

Utilizing Lesson Exemplars as a Tool for Lesson Planning and Instructional Delivery in Multigrade Classrooms

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| Article Detail: | Abstract |
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| <p>Received: 15 Jan 2026; Received in revised form: 18 Feb 2026; Accepted: 21 Feb 2026; Available online: 24 Feb 2026</p> <p>©2026 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).</p> <p>Keywords— Multigrade classrooms, Lesson exemplars, Instructional delivery, differentiated instruction, Lesson planning, Teacher development</p> | <p><i>Teaching in a multigrade classroom means guiding learners from different grade levels at the same time, often with limited materials and varied learning needs. This paper explains how lesson exemplars can support teachers by making lesson planning and classroom instruction more manageable. Aligned with the K–12 curriculum, lesson exemplars offer ready-to-use lesson structures that help teachers organize activities, assessments, and learning goals across multiple grade levels. In multigrade settings, these exemplars reduce the time spent on preparation, support differentiated instruction, and help teachers keep lessons organized and focused. The paper also highlights how using lesson exemplars can boost teacher confidence and improve the quality of instruction when they are thoughtfully adapted to the classroom context. Overall, the study shows that lesson exemplars, when used flexibly, can ease the demands of multigrade teaching and help create more engaging and meaningful learning experiences for learners.</i></p> |

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching multiple grade levels in one classroom is a reality for many schools in geographically isolated and underserved areas of the Philippines, including those in Tabuk City. In these multigrade classrooms, one teacher is responsible for instructing two or more grade levels at the same time. This requires juggling multiple curricula, managing learners with different abilities, and maintaining meaningful instruction despite limited resources. These challenges can make lesson planning and classroom delivery overwhelming. To support teachers, the Department of Education (DepEd) has introduced lesson exemplars aligned with the K–12 curriculum. (1) These exemplars are structured lesson guides

designed to simplify planning, ensure curriculum alignment, and help teachers deliver lessons more effectively. For multigrade classrooms, exemplars provide a roadmap for handling multiple grade levels, reducing workload, and allowing teachers to focus on actual teaching rather than creating every lesson from scratch.(2)

Lesson exemplars are particularly helpful in multigrade settings because they provide strategies for organizing complex classroom activities. For example, in a classroom with Grade 3 and Grade 4 learners, a single Math lesson exemplar on “Measurement of Length” might include activities for both grades: Grade 3 students measure objects using centimeters, while Grade 4 students convert

centimeters to meters. The teacher can rotate between groups while following the same exemplar, ensuring that both grades meet learning objectives without losing instructional focus.(3)

In a Filipino language lesson, one exemplar might offer reading passages and comprehension questions tailored to each grade, making it easier for teachers to manage differentiated instruction efficiently. In Science, an exemplar on plant growth could suggest experiments for small groups of learners, including observation logs and discussion prompts for multiple grade levels, allowing the teacher to supervise and guide learning without confusion. (4)

1.1 Role of Lesson Exemplars in Multigrade Classrooms

Lesson exemplars provide teachers with strategies for organizing complex classroom activities, aligning lessons to curriculum standards, and differentiating instruction for multiple grade levels. For instance, in a multigrade Math classroom with Grades 3 and 4, a single lesson exemplar can include activities for both levels. While Grade 3 students focus on measuring objects using centimeters, Grade 4 learners may engage in converting centimeters to meters. The teacher can rotate between groups, ensuring that both grades achieve learning objectives while maintaining instructional focus.(5)

In a Filipino language lesson, reading passages and comprehension questions can be tailored to each grade level, facilitating differentiated instruction. In Science, exemplars can suggest experiments and observation logs that cater to multiple grades, helping teachers manage learning without confusion.(6)

1.2 Benefits of Using Lesson Exemplars

Studies show that lesson exemplars improve both lesson planning efficiency and instructional quality. Teachers spend less time preparing materials and more time engaging with students, implementing hands-on activities, and monitoring learning.(7) Exemplars also guide pacing, sequencing, and assessment, which is particularly important in multigrade classrooms where students progress at different speeds.

Beyond efficiency, exemplars foster teacher growth by introducing new instructional strategies, assessment methods, and differentiation approaches.

Teachers can adopt methods such as project-based learning or cooperative learning and reflect on what works best in their classrooms, gradually improving professional competence. (8)

1.3 Challenges in Implementing Lesson Exemplars

The effectiveness of lesson exemplars depends on teacher skills and school context. Teachers with strong content knowledge, experience, and training in multigrade instruction can adapt exemplars to local needs and learner differences. For example, a rural teacher may modify Science experiments to use local materials such as seeds, soil, or recycled containers if lab equipment is unavailable. (9)

Conversely, teachers with less experience or limited resources may struggle to implement exemplars effectively, resulting in minimal differentiation or partial implementation. Research emphasizes that exemplars must be adaptable and culturally relevant to be effective. Local studies have shown that teachers often modify exemplars to suit learners' abilities, cultural backgrounds, and available resources (Corpuz & Cruz, 2021; Dumlao & Marcos, 2022; Umali & Miguel, 2023).(10) International studies also highlight the value of scaffolded materials, flexible grouping strategies, and multi-grade activities (Berry & Little, 2021; Mulryan-Kyne, 2020).(11)

1.4 Practical Application of Lesson Exemplars

In practice, using lesson exemplars can make a significant difference in daily classroom management. A teacher may start the day with a Math lesson for one grade, then rotate students through differentiated activities while monitoring progress. Language lessons, Science experiments, and other subjects can be handled similarly, guided by the exemplar.(12) Well-used exemplars support efficient planning, structured instruction, and improved learner engagement, all while accommodating the unique demands of multigrade teaching.(13)

II. CONCLUSION

Lesson exemplars are powerful tools for supporting multigrade teachers. They provide structure, reduce preparation time, promote curriculum alignment, and guide differentiated instruction. Their

effectiveness, however, relies on teacher competence, ongoing professional development, and supportive school conditions, such as access to resources and administrative guidance.(14) By combining exemplar use with teacher reflection, adaptation, and professional growth, multigrade educators can deliver higher-quality instruction, improve student outcomes, and create equitable learning opportunities for all learners, even in challenging classroom contexts.(15)

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