



Courtesy of Army JROTC

U3C12L1

Preparing to Teach

Key Words:

Competency

Condition

Criteria

Learning Objective

Lesson Plans

Measurable

Observable

Performance
Standards

Prerequisite

Training Aids

What You Will Learn to Do

Prepare to teach others

Linked Core Abilities

- Communicate using verbal, non-verbal, visual and written techniques

Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Describe five critical elements you need to consider in preparing to teach
- Write effective learning outcomes
- Create at least six tips for planning a lesson

Introduction

Being an instructor, or an assistant instructor, will be a challenging experience for you. It is for anyone, even experienced teachers. Instructing may also be a little frightening.

In this lesson, you will be introduced to five critical elements that you need to consider while preparing to teach. The five critical elements are listed below:

- Motivation
- Know your material
- Learning outcomes
- Training aids
- Lesson plan

Motivation

In order to properly teach a class, you must be motivated. Motivation is a drive that comes from within yourself. When you get excited about doing something, you will discover that you have the necessary motivation to do that task well. However, the opposite is also true. If you do not get excited about the task, you will lack the necessary motivation and drive to perform the task successfully. In teaching, it isn't enough to just do an okay or a satisfactory job. The students in your class deserve the best instruction and instructors to guarantee a solid education. Therefore, when your instructors give you the opportunity to become a student instructor, consider it a challenging and exciting opportunity.

Learning Outcomes

As a student instructor, your primary responsibility is to help students achieve the learning outcomes for the lesson your instructor has assigned you to teach. The learning outcomes for a lesson describe what students should know and be able to do when they successfully complete the lesson.

Each JROTC lesson also includes performance standards that describe how students and the instructor will know when they are succeeding; learning activities that explain how students will achieve the learning outcomes; and assessment activities that describe how students will demonstrate their learning.

Each lesson will target a single **competency**, which is the major skill or attitude that students must master following a learning experience. Each competency will have a set of **learning objectives**. Similar to competencies, learning objectives are supporting

skills, knowledge, or attitudes that students will need to learn as they work toward achievement of the competency. Your learning objectives will set the stage for “what” you will plan to teach.

Example

Competency	Apply mediation techniques to resolve conflict
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Differentiate between arbitration and mediation B. Describe the role of a mediator and the qualities required to fulfill that roll C. Establish ground rules for the mediation process D. Facilitate the steps in the mediation process E. Adapt active listening skills to the mediation process F. Define key words: arbitration, empathy, mediation, facilitate

All learning outcomes must be realistic, attainable, **observable** and **measurable**. Throughout the learning experience, you will demonstrate what you learn. This “practice” leads to the performance outlined in the competency statement. Each lesson then ends with a product or process assessment that relates to the competency, and is outlined in detail within the performance assessment task, bringing a learning experience full circle.

When learning outcomes are clearly stated upfront in the learning experience, students know what is expected of them and what it is they are working toward. At the end of a lesson there is an observable process or measurable product that shows whether or not the student achieved the stated competency in the initial competency statement.

Writing Competency and Learning Objective Statements

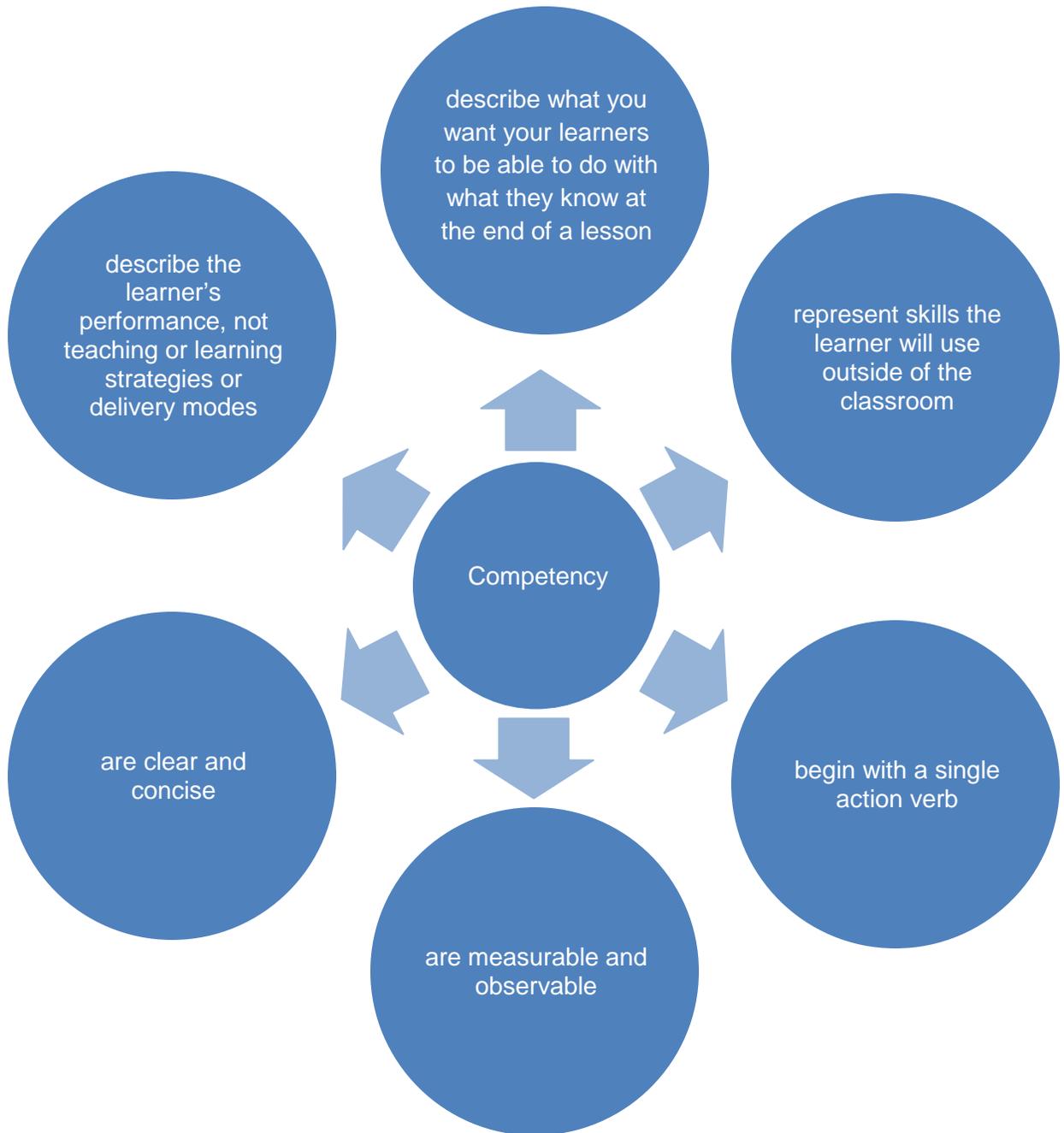
Both competencies and learning objectives begin with one measurable action verb. Action verbs require students to do something like: create a product, make a decision, solve a problem, or perform a task. Verbs such as “understand,” “learn,” and “know” are not action verbs, and therefore, should not be used in a competency or learning objective statement.

Sample Action Verb List

act	discuss	predict
answer	distinguish	prepare
apply	estimate	produce
arrange	explain	rate
build	give examples of	record
calculate	identify	report
change	illustrate	reply
choose	join	restate
classify	judge	revise
compare	justify	schedule
compete	list	select
compose	match	show
compute	measure	solve
contrast	modify	state
create	name	summarize
define	organize	use
demonstrate	outline	verify
describe	perform	write/rewrite

Competencies

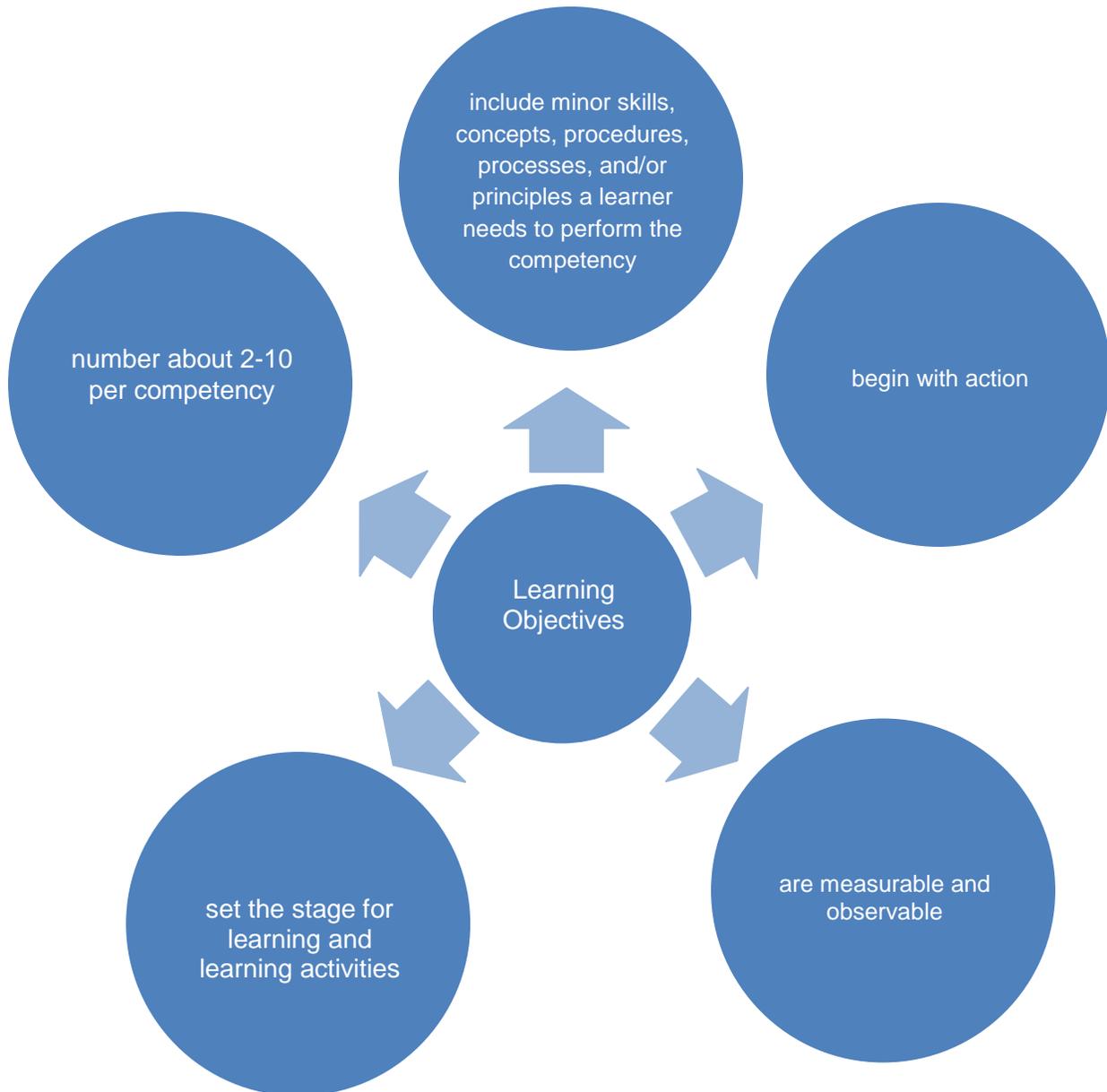
The illustration below outlines the **criteria** for a well-developed competency statement. Examine existing JROTC student learning plans and instructor lesson plans to see how the criteria are met.



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Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are written much like competencies, but keep in mind that they are “benchmark” statements and tell students what they will be learning about in the learning experience. They outline the concepts, principles, facts, processes, and procedures students need to learn in support of the competency.



Courtesy of WIDS

Note: Remember that the goal of a JROTC learning experience is not to “test” knowledge, but to “measure or observe” performances—skills needed for life and learning in the 21st century.

Performance Standards

Performance standards support the lesson competency and describe what a learner will do to demonstrate that he/she is competent and ready to move on to a new lesson or learning experience. It could be through a measurable product like a paper, portfolio, artifact, or through observable processes like presentations, speeches or debates.

Performance Standards consist of two parts:

- Conditions
- Criteria

Performance **conditions** describe clearly and completely the circumstances under which the competency is to be performed. If the competency statement is “prepare to teach others,” then the condition statement would point to an assessment of that particular competency.

Review the competency and performance condition in the sample learning plan below:

 What you will learn to do:
(Competency)

Prepare to teach

Linked Core Ability

B. Communicate using verbal, non-verbal, visual, and written techniques

 How will you know when you are succeeding:

You will show that you have learned the target knowledge and skills:

- by preparing a “Teaching Tips” list and writing learning outcomes (competencies and learning objectives) for a lesson of your choice

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Performance criteria illustrate how a task is measured and observed. In other words, it answers the question “how good is good enough?” Students don’t want to guess at what they are expected to demonstrate or do. Performance standard criteria help to set those quantitative or qualitative standards.

Quantitative standards use numbers to measure performance. By using quantitative measurements, you can evaluate how well students performed the task. Indicated below are five aspects of performance for which we can use quantitative standards.

1. **Accuracy**

If an evaluator measures performance with a measuring tool, the standard must state how close to perfection a person must perform the task; for example, “stretching across the baseline 4.5 inches.”

2. **Quantity**

If an evaluator measures performance in units of measure (such as the number of items, yards, pounds, dollars, miles, or rounds), the standard must indicate a quantity to the closest unit; for example, “to within 100 meters.”

3. **Time**

If time is an important factor in performing the task, the standard must state a specified time requirement; for example, “within 9 seconds after hearing the alarm.”

4. **Rate**

Rate is a quantity over a set period of time. For tasks where rates are important, the standard must specify the rate; for example, “20 units per day.”

5. **Completeness**

Under conditions or situations where the performance does not require a specific measurement, the standard must show a general degree of completeness.

Examples of this standard include, “with all steps performed;” “all pieces must be assembled in the correct relationship;” “all key personnel must be notified.”

Qualitative standards do not use numbers to measure performance unless there is some type of rating system. Otherwise, they require the evaluator to make a judgment. An example of a qualitative standard is “adjust the carburetor until the engine runs at its smoothest point.” If you must use a qualitative standard, avoid vague words such as “effective,” “acceptable,” “proper,” “correct,” and “average.”

Remember, develop standard statements that are realistic, attainable, observable, and measurable. Learning objectives guide the instructor and the class through each lesson. Properly written learning objectives emphasize what the instructor should teach and what the class members should learn.

Training Aids

Training aids are materials that help you teach. In fact, any item that enhances the quality of your instruction, and helps you display instructional material, is a training aid. Types of training aids include, computers, software materials, classroom white boards and electronic white boards, written materials, audience response systems, and visual resources, such as posters, videos, splash screens, etc.

In order to make a training aid effective, you must use it properly. That is, use it the way you would use a visual aid when giving a speech. Use a training aid as a part of your lesson; however, your entire lesson cannot rely on the use of training aids.

When you find a training aid that you like, use it while rehearsing your lesson. The following pointers will help you use training aids more effectively.

- ✓ A training aid should adequately support the material in your lesson
- ✓ Do not talk to your training aids. Keep eye contact with your class as much as possible
- ✓ Position your training aids so that all can see them, and if your training aids use sound, make them loud enough for everyone to hear.

Lesson Plans

Developing an effective **lesson plan** is an important part of teaching. Without a well-written lesson plan, it is almost impossible for you to teach in an organized manner. If you are organized, it is easier for you to teach the learning objectives, especially for those difficult tasks. Plan to develop a lesson plan.

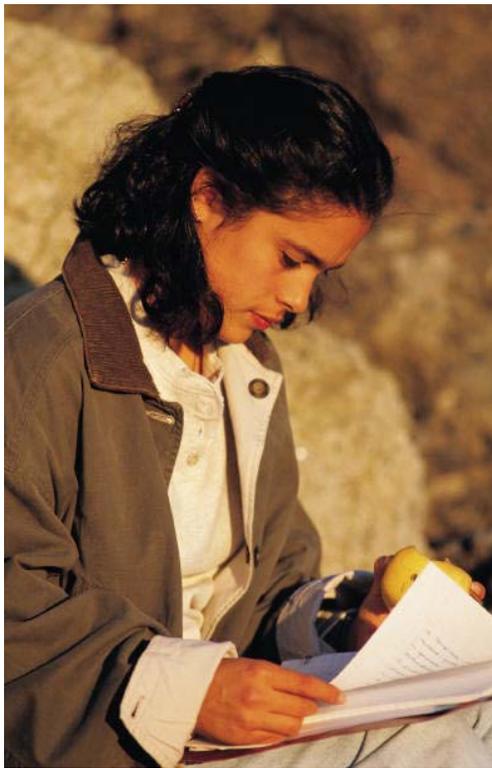
When teaching a class, structure your presentation by following the eight tips outlined below. Be sure you have a logical and orderly method of teaching your lesson. These eight tips will help you capture and maintain the attention of your class, build their respect in your ability as an instructor, and increase your self-confidence.

1. Practice your class presentation while paying attention to time. You may need that time to adequately discuss the main points or for questions and answers.
2. Use an opening that grabs attention.
3. Inform the students of the lesson's learning objectives and of your expectations.
4. Review material from previous lessons (**prerequisites**) that relate to the material you are teaching.
5. Inform or advise the students of any precautions, safety requirements, or special instructions regarding the lesson.
6. Present the material according to your **lesson plan**. Use your training aids effectively. Describe any assignments or practical exercises you plan to give and ensure the class knows how to accomplish them.
7. Use demonstrations and/or other forms of practical exercises, when appropriate, to reinforce your instruction. Give your class examples that will help them understand and complete their assignments or practical exercises.
8. Repeat any material discussed that your class did not fully understand, time permitting. Allow time for questions and answers. You may wish to make a list of **supplemental** material students can review to help them better understand the lesson. Then, conclude or review the main points of your material and the lesson learning objectives.

Know Your Material

It is essential to know your material well so that you can effectively teach it. To do that, you must research and rehearse your subject just like you would a speech. Knowing your material well will make you more confident and self-assured.

Remember to organize your thoughts, prepare and/or review your lesson plan, make changes as required, and rehearse your material. This will bring you added confidence. When rehearsing, practice in front of a mirror, friends, parents, video camera, or with a tape recorder. Always rehearse the material in the manner you plan to present it to the class. By implementing the above methods, or a combination of them, you'll successfully pace your material, ensure that you cover the right information, and that you sufficiently cover areas of special emphasis.



Keep in mind that classes last for only a certain length of time. It is your job to effectively cover the instruction within that period of time. If you know and rehearse your material, you feel comfortable teaching it to others. Additionally, relax while instructing! Doing so will put both you and your class at ease – making them feel more comfortable with you!

Conclusion

When conducting a class, or assisting someone else, proper preparation is essential to doing your best.

Learn the content, create observable and measurable objectives, identify the training aids you will use, develop a lesson plan, and motivate yourself! Your planning will pay off and students will be excited to learn from you!



Lesson Check-up

1. Why is the competency the most important component of a learning experience?
2. Explain the role of learning objectives in your teaching experience.
3. Describe how a performance standard relates to a competency.
4. Write an example of a well-developed competency statement.