Bloom's Taxonomy of Instructional Verbs

Instructional verbs are the heart of learning objectives and lesson plans. They are, if used effectively, the best way to indicate, and communicate to others, specific, observable student behavior. Instructional verbs describe an observable product or action. Inferences about student learning can be made on the basis of what a student does or produces.

Writing Instructional Objectives in a Standards-based System

Behavioral objectives, learning objectives, instructional objectives, and performance objectives are terms that refer to a description of observable student behavior or performance. In a standards based system, describing student behavior or performance is necessary in order to determine accurately whether or not a student has met the standards.

Instructional objectives are about curriculum, not instruction. This is a key point. Many tend to confuse instructional objectives with objectives a teacher may have that relate to student conduct or behavior in a classroom. Instructional objectives are learning objectives; they specify what behavior a student must demonstrate or perform in order for a teacher to infer that learning took place. Since learning cannot be seen directly, teachers must make inferences about learning from evidence they can see and measure. Instructional objectives, if constructed properly, provide an ideal vehicle for making those inferences. They also guide the development and planning of the instructional activities.

The purpose of an instructional objective is to communicate. Therefore, a well-constructed instructional objective should leave little room for doubt about what is intended. A well-constructed instructional objective describes an intended learning outcome and contains three parts, each of which alone means nothing, but when combined into a sentence or two, communicates the conditions under which the behavior is performed, a verb which defines the behavior itself, and the degree (criteria) to which a student must perform the behavior. If any one of these three components is missing, the objective cannot communicate accurately.

A learning objective has three major components:

1. **Conditions** (a statement that describes the conditions under which the behavior is to be performed)
2. **Behavioral Verb** (an action word that denotes an observable student behavior), A description of what the student will be able to do.
3. **Criteria** (a statement that specifies how well the student must perform the behavior).

An instructional objective is the focal point of a lesson plan. It is a description of an intended learning outcome and is the basis for the rest of the lesson. It provides criteria for constructing an assessment for the lesson, as well as for the instructional procedures the teacher designs to implement the lesson. Without an instructional objective, it is difficult, if not impossible to determine exactly what a particular lesson is supposed to accomplish.

Instructional objectives are derived from the standards. In order to write an instructional objective, one should begin with an understanding of the particular content to which the objective will relate. Understanding in more than one way the content to be learned should be a goal of teachers as well as students. This implies that teachers or others who prepare objectives as part of lesson plans or curriculum documents and guides should have more than superficial knowledge of the appropriate content. The standard provides a body of content in which a series of objectives can be written that define how a student will demonstrate mastery of the standard. Instructional objectives deal only with what the student will know or be able to do. They have nothing to do with what the teacher will do during the instruction.

The three domains of educational activities:
Cognitive Domain: mental skills (*Knowledge*)
The cognitive domain (Bloom, 1956) involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the

development of intellectual abilities and skills. There are six major categories, which are listed in order below, starting from the simplest behavior to the most complex. The categories can be thought of as degrees of difficulties.

Affective Domain: growth in feelings or emotional areas (*Attitude*)
The affective domain (Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, 1973) includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes.

Psychomotor Domain: manual or physical skills (*Skills*)
The psychomotor domain (Simpson, 1972) includes physical movement, coordination, and use of the motor-skill areas. Development of these skills requires practice and is measured in terms of speed, precision, distance, procedures, or techniques in execution.

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain

LEVEL	DEFINITION	SAMPLE VERBS	SAMPLE BEHAVIORS
KNOWLEDGE	Student recalls or recognizes Information, ideas, and principles in the approximate form in which they were learned.	Write / List / Label Name / State / Define	The student will define the 6 levels of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
COMPREHENSION	Student translates, comprehends, or interprets information based on prior learning.	Explain / Illustrate Summarize / Paraphrase / Describe /	The student will explain the purpose of bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
APPLICATION	Student selects, transfers, and uses data and principles to complete a problem or task with a minimum of direction.	Use / Compute / Solve / Apply / Demonstrate	The student will write an instructional objective for each level of bloom's taxonomy.
ANALYSIS	Student distinguishes, classifies, and relates the assumptions, hypotheses, evidence, or structure of a statement or question	Analyze / Separate Categorize / Compare / Contrast	The student will compare and contrast the cognitive and affective domains.
SYNTHESIS	Student originates, integrates, and combines ideas into a product, plan or proposal that is new to him or her.	Create / Design / Hypothesize / Invent / Develop	The student will design a classification scheme for writing educational objectives that combines the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
EVALUATION	Student appraises, assesses, or critiques on a basis of specific standards and criteria.	Use / Judge / Recommend / Critique / Justify	The student will judge the effectiveness of writing objectives using Bloom's taxonomy.

The difference between a goal and a learning objective
A goal is a statement of the intended general outcome of an instructional unit or program. A goal statement describes a more global learning outcome. A learning objective is a statement of one of several specific performances, the achievement of which contributes to the attainment of the goal. A single goal may have many specific subordinate learning objectives.

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