

The ABCDs of Writing Instructional Objectives

The ABCD method of writing objectives is an excellent way to structure instructional objectives. In this method, "A" is for audience, "B" is for behavior, "C" for conditions and "D" is for degree of mastery needed.

Example: -"Given a sentence written in the past or present tense, the student will be able to re-write the sentence in future tense with no errors in tense or tense contradiction (i.e., I will see her yesterday.)."

The key here is to use verbs that indicate a clearly observable and measurable action. Appropriate action verbs for the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains are listed below.

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain

Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive learning, originated by Benjamin Bloom and collaborators in the 1950's, describes several categories of cognitive learning.

| ORIGINAL BLOOM COGNITIVE TAXONOMY | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Category | Description |
| Knowledge | Ability to recall previously learned material. |
| Comprehension | Ability to grasp meaning, explain, restate ideas. |
| Application | Ability to use learned material in new situations. |
| Analysis | Ability to separate material into component parts and show relationships between parts. |
| Synthesis | Ability to put together the separate ideas to form new whole, establish new relationships. |
| Evaluation | Ability to judge the worth of material against stated criteria. |

This taxonomy was revised in 2001 by Anderson and Krathwohl to change the category names from nouns to verbs, and to switch the Evaluation and Synthesis levels in the hierarchy.

| REVISED ANDERSON AND KRATHWOHL COGNITIVE TAXONOMY | |
|---|--|
| Category | Description |
| Remember | Ability to recall previously learned material. |
| Understand | Ability to grasp meaning, explain, restate ideas. |
| Apply | Ability to use learned material in new situations. |
| Analyze | Ability to separate material into component parts and show relationships between parts. |
| Evaluate | Ability to judge the worth of material against stated criteria. |
| Create | Ability to put together the separate ideas to form new whole, establish new relationships. |

Many people also call the analysis, synthesis/create, and evaluation categories "problem solving."

| ACTION VERBS APPROPRIATE FOR EACH LEVEL OF BLOOM'S/ANDERSON & KRATHWOHL'S TAXONOMY (Cognitive Domain) | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| <u>Remember</u> | <u>Understand</u> | <u>Apply</u> | <u>Analyze</u> | <u>Evaluate</u> | <u>Create</u> |
| Define Identify List Name Recall Recognize Record Relate Repeat Underline | Choose Cite examples of Demonstrate use of Describe Determine Differentiate between Discriminate Discuss Explain Express Give in own words Identify Interpret Locate Pick Report Restate Review Recognize Select Tell Translate Respond Practice Simulates | Apply Demonstrate Dramatize Employ Generalize Illustrate Interpret Operate Operationalize Practice Relate Schedule Shop Use Utilize Initiate | Analyze Appraise Calculate Categorize Compare Conclude Contrast Correlate Criticize Deduce Debate Detect Determine Develop Diagram Differentiate Distinguish Draw conclusions Estimate Evaluate Examine Experiment Identify Infer Inspect Inventory Predict Question Relate Solve Test Diagnose | Appraise Assess Choose Compare Critique Estimate Evaluate Judge Measure Rate Revise Score Select Validate Value Test | Arrange Assemble Collect Compose Construct Create Design Develop Formulate Manage Modify Organize Plan Prepare Produce Propose Predict Reconstruct Set-up Synthesize Systematize Devise |

References

Anderson, L.W., & Krathwohl (Eds.). (2001). *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York: Longman.

Bloom, B.S. and Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, by a committee of college and university examiners. Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*. NY, NY: Longmans, Green.

Krathwohl and Bloom's Taxonomy of the Affective Domain

Krathwohl and Bloom's 1964 taxonomy of the affective domain describes several categories of affective learning.

| AFFECTIVE TAXONOMY | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Level | Definition | Example |
| Receiving | Being aware of or attending to something in the environment. | Individual reads a book passage about civil rights. |
| Responding | Showing some new behaviors as a result of experience. | Individual answers questions about the book, reads another book by the same author, another book about civil rights, etc. |
| Valuing | Showing some definite involvement or commitment. | The individual demonstrates this by voluntarily attending a lecture on civil rights. |
| Organization | Integrating a new value into one's general set of values, giving it some ranking among one's general priorities. | The individual arranges a civil rights rally. |
| Characterization by Value | Acting consistently with the new value. | The individual is firmly committed to the value, perhaps becoming a civil rights leader. |

| ACTION VERBS APPROPRIATE FOR EACH LEVEL OF KRATHWOHL & BLOOM'S TAXONOMY (Affective Domain) | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <u>Receiving</u> | <u>Responding</u> | <u>Valuing</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Characterization by Value</u> |
| Accept Attend Develop Recognize | Complete Comply Cooperate Discuss Examine Obey Respond | Accept Defend Devote Pursue Seek | Codify Discriminate Display Order Organize Systematize Weigh | Internalize Verify |

References

Krathwohl, D.R., Bloom, B.S. and Masia, B. B. (1964). *Taxonomy of educational objectives, Book II. Affective domain*. New York, NY. David McKay Company, Inc.

Psychomotor Domain

The following is a synthesis of the taxonomies of Simpson (1972), Dave (1970), and Harrow (1972).

| PSYCHOMOTOR TAXONOMY | | |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Level | Definition | Example |
| Observing | Active mental attending of a physical event. | The learner watches a more experienced person. Other mental activity, such as reading may be a part of the observation process. |
| Imitating | Attempted copying of a physical behavior. | The first steps in learning a skill. The learner is observed and given direction and feedback on performance. Movement is not automatic or smooth. |
| Practicing | Trying a specific physical activity over and over. | The skill is repeated over and over. The entire sequence is performed repeatedly. Movement is moving towards becoming automatic and smooth. |
| Adapting | Fine tuning. Making minor adjustments in the physical activity in order to perfect it. | The skill is perfected. A mentor or a coach is often needed to provide an outside perspective on how to improve or adjust as needed for the situation. |

| ACTION VERBS APPROPRIATE FOR THE PSYCHOMOTOR TAXONOMY | | |
|---|---|--|
| Bend Calibrates Constructs Differentiate (by touch) Dismantles Displays Fastens Fixes Grasp | Grinds Handle Heats Manipulates Measures Mends Mixes Operate | Organizes Perform (skillfully) Reach Relax Shorten Sketches Stretch Write |

References

- Dave, R.H., in R. J. Armstrong et al., *Developing and Writing Behavioral Objectives* (Tucson, AZ: Educational Innovators Press, 1970).
- Harrow, A.J. (1972). *A taxonomy of the psychomotor domain*. New York: David McKay Co.
- Simpson, E. (1972). *The classification of educational objectives in the psychomotor domain: The psychomotor domain*. Vol. 3. Washington, DC: Gryphon House.



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