

PLANNING USING THE LOF APPROACH

Communicative Language Teaching

CLT is an approach to language teaching that suggests that the goal of language teaching is to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as “communicative competence” in the target language. The view of this approach is that effective communication “in the world outside the classroom” is the main purpose for learning a language (Lindsay and Knight, 2006: 20). CLT puts fluency and ability to communicate in different settings and in a variety of ways as top priorities.

Nunan (1991) suggests that one of the features of CLT is a deliberate attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom. Learners are made to use the language through contextualised, meaningful and authentic activities that support the learning process as well as maximise learner interaction (Parrish, 2004). Hence, in the CLT classroom, pair or group-work, or more specifically, learner to learner interaction is regarded as a useful and flexible technique which can help the learners to negotiate meaning and solve problems. Activities are therefore presented within a real-life context that necessitate a **need** to communicate in a natural way and offer opportunities to the learners to use language for a range of different purposes and functions, such as, when calling a friend, when ordering food in a restaurant or when asking questions in order to obtain information they do not possess (information-gap). The following table lists some activities that reflect the principles of communicative methodology.

Task-completion activities	Puzzles, games, map-reading, and other kinds of classroom tasks in which the focus is on using one’s language resources to complete a task.
Information-gathering activities	Student-conducted surveys, interviews, and research in which learners are required to use their linguistic resources to collect information.
Opinion-sharing activities	Activities in which learners compare values, opinions, or beliefs, such as a ranking task in which learners list six qualities in order of importance.
Information-transfer activities:	These require learners to take information that is presented in one form, and represent it in a different form. For example, they may read instructions on how to get from A to B, and then draw a map showing the sequence, or they may read information about a subject and then represent it as a graph.
Reasoning-gap activities	These involve deriving some new information from given information through the process of inference, practical reasoning, etc. For example, working out a travel itinerary based on a bus schedule.
Role plays	Activities in which learners are assigned roles and improvise a scene or dialogue based on given information or clues.

Adapted from *Communicative Language Teaching Today* (p.19), by Author J. C. Richards, 2006, Cambridge University Press.

Integrated Skills Approach

The integrated-skills approach presents all language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in conjunction with each other so that the learners are able to use language in a natural and realistic way. The philosophical basis of this approach is that in everyday life communication, the four language skills are used simultaneously and thus, in the classroom, the four language skills should be learned interactively.

The best model for integrating language skills is when the practice of the receptive skills (listening and reading) leads into the practice of the productive skills (speaking and writing) (Cohen, 1990; Burgess, 1994). In a reading lesson, for instance, the pre-reading task might ask learners to view a short audio clip (listening and viewing) and discuss it in pairs (speaking) or jot down any emerging thoughts (writing). The teacher or the learners proceed to read the text (reading). Next, the teacher or the learners themselves provide explanation and elaboration of the text by asking questions or discussing main themes. The learners can be set up in pairs or groups to discuss the text (speaking and listening). As a post-task, the learners might be asked to respond to the text either orally or in written form (speaking or writing). It is clear that although the lesson has a specific target skill (reading), all the other skills come into play and reinforce each other in various ways.

The implementation of an integrated skills approach therefore offers various advantages (Carol, 1990):

- it provides continuity and consistence in teaching and learning because tasks and activities are closely related to each other.
- activities can be designed to provide input (listening and reading) before output (speaking and writing).
- it allows for the recycling and revision of language which has already been taught.
- it increases the confidence of weaker or less confident learners.
- it brings variety into the classroom, which enables teachers to enrich classroom instruction by integrating language skills cooperatively.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning (AFL) is an approach to teaching and learning designed to improve learners' performance and create effective feedback. The main aim of AFL is to close the gap between the learners' current learning and where they need to be in their learning journey. The focus of this kind of assessment is on the learning process, in that, evidence of learning is continuously used to adapt the teaching in order to meet the needs of the learner. The evidence gives suitable information as to where the learner stands in the learning process, and what is the next step in this journey. In everyday teaching and learning, teachers can integrate AFL in their lessons as a natural part of what they do. The following are some important processes that take place in assessment for learning:

- Understanding where the learners stand in their learning
- Having a clear and shared Learning Intention
- Clear and shared Success Criteria
- Maximising Opportunities to think, through good and effective questioning
- Giving quality feedback
- Providing plenty of opportunities for self-assessment and peer-assessment

ClassroomTasks

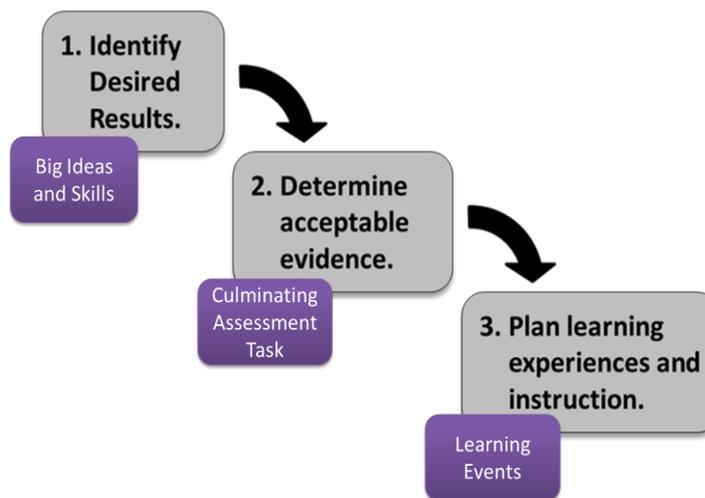
Tasks are investigative tools that improve learning and teaching. All tasks, whether for assessment purposes or otherwise, should be pegged to the Broad Learning Outcomes. Every task should teach, consolidate and give opportunities to use and practise newly acquired knowledge and language skills. Tasks are used to make judgments about the learning process and provide formative feedback.

Assessment Tasks should not be tests and should not be done under examination conditions. They should be opportunities to assess learning in valid and reliable ways. They are different from tasks found in examination papers and they lend themselves better to classroom situations. For example, Kahoot quiz or other digital learning apps, presentations, exhibits, role-play, etc.

	Text Type	Task Types
Listening and viewing	podcast, public announcement, school announcement, recorded message, weather forecast, traffic information, tourist information, advert, short news item, song, short story, instruction, radio report and interview, speech, conversation, and dialogue...	true / false, multiple choice, gap filling, lifting from text, drawing, labelling, grid filling, chart completion, matching, short answer questions, sentence completion, ticking, sequencing, listing, ...
Speaking and representing	Some examples of input / prompts which can be used to assess the different speaking subskills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · textual e.g., advert / note, · iconic e.g., graph / diagram, · pictorial e.g., photo / sequence of pictures 	interview, role play, discussion (opinion-exchange or decision-making), conversation, information gap, storytelling / story completion, picture prompt (narrating), picture prompt (describing), asking questions, presentation, debate, speech...
Reading and Viewing	formal / informal letter and email, young adult fiction, newspaper article, magazine article, notice, advertisement, excerpt from a novel, biography, message, graph, meme, diagram, caption, schedule (e.g. TV) and instruction leaflet.	true / false, multiple choice, gap filling, lifting from text, drawing, labelling, grid filling, chart completion, matching, short answer questions, inferential open-ended questions, sentence completion, ticking, identifying topic, sequencing, listing, information transfer...
Writing and Representing	informal email/letter, review of TV show, narrative/descriptive short story, diary entry, advert, instructions, directions, caption, table or chart, an information text, a poem, a playscript, a message, a notice, an article, a menu, a recipe, a poster, a postcard, an identity kit, an invitation...	guided writing, shared writing, collaborative writing, paired writing, independent writing, free writing (journal)...

The Backward Design Process

Backward Design is an approach to planning that starts with the learning outcomes or goals, then moves ‘backwards’ to thinking about the evidence that shows that these goals have been reached, and finally to designing lessons and activities that allow that same evidence to be collected. These are the three steps of Backward Design.



Wiggins, G. P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design*. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Stage 1 – Identify Desired Results

First, the teacher decides what the learners should know, understand, or produce by selecting the broad learning outcomes that learners should meet by the end of the learning cycle (a week or a unit).

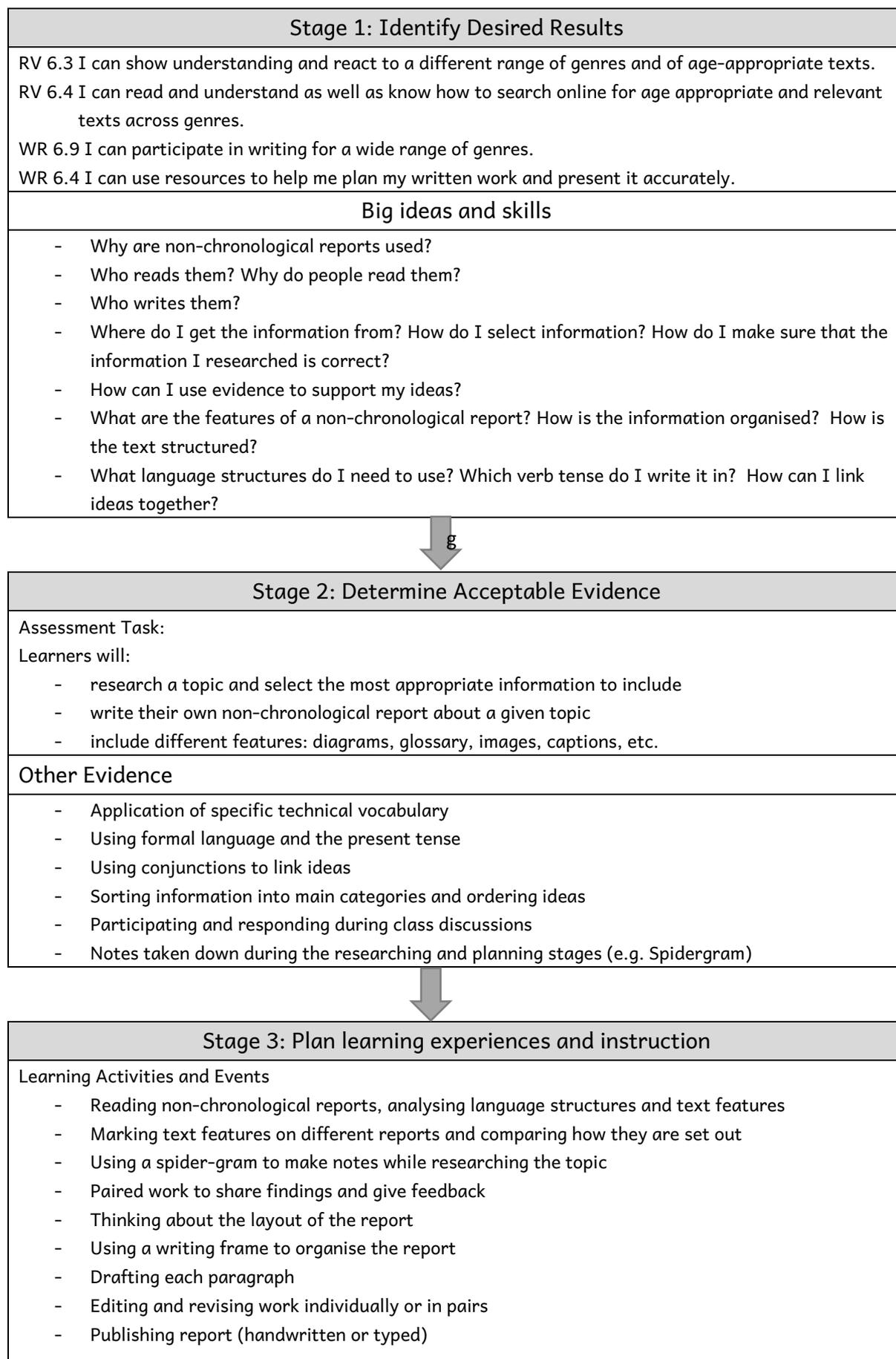
Stage 2 – Evidence of Learning

Next, the teacher asks the question, “How will I know if learners have achieved the desired results?” In this step, the teacher plans reliable, valid and authentic methods of assessment that show evidence of learning. Examples might include: interviews, quick classroom discussions, presentations, short quizzes, role-play, peer evaluation, journal writing.

Stage 3 – Designing the Content for Instruction

The teacher can now plan a sequence of lessons or activities that will prepare students to successfully master the learning outcomes. These planned activities should be directly aligned to the broad learning outcomes and may include direct instruction, demonstrations, watching and listening to a video, collaborative work, research, or analysing a text, to name just a few.

In a real to life context, this is what it might look like.



Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy is a useful tool that teachers can use to inform their teaching and learning. It allows learners to develop their higher order critical thinking abilities. The table below gives you an indication of how to frame questions, using 'The Natural World and Wildlife' theme found in the Year 5 Supporting Document.

Remember	What can you do to help protect endangered animals? What can we do to protect forests? Where is the best place in your country to see or experience nature? How can animals be better protected in the wild?
Understand	Explain how some animals, such as polar bears, are becoming endangered. Describe ways we can save water. Explain how houses can be more environmentally friendly.
Apply	Give an example of how the world has become more polluted. Is there a natural phenomenon that you are particularly interested in?
Analyse	Compare and contrast the two pictures (rainforest and desert). Why is carpooling a good method of reducing traffic on the streets? What are the benefits of learning more about nature in school?
Evaluate	Do you agree that people are now more environmentally responsible than they were in the past? Why? Which is more important: protecting the environment or using cars to move around?
Create	What do you predict will happen in fifty years time? Will there be more or less pollution? How can you convince people to use bikes instead of cars? Design a poster to promote cycling as a means of transport. What new law would you pass to protect wildlife from illegal hunting?

Planning a Scheme of Work

The four language skills can also be sequenced and unified in a continuous and related sequence of lessons spread over a period of time (a week or two weeks). Such integration can be realized by exposing the learners to a body of information from enjoyable authentic texts, videos, music, magazines they read, watch, or listen to and later asking them to reproduce at least some of its content in spoken and/or written language.

The template below may be used when planning your Scheme of Work.

YEAR ____	Week ____ : (add date)	THEME	LO code	Learning Outcome	Assessment	Activity / Procedure	Resources	Language Structure / Vocabulary / Language Function

The following procedure might be followed:

First, the theme for the week/s needs to be chosen. Then, the Learning Outcomes need to be identified. A learning outcome from each strand (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, writing and literature) is to be included each week. Before choosing the content, think about the end product (mentioned in the LO). This would be how you can assess to which extent the LO has been achieved. It is then that you can move on to planning the teaching and learning activities.

When choosing content, we suggest you start by thinking about the final product which is the speaking and / or writing task related to the topic chosen. Keeping this in mind, as well as the vocabulary (topic knowledge – content) and language (linguistic knowledge) the learners will need to be able to complete the speaking and / or writing task, choose the reading or listening task you think would be age- and level-appropriate and ideally of interest to your learners. It should be related to the topic and preferably, a point of reference to learners when they are doing their speaking and / or writing task.

When planning a language lesson, scaffolding strategies need to be used throughout to support every learner by breaking up learning into chunks and providing a structure for each. These stages include (i) an INTRODUCTION: warmer / a lead-in activity (pre-task) which might include another skill to help contextualise and activate schemata whilst also addressing one/two important items of vocabulary which might be practically

impossible to understand from context; (ii) the MAIN BODY OF THE LESSON: while-tasks to keep students actively engaged throughout (iii) a POST-TASK activity which helps extend the task and integrate the skills more effectively; (iv) a CONCLUSION: a concluding activity could take many forms (e.g. Classroom Assessment Techniques), reaffirms the learning outcomes, and helps to get a sense of what students learned and enjoyed. What is important is that it wraps up the lesson through a lead-out activity.

References

- Burgess, G. (1994). Ideational framework in integrated language learning system. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23 (3), pp. 102-121.
- Carol, R. (1990). *At the Chalkface: Practical Techniques in Language Teaching*. ELT Methodology. Longman.
- Cohen, A. (1990). *Language learning: Insight for learners, teachers and researchers*. New York: Newbury House/Harper Row.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On Communicative Competence. In J. B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds.). *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth, Middx: Penguin.
- Lindsay, C & Knight, P. (2006). *Learning and Teaching English. A Course for Teachers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nunan, D. 1991. *Communicative Tasks and the Language Curriculum*. *TESOL Quarterly*. 25(2): 279-295.
- Parrish, B. 2004. *Teaching Adult ESL. A Practical Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Richards, J. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Retrieved November 15 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24270833>.
- Savignon, S. J. (1991). *Communicative Language Teaching: State of the Art*. *Tesol Quarterly*. 25(2): 261-277
- Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development ASCD