

**University of Minnesota Duluth  
Outdoor/Environmental Education  
LESSON PLAN FORMAT**

The following is an outline designed to guide you in developing lesson plans. The lesson plan is an effective tool used to enhance your instruction. Please approach it as a tool rather than a burden. Think of it as a road map to guide the journey!

***I. Title—Name it!***

Be creative, draw the reader in!

***II. Goals—The big why!***

Goals are the general rationale or purpose of what you want to teach. Goals speak to the broad outcome of a lesson.

Example: "This lesson will encourage sensory awareness toward natural objects."

***III. Objectives—The specific why!***

Objectives are the measurable and observable outcomes of your lesson. They are the specific reason/s the lesson is created/used.

Example: From this lesson, students will be able to:

- a) Describe five different natural objects.
- b) Write their awareness clearly in a brief essay.
- c) Describe a different object using each of the human senses.
- d) Perform a diagonal stride using full arm & leg extension with correct body lean.

***IV. Audience identified—Your students.***

- a) Age group
- b) Affiliation, e.g. Boy Scout troop, recreation undergrads, grade 5 class, etc.
- c) Number
- d) What are their learning expectations? (Level, scope, and/or sequence of material to be taught)

***V. Duration—Time involved.***

- a) How long is the lesson? (preparation included)
- b) How long will it take to get to the site? (travel time)
- c) How long will it take to follow up the field experience or lab experience?

***VI. Location—Where?***

- a) Where will the lesson be taught?
- b) How will you get there?
- c) Any specific safety concerns?

***VII. Content & Methods—The substance of your presentation & how you will teach it.***

This is the major portion of your lesson plan. Take time here to lay out your lesson properly and it will pay off during your lesson.

- a) Include the information that is readily usable for your presentation (background), the information you want to impart to the students. Content is finding the factual knowledge and blending it into a conceptual plan so that the receiver can make sense of it. That is, learning through personal meaning and building on past experiences. This information must be organized into a usable form for you, the presenter. Further, include additional background information designed to support other educators preparing to use this lesson.
- b) Describe, within the content, the methods that will be use to present that information and work toward achievement of the objectives. For example, if you are teaching

tree identification, explain how you will teach tree identification and describe the specific activities that might be a part of this (games, role-play, experimentation, demonstration, observation,...). Provide specific directions of procedure to accomplish the planned lesson...Step 1, step 2...part a, part b...

A peer educator should be able to pick up your lesson plan, understand your content and be able to follow your procedural steps to successfully present the lesson.

#### ***X. Management and Safety***

Depending upon your audience, you will need to consider different things for management of the group and prevention of injuries.

- a) How will you manage the group (keeping the group together, rules, discipline, supervision,...)
- b) What are potential risks at the site you are using with the activities you are conducting? How will you minimize the student's exposure to the risks?

#### ***XI. Equipment—What you need!***

- a) What equipment or materials will be needed?
- b) List each specific item and quantity.

#### ***XII. What is a foul weather alternative?***

Strive to avoid simply going indoors in inclement weather. Rather, be prepared to accommodate student comfort and your lesson delivery by protecting your class from weather distractions. For example, provide a clothing list; set up a tarp; bring lanterns; provide extra clothing; Move your learning site to a more sheltered location outside.

#### ***XIII. Evaluation—Assessing learning.***

Provide a specific plan for assessing learning. The plan may be a test, a group discussion, a rubric, a product completed for the student portfolio, demonstration of ability, etc. Be deliberate about how the learning will be assessed, your tool should help you address the following questions:

- a) How do you know that the lesson was successful?
- b) Were your objectives met?
- c) How were you successful as an instructor?

#### ***XIV. Follow up—What's next?***

Each lesson should link to the next lesson of a deliberate sequence (scope and sequence) within a broader context. This is especially important for all formal and non-formal educators – lessons are rarely stand-alone, without a connection to other learning.

- a) What is the next lesson?
- b) How will you prepare your students for the next lesson?

#### ***XV. Reference materials to support your lesson***

- a) Lesson plans must have some reference source that supports your content. The reference must be valid (books, journals). Unless a person is recognized in their field as a leading expert, people are not necessarily valid resources (ie. the camp director at Camp Kookamunga may not really teach proper canoe stroke technique, even though he is the main instructor at the camp). Be wary of web resources.
- b) Provide any source information and cite it properly!
- c) List at least 3 references for additional information.