



## FAQ for Lesson Planning

---

This FAQ document has been created to provide guidance to teachers and programs on best practices related to lesson planning. Programs that are funded by the State should also follow their curriculum guidelines in order to implement the curriculum with fidelity. Programs that are monitored by the State will continue to be monitored using the compliance checklist.

### **General**

How frequently should lesson plans be done?

- At *minimum*, lesson plans should be done weekly.

Do lesson plans need to be saved?

- Programs being monitored will need up to six weeks of lesson plans on file. Check with your district as they might have additional requirements regarding this practice.

What are the required components on a lesson plan form?

- The Illinois State Board of Education suggests the following routines/activities be included on the lesson plan form: large group, small group, outdoor, learning centers, and transitions. The curriculum should be implemented with fidelity. Refer to your curriculum for required components on the lesson plan form.
- Weekly individualization for a *minimum* of 25% of children in the class, with individualization for all children at least monthly.
- Keywords or phrases from Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) benchmarks or curriculum objectives for each activity and for materials added to interest centers on the lesson plan form.

Should studies/projects or themes be used?

- The Illinois State Board of Education supports project approach and project-based learning that allows for child-led investigations based on inquiry as best practice.

Is a “question of the day” required?

- The Illinois State Board of Education does not require use of a “question of the day.” However, the curriculum should be implemented with fidelity. If it is part of the curriculum, then it should be included on the lesson plan.

Should transitions be included on the lesson plan?

- Consider how you might use transitions to meet learning objectives. While it is not required to plan specific transitions each day, intentional teachers plan for ways to use transitions to support children’s growth and development based on weekly goals/objectives. When transitions are planned to meet particular goals/objectives they should be documented on the lesson plan form.

Do the posted lesson plan and the teacher lesson plan have to match?

- The activities should be the same. You may have more detailed lesson plans for yourself or substitutes.

How often should changes be made to learning centers?

- Consider weekly observations to determine what materials should be added or removed to learning centers to enhance children’s play. While it is not required to change something daily or weekly, intentional teachers make changes based upon their observations.

Is it required to list children’s names for each small group?

- It is important to have a list of small groups available so the teaching team, substitutes and administrators are aware of your plan. Children’s names/initials could be included on the lesson plan.

**Curriculum Objectives and IELDS Benchmarks** (*The term “curriculum objectives” refers to the skills being targeted as learning outcomes. Different curriculums use various terminologies to describe skills*).

Should lesson plans use curriculum objectives or IELDS benchmarks?

- Keywords or phrases from curriculum objectives (that have been aligned with the IELDS) or keywords or phrases from IELDS benchmarks may be used. Refer to the IELDS for *Preschool-Focused Concepts/Keywords Handout* if using benchmarks.

How many curriculum objectives or IELDS benchmarks should be listed for each activity on the lesson plan?

- At **minimum**, it is required to have at least one keyword or phrase from a benchmark or curriculum objective for each activity. Consider the main focus of the activity and why you are doing it to determine which objective(s) or benchmark(s) to choose. While at least one is required, too many (more than three) can lose focus of the activity.

Is it allowable to use assessment objectives instead of IELDS benchmarks or curriculum objectives?

- You may use keywords from curriculum objectives that have been aligned to the IELDS. Creative Curriculum Objectives and GOLD objectives are the same. Some programs use Creative Curriculum and Work Sampling as the assessment tool. In

this case, the curriculum objective keyword or IELDS benchmark should be used.

Is it appropriate to list all IELDS benchmarks on the sides of the lesson plan and highlight all of the benchmarks that apply for the week?

- No, keywords or phrases for each activity should be listed next to each activity so it is clear which benchmarks the activity is targeting.

### ***Individualizing***

What does it mean to individualize?

- Individualizing is using the information learned about each child to inform lesson planning. Information to use for individualizing comes from a variety of sources including observations, families, and assessment data. Strengths, interests, preferences, personality, temperament, approaches to learning, life experiences, culture and special learning needs (diagnosed or undiagnosed) all can be used as sources for individualizing.
- Individualizing can be done in a variety ways including, but not limited to, adaptations/modifications to the materials, schedule, or the physical environment.

How often should individualization be planned for?

- At *minimum*, 25% of children per week with individualization for all children in the class within each month.

How is individualization documented on the lesson plan?

- Initials or first names can be used. If sharing lesson plans with families, names or initials should be removed.
- Refer to confidentiality regulations established by your district/program to ensure compliance with their policies.

How thorough should individualization plans be?

- If using a specific curriculum modification or strategy for an activity, clearly indicate the adjustment next to the activity. For example, if you are using peer support for a child during large group, document that on the lesson plan. For example, you might have an asterisk next to some activities to communicate a modification or strategy which signals to teachers to reference the individualization section of the lesson plan for more details. Some lesson plan templates might provide enough space to indicate the modification or strategy right next to the activity.

When planning for small group, if different groups (group 1, 2 and 3) are identified, does that meet requirements for individualizing?

- No. This practice shows you are differentiating instruction, but does not indicate the specific way you are individualizing for a child.

Does ISBE require data reflection on the lesson plan?

- Data is not required on the lesson plan.
- There must be documentation that assessment data was considered when individualizing.
- Reflecting on activities is part of the teaching/assessment cycle.

How do I plan for children with IEP goals on my lesson plans?

- Objectives from IEPs should be embedded within the daily routines and activities of the classroom, when possible. The same system for documenting individualization can be used for children with and without IEPs.