

Foreword

Powerful *Lesson Planning: Every Teacher's Guide to Effective Instruction* is an important book, offering teachers essential guidance in the highly complex task of lesson planning. It provides four models: basic, integrated, differentiated, and problem-based. These models are progressively more complex and nuanced, providing teachers with guidance as they increase their lesson planning proficiency.

As I set forth in *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, planning is one of the four essential domains of professional practice (Danielson, 1996). Further, planning is, of course, highly cerebral, requiring high-level thinking and decision making. And in this age of content standards and the high-stakes assessments of those standards, the teacher's challenge in planning for instruction is more profound than ever.

Textbooks and other instructional materials provide teachers with learning objectives, activities, assessments, and of course, materials needed—all they need for instructional planning. Teachers have the option, if they so choose, to simply follow the directions and “connect the dots.” In many cases, the instructional suggestions offered by the textbooks and ancillary materials are as viable as those that many teachers (particularly novices) could create on their own. However, only teachers know their own students (and therefore how to differentiate instruction to assist them), and content standards are different in different locations. Therefore, if teachers can acquire sophisticated planning skills, they will be able to offer a richer instructional environment for their students than if they relied solely on their text materials.

Powerful Lesson Planning: Every Teacher's Guide to Effective Instruction works equally well for novice teachers and for seasoned professionals. The beginner will likely feel most comfortable with the basic model. With enough practice, this model becomes perfected to the extent that it can be built upon. The models described subsequently (integrated, differentiated, and problem-based) are advanced, requiring skills rarely demonstrated by those just entering the profession. The skills and practice needed to successfully implement these models are highly advanced, reflecting a sophisticated level of planning.

Therefore, by mastering the ideas presented in *Powerful Lesson Planning: Every Teacher's Guide to Effective Instruction*, teachers can advance their practice and demonstrate skills I have identified as “proficient” and

“distinguished” (Danielson, 1996). And if teachers can develop these skills in collaboration with their colleagues, their professional experience will be doubly rewarding.

—Charlotte Danielson
Author and Educational Consultant