

UNIT DESIGN

When Planning Minilessons Consider. . .

Architecture of Minilesson (<i>From the Work of Teachers College Reading and Writing Project</i>)	What I Might Say	Questions I Ask Myself
<p>CONNECT Students learn why today’s instruction is important to them as writers and how the lesson relates to their prior work. The teaching point is stated.</p>	<p>“Writers, we’ve been working on. . .” “Today I want to teach you. . . because writers. . .”</p>	<p>Is my teaching point explicit? Am I teaching one concept? Does my teaching point follow a string of coherent lessons? Is the teaching point clear by the end of the connection?</p>
<p>TEACH The teacher shows the students how writers go about doing whatever is being taught. We may teach by demonstrating (modeling <i>how</i> and when writers use this strategy or concept in their work rather than simply telling <i>what</i> writers do); explaining and showing an example; involving the class in a shared inquiry; or taking them through guided practice.</p>	<p>“Watch me as I show you how I. . .” “Notice what I do as a writer. . .” “Let me show you how writers. . .”</p>	<p>Do I clearly set up what the students should pay attention to and why? Do I model or show the students how writers use the teaching point as a writing strategy? Does my modeling match the teaching point?</p>
<p>ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT After we teach something, students are given a chance to quickly practice what has just been taught or to share noticings about the demonstration in order to understand a kind of thinking about writing that they can try in their own work.</p>	<p>“Let’s try this. . .” “Now it’s your turn to try.” “You and your partner are going to. . .”</p>	<p>Do students understand what to practice? Is what I’m asking them to practice linked to the teaching point and to the modeling?</p>
<p>LINK The teacher reiterates what has just been taught, adding it to student’s growing repertoire. Students are reminded that today’s lesson pertains not only to today, but to every day and to strengthen their writing for the specific unit inquiry.</p>	<p>“Writers, when you. . . remember to . . .” “Today then, and whenever you. . . remember that writers. . .” “Not just for today, but whenever you. . .”</p>	<p>Do I reiterate the teaching point? Do I share that the lesson adds to the students’ growing repertoire of writing strategies?</p>