



Essentials of Effective Teaching

with Robyn Burlew

Lesson 3: Meaningful Planning

Outline:

Before the Class Begins

- Read all material for the class and know the curriculum.
- Know your students, their current knowledge, and where you think they ought to go.
- Find out how to position your class within the school as a whole (what classes are on either end of this one).
- Ask yourself what **loves**, **skills**, and then **knowledge** you want students to acquire in this class.

Planning What Knowledge to Teach

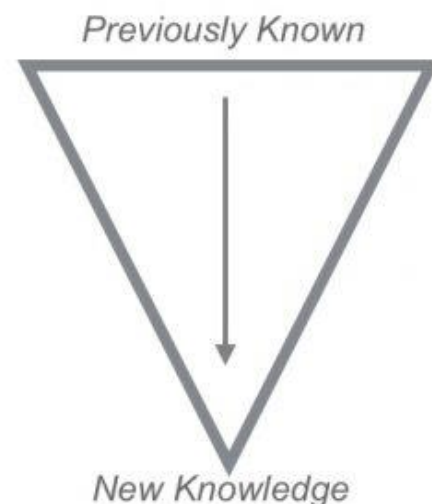
- Find out the **essential** questions you want students to be able to answer at the end.
- Caution: Be careful not to try for too many goals and overload students.
- Try for about 10 essential concepts (you can still have other smaller ones but those 10 are the main goal of the class).
- Plan out the course concepts and be sure to plan for unexpected delays (about 10% of time goes away).
- Build a first draft of the Assessment so you make sure it focuses on the main goals.
- Plan activities and field trips early.
- Always keep the purpose in mind.

Weekly Lesson Plans

- Keep them short, clear, and direct. Make sure anyone could pick them up and read them.
- List the materials, activities, and methods.

Daily Lesson Plans

- Start with what is already known by the students and move to a very specific goal for new knowledge (like a funnel):





- Go back and put the new content in context of all the knowledge covered thus far in the class.
- In class, “bunny trails” from student questions can sometimes be helpful and just as effective as your current plan and other times they might not be effective. Use good judgement.

Reflection on the Class

- Reenforce things that you think were not fully grasped by the students.
- At the end, examine to see if the organization of the class and units was appropriate.
- Never get complacent. Always seek to improve the class.