

## Elements of a Lesson Plan

### Part I: Introduction

**Attention.** The attention step signals that the activity or class is beginning, and therefore students should stop what they are doing and be ready participate. Your unit could adopt the practice of having cadets stand at attention at their seats until the instructor commands, “Seats.” Moreover, the attention step should pique the students’ interest and build enthusiasm for the activity. Some good attention steps include:

- A Fascinating Quote. “To affirm that the aeroplane is going to ‘revolutionize’ war is to be guilty of the wildest exaggeration.” - *Scientific American*, 1910
- A Surprising Fact: “The sentinels who guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier are an elite group. In fact, the only military insignia more rare than the Tomb Guard badge are the wings awarded to astronauts.”
- A Rhetorical Question: “Would you like to fly the F-22 Raptor, the Air Force’s newest and coolest fighter?”
- A Film Clip. Be sure the clip is relevant. Keep it brief, no longer than 1 minute.

**Motivation.** You have won the students attention, for the moment. But to keep it, you need to convince them that what you have to say is important. Why should the students pay attention? Give the students a specific reason for learning. Will it directly relate to a task or activity they’ll be performing later? Is it a foundation for something else? Does it relate to their job responsibilities? Will they have fun?

- If you want to serve on a ground team, you’ll need to become an expert with a compass, which is what we’ll be learning today.
- We’ll be learning how to perform columns. At the end of this class, we’ll have a drill-down, and the winning cadet will earn 10 points in the Honor Cadet competition.

**Overview.** The overview sets the stage for the activity or lesson. What will the students be doing? What are the goals of this activity? How long will it last? What topics will be covered? The idea here is that if you know what you’ll be studying, you will be a more successful learner.

### Part II: Body

The body is the meat of the lesson or activity. It contains a few main points, usually no more than three, with each main point supported by a few subpoints. For example, if the lesson is on CAP’s three missions, the points and subpoints could be arranged as follows:

- Main Point 1: The cadet program mission emphasizes character.
  - Subpoint 1: CAP challenges cadets to live by their Core Values.
  - Subpoint 2: The uniform motivates cadets to emulate the professionalism of Air Force leaders.
  - Subpoint 3: Ranking cadets solidify their character by serving as role models for junior cadets.
- Main Point 2: The aerospace education program shows young people that aviation and space are exciting.

- Main Point 3: CAP saves lives and provides valuable community services through its Emergency Services missions.

### **Part III: Conclusion**

The conclusion of a lesson may stick with the student longer than anything else said, so prepare your conclusion carefully.

**Summary.** One of the best ways to help students retain information is to restate your main points in a concise manner. Emphasize the most important aspects of the activity or a couple key facts of the lesson.

- In summary, the chain of command is the order of authority. It connects you to your flight commander, squadron commander, wing commander, region commander, and the national commander.
- To recap, there are four strokes in an internal combustion engine: intake, compression, power, and exhaust.

**Remotivation.** Before ending, take a moment to instill in students a desire to retain and use what they've learned. During the remotivation step, you answer the question, "Why is this learning important?"

- Next time you're hiking, bring a compass. Your knowledge of land navigation may rescue you if you become lost.
- During your next orientation flight, watch the attitude indicator. It's your best tool for knowing whether the aircraft is rolling or pitching.

**Closing.** Just as your attention step signaled the beginning of the activity, your closing signals its end. The closing stops you from rambling on and watering-down your message. Consider ending with a brief quote, a brief anecdote, or film clip.

- Having a plan is important. Yogi Berra said, "If you don't know where you're going, you might not get there."
- Helen Keller summarized the importance of teamwork when she said, "Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."

### **Instruct using the demonstration – performance training method.**

When teaching someone how to perform a task – how to drill, how to use a compass, how to preflight an airplane – the demonstration performance method can be your best training tool. One of the strengths of this training method is that you and the cadet / student get immediate feedback. You can see if the cadet knows how to perform the task, and the cadet builds confidence if you're there to tell them whether they are doing it right or not. Here's how the "demo-perf" works, as applied to drill.

- State the movement and explain its purpose.
- Perfectly demonstrate how the movement is performed at a normal cadence, twice.
- Break the movement into segments. Show the starting position and the finishing position and identify any special rules or standards. Slowly demonstrate the movement one step at a time, by the numbers. Allow cadets to ask questions.
- Have cadets try executing the movement on their own, and then as a group, by the numbers. Watch them closely and give them feedback. Ensure everyone understands how to perform the movement properly.