

Teaching Tip: Ready... Aim...

If you are willing to make one adjustment to your teaching this year, let it be this: identify the aims of your lessons! Just like a youth group needs a vision, and a business needs goals, a lesson needs aims. An aim expresses the outcome of the lesson for the students. One lesson could have several aims: Biblical content, character development, behaviour and so on. Try beginning the aim “By the end of the lesson, the students...”

Your aims could include:

- “By the end of the lesson, the students will be better able to identify their spiritual gifts.” “By the end of the lesson, the students will have practiced discerning between difficult moral issues.”
- By the end of the lesson, the students will be better equipped to share their Christian story in front of the congregation.”
- “By the end of the announcement, students will have sat quietly for six minutes.”
- “By the end of this activity, Kyle will be sitting with the rest of the group.”

The more specific your aim is, the better you will be able to identify whether you have achieved it.

TASK:

1. Choose a lesson that you will teach soon.
2. Identify the intended aim of that lesson and write it on the lesson plan.
3. Plan and execute the lesson with those aims in mind.
4. At the end of that lesson, review each of your aims and decide whether they were achieved. You will know this through evidence from the students – what they say and do in the group and afterwards. The best monitor of achievement isn't the teacher's feelings of enjoyment during the lesson; it is the students' concrete response to it.
5. Repeat with another lesson. Then, repeat. Repeat again. Set a number of times that you will commit to trying it. This exercise should clarify for you where you are succeeding in your teaching, and where you need new strategies. Keep repeating!