

# Organize Focused Instruction

## Active Learning

## Systematic Assessment

Start with the Five-Week Scope and Sequence

- The five-week calendars provide priorities for language arts and content learning.
- Teachers should identify math priorities based on their instructional program.

Plan each week's development.

The next pages provide planning pages for use for

- self-contained classrooms
- departmentalized classrooms
- specialized programs (art, computer, library, physical education)

- ✓ *Examples are provided to clarify how to use the planners.*
- ✓ *Recommended sequence for the learning day is provided.*

Basically, the important points to remember when planning are:

1. One focus for each subject each week, clarified daily  
*This general focus will apply to any instructional resources from a basal through a novel.*
2. Teacher models/demonstrates ways to apply/develop this focus.
3. Students learn actively.
4. Learning activities incorporate vocabulary development and writing.
5. Students report their learning at the completion of each lesson, so teachers assess every day.
6. Every Thursday, teachers assess student learning so they can complete the week effectively, including providing Friday assistance to students needing help with week's competencies.
7. Homework can be assigned by the week.

You will find more resources for planning, activities, thinking centers,  
and for assessments on the Center's web page:

**<http://teacher.depaul.edu>**

Recommended Schedule for Self-Contained Classroom
<p><b>Focus the Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance graphs (use bar or circle graph to show attendance)</li> <li>Preview Day</li> </ul>
<p><b>Today's Language Arts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary Focus of the Week <i>Could be "word count"—how many examples of the vocabulary pattern of the week have we collected—individually and/or as class</i></li> <li>Modeling Reading/Active Listening Teacher reads aloud and demonstrates the reading strategy/skill emphasized this week-and models strategies of reading used generally—reading with a purpose, adjusting rate to text difficulty, checking understanding, and the other practices of good readers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reading Rotation with Focus--Small Groups.</b></p> <p>Students work in groups in 3 or 4 centers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Vocabulary Center</li> <li>❖ Writing Center (may be incorporated into vocabulary)</li> <li>❖ <i>Independent reading</i></li> <li>❖ <b>Guided reading (teacher-led small group working on strategic reading)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Math Connections</b></p> <p>Focus: Teacher presents math focus of the week.</p> <p>Act: Students work in pairs/groups. (Recommended: math centers.) Teacher works with groups/individuals.</p> <p>Report: Students report math learning.</p>
<p><b>Lunch Plus</b></p> <p>Recommended: goal 4—students present or listen to presentations/video/other goal 10—students could analyze real math data such as lunch favorites</p>
<p><b>Content Learning</b></p> <p>Focus: Teacher clarifies topic, previews activities</p> <p>Act: Students read, analyze, organize learning about the topic</p> <p>Report: Students report what they learned.</p>
<p><b>Writing Connections</b></p> <p>Students write about a topic they learned today and/or a theme Teacher clarifies how to apply the writing emphasis of the week.</p>
<b>Homework Preview</b>

# Self-Contained Classroom Planner

What's Important?	Monday <b><i>Make It Clear.</i></b>	Tuesday <b><i>Take it, use It.</i></b>	Wednesday <b><i>Work on It.</i></b>	Thursday: <b><i>Think It Through.</i></b>	Friday <b><i>Fix and Finish</i></b>
Vocabulary Pattern					
Reading					
Math Focus					
Content Topic					
Writing Emphasis					

# Example Learning Activities

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

What's Important?	Monday <b>Make It Clear.</b>	Tuesday <b>Take it, use It.</b>	Wednesday <b>Work on It.</b>	Thursday: <b>Think It Through.</b>	Friday <b>Fix and Finish</b>
Vocabulary Pattern Proper Nouns	Look for proper nouns in the classroom.	List names of 5 important persons in city. Draw picture of your favorite.	List five important places in the city. Note in a few words what people do in each.	Write a sentence using proper nouns.	Make a list of the kinds of proper nouns there are (people, places....)
<b>Reading</b> Identify/infer traits of character/person Follow 2-step directions	Listen to story. List words that tell about people.	Read more of the story. Draw pictures of what you think the people look like.	Listen to newspaper report. List facts about persons in the report.	Draw pictures of persons in story. Give pictures to another student to guess who they are.	List words that describe character traits.
Math Focus Assessing math operations	Solve addition problems. Explain your steps.	Solve subtraction problems. Explain your steps.	Make up word problems using the math skills you know.	Exchange math problems and solve them.	Write math problem solving guide.
Content Topic GEOGRAPHY How do you read a city and a map?	What does a Chicago map show you about: How people travel Kinds of work Different places in the city	List and describe Chicago places: In the neighborhood Downtown  Locate on map.	Write a song about Chicago places.	Draw map of community as it is. Make key to show important places.	Draw a map of Chicago in the future. For each change, give two reasons to make it.
Writing Emphasis Sentence construction	List kinds of punctuation marks. Note when to use each.	Write sentences about Chicago. Exchange sentences. Check punctuation.	Write sentences describing people. Exchange sentences. Guess who the person described.	Write sentences without punctuation. Give to another student. That student adds the punctuation.	Write sentences about what you learned this week. Include all the different kinds of punctuation you know.



EXAMPLE OF DEPARTMENTAL PLAN SUBJECT: SCIENCE

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>What's Important</b> This week?	<b>Monday Activities</b> <i>Make It Clear.</i>	<b>Tuesday Activities</b> <i>Take It and Use It.</i>	<b>Wednesday Activities</b> <i>Work on It.</i>	<b>Thursday</b> <i>Assess/Clarify</i> <b>Think It Through.</b>	<b>Friday Activities</b> <i>Fix and Finish</i>
<p><i>Topic:</i> How animals adapt to an environment</p> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <p>adaptation species form function behavior camouflage protective coloration</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KW __Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __Homework Review/Connect __Last Week Review/Connect</p> <hr/> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Skim textbook to find facts about animal adaptation.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p> <hr/> <p>Homework</p> <p>Look for and list examples of animal adaptations in your neighborhood.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KW __Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __Homework Review/Connect __Yesterday Review/Connect</p> <hr/> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Make chart showing how animals adapt to an environment through behavior, coloration, shape, size.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p> <hr/> <p>Homework</p> <p>Write a summary of what your chart shows.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KW __Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __Homework Review/Connect __Yesterday Review/Connect</p> <hr/> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Make up and exchange questions about the chapter.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p> <hr/> <p>Homework</p> <p>Make a list of your top ten animal adaptation facts you can use when we take the test on Thursday.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KW __Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __Homework Review/Connect __Yesterday Review/Connect</p> <hr/> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Take chapter quiz. Locate answers for any items you miss in the text. Then correct the answer and tell why your new answer is correct.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p> <hr/> <p>Homework</p> <p>Write a note from an animal about how it has adapted to survive.</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KW __Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __Homework Review/Connect __Yesterday Review/Connect</p> <hr/> <p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Write about chapter for students in a younger grade. Draw pictures for the summary.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p> <hr/> <p>Homework</p> <p>Look for examples of animal adaptation on nature shows on the tv.</p>



**EXAMPLE LIBRARY PLAN**

Weeks 1 - 5 FOCUS: Kinds of Literature Grades: 3-8

NOTE—this series of activities is adaptable to self-contained and departmentalized classrooms.

What's Important?	WEEK 1 <i>Make It Clear.</i>	WEEK 2 <i>Take It and Use It.</i>	WEEK 3 <i>Work on It.</i>	WEEK 3 <i>Think It Through.</i>	WEEK 5 <i>Fix and Finish</i>
<p><b>TOPIC:</b> Reading fiction non-fiction poetry</p> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <p>fiction non-fiction poem preview rate of reading locate information purpose for reading author's choice of words</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KWI __X_Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __Last Week Review/Connect</p> <p>Preview story, set purpose —find out what happens—then read story aloud.</p> <p><b>Student Activities</b> Listen to story. Note events. Make time-line.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __X_Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KWI __X_Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __X_Last Week Review/Connect</p> <p>Preview story, set purpose —find out what happens—then read history aloud.</p> <p><b>Student Activities</b> Listen to history. Note events. Make time-line.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __X_Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KWI __X_Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __X_Last Week Review/Connect</p> <p><b>Student Activities</b> Choose book—fiction or history.  Note events. Make timeline.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __X_Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KWI __X_Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __X_Last Week Review/Connect</p> <p>Preview poem. Set purpose—“see what the poem means”. Read aloud.</p> <p><b>Student Activities</b> Draw pictures of what poem means. Write words from poem that picture shows.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __X_Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p>	<p><b>Focus</b> __KWI __X_Teacher Models __Student Demonstrates __X_Last Week Review/Connect</p> <p>Make chart of different kinds of literature.</p> <p><b>Student Activities</b> Give examples for chart of how to read and why to read. Choose book to read.</p> <p><b>Report</b> __kwL __Learning Log __X_Think, Pair, Share __Student demonstrates</p>



# Self-Contained and Departmentalized--Strategic Teachers Make Learning Clear

## Focus

- ✓ Establish a purpose for learning.
- ✓ Select information and vocabulary that will make the topic meaningful.
- ✓ Survey the class to identify connections with prior learning.
- ✓ Focus learning visually by posting outlines, major questions, and vocabulary

## Make It Clear

- ✓ Demonstrate strategies for learning
  - Check understanding in a variety of ways.
  - Adjust teaching rate to level of topic difficulty.
  - Re-read to find relevant information.

## Help Students to Think More

- ✓ Guide students:
  - to ask questions as they read/listen;
  - to paraphrase;
  - to illustrate what they read/learn.

## Require Students to Think It Through

- ✓ Ask: What are the important ideas, most important information?  
What's it all about—summarize.

## Help Students to Get It Together

- ✓ Organize activities in which students relate what they learned to what they already knew.

## Get It Across

- ✓ Organize projects in which students write and illustrate what they learned.

# Strategic Readers Learn More

## Focus

- ✓ Establish a purpose for reading.
- ✓ Focus on the reading.
- ✓ Skim a text to identify patterns and kinds of content.

## Get it Clear

- ✓ Use structure of text to figure out what's important.
- ✓ Check understanding.
- ✓ Adjust reading rate to level of text difficulty.
- ✓ Re-read to find information, check meaning.
- ✓ Scan a text to locate information.
- ✓ List information related to a topic or question.

## Think More

- ✓ Ask themselves questions as they read.
- ✓ Paraphrase.
- ✓ Make mental pictures as they read.
- ✓ Predict.
- ✓ Read ahead.

## Think It Through

- ✓ Identify purpose and viewpoint of the writer
- ✓ Evaluate information and ideas.
- ✓ Summarize the reading.

## Get It Together

- ✓ Connect ideas and information from different sources.

## Get It Across

- ✓ Write to report the learning.

## Consider Consistent Homework

—a weekly schedule that gives students a consistent nightly assignment plus special assignments.

# Homework Connections (example)

Day	Tonight's Homework	Special Assignment
Monday	Write examples/draw pictures to show what this week's vocabulary terms mean. Then write a sentence using each one.	
Tuesday	Write the math you are learning. Write the steps. Then solve a problem to show how to use them. Then make up a problem for another student. Bring your steps, the problem you solved, and the one you made up to school tomorrow.	
Wednesday	Write the most important facts we are learning in science and social studies. Then make up questions about the facts. Bring your questions and the answers to school Thursday to share with a learning partner.	
Thursday	Get ready for the <b>LEARNING SHOW</b> —show up on Friday with your own explanation of important new learning. Write notes or even write a lesson you will present.	
Friday	Watch television and then <b>choose one</b> of these activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make up a current events quiz based on the news</li><li>• Rewrite a story you watch so it is more interesting</li><li>• Make a chart about what you watched and what you learned from watching it.</li></ul>	

## Organize Thinking Centers.

What goes into a Thinking Center?

**Activity directions students can follow independently.**

### **Materials:**

*Independent Reading Center:* a variety of books and magazines and newspapers

*Vocabulary Center:* dictionary, word cards, word games

*Writing Center:* writing projects, "this week's writing prompt," writing materials

After you complete an activity during your formal instruction, you can put the components of that activity into the Thinking Center .

The Centers can be separate areas, or students can work in pairs in their own areas. If you set up separate areas, the following directions could guide students in any thinking center.

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## *Thinking Center Guide*

1. Choose an activity.
2. Get materials for your work.
3. Sign out and tell what you did.
4. Make sure the Center is neat.

Remember:

- ✓ *Respect students*
- ✓ *Respect the resources*
- ✓ *Respect Yourself*

*Thank You!*

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