

## The Limitations Imposed by Traditional Lesson Plan Books

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ALLOFE | SOLUTIONS



<b><i>The Limitations Imposed by Traditional Lesson Plan Books</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Abstract</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>The Lesson Plan Issue</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>The Lesson Plan Book</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Good Ideas Wasted</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Proposed Solution</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>A Web Based Software Version of the Traditional Lesson Plan Book</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>A Lesson Plan Book That Is Integrated With A Calendar</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>MAKES LESSON PLANNING EASIER</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>ENHANCES THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE FOR ALL INVOLVED</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Going Further</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>MULTIPLE VIEWS FOR EASY COMPREHENSION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>ABILITY TO COPY, SHARE, AND SEARCH</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>SECURITY AS AN INTEGRAL BUILDING BLOCK OF THE APPLICATION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>SEEING THE BIG PICTURE</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b><i>About Allofe</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>

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# The Limitations Imposed by Traditional Lesson Plan Books

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## Abstract

### The Lesson Plan Issue

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The academic industry today is advancing in many areas – it is becoming more technical, more diverse, and more able to accommodate students with disabilities and special needs. One area, however, that lacks in technological advancement is the area of lesson planning.

### The Lesson Plan Book

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Teachers frequently use a planner or notebook to keep track of lesson plans and their schedules. The problem with such books is that they have limited space for very detailed lesson plans and there is no way to easily and efficiently copy the lesson plans from one school year to another. While these books often provide a way to schedule lesson plans, they do not always provide the organization and structure required for detailed lesson planning.

### Good Ideas Wasted

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Due to the lack of space in the typical lesson plan notebook, lesson plan details are drawn up in a notebook, or typed into a Word document. They can become detached from the actual lesson plan book and forgotten or lost. The lack of space can also prevent teachers from writing down important details about the lesson plan so they leave out valuable information such as what materials they will need, or what reading assignment they need to give to their students.

## Proposed Solution

### A Web Based Software Version of the Traditional Lesson Plan Book

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A solution to the problem of disorganized lesson planning is to make lesson plans quickly and easily accessible. The easiest way to do this is to put them online. Paper documents get misplaced, borrowed, and buried under other paper documents. With online documents one has only to perform a search, and no matter which folder they happen to be filed in, or how many other similar documents are in that folder, the right document will be found within seconds.

### A Lesson Plan Book That Is Integrated With A Calendar

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Since an important component of lesson planning is scheduling when the lesson is going to be taught, the online lesson plan should integrate with a calendar. While making the lesson plan, the teacher can specify – along with necessary materials, duration, etc. – what date they would like to teach this plan on. Most teachers have a schedule they look at daily that tells them what errands they need to do, and what appointments they have. What if along with these things, there were also links to that day's lesson plan

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documents? This way, if a teacher created a lesson plan months ago, but specified it for this date, then completely forgot about it until today, the lesson plan would still be right there, waiting for her, and no extra paper-shuffling would be necessary. This prospective solution does the following two things:

### **MAKES LESSON PLANNING EASIER**

The solution would make lesson planning easier by making it more organized and efficient. Consider the following:

- Old lesson plans quickly retrieved and rescheduled.
- New lesson plans built with ease.
- Lesson plans organized by calendar day.
- Daily reminders of what will be taught, with more detail available if needed.
- Quick and efficient copying of lesson plans from one school year to another.

### **ENHANCES THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE FOR ALL INVOLVED**

This solution would provide the foundation necessary for a positive classroom experience. It would provide the teacher with detailed information about what materials to make available to the students, an outline of what steps to follow in teaching the lesson, and a specific area of focus for the lesson in terms of standards. It would provide the students with a lesson that had been well planned out in advance, would include all the relevant materials, handouts, and reading assignments, and would be easy to follow.

### **Going Further**

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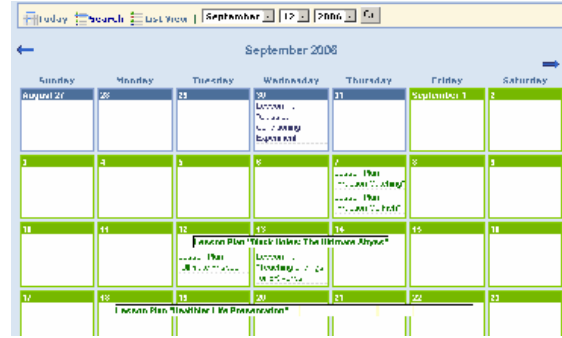
Though such a solution as described above would be useful and would solve the stated problem, it is not necessary to stop at 'good enough.' While improving the ability to access and build lesson plans, why not resolve some other issues that have developed? Why not take a good solution and make it an ideal one? The essential follow-up question, of course, is how would one go about doing this? Here are some ideas.

### **MULTIPLE VIEWS FOR EASY COMPREHENSION**

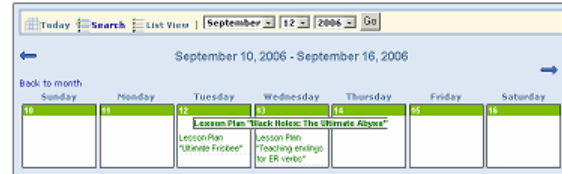
Sometimes people want to plan their day, and sometimes they want to plan their entire week or month. Sometimes they want to go even deeper into their day, and just look at one specific event that will happen that day. One feature that would benefit our lesson plan solution would be the capability to view different levels of detail. Some viewing options for lesson plans include:

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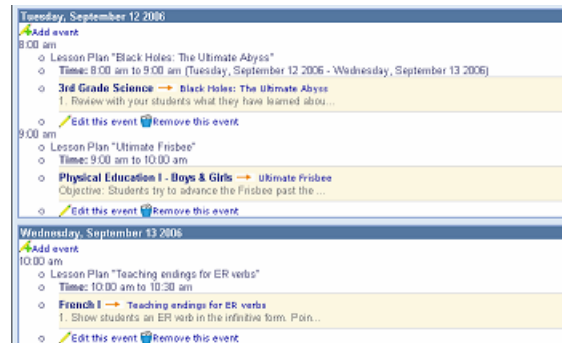
**Calendar View:** In this view, the teacher would be able to see an entire month, similar to what is visible on a wall calendar, with the title of each lesson plan visible on the day or days when it is to be taught.



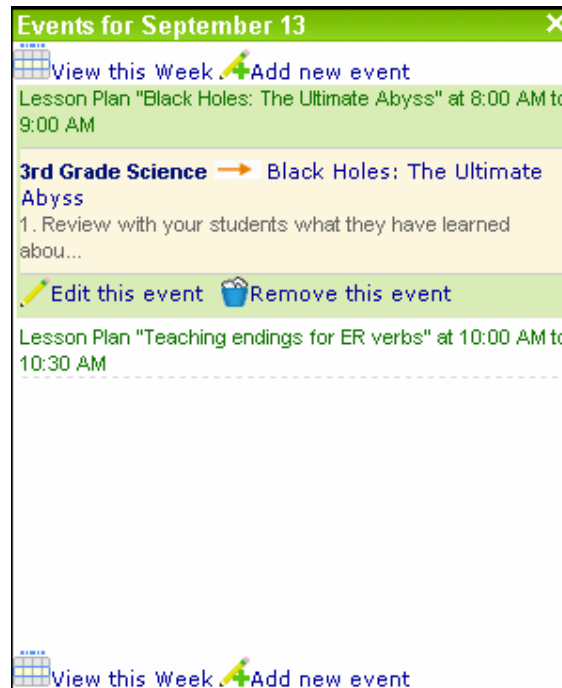
**Week View:** A truncated version of the calendar view, with only a given week (Saturday through Sunday) visible.



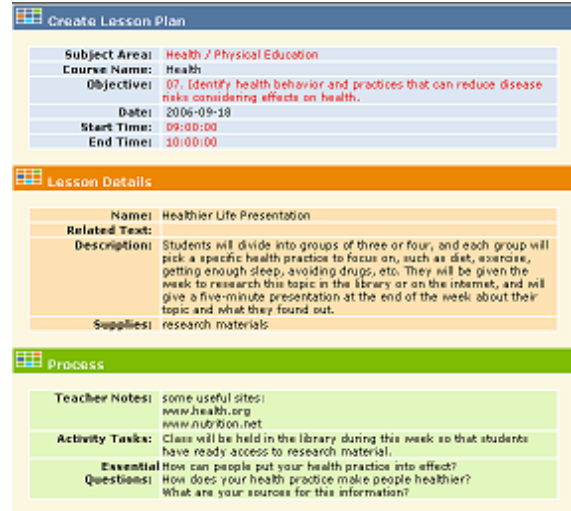
**List View:** This view would show the week, but would show more detail than the normal week view. It would show some key information about each lesson plan, and a short version of that plan's description. It would also provide options to view the full version of each plan, edit each plan, delete each plan, or add a new plan for a given day.



**Day View:** This view would be similar to the list view with all the same options, but instead of an entire week, it would only show one day.

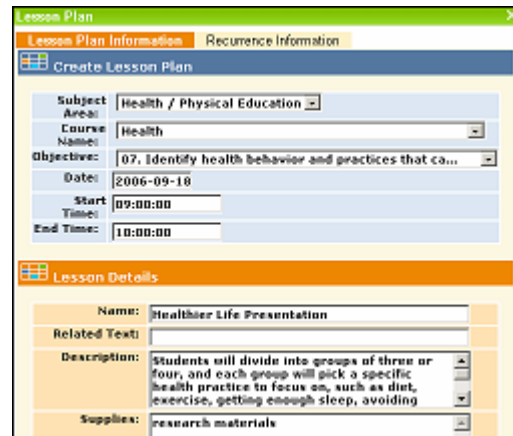


**Full Plan View:** Teachers would need a format in which they could both look at their entire plan in detail, and print off the entire plan for substitutes. This view would serve that purpose, outputting a formatted version of all the details about the plan as the teacher had last entered them.



Create Lesson Plan	
Subject Area:	Health / Physical Education
Course Name:	Health
Objective:	07. Identify health behavior and practices that can reduce disease risks considering effects on health.
Date:	2006-09-18
Start Time:	09:00:00
End Time:	10:00:00
Lesson Details	
Name:	Healthier Life Presentation
Related Text:	
Description:	Students will divide into groups of three or four, and each group will pick a specific health practice to focus on, such as diet, exercise, getting enough sleep, avoiding drugs, etc. They will be given the week to research this topic in the library or on the internet, and will give a five-minute presentation at the end of the week about their topic and what they found out.
Supplies:	research materials
Process	
Teacher Notes:	some useful sites: www.health.org www.nutrition.net
Activity Tasks:	Class will be held in the library during this week so that students have ready access to research material.
Essential Questions:	How can people put your health practice into effect? How does your health practice make people healthier? What are your sources for this information?

**Edit View:** This would be similar to full plan view, but would provide the same details in editable form, so the teacher could change the information on the plan.



Lesson Plan	
Lesson Plan Information	
Subject Area:	Health / Physical Education
Course Name:	Health
Objective:	07. Identify health behavior and practices that ca...
Date:	2006-09-18
Start Time:	09:00:00
End Time:	10:00:00
Lesson Details	
Name:	Healthier Life Presentation
Related Text:	
Description:	Students will divide into groups of three or four, and each group will pick a specific health practice to focus on, such as diet, exercise, getting enough sleep, avoiding
Supplies:	research materials

## ABILITY TO COPY, SHARE, AND SEARCH

Teachers often share one another's lesson plans, so the ability to quickly and easily copy is an important feature. To do this, three specific capabilities are necessary:

- **View:** The ability of every teacher to view every other teacher's lesson plans.
- **Copy:** The ability of every teacher to copy every other teacher's lesson plans, and transfer them to her own calendar.
- **Search:** The ability to search for a lesson plan based on subject, grade level, keyword, timeframe, etc. Teachers could search their own lesson plans as well as other teachers lesson plans. Teacher A, for example, could search Teacher B's lesson plans for a plan that teaches Geometrical shapes and takes 1-2 hours of class time.

## **SECURITY AS AN INTEGRAL BUILDING BLOCK OF THE APPLICATION**

The first two capabilities point in a very obvious direction: security. If a teacher has permission to view and copy others' lesson plans, he might pull up plans on another teacher's calendar, then edit or delete them by accident, thinking he is looking at his own calendar. To make sure that does not happen a good security structure is required. Each teacher should have the ability to view and copy others' plans, but not to do anything else with them, until they have been copied onto the teacher's own calendar. The proper assignment of object-level permissions would make this an easy enhancement to implement.

The need for security goes beyond simple assignment of permissions, however. Strong security, indeed, is what *makes* the assignment of permissions so simple. For a software product to be accessible and useful to multiple users, it is essential that the software have embedded within it a well-developed and standardized method of assigning permissions to all users, user levels, and user groups, and deciding which users will belong to which levels and groups.

## **SEEING THE BIG PICTURE**

One aspect of teaching, and indeed of many professions, that is often overlooked, is the overall purpose of the profession – why we go to work, why we do what we do. For teachers, this means helping the children learn, but that is a fairly abstract concept which is hard to put into practice. For more concrete concepts, a teacher might turn to her state's standards, benchmarks, and indicators; or to her district's objectives and goals.

Teachers do tend to have a busy schedule and looking up or memorizing standards, benchmarks and objectives may not be a feasible solution. But what if, when drawing up a lesson plan, a teacher had the standards and objectives met by the course she was teaching neatly laid out for her, and she could pinpoint which ones were filled by the lesson plan? Seeing the standards and objectives might even pique her creative side, and give her ideas for new lesson plans for the future, or they might make her aware of an area where her class needed some expansion.

Thus, creating an architecture that supports the integration of lesson plans with curriculum information, such as all standards and objectives that need to be met for each subject area and course, is the ideal solution. These should be made readily available for selection at the top of the plan, so that when creating the lesson plan, the teacher could easily see all the options available, and choose which ones would be met by teaching that particular lesson.

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## About AllofE

AllofE ([www.allofe.com](http://www.allofe.com)) is a technology firm specializing in Enterprise Web products and custom applications across a number of vertical markets and industry segments that include Education, HealthCare, Financial, Transportation, Corporate, Construction & Engineering, Sports & Athletics, Printing & Publishing and Telecommunications.

AllofE's broad industry expertise extends to functional areas such as:

- Content Management
- Asset Tracking and Management
- Auction Management
- Scheduling and Resource Management
- Online Training and Certification Systems
- e-Procurement and e-Commerce
- Customer Relationship Management
- Job Costing and Tracking
- Project Management

In the academic sector, AllofE specializes in the areas of Web Content Management, Curriculum Management, Online Assessments/Testing, HR Applicant Tracking, Academic Calendars/Scheduling and Staff Development.

Allofe invests very heavily in R&D to keep pace with the latest trends in web technology and constantly trying to find the most efficient, cost-effective and high quality enterprise-wide solutions. Current research areas include:

- Rich Web Applications including effective UI design and AJAX
- Data Mining and Analysis
- Cross Platform Applications
- Search algorithms and crawling, optimization strategies
- Data Mining and Warehousing
- Security at Functional and Object Level for Web based Applications
- Backend Systems Integration design for interoperability and scalability
- Component based Application Server architecture

For more information about AllofE please visit:

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