

# International House Madrid

## Young Learner Teacher Training Course



### **Module**

## Essential Planning

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This task sheet should be used in conjunction with **Video Module - Essential Planning**

There are three sections in this task sheet:

**Part A - Pre-watching.** These questions should be read and completed before watching the film.

**Part B - While watching.** There are also a few questions for you to think about while watching the film.

**Part C - Post-watching.** In this section, there are some questions for you to consider after watching the film.

## Part A Pre-watching

In a few minutes you are going to watch Neil Armstrong teach a group of 4 year olds. Before watching, consider the questions below. If you are not working alone, take as much time as you need to discuss these questions with your partner. If you wish, you can take notes in the boxes provided. This will help you compare your thoughts with other trainees or those of the course tutors.

1. Why do you think it is important to plan a lesson for young learners?

2. What are the important elements of a good young learner lesson plan?

3. How much of your class goes to plan and why is this?

4. Is it important that you get through all of your material?

5. Do you move your students around at different stages of the lesson?

6. Would you say that, on the whole, you are in control of your class?

When you have considered the questions above, you are ready to watch the video

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## Part B While watching

While you are watching the film, consider the following:

How would you describe the different stages of this lesson?

How does the teacher check understanding?

How does the teacher help to keep the children on task?

## Part C Post-watching

1. What is the purpose of routine in young learner classes?

2. How important is rewarding children and how do you do it?

3. How do you make activities memorable?

4. What are the advantages of preparing the materials before the class begins?

5. How important is it that all the children are on task - i.e. doing what they are supposed to be doing?

The tutor's comments on these post-watching questions are listed on the following page

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## 1. What is the purpose of routine in young learner classes?

Young children respond well to a secure environment. Routine helps to create this environment which they quickly learn and come to expect. Lining up outside the door, taking their jackets off, opening their folders and putting other distractions away, all form part of this routine and help to settle the class and get it off to a good start. If copying words from the board when the teacher asks them to do it, is the routine - it will be done almost automatically when the instruction is given. Children don't really like surprises when it means a change to the way they usually do things - and they are quick to tell the teacher when this happens.

## 2. How important is rewarding children and how do you do it?

Young children are very competitive and like to be praised and rewarded. Unlike adults, they are not used to working in pairs or groups and are very 'me' focused. Teachers can exploit this by awarding points or stars, not just for language but for good behaviour, paying attention, participating, helping the teacher, helping other students. This all helps to make everyone feel that they have something to offer. Be careful to vary your language when giving praise, and try to use the students' names as often as possible. If you only say '*fantastic*' - it can lose its currency.

## 3. How do you make activities memorable?

Keep activities simple and build on them over a number of lessons. Children respond well to visuals and especially colour. The more they are involved **doing** things, the more likely they will remember and benefit from the activity. Young children learn quickly but they tend to forget quickly too so we need to provide lots of opportunity for recycling and using the language in different contexts. They will happily repeat something over and over again if they enjoy doing it and this allows us to increase the degree of difficulty or input new language into an already familiar story or game.

## 4. What are the advantages of preparing the materials before the class begins?

If the materials required - the crayons, the scissors, the crêpe paper - are already at hand, it means they can be distributed quickly and we maximise the learning time and reduce the possibility of students being distracted. Setting out the chairs or having the books or folders on the table - whether done by the teacher or quickly done by the students - establishes the routine and the class can get underway quickly. In the video, the distribution of materials was another opportunity to practise numbers and collecting things as the activity went along, helped push it to the next stage leaving the children with less to cope with.

## 5. How important is it that all the children are on task - i.e. doing what they are supposed to be doing?

Many teachers are over-concerned with keeping everybody active - hopefully doing exactly what they are supposed to doing at the same time. But this is unrealistic and having one student who is not on task doesn't constitute a problem until they become disruptive. Children's moods can change from lesson to lesson or even from activity to activity. Teachers should try to help slower children keep up but shouldn't be worried if they need longer to complete a task or seem a bit distant. Get the others started and try to do what you can to those who may have lost concentration or are simply having an 'off day'. This is particularly true for very young learners.