

Use lesson reports to monitor your teaching

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Purpose: to document your teaching practices by recording details of lessons after you teach

We often use lesson plans when we prepare our lessons. However, while lessons sometimes develop as planned, unanticipated things also happen during lessons and they may in fact contribute to the effectiveness of lessons. Lesson reports record key aspects of what happened during a lesson, and can be used to review our teaching, to trigger reflection and evaluation, and to document effective and less effective teaching practices. They are particularly useful when a group of novice teachers are teaching a course and plan to meet regularly to review how they are using the course materials. Lesson reports could also form part of your portfolio.

A lesson report is normally completed shortly after the lesson, making use of a checklist or other form to guide your recollection.

A lesson report usually contains several kinds of information about a lesson:

- a list of the activities that were used for the different stages of a lesson, such as the opening, the teaching tasks, and the closing, and comments on how much time was spent on different activities;
- reflections on what worked well, what did not work well, and what might be done differently next time.

While a lesson report is not a completely accurate account of what occurred during a lesson, it can serve as a useful record of many features of the lesson – details that might otherwise not have been remembered. The frequency with which you want to complete a lesson report will depend on how useful the information is to you.

A lesson report can be prepared by an individual teacher or by a group of teachers who are teaching on the same course. A lesson report can be a report of a whole lesson or of specific features of a lesson (e.g. how grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, or error correction was addressed

during a lesson). See Appendix 1 for a lesson report form for use with a grammar lesson.

When teaching from a textbook, the report could be based on the exercises contained in a unit, together with additions you may want to make to the unit:

	How I carried out the activity	Time	Suggestions for next time
Exercise 1
Exercise 2 etc.

If the report focuses on a lesson plan based on a lesson you prepared yourself, the lesson plan provides the content for the main structure of the report. The report could be made through annotations to the lesson plan.

A lesson report could also focus on the kinds of teaching techniques or activities you made use of during lessons. For example, in a reading course a lesson report could list pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading activities.

Try it: develop a lesson report form that could be used to monitor the way pronunciation was addressed during a speaking course.

An alternative to a report form is to take a few minutes after a lesson to write an account of the lesson. The report could include both a descriptive account of the lesson, briefly summarizing how the lesson proceeded, as well as a reflective component in which you reflect on how well the lesson realized its aims and what you might do differently next time.