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ABSTRACT
                An approach is presented that allows teachers to
examine their teaching strategies and gradually redesign them if
necessary. Objectives are defined and/or clarified as a result of the
ongoing teacher-student activities. The model consists of four major
parts: (1) preliminary identification of overall classroom goals, (2)
identification of current classroom activities, (3) identification of
objectives through the activities, and (4) questions to ask for
examining the appropriateness and completeness of the classroom
course structure. To achieve maximum benefit, the process used in
implementing the model necessitates a continual monitoring or
adherence to a daily routine of record-keeping and perhaps a weekly
summarization. (Author/MLF)

FROM WHERE YOU ARE . . .

TO WHERE YOU WANT TO BE!

An alternate approach for
identifying classroom objectives

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JANUARY 1977

FROM WHERE YOU ARE . . .

TO WHERE YOU WANT TO BE!

by

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INTRODUCTION

Much to the consternation of some teachers and principals, the demand for written classroom objectives has not faded from the education scene. Instead, the current emphasis on educational needs assessment has highlighted objective writing once again. While almost all educators do perceive a value, albeit undefined, for teaching within the framework of objectives, the majority of these same people will discuss the futility of writing hundreds of objectives that eventually end up on the shelves of the teachers' lounge -- never to be examined until the next North Central evaluation comes around.

Why does this apparent contradiction between the value and the usage of classroom objectives occur? Perhaps one major reason has been the approach normally taken within a school district toward the actual process of writing objectives. The usual model has been a hierarchical model as illustrated below:
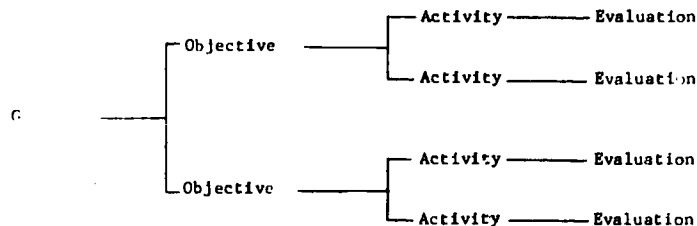

Figure 1: Hierarchical Classroom Model

Following this model, the normal procedure involved teacher work-
shops or extended contract days during which teachers would identify
broad goals (or accept predetermined goals) and then attempt to write
behavioral objectives a' la Mager. Some teachers were able to do
this quite well and even went on to complete the model by writing
activities and evaluation procedures to accompany each objective.
These teachers most likely gained both personally and professionally
by the whole process. But for the majority, it was a time consuming
and frustrating task that usually ended at the *objective* stage with
a resolve never to take another look *at those (expletive) objectives
again!*

The major difficulty with the model and the probable reason for
the usual frustration and anger of teachers stems from the fact that
administrators are usually placed in the position of asking teachers
to *write objectives* or *to give a direction* to their teaching. The
message that the teachers receive becomes one of dissatisfaction. It
is as if the administrator is asking for a complete revamping of
habits and performances that have given a certain amount of satisfac-
tion and success over the length of a teaching career.

A less threatening approach would be one that would allow teach-
ers to examine teaching strategies and gradually redesign them if
necessary. The approach to be presented here is certainly less
threatening, less frustrating and, hopefully, perceived to be more
useful.

Essentially, all teachers teach with some sort of targets or objectives in mind, but for the most part, these objectives have not been written and can be identified only through a close examination of classroom activities. Assuming this is at least partially true, it is logical to begin where the teachers *are* (activities, methods, strategies . . .) rather than where they *should be* (objectives). While this approach loses purity in the theoretical sense, it is far more practical.

The model described on the following pages takes the practical approach. Objectives are defined and/or clarified as a result of the on-going teacher-student activities. One distinct advantage is that this gives a *true* picture, rather than an *ideal* picture, of the objectives as they exist in the classroom.

In presenting the model, the one major assumption is that there exists some reason for teachers taking a close look at their classroom strategies and objectives. This reason may be any or all of the following:

1. Administrators ask teachers to write objectives.

2. Teachers want to improve instruction.

3. Teachers want to be able to better communicate their classroom program to others.

4. Teachers want to build an accountable position for themselves.

The model consists of four major parts: (1) preliminary identification of overall classroom goals; (2) identification of current classroom activities; (3) identification of objectives through the activities; and (4) questions to ask for examining the appropriateness and completeness of the classroom course structure. To achieve maximum benefit, the process used in implementing the model necessitates a continual monitoring or adherence to a daily routine of record-keeping and perhaps a weekly summarization. While this sounds tedious, chances are good that each teacher is already doing much of this in the planning of daily lessons.

Part 1:   IDENTIFICATION OF GLOBAL COURSE GOALS

The first step in the process does not differ from the model
in Figure 1.   In fact the entire model to be found on the following
pages does not differ substantially from the one found in Figure 1.
What makes it different is the technique for implementation.

To begin with, teachers are asked to identify 3-7 goals for
each course that they teach.   These goals should be simply stated,
brief and broad enough in scope to cover at least an entire semester.
Ideally this should be done at the beginning of the school year and
then periodically examined for appropriateness using questions de-
scribed later.   Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between a course
and the goals associated with the course.   A worksheet designed to
assist teachers in identifying these global course goals is shown in
Appendix A.

```
              Global
              Course
              Goals


    C             ┌─  Goal 1

    O             │

    U     ────────┤   Goal 2

    R             │

    S             │

    E             └─  Goal 3
```
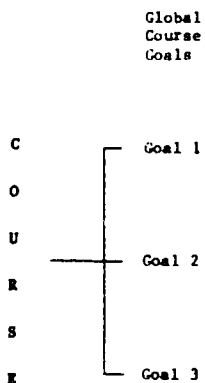
Figure 2:   Identification of Global Course Goals - - Beginning
            the Revised Hierarchical Model

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Part II: IDENTIFICATION OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES, RESOURCES, EXPECTED OUTCOMES, AND INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Rather than proceed in the normal hierarchical pattern from goals to objectives, a jump is made to the classroom activities. Furthermore, there is no attempt to tie the goals to the activities at this time.

Classroom Activities

The purpose of this particular step is to generate a list of activities performed by the instructor and/or the students. It is next to impossible to sit down and write activities for all classes for the entire year. Therefore, it is suggested that this be done on a daily basis for only one or two classes at a time.
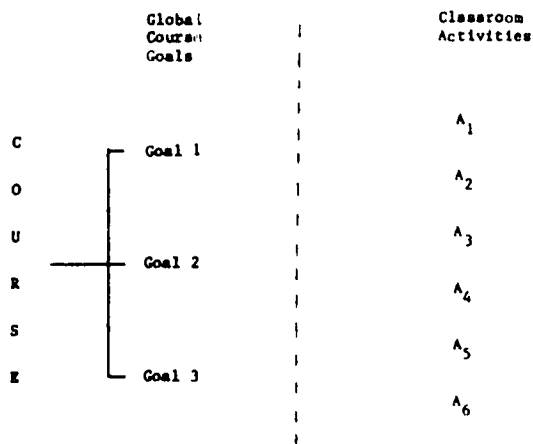
Figure 3: Identification of Classroom Activities

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For the selected course or courses, <u>each</u> activity that is planned for each day should be listed. Elaborate sentences or reasons for the activities need not be written. A short phrase is usually descriptive enough. Doing this as a daily routine should not be a burden since it is proba! 'y already being done in lesson planning. It is important, however, that these be recorded on a sheet similar to the one illustrated in Appendix B.

Classroom Resources

Again on a daily basis, teachers should write down the special resources that are needed to accomplish the activities listed in the previous section. This will serve as a reminder for the specific instructional day and in future years if the activity is to be repeated. Do not include items that are normally available in the classroom.
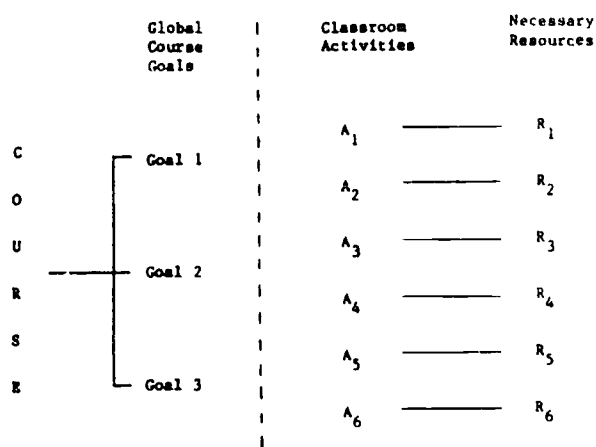
Figure 4: Necessary Classroom Resources

Expected Outcomes

The identification of expected outcomes often seems to be a complex and difficult task. However, it is not complex if approached at the activity level. It is assumed that each teacher has a reason for each planned classroom activity. Even if the purpose be nothing more than to keep the children quiet, it is still a purpose. A teacher need only ask, *Why am I doing this activity?* and the answer should be obvious. If no answer comes to mind, then perhaps the activity should not be done at all. The expected outcome of each activity should be written on the same sheet as the activities and the resources (see Appendix B).

Global Course Goals		Classroom Activities	Necessary Resources	Expected Outcomes
		A_1 ————	R_1 ————	EO_1
C	Goal 1	A_2 ————	R_2 ————	EO_2
O		A_3 ————	R_3 ————	EO_3
U	Goal 2	A_4 ————	R_4 ————	EO_4
R		A_5 ————	R_5 ————	EO_5
S				
E	Goal 3	A_6 ————	R_6 ————	EO_6

Figure 5: Expected Outcomes of Classroom Activities

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Indicators of Success

This step completes the daily record kept on the form shown in Appendix B. The teachers should write down the evidence to be used to indicate whether the expected outcomes were re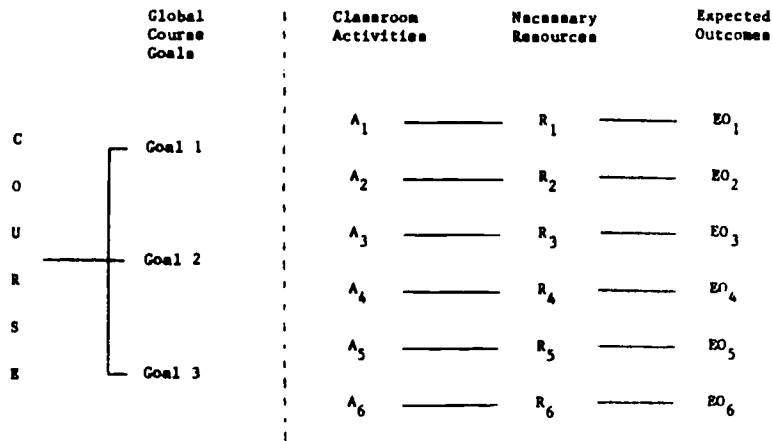ached or at least approached. Any evidence is acceptable evidence. Granted that some evaluation techniques or methods are stronger than others, anything that gives the teacher an indication is worthy of being called supportive evidence. It may be the teacher's observation of children's smiles or frowns, a paper-and-pencil test, an attitude survey, completed projects, or any number of other indicators.

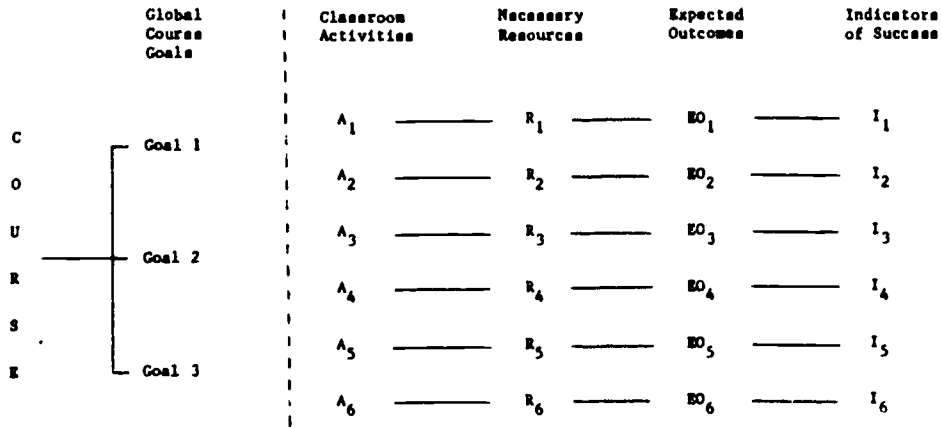| Global Course Goals		Classroom Activities	Necessary Resources	Expected Outcomes	Indicators of Success
C	Goal 1	A_1 ————	R_1 ————	EO_1 ————	I_1
O		A_2 ————	R_2 ————	EO_2 ————	I_2
U	Goal 2	A_3 ————	R_3 ————	EO_3 ————	I_3
R		A_4 ————	R_4 ————	EO_4 ————	I_4
S		A_5 ————	R_5 ————	EO_5 ————	I_5
E	Goal 3	A_6 ————	R_6 ————	EO_6 ————	I_6

Figure 6: Indicators of Success of Classroom Activities

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Part III: COMPLETING THE HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE

Determining Course Objectives From Activity Clusters

While the first two parts consisted mainly of classroom *picture-taking* procedures, Parts III and IV concentrate essentially on analyzing the completeness and appropriateness of the identified activities. The overall intent is to provide a structure upon which to further build a strong instructional program. In order to bridge the gap between the global goals and the classroom activities, an attempt should be made to determine the activities that naturally cluster toward common targets or objectives.

In most instances, two or more activities can be logically grouped. Teachers should periodically examine these groupings and try to write down the common target or objective. These statements should be written much the same as the global goals - - simple, brief, and broad enough in scope to cover the cluster of related activities.

This particular task should not be too difficult, since the process of identifying activities should have already clarified the overall purposes.

Global Course Goals	Course Objectives	Classroom Activities	Necessary Resources	Expected Outcomes	Indicators of Success

$$C \quad O \quad U \quad R \quad S \quad E$$

- Goal 1
- Goal 2
- Goal 3

O_1

$A_1 \longrightarrow R_1 \longrightarrow EO_1 \longrightarrow I_1$

$A_2 \longrightarrow R_2 \longrightarrow EO_2 \longrightarrow I_2$

$A_3 \longrightarrow R_3 \longrightarrow EO_3 \longrightarrow I_3$

$O_2 \longrightarrow A_4 \longrightarrow R_4 \longrightarrow EO_4 \longrightarrow I_4$

O_3

$A_5 \longrightarrow R_5 \longrightarrow EO_5 \longrightarrow I_5$

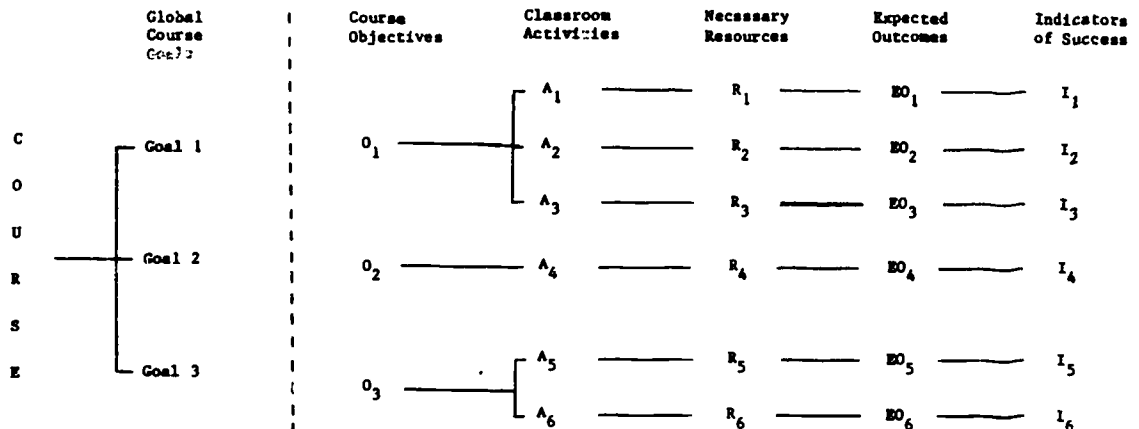$A_6 \longrightarrow R_6 \longrightarrow EO_6 \longrightarrow I_6$

Figure 7: Clustering Activities to Determine Objectives

The model of Figure 7 shows the first three activities directed toward Objective 1 which would have been written as a result of the activities. The fourth activity determines Objective 2 and the last two activities identify Objective 3.

Tying Course Objectives to Global Goals

As each objective is formulated, the teacher should try to classify it into one of the Global Course Goals. Once classified, the entire hierarchical structure from goals to activities will be basically complete. Figure 8 illustrates a partially completed hierarchical structure.
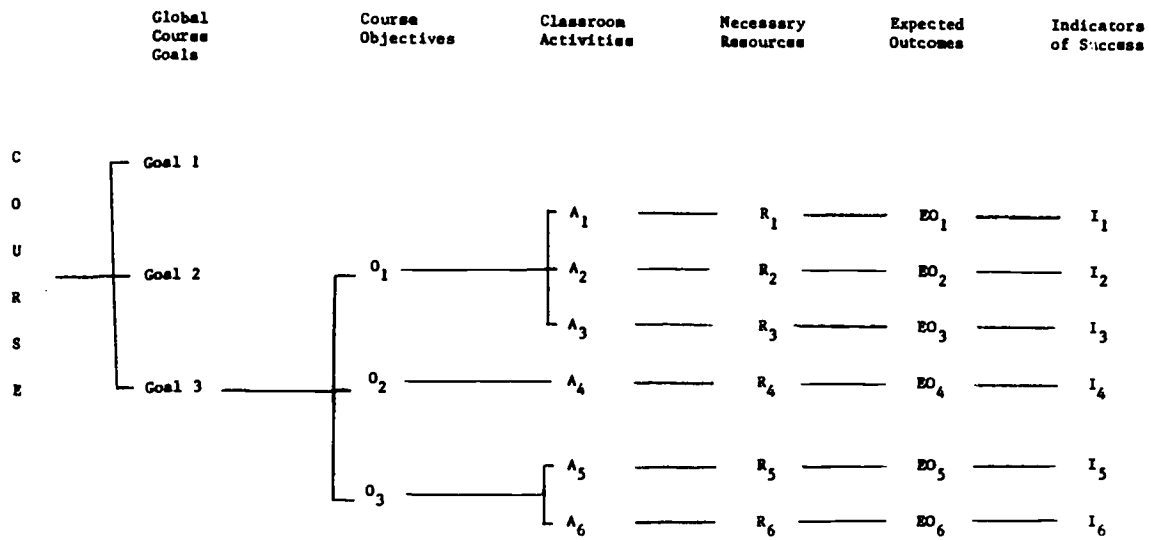
Global Course Goals	Course Objectives	Classroom Activities	Necessary Resources	Expected Outcomes	Indicators of Success

```
C        ┌─ Goal 1
O        │
U        │                        ┌ A₁ ──── R₁ ──── EO₁ ──── I₁
R ──────┤   Goal 2   O₁ ──────── A₂ ──── R₂ ──── EO₂ ──── I₂
S        │                        └ A₃ ──── R₃ ──── EO₃ ──── I₃
E        └─ Goal 3 ───  O₂ ──────── A₄ ──── R₄ ──── EO₄ ──── I₄
                                    ┌ A₅ ──── R₅ ──── EO₅ ──── I₅
                         O₃ ──────── └ A₆ ──── R₆ ──── EO₆ ──── I₆
```

Course hierarchy with levels: A_1 → R_1 → EO_1 → I_1; A_2 → R_2 → EO_2 → I_2; A_3 → R_3 → EO_3 → I_3; A_4 → R_4 → EO_4 → I_4; A_5 → R_5 → EO_5 → I_5; A_6 → R_6 → EO_6 → I_6. Objectives O_1, O_2, O_3.

Figure 8: A Course Hierarchical Structure

Part IV: APPROPRIATENESS AND COMPLETENESS

Up to this point, each activity has been identified and ex-
amined as a separate entity in terms of its purpose and criteria for
success. Furthermore each activity has been identified as part of a
hierarchy of objectives and goals.

Part IV now goes one step further by taking a broader look at
the overall structure in order to determine appropriateness and
completeness.

Relationship Between Activities and Objectives

The objectives were formulated from clusters of activities, but
no attempt was made to control for quality. Several question. per-
iodically need answering in order to constantly strive for improve-
ment.

1. Are the activities the very best activities for accom-
    plishing the objectives?

2. Are there certain restrictions, constraints or lack of
    resources that prohibit certain activities that might
    be better?

3. At what point will the teacher be satisfied that an ob-
    jective has been met?

4. Are all of the activities necessary or even worthwhile for
    the successful completion of an objective?

5. Are there objectives without activities?

Relationship Between Objectives and Global Goals

Similar types of questions should be asked in terms of the

relationship between the global course goals and the objectives.

1. Are the objectives the most approprite for attaining the overall goals?

2. At what point will the teacher be satisfied that a goal has been met?

3. After classifying the objectives to the goals, are there goals without any objectives and, consequently, without any classroom activities directed toward those goals?

4. Are there any objectives that are without a goal? If so, a decision has to be made to either drop the objective or formulate a new goal.

Relationship Between the Course and the Goals

Again similar questions can be asked of the relationship be-

tween the course and the goals.

1. Are the goals appropriate to the nature of the course?

2. Are there any goal statements that should be added to the course?

3. At what point will the teacher be satisfied that the course is a successful course?

4. Are there other courses that could better accomplish these goals?

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CONCLUSION: PROFESSIONALISM IN EDUCATION

Professionalism in education demands that teachers know *what they are doing* and *why they are doing it.* As simple as this statement sounds, there are several concepts underlying it.

What they are doing implies that teachers have a certain amount of subject matter expertise. Without this knowledge base, teaching more closely resembles babysitting rather than teaching. The statement also implies that teachers are aware of their own curriculum and how it complements the overall building or district program.

Why they are doing it not only involves having targets, but also that they be appropriate targets. Furthermore it involves justification of methods used to achieve these targets.

The model presented on the preceding pages can help a teacher with these two aspects of educational professionalism. More specifically, the completion of the model should: (1) satisfy administrators who ask for written objectives; (2) facilitate the improvement of instruction by the strengthening of activities and objectives; (3) assist the teachers in communicating their classroom program to others; and (4) assist in building an accountable position for the teachers.

APPENDIX A

Briefly write 3-7 classroom (course) goals. These goals should be
much broader in scope than o jectives achievable in two or three
days of instruction. These goals should sum up the purposes of at
least a semester course.

*"AS A RESULT OF THE EXPERIENCES IN YOUR CLASSROOM, YOUR STUDENTS
SHOULD (KNOW, FEEL, BE ABLE TO, . . .):"*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

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APPENDIX B

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

ACTIVITY	RESOURCES	EXPECTED OUTCOME	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

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