

## CHAPTER THREE

### PLANNING A LEARNER-CENTRED LESSON

Learner-centred teachers are good lesson planners. They begin with the end in mind. They determine what they want their students to learn and how they will assess them. They create interesting and engaging units and lessons focused on measurable and meaningful learning objectives. They assess student progress throughout a unit. The art of lesson planning is just that – a creative process that can take many forms from discovery learning, to guided lessons and other approaches. This chapter focuses on some lesson planning strategies that have proven effective across different subject areas.

#### **\*\*Technique #6      High Five Lessons**

High Five Lessons are highly effective directed learning lessons. They include five stages. First, effective teachers begin lessons by activating student interest and knowledge, posing guiding questions, and establishing learning goals. Second, the teacher models and teaches the skills and ideas. Third, the teacher guides student practice. Fourth, once most students have mastered the skill, students work independently on an assignment, while the teacher assists students who still need help. And lastly, the teacher ends the lesson by asking students to think about what they learned and to conduct quick assessments of student understanding. *High Five Lessons* match closely with the five stages of developing a lesson in Tanzania. These stages are Introduction, Development of New Knowledge, Reinforcement, Reflection, and Consolidation.

#### **Technique # 7      Discovery Lessons**

Discovery lessons are designed to encourage students to work with their peers to answer questions or solve problems **before** the teacher models or teaches a skill or concept. In this approach the teacher poses problems or questions for students to discuss, analyze or solve in order to encourage students to think for themselves and draw their own conclusions. When students finish their work they take turns sharing the information with the class. During this sharing time, the teacher uses the student responses to teach the lesson. For example, a math teacher might pose a challenging problem and ask groups of students to solve it. Then the students share out their solutions and the teacher uses these examples to teach the whole class how to solve the problem

#### **\*\*Technique #8      Begin with the End in Mind**

Highly effective educators begin lesson planning with the end in mind. In other words, they plan their lessons by starting with what they want their students to learn and how they will assess them. First they

identify the student learning objectives. Then, they develop the assessments to determine student mastery of the learning objectives. Lastly, they plan the lessons and activities that will guide students to successful learning outcomes. For example, a history teacher wants students to explain the important events in the Tanzanian independence movement. The teacher would start by creating the test for the unit based on this learning objective. Then the teacher would plan the daily lessons. Finally, the teacher would assess the students during and at the end of the unit.

### **\*\*Technique #9      Post Student Learning Goals**

When planning a unit of study, it is important to create meaningful and measureable student learning goals and to post them in the classroom. Students are more successful when teachers clearly and regularly articulate what they expect from their students and why it is important for students to learn the material. Posting learning goals on the blackboard and articulating them in student-friendly language, helps students focus their thinking and learning. Highly effective learning goals are also measureable and meaningful. For instance, a learning goal for Form 1 English during a unit on verb tenses might be to “use the simple present tense correctly at least 90% of the time in your essays” or “identify correct and incorrect examples of irregular past tense verbs on quizzes and exams at least 75% of the time.” These goals could increase to 100% of the time by the end of the year as students master the verb tenses over time.