

Verb List for Writing Behavioral Objectives

Goals and objectives are critical to planning educational experiences. A goal is a general description of what the learner will gain from instruction; an objective is a statement in specific and measurable terms that describes what the learner will know or be able to do as a result of the learning activity. Objectives serve as guides in planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction. They help learners know what is expected of them and help them prioritize content. They provide a template for tests and other evaluation tools. Learning objectives typically are composed of four parts, also known as the ABCD's of objective writing:

A = audience who
B = behavior will do what (in measurable terms)
 C = condition under what conditions
 D = degree how much, or how well, or both

The most important component of a learning objective is the action verb that specifies the performance required. When creating objectives, the more precise the action verb the better. When choosing verbs for objectives, the emphasis is on sing verbs that are specific and unambiguous. The three domains of learning objectives are: cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skill), and affective (attitude)

Cognitive (Knowledge) Domain

The New Version of Bloom's Taxonomy for Objectives in the Cognitive Domain

Level	Cognitive process	Verbs
Lower Level Objectives		
Remembering	Remembering learned material	define, list, state, name, recall, recite, repeat, state, point out, tell, write, cite
Understanding	Explaining material that has been learned	identify, explain, recognize, discuss, describe, restate, express, translate, review, paraphrase, summarize
Higher Level Objectives		
Applying	Using knowledge to find or develop new solutions	apply, demonstrate, illustrate, interpret, dramatize, illustrate, operate, practice, perform, use, order, classify, utilize, calculate, employ, interpolate, adapt, consolidate, develop, extrapolate, modify, predict
Analyzing	The ability to break down material into parts so that is organizational structure can be understood	analyze, categorize, compare, differentiate, examine, contrast, diagram, distinguish, experiment, inspect, question, relate, test, infer, inventory, audit, correlate, deduce, discriminate, investigate, solve, verify
Evaluating	Making decisions and supporting views	choose, critique, rate, appraise, assess, estimate, evaluate, judge, measure, revise, score, select, value, determine, grade, recommend, conclude, confirm, justify, prioritize, prove, research, validate, support
Creating	Combining information, concepts and theories	design, formulate, plan, manage, construct, compose, arrange, create, organize, plan, prepare, propose, assemble, diagnose, generalize, integrate, prescribe, produce, specify, build, devise, generate, integrate, synthesize

After Waller K.V. Writing Instructional Objectives (see references)

Psychomotor Objectives:

Psychomotor (skill) objectives are easier to measure than affective or cognitive objectives because they are readily observable. It is important to delineate the degree or standard of performance expected. The degrees for performance of psychomotor objectives tend to be very explicit to allow the learners (and evaluators) to know if the objectives were achieved relative to standards. An example would be, "The learner will intubate a child older than one year of age who does not have underlying airway problems utilizing a curved blade. The outcome will be considered successful if the learner performs the task within two attempts, does not break or dislodge any teeth, and positions the tip of the endotracheal tube 5-15 mm above the carina."

align	integrate	measure	percuss	disinfect
arrange	collate	palpate	utilize	assemble
hold	close	prepare	perform	dismantle
clean	straighten	insert	repair	tie
tighten	manipulate	operate	extract	standardize
compose	react	troubleshoot	arrange	prepare

Affective Objectives:

The affective domain involves attitudes, feelings, values, and beliefs. While this domain is very important, it is also the most difficult to teach. Because objectives for the affective domain involve attitudes, beliefs, and values, they are difficult to write and extremely difficult to measure. Despite these limitations, every effort should be made to include affective objectives when possible.

Level	Judgment	Verbs	Example
Receiving (attending)	Learners are willing to receive the subject matter	Accept, acknowledge, attend (to) follow, listen, meet, observe, receive	The physician will listen attentively while the patient expresses his beliefs about the cause of his illness
Responding	Learners prefer the subject matter	Agree, answer, ask, attempt, choose, comply, conform, cooperate, exhibit, help, notify, offer, participate (in), read, respond, try	The resident will answer a call for volunteers to work with patients displaced by Hurricane Katrina
Valuing	Learners are committed to the subject matter	Adopt, care (for), compliment, contribute, encourage, endorse, foster, initiate, join, praise, propose, respect, seek, subscribe, suggest support, thank, uphold, express appreciation	The physician will express appreciation for the contributions of all team members in the care of his patients
Organization	Learners are forming a life philosophy	Collaborate, confer coordinate, direct, establish, facilitate, follow through, lead, manage, organize, oversee, recommend, choose (to)	The medical student will choose to eat nutritious food over food obtained from the snack achiness while in the hospital
Characterization by value or value complex	The learners' values consistently guide their behaviors without conscious forethought	Act, advocate, challenge, promote, promulgate, reject, serve, strive, commit (to), defend, empathize, enhance, endeavor, forgive, influence, motivate, negotiate, persevere, persist, promulgate, profess, reject, serve, strive, volunteer (for)	The physician will habitually abide by the standards outlined in the Hippocratic Oath