

Programme 4

Preparing lessons



Programme 4: Preparing lessons

Key points to cover during this session

Whether you run a full-day training session or just a very short discussion, try to include these key points:

- Lesson planning is very important. Every child in the class is different, so the teacher needs to plan how they will support each child to engage in each lesson.
- Lesson planning for inclusion means having a clear objective for the lesson and adapting activities to help every child make progress towards that objective.
- Lesson planning also involves choosing or making and adapting the right materials for the lesson.
- Lesson planning is more effective if teachers work together. They can help each other solve problems and plan more interesting and inclusive lessons if they share ideas and experiences.

Watch the video and then facilitate your preferred selection from the following activities.

A Basic workshop activities

Activity 4.1 – Preparing lessons collaboratively

🕒 60–90 minutes

Main purpose of this activity

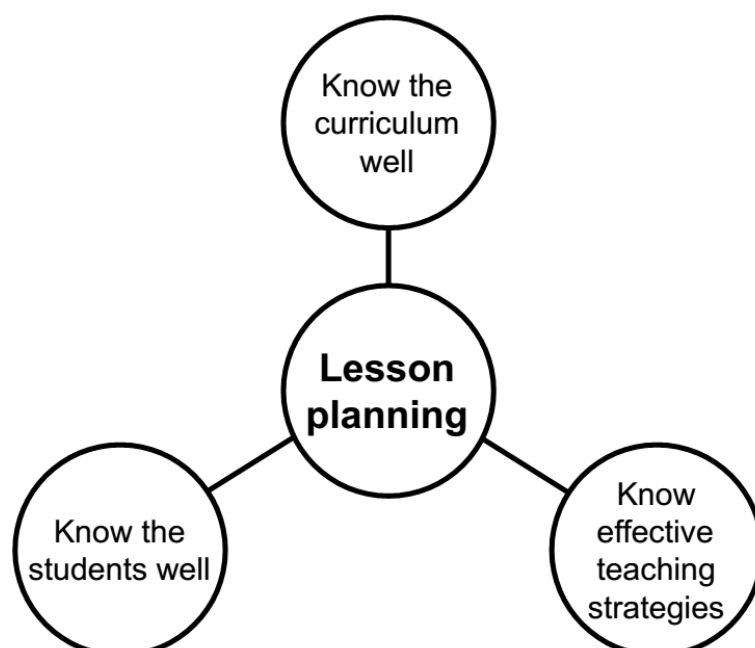
To encourage teachers to think about how they can work together on lesson planning.

Present the following:

Every child learns at a different speed and in a different way. Some children learn better through listening, some learn better if they can read the information, others learn better if they have a chance to touch objects or experiment with actions or work with peers to problem solve. There is no right or wrong way to learn – every human is unique.

For this reason, inclusive teachers need to be well-prepared, so that they can use activities in their lessons to suit the different speeds and ways in which children learn.

When preparing a lesson, you need to be prepared in 3 main areas. You need to know about the relevant parts of the curriculum, you need to have ideas for different learning strategies or activities to use, and you need to know about the children in your class, so that you know which activities will help which children.



We will look in more detail at understanding the needs of children in your class in a later workshop session.

In this session, we will look more generally at how you can prepare better for lessons.

Give participants the following instructions:

- Work in pairs with the person sitting next to you.
- Spend 5–10 minutes telling each other how you prepare for lessons. What do you do and when do you do it? Is anyone else involved?

As a whole group, invite participants to share key points about how they plan for lessons. Ask them to say what they find easiest about lesson planning and what they find most difficult. What helps them the most?

Write their answers on a flipchart or blackboard. Highlight any answers that relate to **teachers helping each other to plan lessons**. This will be the focus of the next activity.

Present the following:

One of the most important tools when you are preparing lessons is your colleagues. Other teachers can be very useful when we are planning lessons, especially when we need to be creative and plan adaptations to help us include lots of different children.

Give participants the following instructions:

- Work in small groups.
- Brainstorm all the different ways in which teachers can help each other to prepare lessons.

After about 15 minutes, give the groups Handout 4a, which is a list of ideas for how teacher can help each other to prepare lessons.

Give participants the following instructions:

- Read the list of ideas.
- Tick the things you already do. Discuss what you do and how.
- You can add to the list any things that you do that are not in the handout.
- Highlight the things you would like to do in your school. Discuss how you could do them. What steps would you need to take, and who else would you need to talk to?

After about 15–20 minutes, ask participants to share their answers as a whole group. Make notes on a flipchart. Try to group their answers under 3 headings:

- Ways in which teachers can help each other to understand the curriculum

- Ways in which teachers can help each other to design different teaching and learning activities and materials
- Ways in which teachers can help each other to understand more about the children in their class.

If any of the categories is lacking answers, encourage participants to think of some ideas.

Next, ask participants to work in small groups again. This time they can choose to form these groups according to the subjects or grades they teach or based on personal friendships.

Give these instructions:

- In your small groups, create a simple plan for how you will work together on lesson planning. For example, you may decide to set up a regular, formal system in your school, or simply agree to help each other on an ad hoc basis.
- Explain what the system will be and what the boundaries or expectations are. For instance, you may want to decide the things you can and cannot help each other with, or the extent of help you can provide. You may agree, for example, not to expect another teacher to write an entire lesson plan for you!
- Think about any time or resource implications for your proposed system of collaborative lesson planning. How could you overcome any problems?

Invite participants to share their plans and discuss whether some of the ideas could become whole-school approaches that all teachers join in.

B

Important theoretical issues to discuss

Activity 4.2 – Teachers are problem-solvers

🕒 90–120 minutes

Main purpose of this activity

To encourage teachers to see themselves as problem-solvers, as agents of change who already have useful skills to help make education more inclusive

To help teachers start to feel empowered to do things differently.

Present the following:

There is not a fixed way of making education inclusive. We have already seen in the previous video programmes that there are lots of different barriers to inclusion – lots of reasons why children may not be included or may not be learning well. It is impossible to train teachers exactly how to solve every problem that will arise during their entire career. For this reason, being a teacher means being a problem-solver. It means finding a solution by using your experience, ideas and connections with other people, rather than relying on receiving the perfect solution through training or from a book.

Schools often struggle to become more inclusive because teachers believe they need to behave in exactly the same way as their own teachers behaved, or they believe they must behave exactly as they were taught at college. But often their experiences at school as a child and their experiences at training college were not inclusive. Becoming an inclusive teacher can therefore mean experimenting with new ideas that are different from what you experienced in education and training. This can feel frightening or difficult. Where do you start? The answer is, you already have some of the skills to be a good innovator and problem solver and you already have some experience of innovating and solving problems. The next activity will help us think about this.

Give participants the following instructions:

- Look at the questions in Handout 4b.
- On your own, spend 10–15 minutes thinking about and making notes on these questions:
 - Think about a situation in your school where you, or another teacher, or a child or group of children, faced a problem.
 - What was the problem? Why was the problem happening? How was it affecting you, or the other teacher, or the child(ren), or other people?

- What steps did **you** take to understand the problem and then try to solve it? What did you do? Who did you talk to or work with?
- What happened? Was the problem solved? Did you at least move in the right direction? What have you done since in relation to this problem or similar problems?

After 10–15 minutes, give these instructions. You may want to put a summary of these instructions on a flipchart or PowerPoint slide, as they are quite detailed:

- Get into pairs.
- Tell your partner your story for 5–10 minutes. The partner needs to take notes while you talk. However, they should not take notes about what happened in the story. Instead they should **list the skills they think you demonstrated**. (For example, in your story, if you say that you encouraged parents to attend a meeting at school so you could find out more about a problem, and as a result you learned lots about the problem, and the parents even volunteered to help you solve the problem, then your partner may make a note that you seem to have ‘consultation skills’ or ‘listening skills’ or ‘motivational skills’.) Your partner should try to list at least 3 skills that they think you have, based on what you told them in the story.
- Swap roles, so the other person tells their story whilst their partner makes notes about the skills demonstrated by the story.
- When both of you have told your stories, read the lists of skills to each other. Do you agree, do you think you possess the skills your partner identified? If so, try to think of another example of how you have used these skills and tell your partner about that. If you don’t think you possess the skills your partner thinks you demonstrated in the story, explain why. Why are you not confident that you have this skill? What do you think you need to get better at? How could you get better? Can your partner give you any advice for how to strengthen this skill?

After about 30 minutes, invite participants to discuss as a whole group. Ask them to call out the skills that were demonstrated in the stories. Write them on the board or flipchart.

If participants do not list many skills, you could add a brainstorm activity here, by asking “what other skills do you think are useful for problem-solving?”

Possible answers to expect from participants

Each group of teachers will tell unique problem-solving stories and therefore will demonstrate that they have a unique set of skills, but they may say things like:

- Listening
- Communication
- Empathy / understanding other people's perspectives
- Consultation
- Motivation / encouraging people
- Creativity / innovative thinking
- Analytical thinking
- Persistence, determination, not giving up
- Team working
- Leadership
- Negotiation
- Research, investigation, curiosity
- Decision-making
- Initiative, confidence
- Being self-critical, reflective, keen to learn

Present the following:

These are the skills that you possess in your school or schools. These are skills needed for problem solving, which is at the heart of inclusive education. You are a skilled group of teachers. Of course, not everyone has all of these skills. Some of you do not feel confident that you have the skills your partner identified – you feel you need to improve some skills. But with these combined skills, as a team in your school, you have a very strong foundation for solving problems and making the school more inclusive.

Give participants the following instructions. Again, you may want to prepare a summary on a flipchart or PowerPoint slide:

- Work in small groups.
- Each person in the group should pick one skill from the list on the board/flipchart that they would like to develop or improve. They should explain why they want to develop or improve this skill in particular.
- As a group, discuss how the person could develop or improve this skill. What could they do? Who could they talk to? Who could help them? Is there someone with this skill who could mentor them? Is there a group of people who could meet to share experiences about how they have developed this skill?

C Digging deeper into specific issues

You may want to focus on some of the specific issues raised in Programme 4. Key issues include:

- Adapting lesson plans
- Making and adapting low-cost teaching and learning materials.

Activity 4.3 – Adapting lesson plans

 **90–120 minutes**

Main purpose of this activity

To encourage teachers to think creatively about how to plan lessons for diverse learners, drawing on their own ideas and experiences as a starting point.

Present the following information to participants. You may want to prepare this information on a flipchart or PowerPoint slide too:

When you are making a lesson plan, you might think about the following:

- **Introduction** – What will you say or do to introduce the lesson and get children interested and attentive? What is the objective for the lesson – what do you want children to be able to do by the end of the lesson and how does this lesson link with previous lessons?
- **Activities** – What activities will you use during the lesson? How will you adapt the activities to suit different children’s interests and needs?
- **Questions** – What questions will you ask? How will you ask the questions and how will children answer them (e.g. verbal questions, or a quiz, or written questions, etc)?
- **Your practice** – How will you handle the lesson? Will you be formal and quiet? Will you make it fun and lively?
- **Student actions** – What actions do you want children to do during the lesson?
- **Assessment** – How will you assess whether children have learned during the lesson?
- **Conclusion** – How will you close the lesson? How will you summarise the learning or create a link with the next lesson you have planned? Will you ask children to do anything after the lesson?

Give participants the following instructions:

- Work in small groups of 3–4 people. You may want to work with colleagues who teach the same or similar subjects or who teach the same or similar grades in your school.
- Choose a lesson that one of you will need to deliver soon.
- Discuss the lesson and then fill in the table in Handout 4c.

After about 30 minutes, give the following instructions:

- Now discuss the questions in Handout 4d and fill in your answers.

Give participants another 30 minutes and then invite them to give feedback to the whole group.

- Ask the groups to share their ideas for how they make a lesson introduction interesting and reassuring. List these ideas on flipchart 1.
- Ask them to share ideas for how they would adapt the lesson activities for children with different disabilities and difficulties. List these on flipchart 2.
- On flipchart 3, compile a list of all their different ideas for ways to ask questions and collect answers from children.
- Ask them to share their ideas for how they would adapt the lesson assessment to help children with different abilities and disabilities to show how much they have remembered and understood. List these ideas on flipchart 4.

If participants are struggling to give answers, you can use the ideas in the box below to prompt them with some examples or to fill in gaps.

You should have 4 flipcharts:

- Ideas for making lesson introductions interesting
- Ideas for adapting lesson activities for children who have difficulty seeing, hearing, understanding and moving
- Ideas for different ways to ask questions and collect answers
- Ideas for adapting assessment activities so that children who have difficulty seeing, hearing, understanding and moving can show you how much they have remembered and understood

Present the following:

These flipcharts can be displayed in your staff room or office. You can use them as a reminder and you can add to them whenever you think about or try out a new idea.

You can also encourage teachers who are not here today to look at them and add their ideas. You could even meet again in a few months to discuss the lists, add to them and share your experiences of trying some of the ideas mentioned.

Possible answers to expect from participants

We cannot predict the answers here as every group will choose a different lesson topic. However, the kind of answers you might expect are listed below. You may decide it is appropriate to offer this list as a handout too.

Ideas for making lesson introductions interesting

- Link to a previous lesson so children see the relevance.
- Bring in an object or show a picture which makes children curious to know more.
- Read a relevant line or section from a famous book, song, poem, film, etc, that the children may already know.
- Link the lesson to something important that is happening locally or internationally, like a famous event or a big news story.

Ideas for planning lesson and assessment activities for children who cannot see well

- Help children to use their other senses (hearing, touch, smell and taste). Encourage movement activities too.
- Use tactile objects where possible, so that children can feel the things you are talking about.
- Use counters or other objects like stones to help children when doing maths or numeracy activities.
- Use large, clear writing on the board and on paper and in the child's exercise books.
- Read aloud what you have written on the board.
- Plan for pair work so that children who see well can help children who cannot see well.
- Allow plenty of time for activities, in case the children who cannot see well take longer to complete a task. Have other tasks ready for children who finish faster.

Ideas for planning lesson and assessment activities for children who cannot hear well

- Plan to use pictures and objects as well as talking.
- Prepare written instructions (on the board, in the child's book or on a handout) as well as giving verbal instructions.
- Use demonstrations and movements, as well as verbal and written explanations.
- Ask questions to find out if everyone has understood.
- Plan to use pair or group work so that children can help each other and so that you get an opportunity to provide one-to-one support to children who need it.
- Think about the timetable so that lessons that require a lot of listening are not scheduled when there is a lot of other noise (e.g. when there is a music lesson next door).

Ideas for planning lesson and assessment activities for children who have difficulty understanding

- Plan activities in small stages. Make it clear when one activity stops and another starts.

- Prepare instructions that are broken down, so that you can give one instruction at a time.
- Use objects and demonstrations as well as verbal explanations.
- Plan for pair or group activities so that children can help each other. This also gives you an opportunity to give some children one-to-one support.
- Prepare more than one way of introducing or explaining something, so that you can quickly switch to a simpler way of explaining if you notice any children are not understanding.
- Plan for activities to be repeated and reinforced. Allow enough time for some children to do a task several times. You can plan other activities for children who understand faster, or they can help their peers.

Ideas for planning lesson and assessment activities for children who have difficulty moving

- Plan lessons so that children do not sit still in a fixed position for the whole lesson – this can be uncomfortable or painful. Allow movement.
- If a lesson activity involves movement or motor skills, such as a science experiment, talk with the child to see how much they can do or how they think the task could be adapted for them. Encourage them to be innovative.
- Use pair and group work so that children can help each other with physical tasks. For instance, you could plan some activities so that all children pair up and one child has to describe the action while the other one performs it.
- If a task involves writing and some children find it difficult, plan for more time or organise the lesson so you can write down what they tell you.

Note, we look at environmental accessibility in other parts of this training, so the main focus in this workshop session needs to be on how to adapt activities rather than how to adapt the classroom or other spaces in school.

Activity 4.4 – Making and adapting low-cost teaching and learning aids

🕒 90–120 minutes

Main purpose of this activity

To encourage teachers to be innovative with making low-cost aids, and to develop a sense of satisfaction in making these materials.

Present the following:

An important part of planning lessons is planning what aids you will use in the lesson. The aids need to be relevant to the lesson and they need to be accessible for the children in the class. Often the school cannot afford to buy teaching and learning aids, but this does not stop an inclusive teacher. As an inclusive teacher, you are innovative and good at solving problems, so you can find or make teaching and learning aids at very low cost or even no cost.

Give the following instructions:

- As a whole group, brainstorm what you think makes a teaching and learning aid 'good'.

Write their answers on a flipchart.

As an alternative, before the brainstorm, you could start by presenting two different aids for the same lesson and asking participants to discuss if one is better than the other, and why. An example you could use is: the teacher could draw 20 circles on the board as a way to help children count, or the teacher could hand out 20 beans to each child to help them practice counting.

Possible answers to expect from participants

A 'good' teaching and learning aid is:

- Interactive – the learner can touch it, investigate and manipulate it.
- Clear to see
- Attractive, maybe colourful or bold
- A good size for children to hold or touch safely
- Made of strong materials that will be durable or easy to repair
- Contains only relevant information or details
- Fun to use
- Relevant to lesson objectives
- Made from local or waste materials
- Could have more than one use.

If the workshop is happening in a school, invite participants to go and collect their favourite teaching and learning aids. They can spend a few minutes explaining to each other why they like them so much and how they use them.

For the next activity, you can either collect waste and environmental materials and have them ready for the next session, or if you have more time, ask the participants to go and collect them during the workshop. You will also need glue and scissors.

The sorts of materials you or the participants could collect include:

- Bottle tops
- Milk cartons
- Old newspapers or magazines

- Straws
- Sandpaper
- Old pieces of string
- Tubes from toilet rolls
- Any old clean food containers
- Clean empty plastic bottles (drink/food bottles not ones that previously contained chemicals)
- Egg shells (clean)
- Pasta (uncooked)
- Rice (uncooked)
- Small sticks and stones
- Leaves and flowers of different shapes and sizes
- Clean feathers.

Give participants the following instructions:

- Select a teaching and learning aid to make.
 - Option one: If participants have done activity 4.3, you may want to ask them to make teaching and learning aids that could be used in the lesson they planned.
 - Option two: Give them some activity cards (Handout 4e) and ask them to make aids that could be used during one of these activities. Get each small group to pick a different activity.
- Use any of the waste and environmental materials we have collected.
- When designing your teaching and learning aid, think about children who cannot see, hear, understand or move very well. Make sure you adapt the aid to ensure that at least one of these groups is able to use the aid easily.

After at least 30 minutes, ask participants to share their teaching and learning aids with the whole group. They should briefly explain their chosen lesson objective and what this aid will help children to learn. They should also explain any specific adaptations they have made, to make it more suitable for children who have difficulty seeing, hearing, understanding or moving.

Allow everyone to give feedback on each teaching and learning aid. Encourage participants to be positive and constructive. Ask them to suggest how each aid could be adapted for learners who experience specific difficulties.

Present the following:

If each teacher creates several aids like these, very quickly the school could develop a resource collection. The aids could be stored in one place and every teacher could borrow them.

Give participants the following instructions:

- In small groups, discuss how you could create a resource collection for your school.

- Where could you put it? How could it be organised and managed?
- Who could help you to make more teaching and learning aids to add to the collection?

Possible answers to expect from participants

Organising and managing a resource collection

- It could be stored in the staff room, library, head teacher's office, etc.
- Teachers could borrow an item, write it in a note book, and then return it when they have finished.
- One teacher could take responsibility for organising, cataloguing and tracking the materials. This role could be rotated so that teachers take it in turns each term or year.
- Responsible older children could also be given the task of helping to organise and manage the collection. This could help them learn useful skills for work.

Who could help you make more teaching and learning aids?

- Children could help make them. It could be part of art lessons, or they could make them during subject lessons as a way to revise a topic. Older children could make aids for use with younger children.
- Parents may be able to help make aids, or at least help collect the waste and environmental materials.
- Local businesses, clubs, etc, may be interested in helping.

Programme 4 transcript

Preparing lessons

Every child learns in a different way and at a different speed.

Inclusive teachers respond flexibly to the different needs of the children in their class.

You can respond better to each child's needs if you have prepared well before each lesson.

What can you do?

Decide what the lesson is going to be about. What is the learning objective linked to the curriculum?

“A teacher should be well prepared and always think ahead about what he or she is going to teach.”

Work out what activities you will do to help the children learn what you want them to learn.

“If they just sit down and write, they don't like to write, they are sleepy. But when we do activities they are happy to learn and they are not sleepy and not bored.”

You will need to decide how to adapt these activities for specific children in your class.

For example, you might need to adapt activities for children who cannot see, hear, or move very well.

You might need to create some simpler activities, or break tasks into smaller steps, for children who have difficulty understanding or remembering.

Before a lesson starts, you need to organise any books, writing materials, and other objects that you will use.

Teaching and learning aids can be things you have collected or made for free, using items that are usually thrown away, like cardboard boxes, or bottle tops.

“It is important to prepare lessons in advance and to make sure the materials needed will be available for the lesson you are going to teach. Preparation takes place well in advance. Preparation often takes place at home so that you can collect the materials you need. It is not always the case that we have the materials we need in school. As we have children with disabilities in class, we need to make sure we prepare materials for the lessons that they can use

and manipulate. As part of your preparation you need to write in your book everything that you are going to do and use the next day.”

You can make teaching and learning aids yourself.

You can also get children involved in making them.

For example, older children could help to make materials for children in lower classes. Or sighted children could help to make tactile materials for their friends who cannot see well.

You can improve your lesson planning, and make more creative teaching and learning aids, if you work with other teachers.

You can share ideas and experiences, borrow each other’s materials, or even set up a resource table or resource room in your school.

“In our school, there are different activities where we plan for the entire year ahead. During the Primary Classes Month, which is in October this year, we plan the lessons together so that we can help each other, we invite each other into our lessons. It is like a family because first we plan together and then we help one another by providing feedback on how we can improve. It is always done with love, in a kind manner, without any aggressive criticism.”

It can be challenging for teachers to find the time or the space to prepare lessons.

Head teachers need to make sure teachers have time allocated in their daily schedule for planning.

If possible, they also need to provide a space in the school where teachers can do their preparations.

Handout 4a

How can teachers help each other to prepare lessons?

Idea	Already do this	Would like to do this
Organise regular lesson planning sessions for all teachers in a particular grade or subject.		
Organise small workshops to help each other understand the curriculum better or learn more about a particular subject.		
Ad hoc help – teachers ask each other for help with specific lessons or activities whenever they have problems.		
Create files of lesson plans and materials that colleagues can browse or borrow and adapt.		
Observe (or even video) each other's lessons, give constructive feedback and share ideas for improving how you plan certain activities or adapt activities for certain children.		
Develop a teacher buddy system so that pairs of teachers help each other. Or this could be a mentoring system, so that an experienced teacher helps a new teacher.		
Develop a system so that, towards the end of the year, teachers in higher grades meet with teachers in lower grades to learn about the children who will soon move to the higher classes. Find out about how their current teachers plan for the needs of certain children and how they adapt activities for these children.		

Handout 4b

On your own, think about and make notes on your answers to the following questions:

- Think about a situation in your school where you, or another teacher, or a child or group of children, faced a problem.
- What was the problem? Why was the problem happening? How was it affecting you, or the other teacher, or the child(ren), or other people?
- What steps did **you** take to understand the problem and then try to solve it? What did you do? Who did you talk to or work with?
- What happened? Was the problem solved? Did you at least move in the right direction? What have you done since in relation to this problem or similar problems?

Handout 4c

Lesson planning

Lesson title	
Lesson objective	
Introduction – what will you say and do?	
Activities	
Questions	
Teacher’s practice	
Student actions	
Assessing learning	
Conclusion – closing the lesson	

Handout 4d

Discuss the following questions and make notes on your answers:

Lesson introduction

- How will you ensure that your introduction gets everyone's attention and makes the lesson sound interesting for everyone in the class?
- What could you say to encourage or reassure learners who may struggle with this subject or feel worried that they will not understand the lesson?

Lesson activities

- How will you adapt the activities for children who have difficulty seeing?
- How will you adapt the activities for children who do not hear very well?
- How will you adapt the activities for children who have trouble understanding (maybe because they have an intellectual disability or speak a different mother tongue language)?
- Do you need to make any adaptations to the activities for children who cannot move easily? This includes children who may find it difficult to hold a pen or write. If so, what will you do?

Questions

- Think of 3 different ways you could ask questions and get answers from the children.

Assessing learning

- How could you adapt your ideas for assessment so that they help the following children to show you what they have remembered and understood?
- Children who cannot hear very well.
- Children who cannot see very well.
- Children who have difficulty understanding.
- Children who have difficulty moving.

Handout 4e

Making teaching and learning materials - activity cards

Cut out these cards and give each small group a different card.

<p>Maths</p> <p>Make a teaching aid that will clearly demonstrate the concept of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) A whole(ii) Half(iii) Quarter(iv) Third	<p>Nature</p> <p>Make an interactive wall or desktop display to teach the seasons of the year and the weather changes</p>
<p>Life-skills</p> <p>Make or provide a teaching aid to demonstrate the importance of hand-washing</p>	<p>Geography</p> <p>Think of an important landmark in your village or town. Make a teaching aid that will clearly describe it, and its location.</p>
<p>Life-skills</p> <p>Your lesson objective is to teach about six easily obtainable nutritious foods. Make a teaching aid to enhance the lesson.</p>	<p>Language</p> <p>Make an effective teaching aid to help improve spelling and word building.</p>