

Lap- - A Tool For Individualizing Instruction*

Introduction

What does LAP mean? LAP is an acronym, which means Learning Activity Packet. This packet is a self – instructional unit designed to aid students in learning a single basic concept. The concept to be learned is set up in a step-by-step pattern.

A LAP is designed for a specific ability level. It provides flexibility in the learning activities which students may choose in order to attain stated objectives.

Students proceed at their own pace. A LAP is a tool for individualizing instruction.

Component Parts Of A Learning Activity Packet

Rationale:

The rationale should describe what the unit is about and why it is important for the student to complete it.

A term such as purpose or introduction may be used to identify the rationale.

Objectives:

Goals stated in terms of measurable performance are referred to as behavioral objectives. Behavioral objectives must be started for each learning activity so that student performance may be evaluated, based on these objectives, by the teacher, the student, or a third party.

Pretest:

A pretest is a diagnostic instrument designed to determine the learner's need for the activities in the packet. Each test item is based on the objectives and content of the LAP.

Learning Activities:

The LAP contains a variety of learning activities and materials - - some required, some optional - - that lead to achieving stated objectives.

*Courtesy of Business and Office Education, Division of Occupational Education, State Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1972-73

Examples of learning activities include reading from suggested reference, viewing a film or filmstrip, operating equipment, taking a field trip, conducting a personal interview, etc.

Specific instructions for each learning activity are provided for the student.

Self – Test:

Students are provided a self – test by which they may evaluate their performance. This test is based on stated objectives and is different from the pretest and any of the activities in the packet. It is taken and scored by the student. The results are used by the student to determine if any of the learning activities need to be repeated and/or if additional ones are needed.

Posttest:

The posttest is designed to measure student performance in terms of stated objectives. It may be a written test, a performance test, or a combination. The posttest may be scored by the teacher, another student, and/or a third party.

Teacher Evaluation Check List:

The teacher evaluation check list is a device for recording student performance. Items on the list are based directly on the stated objectives.

Suggested Uses Of Laps

Since each student learns at a different rate and in a different way, LAPs offer an effective means of permitting students to plan and self-pace their learning.

LAPs may be used in a variety of ways. The following is a suggested list:

1. To encourage students involved in the individualized instruction process.
2. To make-up classwork missed due to absence from, school (applicable only when group instruction has been used).
3. To provide remedial experiences where group instruction has been used.
4. To provide individual projects for advanced students.
5. To provide materials for independent study (For example: A student who cannot participate in regular class activities for various reasons).
6. To provide an in-depth experience in a selected skill area.

Cautions:

A LAP may not be appropriate for all students in all situations within a given course. The following are some of the conditions under which a LAP should not be used:

1. When students do not understand what a LAP is or how to use it.
2. When all students are to use the same LAP and complete each learning activity simultaneously.
3. When the content of a LAP is not appropriate for the ability level of a student.
4. When the teacher frees himself/herself from teaching responsibilities (used as “busy” work).
5. When the purpose is used as a continuous reading activity.

Advantages Of Using Laps

LAPs provide certain advantages to teachers and students. Some of these are:

1. Provide diversified learning activities within a class.
2. Provide the time during class for teachers to help students who need additional assistance.
3. Permit students to assist in collecting and organizing resource materials, which may be used in LAPs.
4. Provide opportunity for student involvement in the selection of student learning experiences.

Caution:

It takes time to determine appropriate approaches for various student ability levels; to select content; to organize materials; to secure adequate resources; to field test, revise, and refine LAPs, and to acclimate to this method of instruction.

Remember - - A well-planned learning packet permits the student to learn at his/her own pace; to select resource materials and activities, and to evaluate personal progress toward stated objectives.