



Ministerio
de **Educación**

PLANNING GUIDELINES

ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

**EIGHTH-NINTH-TENTH YEAR
EDUCACIÓN GENERAL BÁSICA**

**FIRST-SECOND-THIRD YEAR
BACHILLERATO**

PRESIDENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA

Rafael Correa Delgado

MINISTRO DE EDUCACIÓN

Augusto X. Espinosa A.

Viceministro de Educación

Freddy Peñafiel Larrea

Viceministro de Gestión Educativa

Jaime Roca Gutiérrez

Subsecretaria de Fundamentos Educativos

Tannya Lozada Montero

Autora del documento

Jenny Villalba Zambrano

Revisión y actualización pedagógica

Dirección Nacional de Currículo

Diseño y diagramación

Álex Yáñez Jácome
José Antonio Valencia Pérez

© Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (MinEduc)
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ANNUAL, UNIT AND LESSON PLAN DESIGN

Some Questions and Guidelines for English Teachers

ABOUT ANNUAL TEACHING PLANS

1. What kind of information can teachers use to design their Annual Plans?

Teachers can currently resort to the following documents:

- The new English National Curriculum Guidelines which are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR).
- New Curriculum Specifications (i.e. known as precisiones curriculares in Spanish).
- A second run of new textbooks for the 8th, 9th, 10th year of EGB and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Bachillerato.
- Suggestions for designing their annual, unit and lesson plans (the present document).
- Suggestions for classroom assessment within the Communicative Approach.

2. What kind of information do the new Curriculum Guidelines provide?

They display the following components:

| No. | Component | Description |
|-----|---|---|
| 1. | Introduction | Explains key issues that shape the curriculum design: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the view of language• type of international standards the guidelines are aligned to.• approach to language teaching and learning• details about the time frame and implementation process. |
| 2. | Curriculum objectives & students' exit profile | Learners should have reached them by the end of the 3 rd year Bachillerato. |
| 3. | Exit profiles per level & specific objectives per school year | Detail what is expected from students per communicative competence component and language skill. |
| 4. | Assessment indicators | Per language skill (i.e. listening, speaking, reading & writing). |

3. What kind of information do the Curriculum Specifications provide?

They display standard-based syllabi¹ per school year with the following information:

1. Clear overall objectives (also described in the Curriculum Guidelines).
2. Specifications for choosing text types.
3. Approach and suggested methodology for the teaching of language skills.
4. Recommended materials (supplementary).
5. Assessment indicators per skill (described in the Curriculum Guidelines as well).
6. Minimum core content (i.e. functions, grammar, vocabulary) to be studied.

4. What about textbooks and how they will be used?

The third run of textbooks is aligned to the CEFR and levels A1.1, A1.2, A2.1 and A2.2 described in the National Curriculum Guidelines and specifications. During school years 2014-2015 (Régimen Sierra) and 2015-2016 (Régimen Costa), they will be used as follows:

| School year | Textbook |
|---|---|
| 8 th year <i>EGB</i> | textbook 1A (corresponds level A1.1, blue book) |
| 9 th year <i>EGB</i> | textbook 1B (corresponds level A1.2, purple book) |
| 10 th year <i>EGB</i> and 1 st year <i>Bachillerato</i> and 2 nd year <i>Bachillerato</i> | textbook 2A (corresponds level A2.1, green book) |
| 3 rd year <i>Bachillerato</i> | textbook 2B (corresponds level A2.2, orange book) |

5. Why to design an Annual Teaching Plan?

An annual plan is intended to provide teachers and school administrators with an overview of curriculum guidelines at a glance, and therefore, it can definitely help educators to stay on track— each month, for instance— in meeting the curriculum goals that have been set up for the school year.

6. Are there any standard formats for Annual Plans?

No, but although there is no unique style and/or format used for formal teaching plans –because among other factors, they mostly depend on, course objectives, institutional templates and even personal preferences (Harmer, 2010)— there are several common elements they can include (e.g. what to teach, in what order, and for how much time). The same applies for unit and lesson plans. We will provide you with sample templates as you continue reading.

1. *Syllabi*: “a list that specifies all the things that are to be taught in a course” (Ur, 2012, p185). *Standard-based syllabi* describe what learners should be able to do at specific levels.

7. How do I start designing my Annual Teaching Plan?

The following are only suggestions to the layout of your annual plan, and therefore, you may feel free to adapt, modify or even improve any format resulting from them to fit your specific needs and the needs of your group(s) of learners.

SECTION ONE

Start by labeling your plan, and providing general information about the subject you are designing the plan for, school's name, school year, and target group (s) you will be teaching in the first section. You can also include any other type of information you consider relevant; for example, the author(s)' name, class schedule (i.e. morning, afternoon or evening), general high school education track (i.e. Liberal Arts or Vocational²), etc.

(Sample Template A)

| ANNUAL TEACHING PLAN | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. GENERAL INFORMATION | |
| Area: English Language | School/ high- school: |
| School Year: 2012 -2013 | Target group (s): ...E.g. 8 th year EGB.... |

SECTION TWO

Take your Curriculum Guidelines to look at the objectives per school year that have been proposed for each component of the communicative competence. Read the ones that correspond the target group(s) you are teaching (i.e. 8th, 9th, 10th year EGB or 1st, 2nd, 3rd year Bachillerato) and write them down in the second section.

Proceed similarly with the objectives per language skill (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and write them down in the same section under a different numeral.

(Sample template B)

2. *These terms are the closest equivalent translations for Bachillerato en Ciencias and Bachillerato Técnico respectively.*

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES

By the end of 8th year EGB, students will be able to:

| Linguistic Component | Sociolinguistic Component | Pragmatic Component |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| • • | • • | • • |

2.2. LANGUAGE SKILLS OBJECTIVES

| Listening | Reading | Speaking | Writing |
|-----------|---------|----------|---------|
| • • | • • | • • | • • |

SECTION THREE

Insert a blank table for your template in a word processing document and list the months that correspond the present school year (e.g. September to June) in the first column. Take the curriculum specifications and look at what functions, grammar and vocabulary make sense to teach in each month. They should be listed at the top of the table and jotted down under the corresponding columns.

Remember to consider the school year has been divided up into two terms at present (i.e. quimestres: one starting in September and the other in February with a break of 15 days between both) and you should realistically break down the contents (i.e. functions) proposed into months by also taking into account vacation days and holidays (for an accurate reference on them, take a look at the school calendar provided on the Ministry of Education’s website at <http://educacion.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2014/08/Cronograma-de-clases-Ciclo-Sierra.pdf>)

According to Patsalides (2012), advantages of sketching your plan this way include the following:

- You will be able to check it frequently to see if it is being followed as planned and assure as much as possible that all contents are covered.
- You can be assured that you are meeting the national curriculum guidelines.

Consequently, it will be easier to plan for “extras”, such as projects, open house presentations, cultural weeks which are usually part of an institutional plan. Finally, “fun projects can be justified when they meet and are an extension of the curriculum standards” (Patsalides, 2012, p.1).

(Sample template C)

3. CONTENTS

| TIME FRAME | FUNCTIONS | GRAMMAR | VOCABULARY |
|------------|-----------|---------|------------|
| September | | | |
| October | | | |
| November | | | |
| December | | | |
| January | | | |
| February | | | |
| March | | | |
| April | | | |
| May | | | |
| June | | | |

SECTION FOUR

Read the Curriculum specifications you have been provided with and summarize information on the methodological strategies as well as the genres and text types that have been proposed as tools for developing each language skill with your corresponding groups of learners.

Unquestionably, you may feel free to propose and write down any other methodological strategy (ies) you consider pertinent by keeping in mind they should reflect the basic principles featuring the Communicative Approach:

- make real communication the focus of language learning.
- provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.
- be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence.
- provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.
- Link the different skills such as speaking, listening and reading together, since they usually occur so in the real world.
- let students induce or discover grammar rules. (Richards, 2006, p.11).

(Sample template D)

4. METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES**Listening**

-
-
-

Reading

-
-
-

Speaking

-
-
-

Writing

-
-
-

SECTION FIVE

Briefly list the didactic resources (i.e. official textbook/s as well as supplementary materials and equipment) that are available at your institution or you have made or provided and which you consider are appropriate to facilitate the students' learning process.

(Sample template E)

5. RESOURCES

-
-
-
-

SECTION SIX

Take either the Curriculum Guidelines document or the Specs³ document and carefully look at the assessment indicators per skill for your target group. Then describe briefly the type of evaluation you will carry out with your students (i.e. diagnostic, formative, and/ or summative) according to National regulations and when it will be done (at the beginning, middle or end of the first/second term, school year, etc.), as well as the type of assessment you will carry out (i.e. formal/ informal) and the type of assessment activities and / or instruments you will use (e.g. quizzes, presentations, writing rubrics, etc.).

3. *Specs: short form for specifications*

(Sample template F)

| | | |
|----------------------|--|-----------------|
| 7. EVALUATION | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| ENGLISH TEACHER | ENGLISH DEPARTMENT/AREA COORDINATOR | SCHOOL DIRECTOR |

ABOUT UNIT PLANS

8. Why to design a Unit Plan?

A unit plan is basically a list or series of lesson plans designed around a specific topic, project, content, etc, and among other reasons that apply for planning in general, it is important for teachers to design one because a great deal of learning is directly correlated to teachers' planning and preparation. According to Bilash (2011), some of the advantages of unit planning include the following:

- Class standards that are thematically integrated are addressed.
- The process of planning forces you to reflect on what you want to accomplish in each unit and in each class and how best to do so.
- Planning helps you control how class time is used and, as a result of reflection, use that time as productively as possible.
- Lesson and unit plans can be used and recycled, with revisions and adaptations, each time you teach the course, so they may be part of a really useful teaching portfolio.

9. What considerations do I need to make for being able to design my Unit Plan?

- Unit plans are consistent with National curriculum guidelines. Therefore, you should be aware of the standards as well as the contents for the subject matter you intend to write about in a unit.
- You must stick to a timeline to complete a unit.
- You should take some time to review what resources are already available to you (for designing your Unit Plans you may unquestionably resort to your Curriculum Specifications and the textbooks you receive).
- You should know about your students' needs and interests (through a diagnosis and/or survey) as well as have pedagogical resources available before you begin planning the lessons you choose.
- Once you review what resources you can resort to, you should create a diversity of assessment tools to evaluate learning because you should ensure students meet the objectives through both formative and summative evaluation.
- After considering your students' needs and the timeline, select what may fit their learning styles and use lessons and activities that motivate their curiosity and interest.
- You can follow a standard template to prepare a unit. The template may begin with the objectives but also include the competences addressed, materials, lessons, assessment, resources, etc.

10. What are some standard components in a Unit plan?

- A. Unit Title & Subject Area:** The theme of your unit and subject you are teaching.
- B. Communicative competence components:** Briefly list the ones covered in this unit plan.
- C. Classroom/ Level:** The classroom in which the subject is taught and the level according to the Curriculum Guidelines.
- D. Unit Rationale:** Your rationale is your overall justification for the unit, and basically what you will have to do is to provide a paragraph explanation to describe the value of the unit that is presented, the why the unit is important, how it will benefit students and where it will fit in the curriculum. This is prepared by individual teachers based on the students, school, community, and on curricular and instructional objectives and needs.
- E. Goals:** They are also called long-term objectives and describe the purposes or major concepts that will be taught. It is expected that from each goal, several specific objectives could be pulled out. The goals will cover the entire unit whether it is 3 lessons or 8.
- F. Objectives:** These come from the goals and represent the content areas or skills that would be included on all of the lesson plans for the unit. They are more specific than the goals. Objectives must be measurable. (Short-term or immediate objectives).
- G. Content:** Identify and organize the topics that are included in the unit.

-
- H. Learning activities:** The main methods/activities for teaching each goal. While not as detailed as the instructional procedures in a lesson plan, they should contain all key information. Example: display a power point presentation, introduce the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, etc.
 - I. List of Sources:** All sources consulted in preparation of the unit should be listed. Remember multiple sources are expected.
 - J. List of Materials:** List all materials needed to teach the unit that are not readily available to the teacher every day.
 - K. Assessment:** Identify the ways students' learning will be measured as well as how students will receive feedback and list the strategies and instruments you will use. (remember the way you measure students' learning will depend on what you want them to learn—i.e. objectives—and the learning activities involved).
 - L. Explanation of how the unit plan addresses a particular student profile.** Demonstrate how your plan addresses the interests and needs of your students (you may resort to the results you got from the administration of diagnostic tests at the beginning of the school year because that may have provided you with some information on your learners' strengths and weaknesses). For instance, you have 3 new students who come to your class & they do not speak English very well. How are you going to address their needs, as well as, your other students'?

(Sample template)

UNIT PLAN

A. General information:

Unit title:

Classroom/ level:

Subject Area:

B. Communicative Competence Components:

C. Unit rationale:.....

D. Overview/ Goals:

.....

| Objectives | Content | Learning Activities | Days |
|------------|---------|---------------------|------|
| | | | |

E. List of resources:

F. List of materials:

G. Assessment:

H. Explanation of how the unit addresses a particular student profile:

.....

.....

English Teacher

.....

Area Coordinator

.....

School Director

ABOUT LESSON PLANS

11. Why to design a lesson plan?

According to Celce-Murcia (2001), “all good teachers have some type of plan they walk into their classrooms” (p.403) and this can go from a simple a mental checklist or a complex , detailed two-paged typed lesson plan that follows a prescribed format.

Therefore, a lesson plan is an extremely useful tool that serves as the following:

- A guide because it serves as a map or checklist that leads us in knowing what to teach, in what order, and for how long.
- A resource for planning assessment measures such as quiz, midterms, and final exams.
- A historical document in which we record what we did in class and which we or a substitute teacher can resort to as an account of what we did before and what needs to be done.

12. What are some important characteristics featuring lesson plans?

- They reflect our teaching philosophy, student population, textbooks, and most importantly, our goals for our students.
- They are mutable (i.e. the duration of activities may be changed if needs arise).
- They benefit teachers, administrators, observers, substitutes and students.

13. What are some fundamental questions that need to be answered before planning a lesson?

According to Harmer (2010), the following questions should be answered:

- a. Who exactly are the students we will teach?
- b. What do we want to do and why?
- c. How does it work?
- d. What will be needed?
- e. What might go wrong?
- f. How will it fit in with what comes before and after it?

14. What are some standard components in a Lesson Plan?

Harmer (2010) suggests the following elements should be included in lesson plans; the sample below can be used, for instance, when one is to be observed and assessed:

- A. Description of the students:** this may include from a general picture of the students' level, age range, atmosphere, etc. to a detailed description of individual students (what they find easy or difficult, how they respond to different activities, etc.).
- B. Aims and objectives:** refers to what we hope our students to achieve; most lessons usually include a series of primary and secondary aims because it makes it easier for us (and anyone who may observe our class) to see whether or not we have achieved those aims. E.g.: Sensitize students to uses of pitch and intonation to indicate enthusiasm (or lack of enthusiasm).
- C. Procedures:** refers to the description of how the plan will be executed. In other words, the actual procedures (i.e. methodology) proposed. This section can include information about patterns of interaction (e.g. teacher-students, student-student, whole class, groups, pairs, etc.) and timing (to describe how long teachers expect things to take) as well.
- D. Anticipated problems:** teachers may list some potential difficulties they may foresee and add suggestions about what to do if they arise. For example, teachers may propose what to do in case a computer or piece of equipment fails (a kind of backup plan in case things do not go as expected).
- E. Extra activities/materials (just in case):** teachers may make a note of extra activities they could include if things go quicker than anticipated.
- F. Materials to be used in the lesson:** teachers may attach examples of the material they are to use with the students to their plan.
- G. Success indicators:** where the teacher indicates how s/he will be able to measure the success of what happens (it may also be called evaluation).
- H. Homework/Further work:** it shows what teachers have thought about beyond the actual lesson.

(Sample template taken from Harmer, 2010)

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Group: | Date: | Time: | No. of students: |
| Recent topic work: | Recent Language work: | | |
| Aims: | | | |
| Objectives | | | |
| Assessment: | | | |
| Materials: | | | |
| Anticipated problems: | | | |
| Timing | Teacher activity | Student activity | Success Indicators |
| | | | |
| Additional possibilities: | | | |
| Homework/Further work: | | | |

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