

Easy Way to Write Effective Objectives and Goals

©2014 www.ELT.International

Why We Should Plan Learning Objectives as Specific Actions: We all want to believe that our students are learning something when we teach. We may even say that our real “objective,” or goal, is for our students to learn. When some beginning teachers write objectives, they may say they want students to “know” the lesson or to “understand” some concepts. But think about this for a moment. It is actually impossible to see learning or knowing because that takes place INSIDE our students’ brains!

For example, if you simply look at a student, it is impossible to tell if that student knows the English alphabet. The student must SAY the alphabet to DEMONSTRATE his knowledge. Therefore, if you plan a lesson on the alphabet, but your objective says “students will know the alphabet,” you may or may not plan an effective lesson, but if you plan a lesson where your objective is that each student will recite the alphabet by the end of it, then you will plan activities that will help students to accomplish that goal.

When you have a clear, specific objective for something your students will DO, your lesson will likely be much more effective.

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Designing Lessons with the help of Bloom’s Taxonomy, Critical Thinking Questions, & Specific Learning Objectives</h2>					
<i>In order to develop the thinking skills of ...</i>					
REMEMBERING	UNDERSTANDING	APPLYING	ANALYZING	EVALUATING	CREATING
<p style="color: red; margin: 0;">...students receive rich, comprehensible input or information and then are given time and opportunity to do learning tasks in which they actively engage with the material.</p>					
<p style="margin: 0;"><i>Learning tasks are designed to encourage students to ask & answer questions that stimulate thinking, such as...</i></p>					
Who is...? What is...? When did...happen? Where is...? Which one...? How did...? Why did...? How would you describe...? Who were the main...? Can you list three...?	How does...compare to ____? How do you interpret ...? How can you rephrase...? Which facts or ideas show...? Which statements support...? Which information contradicts...? Which is the best answer for...? How would you summarize...?	How would you use...? What examples can you find to...? How would you solve ...using what you have learned...? How would you organize ...to show...? How would you show your understanding...? What would you use to...? How would you apply what you learned to develop...? What other way would you plan to...? What would result if...? What elements would you choose to change if ...?	What are the parts of...? How is...related to...? Why do you think...? What is the theme...? What motive is there...? What inference can you make...? What conclusions can you draw...? How would you categorize...? What evidence can you find...? What is the relationship between...? How would you prioritize...?	What is your opinion of...? Can you assess the value or importance of...? Which would you recommend...? How would you rate the ...? What criteria can you use to evaluate...? What would the ideal...look like? How does this sample compare to the ideal? What judgment would you make about...?	How would things improve if...? Based on what you know, how can you build a better...? What ideas can you combine to solve...? How can you implement...? What steps need to be taken next? How can you follow up on the most promising idea?
<p style="margin: 0;"><i>Working in this way, students will develop thinking skills which means they ...</i></p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and recall of information Have knowledge of dates, events, places, details Have knowledge of major ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grasp meaning Interpret facts, compare, contrast Order, group, rank Identify “big picture” Grasp variations of similar ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use information Use methods, concepts, theories in new situations Solve problems using required skills or knowledge Translate knowledge into new context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See patterns Organize of parts Recognize of hidden meanings Identify components 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare and discriminate between ideas Assess value of information and ideas Make choices based on clear criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repurpose old ideas to create new ones Juxtaposition knowledge from several areas to create new knowledge Generate new ideas
<p style="margin: 0;"><i>When planning lessons, write objectives to say that, by the end of the lesson, students will...</i></p>					
collect, copy, define, describe, examine, find, group, identify, label, list, locate, match, name, quote, recall, recite, recognize, repeat	categorize, change, communicate, convert, distinguish, expand, explain, inform, paraphrase, rearrange, summarize, translate	apply, demonstrate, discuss, organize, solve novel problems, tell consequences, try, use in a new context, utilize, give example	analyze, arrange, categorize, classify, compare, contrast, diagram, differentiate, discuss causes, dissect, distinguish, sequence, survey, sort, take apart, draw conclusions	appraise, assess, choose, conclude, criticize, decide, evaluate, grade, judge, justify, prioritize, recommend, reject, validate	alter, build, combine, compose, construct, create, develop, generate, hypothesize, imagine, improve, invent, modify, plan, predict, produce, propose
<p style="margin: 0;"><i>...something from the material to show what they’ve learned.</i></p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>For example, in these objectives that show thinking skills, students will...</i></p>					
Recite a text from memory. Answer all the comprehension questions after reading. Take a MCQ test.	Write a summary that paraphrases the main ideas of a text. Explain which statements in a text show implied meaning. Describe three ways that two texts contradict each other.	Describe examples of principles learned. Given a problem, apply information learned to devise a unique solution. Create a model that exemplifies principles.	Sort raw data into relevant categories. Create a chart that shows relationships between different categories of raw data.	List 3-4 criteria that are relevant to judging the value of a certain item. Describe an ideal product and compare a real product to the characteristics of the ideal.	Propose a new solution to a problem by combining two previously unrelated ideas.