire room
- » The ratio of blue M&M's to brown M&M's in the entire room
- » The percentage of blue M&M's in the entire room

After making estimates, students count the number of blue, brown, and all other M&M's colors in their bags. Students report their findings to the teacher, who adds up the totals and announces the answers. Give prizes to winners, or just let everyone eat their M&M's.