

Effective Elementary School Lesson
Planning
(Tom Batten & Mayumi Kurokawa)



Introduction

When we first started working on this workshop, we originally entitled it "Effective Elementary School Teaching." However, as our ideas were put to paper and the presentation started to take form, we realised that the direction we were taking was falling more and more on what happens *before* the lesson, not during. Put simply, this wasn't going to be a workshop covering all the ins and outs of shogakko teaching that will make anyone an amazing teacher; that just wouldn't be possible in 70 minutes! So, not wanting to be accused of misleading anyone, we decided to change the title to "Effective Elementary School Planning."

In some ways, however, the original title is still relevant, up to a point. Why? Well, we believe that the most fundamental thing for teaching is to be prepared, and without meaning to state the obvious, this will only be achieved by planning ahead. If you're prepared, the scope for things going wrong in class is dramatically reduced. This in turn makes you confident, as you're safe in the knowledge that your lessons will run smoothly. And if you're confident during your lessons, you will be more engaging to your students. In short, your teaching will be more effective!

The Lesson Plan Template

We've included a lesson plan template in this handout - please feel free to use or adapt this as you see fit. Filling out this form for every lesson may seem like extra work, but look at it this way: the things you'll be writing down are the things that you should be considering anyway. No ALT enters a class without giving at least a tiny amount of thought as to what they'll be doing in that class. All you're doing, therefore, is putting those thoughts to paper, so it shouldn't really be too time consuming.

"But if I'm just writing down information that's already in my head, what's the point?!"



It's all very well *you* knowing what you're going to do, but you don't want your teaching partner standing around like a helpless animal wondering what on earth is going on. Show the plan to them before the lesson (and ideally a decent amount of time before, so they have time to make any necessary preparations).

If your template is thorough, as you're writing your plan it should prompt you for anything you might have overlooked (e.g. anything the students will need to bring to class - something which is always easy to forget about).

Your plan doesn't have to be consigned to the annals of forgotten history once the lesson starts; bring it with you into the class and then if your mind goes blank and you can't remember what's coming next, it can be your prompt.

"My homeroom teacher doesn't speak English, and my Japanese is terrible! How is this writing malarkey going to work?!"



You'd be extremely hard pressed to find a Japanese teacher who doesn't understand ANY English. They had three years of English education at junior high, and three more at high school. They may say they don't speak or understand English, but this is often out of shyness or a sense of modesty. Just keep the writing simple and you shouldn't have too many problems, especially if you give the plan to them a week or so in advance so they have time to translate it. Even better, why not try writing it in Japanese? They'll appreciate this very much and you may find that if you do this enough your Japanese will start to improve.

"OK, so I made my plan and brought it with me into class. Sure, it was helpful and all. Now can I throw it away?"

NOOOOOOO!!!! There's still life in the old girl yet! It's a good idea to keep all your plans after you've used them to keep a record of everything you've taught. If you want to be really fancy, write some feedback on the plan so you'll remember what worked well and what didn't.

Should I Make A Curriculum For My Students? And For How Long?



OK, we've waffled on about how important planning is, but at the same time we're also realists. Coming up with an extensive plan of what you're going to be teaching your students over the coming months may sound like a good idea, but try not to overstretch yourself.

As far as grades 1-4 are concerned, having a vision or a sense of direction is fine, in fact some ALTs have been known to plan for a whole year in advance, games, activities and all! But remember that even the more experienced ALTs are constantly learning and finding better ways of doing things. With this in mind, who's to say that 6 months after making a detailed curriculum, you're still going to want to stick to it? Maybe the students are slower learners than you anticipated, so you have to progress more slowly and use simpler activities. Maybe you discover that some games that sound great on paper aren't actually that much fun or effective in practice. As you gain in experience, there's a good chance you'll look at this curriculum you wrote 6 months ago, find it rather crude and decide not to stick to it anymore (I'm talking from personal experience!). So, we recommend planning a curriculum for every semester at most. Even then, you may want to limit it to a basic outline of the things you want to teach, lesson by lesson - not a necessarily detailing everything you'll be doing in class. For that level of detail, planning maybe a couple of weeks in advance is fine.

High Friends

As for grades 5 & 6, you'll very likely be using Hi Friends in some form or another. Here the lessons are already set in place - how you go about teaching them is up to you. It may be tempting to use the activities suggested in the book, but let's be honest, many

of these activities aren't particularly exciting, are they? If you are able to, try introducing your own to spice things up a bit. Of course, if you chose to use your own activity or game instead of one suggested in the book, all the more reason to write it down on the template so your teaching partner can understand.

() Shogakko Class ()
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

() sensei
先生

●Next class is () 月 日 曜日 時間目)
次回の授業は

●Topic is ())
単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を記入して____:____までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week:		Goal:
Min.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students(児童)・・・ ())

I (私)・・・ ()) を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくをお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

(Midori) Shogakko Class (6-1)
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

(Kurokawa) sensei
先生

●Next class is (月 日 曜日 時間目)

次回の授業は

●Topic is ()

単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を記入して 4 : 30 までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week:		Goal:
Mins.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students(児童)・・・ ()

I (私)・・・ () を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

(Midori) Shogakko Class (6-1)
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

(Kurokawa) sensei
先生

●Next class is (12 月 5 日 金曜日 5 時間目)
次回の授業は

●Topic is (Hi, friends! 2 P.18-19 Lesson 5: Let's go to Italy.)
単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を記入して 4 : 30 までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week:		Goal:
Mins.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students (児童) . . . ()

I (私) . . . () を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくをお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

(Midori) Shogakko Class (6-1)
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

(Kurokawa) sensei
先生

●Next class is (12 月 5 日 金曜日 5 時間目)

次回の授業は

●Topic is (Hi, friends! 2 P.18-19 Lesson 5: Let's go to Italy.)

単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を入力して 4 : 30 までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week: 1		Goal: The names of countries
Mins.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English
5	Greeting + Basic questions (How are you? How's the weather? What day is it?)	Hello, everyone. It's sunny. It's Friday.
10	Warm up - Phonics *Find your partner!	Please make pairs. One each.
15	New word practice *2choice Karuta	Please repeat after ~sensei. Please make pairs. Hands on your head. Please clean up.
12	*Bean bag fight game	Please make groups of ten. Please make a circle.
3	Wrap up	You did a great job!

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students (児童) . . . ())

I (私) . . . ()) を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

(Midori) Shogakko Class (6-1)
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

(Kurokawa) sensei
先生

●Next class is (12 月 12 日 金曜日 5 時間目)

次回の授業は

●Topic is (Hi, friends! 2 P.18-19 Lesson 5: Let's go to Italy.)

単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を入力して 4 : 30 までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week: 2		Goal: I want to go to ~ .
Mins.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English
5	Greeting + Basic questions (How are you? How's the weather? What day is it?)	Good afternoon, everyone. It's cloudy. It's Friday.
10	Warm up - Month of the year *Stand up for your birthday! "When is your birthday?"	Big voice, please. Please stand up /sit down.
10	Vocabulary review Introducing world heritage sites	Please repeat after ~sensei. Please listen to ~sensei.
5	Response practice " I want to go to ~. "	I want to go to ~.
12	*Train game	Please make groups of ten. Line up, please. You're in team ~.
3	Wrap up	Well done, everyone!

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students (児童) . . . ())

I (私) . . . ()) を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

(Midori) Shogakko Class (6-1)
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

(Kurokawa) sensei
先生

●Next class is (12 月 18 日 木曜日 3 時間目)
次回の授業は

●Topic is (Hi, friends!2 P.20-21 Lesson 5: Let's go to Italy.)
単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を入力して 4 : 30 までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week: 3		Goal: Where do you want to go?
Mins.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English
5	Greeting + Basic questions (How are you? How's the weather? What day is it?)	Good morning, everyone. It's rainy. It's Friday.
5	Warm up - Feelings *Matching game	Please make pairs. Yeah! Oh, no!
5	Response review " I want to go to ~. "	Please repeat after ~sensei.
10	*Jintori game	Please make groups of five.
5	Question practice " Where do you want to go? "	Let's ask ~sensei "Where do you want to go?"
12	*tic-tac-toe	You're in team ~. It's your turn.
3	Wrap up	See you next month!

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students (児童) . . . ()

I (私) . . . () を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

(Midori) Shogakko Class (6-1)
小学校 クラス

☆次回の予定☆

(Kurokawa) sensei
先生

●Next class is (1 月 16 日 金曜日 5 時間目)
次回の授業は

●Topic is (Hi, friends!2 P.20-21 Lesson 5: Let's go to Italy.)
単元／教科書は

お忙しいところ申し訳ありませんが、●の部分を入力して 4 : 30 までに私の机の上をお願いします。

Sorry to bother you but please complete the spaces above and leave it on my desk by : . Thank you.

Week: 4		Goal: Mastering phrases
Mins.	Activity/Instructions	Classroom English
5	Greeting + Basic questions (How are you? How's the weather? What day is it?)	Good morning, everyone. It's snowy. It's Friday.
5	Warm up - Can you ~? I can ~. Can you ~? chant	Big voice, please.
5	Question and Response review " Where do you want to go? " " I want to go to ~. "	Please repeat after ~sensei.
15	*Where do you want to go? basket	One each. Make a circle with your chairs.
12	*Interview Bingo	Let's play Bingo! Please get your pencil.
3	Wrap up	Good job, everyone!

Materials we need for the next lesson...次回の授業で必要なもの

The students (児童) . . . (scissors はさみ)

I (私) . . . (Plastic tape スズランテープ) を使います。

お手数ですが準備をお願いします。次回もよろしくお願いします。

I'll need () for the next lesson. Please prepare these materials. Thank you.

Some Useful Games

☆Matching Game☆

Suitable for : simple vocab or phrases

Materials : flashcards (one set for a class)

- * Have the Ss make pairs and stand back-to-back
- * Pick 2 vocab or phrases and have the Ss repeat after you 3 times (Tell the Ss to pick one of them while they're repeating)
ex. Topic is Feelings and you pick "I'm happy." and "I'm sad."
- * Say "How are you?" then the Ss turn around (face each other) and say the one they pick
- * If say the same word or the phrase, they say "Yeah!(High 5)". If not, "Oh no!"
- * If you only teach vocab, you can say " 3,2,1!" to have the Ss turn around



☆2 Choice Karuta☆

Suitable for : simple vocab or phrases

Materials : flashcards (one set for a class), small playing cards (a set for each pair)

- * Have the Ss make pairs and sit face-to-face
- * Give a set of small cards to each pair
- * Pick 2 vocab or phrases and tell them to the Ss, showing the flashcards
- * Have the Ss put those small cards in the middle of them
- * Have the Ss repeat after you 3 times
ex. Topic is Animals and you pick "cat " and "dog "
- * You say "Hands on your head!"
- * When the Ss do that and become quiet, say one of the vocab and the Ss have to snatch the card
- * If you teach phrases, have them say question and response.
ex. Topic is dream job. Have the Ss repeat "I want to be a nurse." "I want to be a singer." 3 times. They put their hands on their heads. Have the Ss ask you "What do you want to be?" you say "I want to be a nurse." The Ss snatch the nurse card.

☆Bean bag fight☆

Suitable for : simple vocab or phrases

Materials : flashcards (one set for a class) , OTEDAMA-bean bags (one for each group)

- * Have the Ss make groups equal to the number of vocab you want to teach them
ex. Topic is Colors and you teach 8 colors. Put the 8 flashcards on the blackboard.
- * Each of the 8 students in the group must choose one of the colors (students can't choose the same color)
- * Tell the Ss to be responsible for the colors they've chosen
- * Have the 2 groups sit in a circle and put a OTEDAMA in the middle
- * Have the Ss repeat all the colors after you
- * You say "Hands on your head!"
- * When the Ss do that and become quiet, you say a color and the Ss who chose the same color have to grab the OTEDAMA (2 Ss in a circle)

* If you teach phrases, have them say question and response.
ex. Topic is Colors. Have the Ss repeat " I like pink. I like yellow..." They put their hands on their heads. Have the Ss ask you "What color do you like?" you say "I like purple." The Ss who chose purple try to grab the OTEDAMA.

☆Jintori game☆

Suitable for : simple vocab or a phrase

Materials : flashcards (one set for 2 groups)

- * Have the Ss make groups (5 - 8 students per group is ideal)
- ex. Topic is Food and you teach 7 kind of food. Put the 7 flashcards on the floor in a line.
- * 2 groups line up at each end of the line of flashcards
- * The first students from each group move forward, saying the relevant word or phrase for each flashcard they step by
- * When two of them meet along the line, have them do janken
- * The winner continues and the loser goes to the back of the team's line and the next challenger moves forward
- * When a student reaches the other team his/her team scores a point

☆Train game☆

Suitable for : simple vocab or phrases

Materials : flashcards (one set for a class), small playing cards (a set for each group)

- * Have the Ss make groups (5 to 8 students per group is ideal)
- * Have each group line up. Tell the Ss they are train carriages and therefore must stay in line
- * Put the flashcards on the blackboard
- * Tell the first students of each group that they're train drivers and give them a set of small cards (same vocab as the flashcards)
- * The train drivers must have their backs to the blackboard
- * The rest of the Ss line up facing the driver
- * The first student has one attempt to guess what card the driver is right, the driver says "Yes!" and gives the card to him/her. If they're "No!"



Either way the students go to the back of the line.

- * Repeat until the driver has given away all the cards

☆Memory game☆

Suitable for : simple vocab or phrases

Materials : flashcards(one set for a class), small playing cards (a set for each pair/group)

- * Have the Ss make pairs/groups (3 or 4 students per a groups is ideal)
- * Give a set of small cards to each pair/group
- * Have the Ss spread the cards on the desk/floor facing upwards (easy version) or downwards (difficult version)
- * Tell the Ss to memorize the order of cards you will call out (call out 6 to 10 according to the lever of the class)
- * Make sure the Ss don't touch the small cards until you say "Ready go!"

- * When you have finished calling them, the Ss must put the small cards in the correct order
- * When all the pairs/groups are finished, have the Ss together call out each card one by one
- * Lastly confirm the correct order by lining up the flashcards on the blackboard



More great ideas can be found on the Kumamoto lesson plan wiki:

http://kumamotojet.com/mw/index.php?title=Elementary_School#Lesson_ideas_by_topic_.28non-textbook.29