

# Lesson Plan: The Art of the Perfect Itinerary

## Materials Needed:

- Computer or tablet with internet access
  - A notebook and pen (or a digital note-taking app like Notion or Evernote)
  - Access to Google Docs/Slides or Microsoft Word/PowerPoint
  - Recommended (Free) Online Tools:
    - Google Flights (for flight research)
    - Booking.com or Airbnb (for accommodation research)
    - TripAdvisor or Yelp (for activity and restaurant reviews)
    - Google Maps (for logistics and travel times)
    - Wanderlog or Triplt (optional itinerary building apps)
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## Lesson Details

**Subject:** Life Skills & Project Management (Travel Planning)

**Audience:** 24-year-old homeschool student

**Time Allotment:** 90-minute core session, with a multi-day project

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## 1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson and project, you will be able to:

- Analyze a "traveler profile" to identify key priorities, constraints, and interests.
  - Conduct targeted research to compare and select a destination that aligns with a traveler's needs.
  - Design a detailed, practical, and personalized 5-day travel itinerary.
  - Create and present a compelling destination recommendation and itinerary pitch.
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## 2. Lesson Activities & Instructional Strategy

### Part 1: The Foundation - Understanding Your Traveler (25 minutes)

1. **Introduction (The Hook):** Let's start with a scenario. Imagine your best friend comes to you and says, "I have a week off and \$1,500 to spend. I want an adventure, but I hate big cities. Plan my trip!" Where do you even begin?

The secret to great travel planning isn't just finding cool places; it's about understanding the *person* you're planning for. We'll call this the "Traveler Profile."

2. **Guided Discussion - Deconstructing the Traveler Profile:** Let's break down the essential questions you need to ask to build a complete profile. For any potential traveler, we need to know:
    - **The Budget:** What is the total budget? Does this include flights, accommodation, food, and activities, or just some of these? Is it a strict budget or a flexible guideline?
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- **The Timeframe:** When are they traveling (season matters!) and for how long?
- **The Vibe:** What kind of experience are they looking for? (e.g., Relaxation, Adventure, Cultural Immersion, Culinary Tour, Party Scene).
- **The Pace:** Do they want a packed schedule seeing everything, or a slow pace with plenty of downtime?
- **The Deal-Breakers & Must-Haves:** Are there things they absolutely must do or see? (e.g., "I must visit a museum.") Are there things they refuse to do? (e.g., "I'm afraid of heights, so no mountain climbing.")
- **Logistics & Accessibility:** Any mobility issues? Do they prefer driving or public transport? Are they a foodie or a picky eater?

## Part 2: The Itinerary Blueprint (20 minutes)

1. **Direct Instruction - The 5 Pillars of a Great Itinerary:** A strong itinerary is more than a list of activities. It's a balanced plan. We'll structure it around these five pillars:
  1. **Logistics:** Flights/travel to the destination, and daily transportation (rental car, subway passes, walking).
  2. **Accommodations:** The "home base" for the trip. Hotel, Airbnb, hostel? What part of the city/area makes the most sense?
  3. **Anchor Activities:** The 1-2 main things you plan to do each day. These are the "big rocks" you schedule first (e.g., museum visit, guided hike, cooking class).
  4. **Food & Dining:** A mix of planned special meals and flexible options. Research a few "must-try" local spots.
  5. **Downtime:** This is the most forgotten but most critical part! Schedule empty blocks for spontaneous exploration, rest, or just enjoying a coffee. An over-scheduled trip is an exhausting trip.
2. **Demonstration:** Let's quickly outline a single day together for our "adventurous friend" from the intro scenario.

*Example: Day 1 in Asheville, NC*

  - **Morning (Anchor):** Hike a section of the Blue Ridge Parkway.
  - **Lunch (Food):** Casual lunch at a brewery downtown.
  - **Afternoon (Anchor/Downtime):** Explore the River Arts District, leaving time to wander in and out of studios.
  - **Dinner (Food):** Reservations at a highly-rated farm-to-table restaurant.
  - **Evening (Downtime):** Relax, maybe find some local live music.

## Part 3: Your Project - The Travel Consultant Challenge (45 minutes to begin, project continues independently)

1. **The Task:** You are now a professional travel consultant! Your job is to select one of the following clients, research and choose the perfect destination, and build them a complete 5-day itinerary and recommendation pitch.
2. **Choose Your Client (Pick One):**
  - **Client A: The Foodie Couple.** A couple in their early 30s celebrating an anniversary. Budget: \$4,000. Time: 5 days in October. Vibe: They want a trip centered entirely around food and wine. They enjoy cooking classes, nice dinners, and exploring local markets. They prefer a relaxed pace and a charming, walkable city.
  - **Client B: The Solo Backpacker.** A 22-year-old recent graduate on their first solo trip. Budget: \$1,200 (very strict). Time: 5 days in July. Vibe: Adventure and meeting other travelers. They want hiking, unique nature experiences, and social opportunities. Must stay in hostels. They want a packed, high-energy trip.

- **Client C: The Multi-Generational Family.** Grandparents (early 70s, limited mobility), parents (40s), and a child (age 10). Budget: \$7,000. Time: 5 days in March (Spring Break). Vibe: Something for everyone. The grandparents want history and culture, the parents want relaxation and good food, and the child wants fun, interactive activities. Must be accessible and not overly strenuous.
3. **Independent Work Session:** Use the rest of our session time to start your research.
- **Step 1: Brainstorm & Research.** Based on your chosen client, brainstorm 2-3 potential destinations. Use travel blogs, Google Flights, and TripAdvisor to see which one best fits the budget, vibe, and timeframe.
  - **Step 2: Select Your Destination.** Make a final choice and write down 3-5 reasons why it is the perfect fit for your client.
  - **Step 3: Start Building the Itinerary.** Open a Google Doc and create a day-by-day outline. Start by plugging in the "Anchor Activities" and then build the rest of the day around them, always considering travel time between locations (use Google Maps for this!).
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### 3. Assessment & Final Product

Your final project will be a **Destination Pitch**, presented as a simple slideshow (Google Slides) or a well-organized document (Google Docs).

It must include:

1. **Title Slide/Page:** "A [Vibe] Trip to [Destination] for [Client Name]"
2. **Why This Destination?:** A brief, persuasive paragraph explaining why you chose this location for them, referencing their specific profile needs.
3. **Budget Estimate:** A simple breakdown of estimated costs (flights, lodging, activities, food).
4. **The 5-Day Itinerary:** A clear, day-by-day schedule that includes the 5 Pillars (Logistics, Accommodation suggestion, Anchor Activities, Food, and Downtime). Be specific! Instead of "Go to a museum," write "Visit the Louvre Museum (pre-booked tickets for 10 AM entry)."

This project will be evaluated based on the following rubric:

- **Alignment (40%):** How well does the destination and itinerary match the client's profile (budget, vibe, pace, etc.)?
  - **Practicality (30%):** Is the itinerary realistic? Are travel times considered? Is the budget reasonable?
  - **Clarity & Organization (20%):** Is the final pitch easy to read and understand?
  - **Creativity & Persuasion (10%):** Did you include unique, thoughtful suggestions? Is your recommendation compelling?
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### 4. Differentiation & Extension

- **For Extra Support:** We can work together to build the Day 1 itinerary for your chosen client, creating a template you can follow for the remaining days.
  - **For an Extra Challenge:** Add a "Plan B" section to each day's itinerary, suggesting an alternative activity in case of bad weather or cancellations. You could also research and include visa requirements or local customs for an international destination.
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