Backwards Design Step One: Identify Learning Goals

1. Briefly describe the session you will be teaching.

2. What do the students need to know to complete their assignment? (Skip if no assignment)

3. Regardless of the assignment, what do the students need to know 3 days, 3 months, and 3 years from now, that you can teach them today?

4. Turn your notes from above into SMART Student Learning Objectives. Use verbs from Bloom’s Taxonomy to help.

Backwards Design Step Two: Determine Acceptable Evidence

1. How will you know that the students “got it”? What does success look like?

2. What assessment method will you use to verify that the students have achieved the SLOs?

3. Outline your chosen assessment method, and list any materials you will need to create.

Backwards Design Step Three: Plan Learning Activities

1. How will you teach this SLO to your students?

2. Are there any particular aspects of this SLO that you expect the students to struggle with more than others? How can you help the students learn those aspects?

3. Briefly describe how you will teach this SLO to your students. How can you keep as many students engaged in learning as possible?
Bloom’s Taxonomy

Creating:
design
write develop
assemble construct

Evaluating: appraise
argue judge support
defend value select

Analyzing: examine compare
distinguish question criticize test

Applying: choose demonstrate employ
interpret operate practice prepare use

Understanding: classify describe discuss explain
identify locate recognize report paraphrase

Remembering: arrange match label reproduce duplicate
outline order define list recall state name

Suggested Further Readings


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Some Suggested Classroom Assessment Techniques

Pre-Test and/or Post-Test
These come in many formats, and can be as short as one or two questions, or significantly longer. Pre-Tests are administered before, or at the beginning, of the instruction session to test student knowledge of key skills. Post-tests are administered at the end of the session, or later, to test student abilities with the skills/concepts taught. They can be used either separately or together, although the tests should parallel one another if being used together.

Concept Mapping
Concept maps are visual representations of knowledge. You can ask the students to map out how the new skills learned relate to their prior knowledge, or map out their research process, and then add the concepts learned into it later in the session.

Problem Recognition Tasks
Give the students a problem and ask them to identify the best solution. These problems should be real-world situations, and can be quite large if being used to organize the entire session, or quite small if only spending a portion of the class on the task. For example, you might have students tackle a full research question related to their assignment, or provide their own solutions to common research problems in databases (off topic results, etc.).

Student Demonstration
Ask a student to come to the front of the room and demonstrate the skills taught. For example, after teaching about developing search terms, have a student enter their search into the database. Include some group discussion of what the student does well, and what can be improved.

Application Cards
Hand out index cards and have students write down one or two real world applications for what they just learned. For example, “How can you apply these search skills outside of this class?”

One-Minute Paper
Ask students to write about a specific question for one minute. For example, “What was the most important thing you learned today?” or “What question remains upper-most in your mind at the end of this session?” Alternatively, you can do the Muddiest Point version of this activity – “What was the muddiest point in the session today?”

In some cases, you may prefer to assess student learning less formally, such as giving them free research time and assisting as needed, or simple question-and-answer sessions with the students. This is also perfectly acceptable, and works well for classes where you have less time to prepare the session.
Instruction Request from a First-Semester Writing Instruction Course

Assignment description: Students will look for social science articles on some aspect of race and society (their choice). They will have to find 4-5 scholarly articles on their topic, create an annotated bibliography in APA, and then summarize and evaluate those articles as a review of the scholarly literature on that topic.

Sample Topics:
- Race and incarceration
- Diversity training in the workplace
- Achievement gaps in education between rich and poor students

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Instruction Request from a Sophomore Writing Instruction Course

Description: I don't know whether there are some standard things that you cover in these library sessions -- e.g., citing sources, etc. If so, that would be great. In addition: I am giving my students two research assignments that require them to find out information about the high school they attended and the local high school at which they will tutor through the AVID program. Would you be able to provide some help to them with these assignments?

Sample Topics:
- Statistical data on the school (demographics, faculty/student ratio, graduation rates, etc.)
- Quality of school resources (classrooms, textbook availability, support services, etc.)

Other: Students will be allowed, and encouraged, to collect some via interviews with students or school personnel

Instruction Request from a Psychology Research Methods Course

Description: finding appropriate research articles, overview of discipline-specific databases, sources, and in-depth evaluation of sources.

Sample Topics:
- We will pick these in the first week of class- it will be something psychological, of interest to students (sorry I can't be more specific).