How to Use This Book

In the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Failing to plan is planning to fail." The best lessons students can experience always begin with a prepared teacher who considers student learning the primary goal of instruction.

Searching the Internet for lessons plans to use or adapt may seem to be an efficient way to plan. However, you will likely spend hours searching for the perfect lesson only to find that what you needed/wanted was not quite what you found. In contrast, planning your own lessons is a special skill that has invaluable rewards both for you and for your students. This guide will help you plan lessons that are strategically designed with YOUR students in mind.

When you are able to build your own mathematics lessons, you have the power to make decisions about all aspects of your students' learning, including how to make the content meet your students' individual needs. This approach may seem overwhelming in the beginning, because creating an effective lesson plan requires thinking and practice to consider all the factors you need. The good news is that after a bit of practice, it will become second nature.

Start slowly and take each chapter one at a time. We find that teachers who follow this process gain new insight into the mathematics they are teaching, which, in turn, helps them to better facilitate their students' learning.

Part I of this book begins with the premise that good instruction should be planned with purpose, coherence, and rigor in mind. It includes a chapter emphasizing that children all have different needs and that, as a teacher, you need to plan lessons in accordance with those needs. At the end of Part I, you will find the lesson-planning template that reflects all of the decisions a teacher makes when planning and facilitating a lesson. It may seem overwhelming at first glance. However, with practice, you will find that these decisions become second nature to your planning process.

Part II comprises a series of chapters for each component of the template. Each chapter includes the following:

- A real-world scenario of Grades 3–5 teachers wrestling with the decision-making part of the component
- Ideas and information to help with your decision-making process
- Snapshots that model the gradual construction of a third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade lesson plan chapter by chapter
- A section highlighting the importance of coherence for future lessons in a unit
- Questions for reflection
- An Under Construction section for you to begin planning your own lesson

Part III helps you put it all together with suggestions for planning to launch, facilitate, and close your lesson. Appendix A will show you the complete lesson plan for each grade so that you can see how it has come together in the end. A blank template can also be found in Appendix B and is available to download online at resources .corwin.com/mathlessonplanning/3-5.

Appendix C also offers suggestions of further reading and resources, and throughout the book, you will find words that appear in bold type. You can find their meanings in the glossary in Appendix D.

You may wish to begin the planning process by tackling one chapter at a time. You can read about an approach, try it out, and then, after completing the next chapter, integrate additional new concepts into your planning process. Take it slow, reflect along the way, and, before you know it, you will be planning robust mathematics lessons! Let's begin!