

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for  
the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## Planning Lessons and Courses



Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for  
the Language Classroom  
Tessa Woodward  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521633543](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521633543)

© Cambridge University Press 2001

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written  
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2001

7th printing 2006

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Woodward, Tessa.

Planning lessons and courses: designing sequences of work for the language classroom/  
Tessa Woodward.

p. cm. -- (Cambridge handbooks for language teachers)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-63354-0 (pb)

1. Language and languages--Study and teaching. 2. Lesson planning. I. Title. II.  
Series.

P53.47 .W66 2000

418'.0071--dc21

00-048625

ISBN-13 978-0-521-63354-3 paperback

ISBN-10 0-521-63354-0 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for  
the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# Planning Lessons and Courses

*Designing sequences of work  
for the language classroom*

Tessa Woodward



Consultant and editor: Penny Ur



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for  
 the Language Classroom  
 Tessa Woodward  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

## Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers

This is a series of practical guides for teachers of English and other languages. Illustrative examples are usually drawn from the field of English as a foreign or second language, but the ideas and techniques described can equally well be used in the teaching of any language.

*Recent titles in this series:*

### Ways of Doing

Students explore their everyday and classroom processes  
 PAUL DAVIS, BARBARA GARSIDE *and*  
 MARIO RINVOLUCRI

### Using Newspapers in the Classroom

PAUL SANDERSON

### Teaching Adult Second Language Learners

HEATHER MCKAY *and* ABIGAIL TOM

### Teaching English Spelling

A practical guide  
 RUTH SHEMESH *and* SHEILA WALLER

### Using Folktales

ERIC TAYLOR

### Personalizing Language Learning

Personalized language learning activities  
 GRIFF GRIFFITHS *and* KATHRYN KEOHANE

### Teach Business English

A comprehensive introduction to Business English  
 SYLVIE DONNA

### Learner Autonomy

A guide to activities which encourage learner responsibility  
 ÁGOTA SCHARLE *and* ANITA SZABÓ

### The Internet and the Language Classroom

Practical classroom activities and projects  
 GAVIN DUDENEY

### Using the Board in the Language Classroom

JEANNINE DOBBS

### Learner English (second edition)

MICHAEL SWAN *and* BERNARD SMITH

### Teaching Large Multilevel Classes

NATALIE HESS

### Writing Simple Poems

Pattern poetry for language acquisition  
 VICKI L. HOLMES *and* MARGARET R. MOULTON

### Laughing Matters

Humour in the language classroom  
 PÉTER MEDGYES

### Using Authentic Video in the Language Classroom

JANE SHERMAN

### Stories

Narrative activities for the language classroom  
 RUTH WAJNRYB

### Language Activities for Teenagers

*edited by* SETH LINDSTROMBERG

### Pronunciation Practice Activities

A resource book for teaching English pronunciation  
 MARTIN HEWINGS

### Five-Minute Activities for Business English

PAUL EMMERSON *and* NICK HAMILTON

### Drama Techniques (third edition)

A resource book of communication activities for language teachers  
 ALAN MALEY *and* ALAN DUFF

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for  
the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

<i>Thanks and Acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Map of the book</i>	viii
Introduction	1
1 Who are the students?	16
2 How long is the lesson?	47
3 What can go into a lesson?	73
4 How do people learn and so how can we teach?	110
5 What can we teach with?	131
6 How can we vary the activities we do?	162
7 Getting down to the preparation	180
8 What are our freedoms and constraints?	212
<i>Bibliography</i>	243
<i>Index</i>	248

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

*To Pat and Robin, all their offspring and to  
Grandma Lil*

## Thanks

To Seth for listening to chapters read out loud and for taking over the typing when my fingers gave out!

To Penny Ur for inviting me to contribute to this series and for her helpful, indefatigable and swift responses to my drafts.

To Alison Silver for her patience and humanity while editing the typescript.

To Jane Clifford for all her support.

To Christine Frank for commenting so charitably on my first draft chapter.

To the two anonymous readers who gave comments on a very early draft.

To Phillip Burrows for his beautiful illustrations.

To Ruth Carim for her meticulous proof-reading.

## Acknowledgements

The author and publishers are grateful to the authors, publishers and others who have given permission for the use of copyright material identified in the text. In the cases where it has not been possible to identify the source of material used the publishers would welcome information from copyright owners.

Text on p. 53 from *Teacher Cognition in Language Teaching* by Devon Woods, Cambridge University Press; poem on p. 191 ‘London Airport’ from *Selected Poems* by Christopher Logue, Faber and Faber Ltd; text on p. 200 from *Cambridge English for Schools* by Andrew Littlejohn and Diana Hicks, Cambridge University Press. Illustrations on pp. 46, 72, 109, 130, 161, 179, 211, 242 by Phillip Burrows.

## Map of the book

A = Activity

---

### Introduction 1

What do I mean by planning?  
 What do I mean by a 'good' lesson or  
 course?  
 What are teachers' concerns about lesson  
 and course planning?  
*A beginner teacher's concern: 'Planning  
 takes too long'*

---

### 1 Who are the students? 16

1.1 Introduction  
 1.2 Who can you find out from?  
 The institution  
*Students from a different institution*  
*Students from inside or outside your own  
 institution*  
 Past and present teachers  
 Other stakeholders  
 1.3 What you can know and why  
 The students  
 1.4 How to get information before meeting  
 the class  
 Letter writing A  
 1.5 How to get information on first meeting  
 First lesson sequences  
 Name learning  
 Labels A

---

### 2 How long is the lesson? 47

2.1 Introduction  
 2.2 Beginnings  
*Beginning before the beginning*  
*Clear boundaries*  
*Fluid boundaries*  
*Working starts*  
*Taking care of the atmosphere*  
*Student starts*  
*Discussing the menu*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Map of the book**An experienced teacher's concern: 'It's getting boring'***Ways of getting better at planning***The first way: Considering our past learning experiences**The second way: Using coursebooks**The third way: Learning as we teach***Using 'Chunks'**

What are 'Chunks'?

*When are chunks good or bad?***Beliefs, perceptions and assumptions**The four-column analysis **A****The organisation of this book**Register mnemonics **A**Settled places **A**Testing yourself **A**

Building a sense of community

Drawing yourself **A**Group profile **A**

Student expectations

Why are we here? **A**Unfinished sentences **A**The graph **A**Bartering **A**'What we are used to' sentences **A**

Level

How much can they understand? **A**One thing I know about English **A**Class dictionary **A****1.6 How to get information during subsequent lessons**Name review – Chair swap **A**50-second talks **A**Learner style **A**Teacher style **A***Probing thinking to see what students understand*Learning contracts **A**Tutorials **A***Other ideas***1.7 How to get information after the students have gone**Tracer study **A****1.8 Conclusion****2.3 Middles**

Threads

An animal a day **A**

Stimulus-based blocks

*Meeting the stimulus**Analysis**Personalisation**Alteration and transfer**Creation*

Generalisable procedures for texts

**2.4 Break time**Rounding off **A**Complete break in class **A**Complete break outside class **A****2.5 Ends**Homework **A**Dialogue journals **A**What have we done today and why? **A**Plans for next time **A**Filling up the last remaining moments **A****2.6 Conclusion**



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Map of the book*


---

<b>3 What can go into a lesson? 73</b>	<p>3.1 Introduction What there is to teach and learn</p> <p>3.2 Classes and people</p> <p>3.3 Language patterns Individual words <i>Learning about words</i> Groups of words Grammatical patterns Functions Practical principles for teaching words, word groups, grammatical patterns and functions</p>
<b>4 How do people learn and so how can we teach? 110</b>	<p>4.1 Introduction Ways of learning and teaching</p> <p>4.2 Finding out for yourself What it is and how it works How it works in the language class Finding out for yourself: Functional expressions   <b>A</b> Finding out for yourself: Discourse structure and lexical phrases   <b>A</b></p> <p>4.3 Things made plain What it is and how it works How it works in the language class</p>
<b>5 What can we teach with? 131</b>	<p>5.1 Introduction Part 1</p> <p>5.2 What materials and equipment are available and where?</p> <p>5.3 The dictionary Main types of dictionary Uses of dictionaries Use dictionaries yourself   <b>A</b> Looking up words you know   <b>A</b></p> <p>5.4 The board Main types of board Uses of boards Group landscape   <b>A</b> Mapping the lesson   <b>A</b></p> <p>5.5 The box of rods Main types of rods Uses of rods Marking phonological features   <b>A</b> Story telling   <b>A</b></p>

---

*Map of the book*

<p><i>Stage 1: Exposure to language</i>  <i>Stage 2: Noticing</i>  <i>Stage 3: Remembering (or mental storage)</i>  <i>Stage 4: Use and refinement</i>  <b>3.4 Language skills</b>      Listening      Speaking      Reading      Writing      Practical principles for working on skills      and sub-skills  <b>3.5 Combinations</b></p>	<p>Situations      Topics and themes      Practical principles for teaching situations,      topics and themes  <b>3.6 Literature</b>      Practical principles for teaching literature  <b>3.7 Culture</b>      Practical principles for working with culture  <b>3.8 Study skills</b>      Practical principles for teaching study skills  <b>3.9 Other subjects</b>  <b>3.10 Conclusion</b></p>
<p>Things made plain: Functional      expressions <b>A</b>      Things made plain: Sentence structure <b>A</b>  <b>4.4 Periphery learning</b>      What it is and how it works      How it works in the language class      Periphery learning: Functional      expressions <b>A</b>      Periphery learning: Study skills <b>A</b>      Periphery learning: Grammatical      patterns <b>A</b>  <b>4.5 Use and refinement</b>      What it is and how it works</p>	<p>How it works in the language class      Use and refinement: Functional      expressions <b>A</b>      Use and refinement: The listening skill <b>A</b>  <b>4.6 Taking stock</b>  <b>Commonly found instructional sequences</b>  <b>4.7 Test, teach, test</b>  <b>4.8 Pre-, in-, post- stages for receptive skills</b>  <b>4.9 PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production)</b>  <b>4.10 TBL (Task-based Learning)</b>  <b>4.11 Conclusion</b></p>
<p><b>5.6 The picture pack</b>      Main types of picture pack      Uses of picture packs      It reminds me of ... <b>A</b>      Standardising practice <b>A</b>  <b>5.7 The music tape</b>      Main types of music tape      Uses of music tapes      Mental images <b>A</b>  <b>5.8 How to look after your tools:</b>  <b>Maintenance and storage</b>  <i>Getting materials ready</i>  <i>When you go into class</i>  <i>In class</i>  <i>Between tasks in class or between classes</i>  <i>On leaving class</i>  <i>Filing systems</i>  <i>Personal favourites</i></p>	<p><b>Part 2</b>  <b>5.9 A central tool: The coursebook</b>      Advantages of using a coursebook      Disadvantages of using a coursebook  <b>5.10 Using the whole coursebook: The      stimulus-based approach</b>      Meeting the coursebook      Me Teacher, You Book <b>A</b>      Sharing your reasoning <b>A</b>      Students survey the book in class <b>A</b>      Students write bibliography cards <b>A</b>      Looking ahead – Getting organised <b>A</b>      Analysing the coursebook      Teacher guts the coursebook before use in      class <b>A</b>      The coursebook vocabulary thread for      students in class <b>A</b></p>

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Map of the book***5 What can we teach with?**  
*(continued)*

Personalising the book  
 Covering the coursebook    **A**  
 Coloured filters    **A**  
 Forging connections    **A**  
 Inner voice    **A**  
 Teacher dissects the coursebook at home    **A**  
 Altering the coursebook  
 Teacher selects, rejects and supplements parts of the coursebook before use in class    **A**

**6 How can we vary the activities we do?** 162

6.1 Introduction  
 6.2 Description of a learning activity  
 The alphabet blackboard game    **A**  
 6.3 Definition of the features of an activity  
 6.4 Changing the features of an activity  
 6.5 The activity bank

**7 Getting down to the preparation** 180

7.1 Introduction  
 7.2 What is 'planning'?  
 Why would we want to plan courses and lessons?  
 Why would we not want to plan courses and lessons?  
 Who can you do your planning with?  
 When can you plan your courses and lessons?  
 7.3 Specifying objectives  
 The traditional view  
 The 'starting from different angles' view  
*The students*  
*Time*

**8 What are our freedoms and constraints?** 212

8.1 Introduction  
 External variables  
 8.2 Type of organisation  
 8.3 Type of class  
 Heterogeneous classes  
 Practical principles for working with heterogeneous classes  
*Syllabus and content*  
*Materials and tasks*  
 Mixed ability dictation    **A**  
*Working together*  
 Very large classes  
 Practical principles for working with large classes

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Map of the book*Teacher and students alter texts that are too short **A**Teacher and students alter texts that are too long **A**

Adding the students in

Read aloud and shadow **A**Different voices and gestures **A**Reversals **A**

Creating things based on the coursebook

Using the pictures **A**

Bringing out the coursebook

characters **A**

Things you can do with the coursebook

apart from studying it **A**Finishing off **A****5.11 Conclusion**Reading a text and then answering questions on it **A**Dictation **A**Repeating after the teacher **A**Copying from the blackboard **A**

Reading a dialogue and then role

playing it **A**Checking homework around the class **A**Filling in gaps in a cloze text **A**Student presentations **A**Memorising **A****6.6 Conclusion***Generative activity frameworks**Content**How people learn**How teaching can be handled**Materials***7.4 What happens once you get some starting points**

Building courses, playing your course cards

*Laying down one card, or the one card trick**Playing similar sorts of cards**Heart, club, diamond, heart, club, diamond**One of spades, one of hearts, one of clubs**Building a pack of cards**Face down concentration***7.5 Before individual lessons***The zero option*

Writing lesson notes

*Different sorts of notes**Visualising the class*

In-class ideas

Immediately after class

More ambitious ideas for later on

*Keeping track**Analysis of tapes**Ideas for balancing up**Variety stars***7.6 The design model for planning****7.7 Conclusion***Crowd control**Basic chores**Group work*

One-to-one (or very small group) teaching

Practical principles for teaching one-to-one or very small groups

Exam classes

Practical principles for working with exam classes

*Transparency**Similarity**Get students in the study mood**Balance**Exam tips**Sort yourself out!*

Substitution classes

Practical principles for working with substitution classes

Using pictures **A**Using an unusual methodology **A***Using teacher resource books**Using a topic-based lesson*

Classes with few resources or facilities

Practical principles for working with under-resourced classes

*Seating**Boards and display surfaces**Individual student materials*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

*Map of the book*

**8 What are our freedoms and constraints?** *(continued)*

*Crowd control*

*Basic chores*

*Group work*

One-to-one (or very small group) teaching

Practical principles for teaching one-to-one or very small groups

Exam classes

Practical principles for working with exam classes

*Transparency*

*Similarity*

*Get students in the study mood*

*Balance*

*Exam tips*

*Sort yourself out!*

Substitution classes

Practical principles for working with substitution classes

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-63354-3 - Planning Lessons and Courses: Designing Sequences of Work for the Language Classroom

Tessa Woodward

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Map of the book*

Using pictures	A	Undisciplined classes
Using an unusual methodology	A	Practical principles for dealing with undisciplined classes
<i>Using teacher resource books</i>		<i>Before class</i>
<i>Using a topic-based lesson</i>		<i>In class</i>
Classes with few resources or facilities		<i>After and between lessons</i>
Practical principles for working with under- resourced classes		Hijacks: Pleasant and unpleasant surprises
<i>Seating</i>		Practical principles for dealing with surprises and hijacks
<i>Boards and display surfaces</i>		<b>8.5 The internal variable: Ourselves</b>
<i>Individual student materials</i>		Practical principles for dealing with strengths and weaknesses in ourselves
<b>8.4 The unpredictability of working with people</b>		<i>Finding out about ourselves</i>
Classes with students who don't get on		<i>Working on our weaknesses</i>
Practical principles for working with classes who don't get on		<i>Working on our strengths</i>
<i>Avoidance</i>		<b>8.6 Conclusion</b>
<i>Confrontation</i>		
<i>Separate development</i>		
<i>Cooperation</i>		