Lesson Design (Hunter)

Madeline Hunter’s approach is based on research on the psychology of learning; it is an example of “putting theory into practice” (her words). The regular use of Hunter’s lesson design by teachers can serve as the means for putting theory into practice on a daily basis and thereby can promote achievement of desired outcomes by students.

The first consideration in planning for daily instruction is to establish specific objectives—what you expect students to know, be able to do, or believe or value by the end of the lesson. The instructional objective makes it possible to evaluate lessons to determine whether desired learning actually takes place.

The elements in Hunter’s model for designing a daily lesson plan include only activities that involve students directly. For example, the first element is what the teacher first says or does with the students who are to be taught the lesson. It is assumed that the teacher has already decided the content to be taught, the instructional objectives, and the target group of students before beginning with the first element of the lesson.

1. **Establish anticipatory set.** To begin a lesson, the teacher gains the learners’ attention, focuses it, provides a brief review of previous information or practice of previous or related skills, or otherwise develops readiness for the instruction to follow.

2. **Explain the objective or purpose.** The teacher communicates to the pupils what will be accomplished by the end of the lesson and why it is important, useful or relevant to their lives.

3. **Provide instructional input.** The teacher provides new information or instructions using appropriate techniques and materials such as oral description, film, diagram, picture or textbook.

4. **Model the desired behavior.** This element is not necessary for all lessons, but is critical when teaching a skill. The teacher demonstrates the desired behavior or skill using examples of the product or process. Each critical feature is highlighted and labeled to help students focus on the essential elements or steps.

5. **Check for understanding.** The teacher elicits feedback from the class to assess pupils’ understanding and performance (if a skill is involved). This can be accomplished by addressing questions to the whole class and (a) sampling answers from representative pupils, (b) requesting a signal from every class member or (c) requiring an individual response, usually written or whispered.

6. **Provide for guided practice.** The teacher provides the student with an opportunity to practice (or use) the new information, skill, attitude or value. While the students practice, the teacher carefully monitors their initial attempts by correcting inaccuracies, misunderstandings or deficiencies; by providing additional instruction as needed; and by positively reinforcing correct behavior.

7. **Provide for independent practice.** Pupils are given opportunities for independent practice using the new information, skill, attitude or value. This can take the form of seatwork, learning center activities, library research or homework. (Note that the teacher is not on hand to assist students as in guided practice and that independent practice may occur after the group lesson appears to have ended.)

8. **Provide Closure.** The teacher has the students identify the session’s learning.