

Lesson Plans

for the Literacy Lab

A Class Calendar

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OBJECTIVE:

Computer component: The student will be able to type capital letters and words into a spreadsheet or table.

Literacy component: The student will correctly spell and capitalize the days of the week and months of the year.

LEVELS:

This activity was designed for beginner level students but it could be adapted to a variety of levels, both in computer and in literacy skills.

MATERIALS:

Each student will need a computer with a spreadsheet program. Claris Works or Microsoft Works are two common programs with spreadsheets.

Instead of a spreadsheet program, you could use the table feature in a word processing program such as Microsoft Word or WordPerfect, both of which have excellent table features.

Each student will need to be given a file containing a blank table or spreadsheet, setup in the dimensions of one month in a calendar.

If you are not going to type in the numbers yourself you will also need to provide each student with a list of the first day of each month (ea. January 1 falls on a Tuesday).

PREPARATION:

This lesson should follow up a classroom discussion on capitalization and spelling for the days of the week and the months of the year. The students should also have had some previous typing experience on the computer.

DESCRIPTION OF TASK:

At the beginning of the class each student should be assigned a month. Under the teacher's direction, the class would run the program being used and open the file containing the blank month. If the class is very inexperienced using computers, the teacher may decide to do this ahead of time.

Students will then enter the name of their month and the names of the days of the week across the top row of the spreadsheet or table. I would suggest that everyone does the first few entries together and then the rest could be completed independently. The computer is an ideal tool to teach capitalization because the capitalization mistakes are noticeable and may be easily corrected.

If the numbers have not been entered into the calendar, the students would enter them next.

Once the students have finished their month they would print a copy. All of the months from each of the students could be collected, photocopied, bound and handed out to students to use as a class calendar.

ADAPTATIONS:

This lesson plan can easily be extended to include teaching the capitalization of holidays and names of people. Each student could be given a list of holidays and students' birthdays for each month.

The lesson could be adapted to a multilevel class by involving higher level students in writing about holidays, weather or other events that take place during the year. This writing could be included on the calendar page opposite each of the months.

Having students write about holidays from various cultures and religions can also encourage understanding and tolerance in a multicultural class. Information about holidays from around the world can be found on the World Wide Web at: <http://www.calendarzone.com/> and <http://www.smiley.cy.net/bdecie/index.html>