Writing Effective Learning Objectives

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Introduction

- Learning objectives can provide guidance to students on what it is that they will achieve in the classroom or during online learning process. The objectives are developed from three domains of behavioral changes; psychomotor (physical), affective (attitudinal), and cognitive (changes based on intellectual skills). As an instructor or professor, writing clear and meaningful learning objectives enables you to focus on specific outcomes of instruction and to assess whether or not students have achieved the intended outcomes. In this workshop, we will discuss how to write effective objectives applicable to different content areas and learning goals, including related examples.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Identify learning objectives that are written in the correct form

- Explain how objectives may be used

- Write objectives for a broad range of learning goals

Characteristics of Effective Learning Objectives

Learning objectives have three distinguishing characteristics regarding the action that the learner will perform:

- It must be observable

- It must be measurable

- The specified action must be performed by the learner

Sample Verbs for Writing Instructional Objectives

Analyze	**Create**	**Calculate**
Classify	**Compare**	**Construct**
Describe	**Design**	**Identify**
Illustrate	**List**	**Sort**
Recite	**Build**	**Write**
Apply	**Show**	**Summarize**
Compare	**Rate**	**Solve**
Compute	**Define**	**Select**
Estimate	**Explain**	**Draw**

Instructional Objectives Activity

**Which of the learning objectives below are correct?**

1. Become familiar with elements of editing.

2. Given fourteen colored blocks, the student will be able to classify them correctly according to their colors.

3. Without the use of any aids, the student will be able to match at least ten items correctly.

4. Know the basic skills of arithmetic.

5. Given a poorly written paragraph, the student will edit it and correct 80 percent of the errors.

Feedback on Instructional Objectives Activity

Learning Objectives	Feedback
1. Become familiar with elements of editing.	Too broad and difficult to measure.
2. Given fourteen colored blocks, the student will be able to classify them correctly according to their colors.	Correct. One may also assume that 100 percent score is expected.
3. Without the use of any aids, the student will be able to match at least ten items correctly.	The objective does not mention specifically what the student will be able to do.
4. Know the basic skills of arithmetic.	Too general.
5. Given a poorly written paragraph, the student will edit it and correct 80 percent of the errors.	Correct. This objectives implies locating and correcting errors in a paragraph.

Bloom's/Krathwohl's Taxonomy
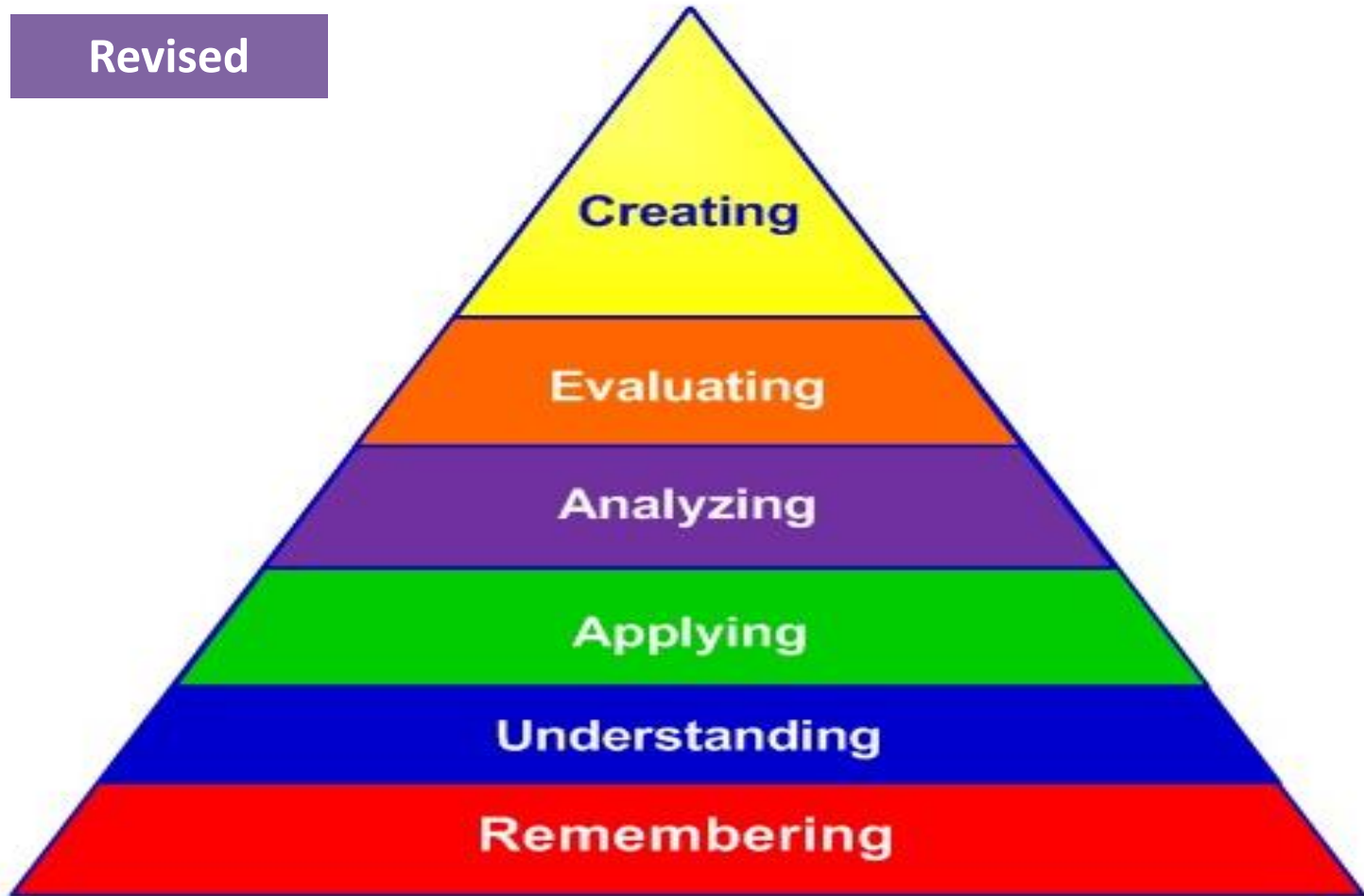
Verbs That Match Bloom's/Krathwohl's Taxonomy

Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
List	Distinguish	Prepare	Differentiate	Defend	Construct
Describe	Interpret	Organize	Compare	Criticize	Combine
Define	Illustrate	Produce	Infer	Rank	Compose
Label	Show	Sketch	Structure	Assess	Plan
Name	Paraphrase	Solve	Deconstruct	Appraise	Design
State	Choose	Use	Discriminate	Judge	Formulate
Select	Summarize	Implement	Outline	Check	Develop

Reference

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

Walter, D., & Carey, L. (1985). **The Systemic Design of Instruction**. Scott, IL: Foresman and Company.