A Guide for Effective Learning Targets

Effective learning targets guide instruction and learning for a single classroom lesson (approximately one hour). When designed well, learning targets
- focus on appropriate content/grade level standards,
- usestudent friendly language, and
- include measurable objectives that anchor instructional activities/formative assessment.

The learning targets below have been annotated to demonstrate varying degrees of effectiveness and to provide additional guidance to teachers as they develop and refine learning targets for their students.

Ineffective:
- I can explore volume.
- I can write a newspaper article.
- I can talk about important parts of the story.
- I can straighten the chairs in our music room.
- I can - weather conditions, cloud formation

The first two targets are too vast. Exploring volume has many components; the target needs to focus on one particular aspect of volume. Writing a newspaper article is something that will take more than a one-hour class period to do. Be careful when writing targets that say students can "talk about" or "discuss" something. How will you assess that for each child in the lesson?All targets must be connected to the standards. Activities and logistical work should not be written as targets. The last target is not clear and does not communicate what the student needs to be able to do with these concepts.

Somewhat Effective:
- I can identify characters, setting, and plot.
- I can explain how Earth's materials are classified by properties and used.
- I can listen and make judgments based on what is read.
- I can find the value of money.

The first two targets need to be broken down to one component. Focus on character for today's lesson, then move on to the other two concepts. The same applies to the science target – focus on classification one day and uses the next. The third target would be good if it didn't include "listen" – how will you assess that? The last target needs to be more specific – What kind of money (coins, bills, both)? Will you find the value by counting manipulatives or by adding the number values?

Effective:
- I can find the perimeter of a polygon.
- I can describe how early pioneers met the challenges of frontier life.
- I can add details to a feature article.
- I can classify rocks according to their properties.
- I can identify the main idea of a passage.
- I can identify and use prepositions.
- I can compare 3D shapes by using properties.
- I can draw or write about the life cycles of various animals.
- I can describe the purpose of the U.S. Government.

These targets clearly focus on skills from appropriate standards. Each target also provides a measurable objective written in student friendly language that will drive instruction and assessment during the lesson.

Learning Targets

Standard:
Write narratives and other creative texts in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.

"Unwrapping" a Standard:
- Underline key concepts (important nouns)
- Circle skills (verbs)
- Identify the particular context or topic (selected learning activities)
- Represent the "unwrapped" concepts and skills in a bulleted list

"Unwrapped" Concepts:

- Write narratives

- Write creative texts

- Recount well-elaborated sequence of events

- Include details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings

- Use temporal words to signal order

- Provide a sense of closure

Learning Targets:
- ☐ From Standard Course of Study (CCSS, GLEC, or National)
- ☐ Written in Student-Friendly Language
- ☐ Begins with "I can"
- ☐ Measureable

-After reading today's short story and analyzing the sequence of events, I can write my own narrative that recounts a detailed story and the events that took place.

- I can add details to my story that describe actions, thoughts and feelings.

- I can add transition words to move my story along such as before, first, next, sometimes and last.

- I can determine which elements of closure (reflection, identifying character changes, revealing the outcome) are best suited for my story.

Note: what would need to be provided to students for these targets to be measurable?