

# Bloom's Taxonomy

In 1956 *The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, The Classification of Educational Goals, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain* was published. Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist, served as the editor of this handbook. This taxonomy is a classification of learning objectives in education that ideally should be mastered at all levels. In the cognitive domain—the most commonly referred-to domain—objectives focus on knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking skills that demonstrate mastery of the content. Ideally, the goal of education should be to bring students through all six levels in order to demonstrate a level of critical thinking that is commensurate with their development. The taxonomy is used, then, as a kind of planning tool in the classroom that recognizes that basic knowledge is the first step toward mastery of the content area.

The six levels of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Recently, these levels have been reframed and stated as verbs, rather than nouns. The updated version, put forth in the 1990s by one of Bloom's students, Lorin Anderson, uses the following terminology: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. These terms can be explained in the following manner:

**remembering:** recalling basic information by listing, describing, naming, and finding

**understanding:** paraphrasing, classifying, explaining, interpreting, or summarizing information

**applying:** using this information in a similar or relevant situation

**analyzing:** comparing, contrasting, organizing, or breaking information into parts to explore relationships

**evaluating:** critiquing, evaluating, hypothesizing, or forming a judgment

**creating:** developing new ideas or ways of viewing the concept

By integrating these active learning objectives in more or less sequential form or order in classroom learning experiences, students will master the content area. In this way, educators can more clearly determine the most appropriate assessment based on the skills acquired and the learning objectives.

