

WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A learning objective describes what you expect students to be able to do as an outcome of a course, lesson, or activity.

OBJECTIVES SHOULD INCLUDE ABCD ELEMENTS

A
AUDIENCE
who is the target?

B
BEHAVIOR
a verb

C
CONDITION
under which behavior is expected

D
DEGREE
of expected performance

HOW TO WRITE GOOD OBJECTIVES - AN EXAMPLE

After reviewing this information,
instructors
will be able to write objectives
using ABCD elements.



CONDITION

AUDIENCE

BEHAVIOR

DEGREE (or criteria)

OBJECTIVES SHOULD BE S.M.A.R.T.

S

clear description
of expectation

SPECIFIC

M

can be directly
assessed

MEASURABLE

A

outcome is
realistic

ACHIEVABLE

R

consistent with
overall goals

RELEVANT

T

clear end point
for achievement

TIME-BOUND



REMEMBER!

Objectives, and what the students are able to do, will need to be directly assessed.

Be sure you are writing objectives you can assess, and that you are assessing them as written.

USING BLOOM'S TAXONOMY TO CREATE OBJECTIVES

Benjamin Bloom (1956) described a classification system for educational goals as they progress in complexity. Each of these taxonomic categories, updated by Anderson et al (2001), is associated with verbs that can be used to create learning objectives.



COURSE OBJECTIVES SHOULD INCORPORATE MULTIPLE LEVELS OF LEARNING.

Strive for higher order thinking (analysis, evaluation, and creation levels) when applicable.

			Critical Thinking		CREATION
					Design
			EVALUATION		Plan
			Judge		Compose
			ANALYSIS	Appraise	Propose
			Compare	Estimate	Formulate
			APPLICATION	Distinguish	Arrange
			Use	Evaluate	Assemble
			Differentiate	Revise	Collect
COMPREHENSION			Diagram	Score	Construct
Express			Analyze	Select	Create
KNOWLEDGE	Restate	Dramatize	Categorize	Rate	Setup
Define	Identify	Sketch	Appraise	Choose	Organize
Repeat	Explain	Practice	Experiment	Measure	Prepare
Name	Recognize	Illustrate	Test	Compare	Manage
Recall	Discuss	Operate	Contrast	Value	Predict
List	Describe	Generalize	Inspect	Assess	Develop
Relate	Tell	Apply	Debate	Validate	Generate
Record	Locate	Schedule	Inventory	Critique	
Underline	Report	Show	Question	Conclude	
Outline	Review	Translate	Examine		
Delineate	Summarize	Interpret	Criticize		
Specify		Solve	Relate		
State		Sketch	Solve		
Label		Justify	Calculate		
Match			Critique		

VERBS TO AVOID

not measurable

understand appreciate demonstrate
 know be aware of learn
 explore familiar with improve

VERBS TO USE SPARINGLY

lower-level cognition

recall identify
 define describe
 recognize summarize

Bloom, B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.

Anderson, L. W., Krathwohl, D. R., Airasian, P. W., Cruikshank, K. A., Mayer, R. E., Pintrich, P. R., ... & Wittrock, M. C. (2001). *A Taxonomy For Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision Of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Abridged Edition*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Here are some additional resources on preparing courses, writing objectives, and best practices for teaching