

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LESSONS

Effective Lessons ...	That means...	
Are well-planned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Every teacher should have a written plan every day. Activities should be planned to balance the importance to the students' needs and goals, i.e. time and teaching emphasis should be given to the critical issues reflected in the needs assessment. Every activity planned should have a clear language learning and/or community-building purpose.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Generally, teachers should have at least the following sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Warm Up • Agenda Review • Skill Building and Skill Using Learning Activities • Intended Materials • Wind up and Reflection
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plans should contain sufficient detail so that the teacher can follow them effectively. This is especially important in a situation when a substitute must step in at the last minute for the teacher. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers might be quite brief for activities done repeatedly and for which the procedure is known. • Plans should be detailed when teachers are trying out a new activity or strategy and want to be precise in how they do it and what they say.
Reflect needs assessment results	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lessons should focus on language tasks, cultural and systemic information and other skills that the students need to reach their goals and that are appropriate for the CLB level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any grammar or vocabulary that is taught should be necessary for a specific language task.
Build on prior experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lessons are like building blocks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers need to know what students already know or think they know and build on that. • Students should not be asked do an activity or task until the teacher is sure they have the language they need for the activity.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Activities should be structured so that students hear new language before they say it, say it before they read it and read it before they write it.
Focus on the learners	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lessons should focus on the learners' needs, interests and goals. Teachers should try to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have more student talk than teacher talk • Make sure the tasks and the texts used are appropriate for the level of the students. If teachers can't tell off hand, they should refer to the CLB, especially the performance conditions on the left hand page to make sure what they do conforms to those requirements.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning activities should focus on an appropriate number of new language concepts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At CLB Stage 1 students should be introduced to no more than 5 or 6 essential new vocabulary items in a day. Assessment should show comprehension before additional words or phrases are introduced. • At CLB Stage 2 students should be introduced to no more than 8 or 10 essential new vocabulary items in a day. Assessment should show comprehension before additional words or phrases are introduced.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Students in multilevel classes should be grouped. Teachers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do whole group activities as well as same-ability or cross-level group work. • Modify performance conditions for tasks. If there are CLB 3s and 4s, CLB 3s can do tasks face-to-face and CLB 4s can do them on the phone. • Include easier questions at the beginning of a worksheet and more difficult following. Then beginners can do questions 1-5 and higher level students can do all 10 questions. • Vary instruction by modifying the expectations for the different students. • Provide alternative activities, such as one group having to write a paragraph and the other group completing sentence stems.

Are coherent and cohesive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should maintain cohesion by not bouncing around from one disconnected topic to another.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be a flow and a rhythm to the lessons. • One activity should somehow transition into another. • Teachers should plan thematically so they can use and reuse language throughout the L, S, R & W activities.
Reflect the difference between “teaching” and “testing”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should ensure students have been introduced to and practised skills before they are tested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Listening, for example, students should be taught to listen for sentence stress to identify key words as a strategy leading towards comprehension before being tested to listen and comprehend text.
Are varied, purposeful, engaging, enjoyable & well-paced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should include a variety of activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do individual work; work in pairs or in small or whole groups. • Include activities focused on different skills
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Learning activities should be purposeful and lead to skills the students need and can use immediately in real life.</p>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Learning activities that help students learn meaningfully related language are useful. For example, in a Grocery Shopping module:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using foods typically eaten by the students, categorizing them into different food groups and learning the words in the group (e.g. dairy products) is meaningful and useful, Using foods students do not eat, categorizing them according to the letter of the alphabet) they begin with (e.g. foods that begin with the letter “p”) and learning them is meaningless and useless
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should incorporate authentic materials, realia or music or art or drama!</p>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should keep the lesson moving! Do not spend hours doing the same thing, especially at lower levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should work in 15-20 minute chunks. This is especially critical in EAL Literacy, CLB Stage 1 and also in evening classes when students are tired.
Develop language and genre awareness, accuracy, fluency and transfer to other contexts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should ask themselves, “Would I enjoy this lesson? Would I learn anything practical?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One day, a teacher could take in a mini recorder, like a MP3 recorder and record one of the lessons. They can listen to it afterwards and ask themselves if it sounded stimulating, clear and coherent and enjoyable.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>For any one module, teachers will likely be working on 4 tasks (L, S, R and W). They will need to move between awareness raising, autonomy (SB) and fluency (SU) focused activities each day. They need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagger the intro of new material so all tasks are not introduced on the same day. However, they should try to attend to a variety of skills each day. • Good teaching begins with making students aware of the language in context. • It also includes providing LOTS and lots of practice and repetition opportunities. It is in those activities that teachers focus on error correction and accuracy. • However, teachers should not limit themselves to those types of activities. They need to make sure students have opportunities to use their new language to do real, purposeful things – solve problems, plan, discuss, role play. It is in these fluency focused activities that they get practice in making choices to negotiate meaning in a particular context. During fluency focused activities, it is the teacher’s role to note errors and language needs for remediation or new teaching.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>When an activity is introduced, teachers should make sure to build in a sufficient demonstration or practise segment in any activity. Teachers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do a few examples with the students first, before they do the exercise or activity. • Make sure students know what they are supposed to do
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Teachers should help students recognize where they can use these new skills outside of class in similar and different situations. They should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief activities to show how the language or other skills can be applied in the community, work and academic contexts.