

What Are Learning Objectives?

A learning objective should describe what students should know or be able to do at the end of the course that they couldn't do before.

The lesson Objectives

1. The objectives must be clear to students. They **ALL** must know **WHAT** they are learning and **WHY** they are doing it. They also need to see the point of the objectives in the bigger picture; that is, how they relate to the last lesson's learning, the course they are following and the big overall goal. This means that you can't simply write the objectives on the board and hope that the students copy them down. It implies that you have fully explained them in context; the students have engaged with them and can explain them to any observer.
2. The objectives and outcomes must be differentiated for the individual student. All the learners should be able to see where they are and what they need to do to get to the next level. This should link into subject standards and progression where possible. It is crucial to have high expectations of what can be achieved and engage the students with that belief.
3. **SUCCESS CRITERIA** for achieving the outcomes need to be negotiated with the students for optimum engagement to enable them to be clear about what it will look like and feel like and sound like when they have made that progress.

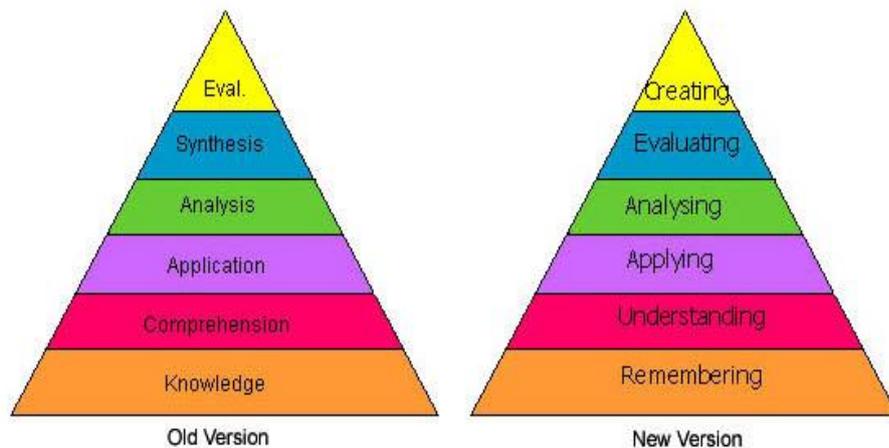
Example from an English Functional Skills lesson

OBJECTIVE: To recognise the power of different types of language

OUTCOMES: I will be able to:

- Use formal and informal language (Entry level)
- Explain how to speak and write in appropriate language (Level 1)
- Teach others how to use a range of writing and speaking styles appropriate for different audiences (Level 2)

The Theory behind the teaching: Blooms Taxonomy



What is a Learning Objective? Why should we use learning objectives?

Learning objectives should be brief, clear, specific statements of what learners will be able to do at the end of a lesson as a result of the activities, teaching and learning that has taken place. They are sometimes called learning outcomes. The Learning objective or objectives that you use can be based on three areas of learning: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Learning objectives define learning outcomes and focus teaching. They help to clarify, organize and prioritize learning. They help you and your students evaluate progress and encourage them to take responsibility for their learning.



What is the difference between an aim and a learning objective?

A lesson aim is a very general statement of what the overall goal is in a lesson – the intention behind the teaching. The lesson objective/objectives are the measurable stages that a learner will go through and need to achieve in order to achieve the overall goal. Aims are like strategy, objective are like tactics

How do you write aims and learning objectives?

As part of your planning you need to decide what your students need to be able to DO after they have learned something that you have taught. Beginning your planning with the learning objectives will also help you ensure that your tasks and activities are appropriate and will help your students achieve their objectives.

A learning objective must not include the phrases 'to know' or 'to understand' but instead active verbs such as 'state', 'explain', 'outline', 'list' or 'describe'. Avoid using verbs that are difficult to measure objectively. The following verbs are difficult to assess and measure and therefore should be used with caution:

- Know, comprehend, understand, appreciate, familiarize, study, be aware, become acquainted with, gain knowledge of, cover, learn, realize

Know and understand do not specify any overt 'doing' and although knowing and understanding underpin learning, objectives are always written using active doing verbs. They are statements of what you want your learners to do and should

- Be stated clearly
- define or describe an action
- Are **measurable*, in terms of time, space, amount, and/or frequency.
- Be differentiated



Examples of Measurable Action Words (examples)

Explain	Demonstrate	Analyze	Formulate	Discuss
Compare	Differentiate	Describe	Name	Assess
Evaluate	Identify	Design	Define	List

How can I differentiate my learning objectives and make them more demanding and make sure that they are challenging?

You can make your learning objectives difficult, demanding or challenging by changing the active verb that you use (see detailed table below) to a more complex, involve higher order thinking; or you can add specific conditions or limits.

Putting the theory into practise

The following lists and tables contain examples of active verbs which describe the sorts of things you want your students to be able to do and may help you to write useful learning objectives.

Set 1: Based on the '3 areas of teaching'

Knowledge

analyse	arrange	calculate	circle	cite
classify	compare	contrast	compare	define
describe	diagram	differentiate	group	identify
interpret	itemize	label	list	match
name	outline	plan	record	revise
select	solve	state	tabulate	give examples
evaluate	recognise			

Skills

adjust	assemble	chart	collect	use
draw	employ	establish	illustrate	imitate
interact	locate	maintain	measure	modify
operate	organise	rearrange	return	set up
practice	manipulate	master	fit	perform
demonstrate				

Attitudes

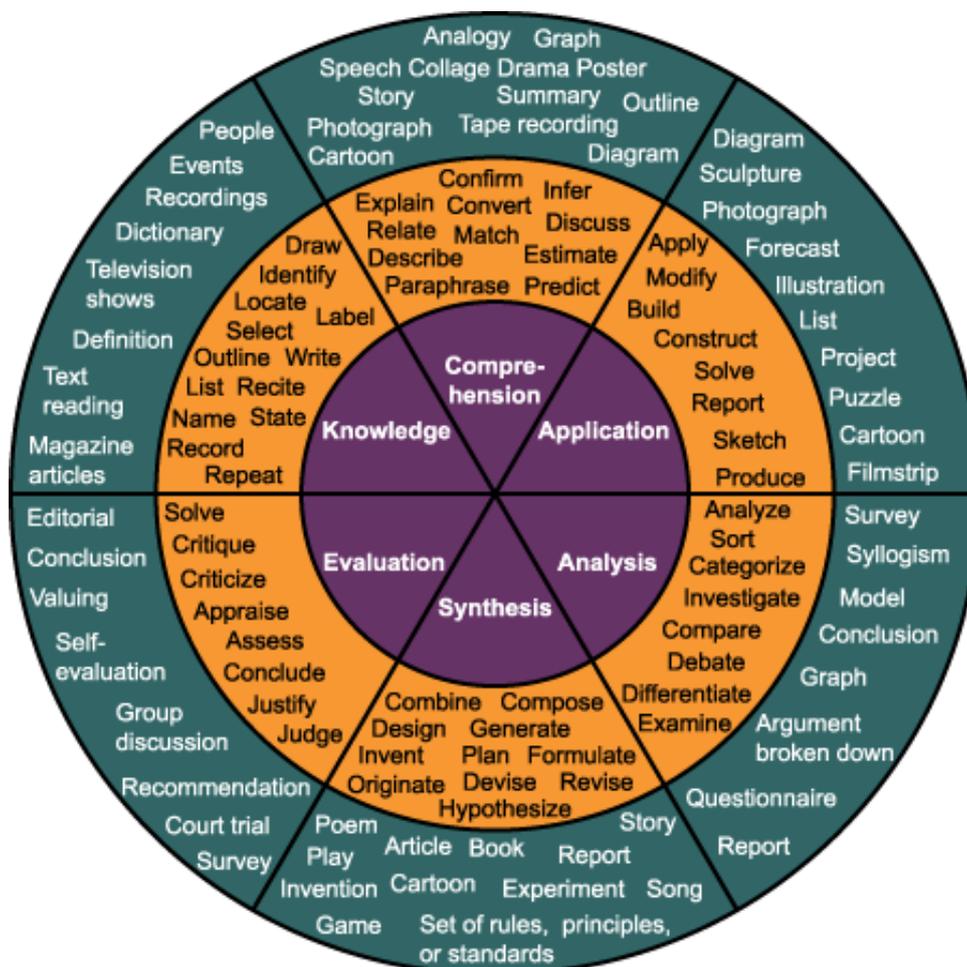
accept	adopt	advocate	approve	assess
challenge	characterise	choose	criticise	defend
evaluate	formulate	judge	justify	manage
model	persuade	recommend	resolve	select
specify	value	re-assure	empathise	

Set 2: Based on increasing level of difficulty and challenge (Blooms Taxonomy)

Emphasis – link to Blooms Taxonomy	Relevant Action Verbs to use in your lesson objectives:
<p>Knowledge</p> <p>‘To find or remember information memorizing information’</p>	<p>Tell, uncover, show, state, define, name, write, recall, recognise, list, label, reproduce, identify, acquire, distinguish, state, order, locate, repeat, count, describe, enumerate, find, match, read, recite, record, select, sequence, state, view</p>
<p>Comprehension</p> <p>‘To understand the information and restate in your own words, paraphrasing, summarizing, translating’</p>	<p>Comprehend, appreciate, select, indicate, illustrate, represent, formulate, explain, classify, translate, extrapolate, convert, interpret, abstract, transform, select, indicate, relate, experiment, simple comparisons, demonstrate, explain, reword, discuss, cite, conclude, describe, discuss, estimate, generalise, give examples, locate, make sense of, paraphrase, predict, report, restate, review, summarise, trace</p>
<p>Apply/Application</p> <p>‘To use information to solve problems, transfer abstract or theoretical ideas to actual situations, identifying connections and relationships and how they apply ’</p>	<p>Assess, change, chart, choose, demonstrate, determine, develop, establish, produce, relate, report, select, show, use, try, diagram, perform, make a chart, put into action, build, report, employ, relate, draw, construct, adapt, apply, sequence, carry out, solve, prepare, operate, generalize, plan, repair, explain, predict, instruct, compute, use, implement, solve,</p>
<p>Analysis</p> <p>‘To take information apart, identifying components, determining arrangement, logic and semantics’</p>	<p>Analyze, study, combine, separate, categorise, detect, examine, inspect, discriminate, take apart, generalise, scrutinize, estimate, compare, observe, detect, classify, discover, explore, distinguish, catalogue, investigate, breakdown, order, determine, differentiate, dissect, contrast, examine, interpret, identify, dissect, characterise, correlate, diagram, illustrate, infer, limit, outline, point out, prioritise, relate, separate, subdivide.</p>
<p>Synthesis</p> <p>‘To create new ideas or things, combining information to form a unique product,</p>	<p>Write, plan, integrate, formulate, propose, specify, produce, organize, theorize, design, build, systematize, combine, summarize, restate, argue, hypothesise, predict, create, invent, produce, modify, extend, design, formulate, develop, build, compile, discuss, derive, relate, generalize, conclude, combine, précis, discuss, integrate, conclude, adapt, categorise, compose, construct, create, design,</p>

requiring of creativity and originality'	generate, incorporate, integrate, modify, organise, perform, propose, reinforce, reorganise, rewrite, structure
Evaluation 'To make judgements about knowledge, to make decisions and supporting views, requires understanding of values. '	Evaluate, interpret, decide, solve, rate, appraise, verify, assess, test, judge, rank, measure, appraise, select, check, evaluate, determine, support, defend, weigh, judge, justify, attach, criticise, weigh up, argue, choose, compare and contrast, conclude, critique, defend, predict, prioritize, prove, reframe,

Blooms Taxonomy with actual teaching and learning ideas and strategies:



Writing Learning Objectives correctly – checklist!:

- Does the learning objective reflect a step in achieving an overall lesson aim?
- Do your lesson activities ensure that students will achieve their objective and your overall aim?
- Is the learning objective measurable?
- Is the learning objective student-centred?
- Have you used effective, action verb that targets the desired level of performance?

Differentiating your learning objectives:

What is the climate of a Tropical Rainforest?

By the end of this Geography lesson:-

You

- Must be able to describe the information shown on a climate graph.
- Should be able to draw a climate graph quite accurately
- Could be able to draw a climate graph accurately and interpret the information it shows.

We will achieve this by studying, drawing and interpreting a climate graph for the TRF!

 Your **PLTS** objective is to be an effective participator!

 Your **SEAL** objective is to use a range of strategies to solve problems when completing a tough task!

Remember today's skills can be transferred to all of your subjects, can you think of a situation they would have helped?

More examples of Learning Outcomes

Good learning outcomes are focused on what the learner will know or be able to do by the end of a defined period of time and indicate how that knowledge or skill will be demonstrated.

- Upon completing this assignment, students will be able to provide accurate diagrams of cells and be able to classify cells from microscopic images.
- By the end of this course, students will be able to identify and develop data collection instruments and measures for planning and conducting sociological research.
- By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to identify and classify their spending habits and prepare a personal budget.

One unit of instruction – whether a course, assignment, or workshop – might have multiple learning outcomes that span a range levels of learning as described by Bloom's Taxonomy and indicated by relevant, active verbs.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- **predict** the appearance and motion of visible celestial objects
- **formulate** scientific questions about the motion of visible celestial objects
- **plan** ways to model and/or simulate an answer to the questions chosen
- **select** and integrate information from various sources, including electronic and print resources, community resources, and personally collected data, to answer the questions chosen
- **communicate** scientific ideas, procedures, results, and conclusions using appropriate SI units, language, and formats

- **describe, evaluate, and communicate** the impact of research and other accomplishments in space technology on our understanding of scientific theories and principles and on other fields of endeavour [Adapted from <http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/~astro/SNC1D.htm>]

Learning outcomes can address content, skills, and long-term attitudes or values.

Content

- By the end of this course, students will be able to categorize macroeconomic policies according to the economic theories from which they emerge.
- By the end of this unit, students will be able to describe the characteristics of the three main types of geologic faults (dip-slip, transform, and oblique) and explain the different types of motion associated with each.

Skills

- By the end of this course, students will be able to ask questions concerning language usage with confidence and seek effective help from reference sources.
- By the end of this course, students will be able to analyze qualitative and quantitative data, and explain how evidence gathered supports or refutes an initial hypothesis.

Values

- By the end of this course, students will be able to work cooperatively in a small group environment.
- By the end of this course, students will be able to identify their own position on the political spectrum.

Learning outcomes should use specific language, and should clearly indicate expectations for student performance.

Vague outcome	More precise outcome
By the end of this course, students will have added to their understanding of the complete research process.	By the end of this course, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the research process in social interventions • evaluate critically the quality of research by others • formulate research questions designed to test, refine, and build theories • identify and demonstrate facility in research designs and data collection strategies that are most appropriate to a particular research project • formulate a complete and logical plan for data analysis that will adequately answer the research questions and probe alternative explanations • interpret research findings and draw appropriate conclusions

By the end of this course, students will have a deeper appreciation of literature and literary movements in general.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- identify and describe the major literary movements of the 20th century
- perform close readings of literary texts
- evaluate a literary work based on selected and articulated standards