E-Teacher Scholarship Program
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E-Teacher Professional Development Workshop
University of Maryland, Baltimore County and
University of Oregon, Summer 2012

Workshops on Effective Lesson Planning for Tunisian Primary and Middle School Teachers
Chaouki M’kaddem, Tunisia

In October 2012, the proposal for a professional teacher-training course on Effective Lesson Planning for Tunisian Primary and Middle School Teachers in Tunisia will be presented to the Regional Educational and Training Center (CREFOC: Centre Régional de L'éducation et de la Formation Continue), Sousse and the American Corner, Tunisia. If approved, CREFOC will host the teacher-training program. The in-service teacher-training program will service primary and middle school teachers from both the public and private school settings. The content of this training program will come mainly from the online course *Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)*—delivered by the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), and sponsored by the U.S. State Department; and the *E-Teacher Professional Development Workshop, Summer 2012*, at UMBC. The workshops will expose participants to the theory and practice of TEYL and enable them to develop adequate ways to design and choose appropriate activities for young learners and design engaging lessons that meet the young learner’s needs. The training program will be delivered face-to-face; it will be interactive, student-centered, aiming at enhancing the participants’ motivation and involvement in an interactive fashion.

**Host:** The Regional Training Center (CREFOC), Sousse and the American Corner, Tunis

**Participants:** 80 Tunisian primary and middle school teachers from public and private sectors

**Program:**
- Part I. Two-day session for Public schoolteachers
- Part II. Two-day session for Private schoolteachers

**Schedule:**
- Part I. Two-day session for Public schoolteachers
  - November 7th, 2012: *The Young Learner, TEYL Methodology, and TEYL activities*
  - November 14th, 2012: *How to design a Lesson Plan to meet the Needs of Young Learners (YLs)*
- Part II. Two-session day for Private school teachers
  - December 15th, 2012: *Morning session: The Young Learner (YL), TEYL Methodology, and TEYL activities*
  - *Afternoon session: How to design a Lesson Plan to meet the Needs of Young Learners (YLs)*

**Goals:** The goals of the professional development course are to:
- Raise attendees’ awareness of the differences between young learners (YLs) and teenager learners;
- Expose trainees to multiple young learner’s learning styles;
- Provide attendees with adequate methods, techniques and activities that can be applied to teaching the young learner (YL); and
- Create an effective lesson plan specific for young learners (YLs).
Problem Identification
In the Tunisian context, some public school teachers do not give importance to lesson planning and resort to improvisation. Some think that they are “experienced” enough to give lessons without pre-set steps to follow; others who have recently graduated believe they are young and assume that they are able to retain the whole lesson parts in mind. Still others do some effort to design a lesson plan but fail in meeting the learners’ needs and their different intelligences. When it comes to the private sector, there is an absence of training because of the shortage in funds. Without an effective lesson plan, teachers may be derailed from the right path to achieve effective learning while delivering their lessons and may result in learners’ frustration and loss of interest in learning English. Moreover, a lesson plan is a required document from authorities to keep track of teachers’ work. Educators all over the world will see this document as an indispensable step toward effective teaching and learning as it serves as a reference either for the teacher or for stakeholders that shows what has been covered so far according to the curriculum. It is also a useful record that helps teachers evaluate their work to improve their input and consequently the learners’ output. Lesson planning is tightly related to all curriculum contents. The different steps of a lesson being conducted are highlighted in the curriculum.

Particularly, teaching English to young learners (7-12 years old) in Tunisia is a relatively new field that has not been given the pertinent importance. Elementary school teachers have not been receiving effective teacher training regarding the challenges of teaching the young learner, or have not been exposed to enough theoretical background to deal with young learners.

Thus, this project proposal has been designed with one clear objective in mind: help the Elementary schoolteacher understand the importance of lesson planning and planning instruction for the Very Young Learners (VYLs) and Young Learners (YLs) – whose characteristics differ greatly from that of teens or adults. TEYL is highly regarded in most parts of the world. The project is mainly linked to TEYL, which addresses workshops and training sessions to EFL teachers. The training will be divided in two parts. The first part will highlight the young learners’ distinctive characteristics and the current methodology specifically selected to cater their diversity. The second part will deal with how to incorporate such activities in one lesson and how to design an effective lesson plan that covers all the previously mentioned points.

Contextual Analysis
All official training sessions and workshops in Tunisia that concern the public sector are organized and funded by the Ministry of Education through the authority of the supervisors who are distributed all over the educational zones of the country. Each educational zone has a center where sessions are held to address Professional Development workshops to public school teachers. These centers are referred to as Regional Centers of Training (CREFOC). The project will be conducted in one CREFOC Sousse and in other educational zones to ensure the multiplying effect. The project will also be conducted in the American corner, Tunis in order to involve private school teachers in the training process. The latter category will require more funding due to the fact that private school teachers lack the economic resources to participate in specialized teacher-training workshops and the like. Funding for this program will be sought from various sources, including the U.S. Embassy in Tunis.

Learner Analysis
The first group of trainees will be comprised of in-service public school teachers who teach 6th-8th grades. These trainees are both experienced teachers and novice ones who normally attend training sessions twice or three times a year. Not only are these training sessions insufficient and ineffective to clearly develop them professionally but they also fail to address the heart of TEYL issues. The second group of is comprised of private school teachers who have not received either professional development workshops or attended conferences. A whole set of training sessions may receive approximately 40 teachers and may be conducted four times a year.
At the beginning of each academic year, the supervisors invite public school teachers to choose at least two or three topics to be trained on. The supervisors in the educational district of Sousse will be willing to add to this project to the list of training topics and facilitate its occurrence. As far as private school teachers are concerned, they will be contacted personally and will be handed invitations to attend the workshop and follow up with email communications. Approximately fifty private school teachers will attend a one-day conference that will cover the seminar in whole.

**Content Analysis**
The content of these workshops will be based on the US Department of State E-Teacher Scholarship Program online TEYL course delivered by the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and the E-Teacher Professional Development Workshop held at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and University of Oregon (UO), Summer 2012. The project proposal will highlight the differences between young learners (7-12 years old) and teens to provide hands-on activities that show what appropriate methods, techniques, and activities can be used in the young learner's classroom. Moreover, it will shed light on the importance of elaborating a lesson plan for each lesson with reference to young learners’ characteristics.

**Delivery Analysis**
The workshops will be delivered in CREFOC (Regional Training Center), Sousse for public school teachers and the one-day conference will be held in the American Corner, Tunis for private school teachers. The approach used in the workshops will be mainly learner-centered, with activities that are interactive, cooperative, experiential, and analytical. It will engage attendees in hands-on activities using the KWL chart and the Think-Pair-Share technique. It will also involve attendees in group/pair work and class discussions. Peer-to-peer and instructor-to-student feedback will be applied when necessary. The presentation will be conducted by means of PowerPoint Presentations and handouts as well.

**Project Plan**
The training sessions will have two phases: the first two-day session phase will be specifically tailored to meets the needs of the public school teachers and the second phase one-two session phase will be specifically catered to service the private school teachers.

**Schedule**
Public school teachers:
- November 7th, 2012: *The Young Learner, TEYL Methodology, and TEYL activities*
- November 14th, 2012: *How to design a Lesson Plan to meet the Needs of Young Learners (YLs)*

Private school teachers:
- December 15th, 2012
  - Morning session: *The Young Learner, TEYL Methodology, and TEYL activities*
  - Afternoon session: *How to design a Lesson Plan to meet the Needs of Young Learners (YLs)*

The workshops will enable attendees to gain a thorough knowledge about the distinctive features of young learners that have to be taken into consideration not only while elaborating lesson procedures but also while conducting activities in the classroom. The workshops will also make the attendees aware of the necessity of preparing their lessons beforehand and effectively.
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<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Learning/Training Activity</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. By the end of the workshop, trainees will be able to clearly differentiate between YLs, VYL, and teens through studying each category features</td>
<td>Self-designed worksheet</td>
<td>Trainees work in groups to make a list of what they already know about the characteristics of each category of learners, compare it with ready-made lists, and then discuss the differences and the commonalities.</td>
<td>Trainees match corresponding adjectives with pictures of a young learner, very young learner and a teen.</td>
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<td>2. By the end of the workshop, trainees will be able to accurately recognize the appropriate methods, techniques and activities that fit each learning style.</td>
<td>Self-designed worksheet</td>
<td>Trainees work in groups to elicit the different types of methods, techniques and activities that they consider suitable and then discuss the ones shown by the trainer.</td>
<td>Trainees match corresponding methods, techniques and activities with each given learning style.</td>
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<td>3. By the end of the workshop, trainees will recognize the appropriate brain breakers necessary to young learners.</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>Trainees work in pairs to choose the appropriate brain breakers and give justifications.</td>
<td>Trainees circle the appropriate pictures and label them.</td>
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<td>4. By the end of the workshop, trainees will be able to accurately identify what should be taken into consideration while elaborating a lesson plan for TEYL with reference to the knowledge gained during the first part of the project.</td>
<td>Self-designed worksheet</td>
<td>Trainees work in groups to make a list of the criteria necessary to an effective lesson plan which will be followed by a discussion.</td>
<td>Trainees identify the appropriate criteria in a list of items.</td>
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<td>5. By the end of the workshop, trainees will be able to accurately recognize the appropriate activities that ensure a smooth sequence in one lesson.</td>
<td>A selected lesson from the text book</td>
<td>Trainees work in groups to design 3 to 4 activities for the lesson.</td>
<td>Trainees justify their choice of activities and show their interrelation.</td>
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<td>6. By the end of the workshop, trainees will be able to effectively elaborate a lesson plan for TEYL.</td>
<td>A selected lesson from the text book</td>
<td>Trainees work in groups to elaborate a thorough lesson plan.</td>
<td>Trainees exchange their plans with other groups for feedback.</td>
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**Rationale for Sequence**

TEYL specialists advocate for the implementation of particular methods, techniques and activities when teaching young learners. The learning environment will aim to cater to specific needs in their particular learning context. In order to match these features, lesson plans should be meticulously created accordingly. This workshop will attempt to communicate to the targeted audience the specificity of TEYL and then what should be put into consideration to design appropriate activities and adequate lesson procedures in order to elaborate an effective lesson planning for young learners’ class.

**Development**

(Training plan based on Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction)
1. **Gain attention**
   - Telling a joke: attendees listen to a joke and then provide comments
   - Humorous dialogue: attendees read the dialogue and then draw a conclusion
   - Sharing viewpoints: each attendee finds a partner and share their viewpoints

2. **Inform learners of activities**
   - Display a set of objectives and let attendees read them aloud in turns

3. **Stimulate recall of prior learning**
   - Trainees work in groups of five
     - to elicit the reasons of lesson planning on flipcharts
     - to classify the reasons into four categories:
       - practical (guide/support for teaching)
       - professional development (self-assessment/improving teaching)
       - public accountability, i.e. proof of competence for authorities, parents
       - confidence boosting
     - to provide suggestions about what should be taken into consideration to elaborate an effective lesson plan

4. **Present the content**
   - The trainer makes use of the information provided by the trainees and supplies the adequate information through a Power Point presentation, oral explanations and handouts.

5. **Guide learning**
   - The trainer engages trainees in hands-on activities and leads a class discussion. She/he elicits information from the trainees through giving assignments and questioning and at the same time provides feedback and information. It is a learner-centered workshop.

6. **Elicit performance (practice)**
   - Trainees are provided with a selected lesson from the textbook and asked to work in groups in order to design a lesson plan that should cater for YLS features.

7. **Provide feedback**
   - The trainer allows trainees to comment and give feedback on each other's responses during and at the end of every phase of the workshop and reinforces them with a constructive feedback.

8. **Assess performance**
   - The trainer observes trainees' group work and responses and asks appropriate questions as well as assigns them to do constructive quizzes after each phase.

9. **Enhance retention and transfer**
   - The trainer assigns trainees to elaborate a lesson plan in which they include the knowledge gained during the previous steps of the workshop. While trainees work on their plan, the trainer provides assistance. After designing the plan, each group puts the plan into action by giving a mini-lesson to their peers following the plan they have elaborated. Each group member conducts one lesson stage.

**Implementation Checklist**

*Items*
- Overhead projector
- Flipcharts
- Photocopies
- White board
- White board pens
- Video camera
- Notepads
- Pens
- Markers
Tasks
- Copying handouts
- Distributing handouts
- Set chairs in buzz groups

Evaluation
There will be two types of evaluation: formative and summative. As for the formative type, the trainer provides attendees with feedback on each response and assignment as well as with opportunities during and at the end of each step to give feedback on their peers’ responses. The trainer may also elicit the trainees’ understanding through questions and observation. Moreover, trainees are invited to do constructive quizzes after each phase of the workshop to check their learning. As far as summative evaluation is concerned, trainees are evaluated through micro-teaching. They are assigned to design a lesson plan in which they have to apply all the knowledge they have already gained during the two workshops and then give a mini-lesson to their peers. Besides, they are requested to fill in an online questionnaire with the help of Survey Monkey. Through this questionnaire, trainees provide the trainer with information about the overall content of the workshops, the delivery, and how far these workshops have changed their teaching practices and philosophy of teaching.