What are Characteristics of an Effective Assignment or Assessment?

- Built upon important learning outcomes
- Has a well-defined rubric to use in evaluation (e.g. what is poor, limited, proficient, advanced)
- Has clear, brief prompts written in a way that directs students to demonstrate skills (i.e. ensure the appropriate skills are being targeted)
- Has been allocated an appropriate amount of time for students to complete, commensurate with task
- Has challenging, but realistic, attainable goals
- Can include more than one technique (e.g. multiple choice test, short answer/paragraph)


Questions to Address in a Prompt for an Assignment

Why are you giving students this assignment?
- What is its purpose?
- What do you expect students to learn by completing it?
- How will it help prepare them to succeed in later courses, in the workplace, and/or in their lives?

What skills and knowledge you want students to demonstrate?
- Explain all terms that may be fuzzy to your students even if they are clear to you, such as compare, evaluate, and discuss.
- Explicitly ask for the outcomes you’re seeking. For example, if the rubric assesses the quality of arguments, explicitly ask students to make arguments that meet the rubric’s traits.
- Ask only for knowledge or skills that are listed on the rubric.

What should the completed assignment look like?
- What should be included in the completed assignment?
- Who is the (perhaps hypothetical) audience for the assignment: academicans, people working in a particular setting, or the general public?
- How should students format the completed assignment?
- If the assignment is to write or present something, what is an optimal length?

How are students to complete the assignment?
- How much time do you expect them to spend on the assignment?
- How do you expect them to focus their time and energy?
- If this is a course assignment, how much will it count toward their final course grade?
- What readings, reference materials, technologies, and other resources are they expected to use?
- Can they collaborate with others? If so, to what extent?

What are the deadlines for this assignment?

What assistance can you provide while they are working on the assignment?
- Are you willing to critique drafts, for example?

How will you score or grade the assignment?
- The best way to communicate this is to give students the assignment’s rubric.

### Verbs for Significant Learning Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundational Knowledge</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Integration</th>
<th>Human Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Connect</td>
<td>Come to see themselves as...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>Relate</td>
<td>Understand others in terms of...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>Calculate</td>
<td>Integrate</td>
<td>Decide to become...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Application

**Foundational Knowledge**
- Remember
- Understand
- Identify

**Application**
- Use
- Judge
- Calculate
- Critique
- Do [skill]
- Create
- Manage
- Imagine
- Coordinate
- Solve
- Analyze
- Make decisions about...
- Assess

**Integration**
- Connect
- Relate
- Integrate

**Human Dimension**
- Come to see themselves as...
- Understand others in terms of...
- Decide to become...

#### Human Dimension

**Caring**
- Get excited about...
- Be more interested in...
- Value...

**Learning How to Learn**
- Read and study effectively...
- Identify sources of information on...
- Be able to construct knowledge about...
- Set a learning agenda about...
- Frame useful questions
- Create a learning plan...

### Structure of Cognitive Process Dimension of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>Retrieving relevant knowledge from memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Recognizing</td>
<td>Recognizing instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Recalling</td>
<td>Recalling information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Determining the meaning of instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Interpreting</td>
<td>Interpreting instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Exemplifying</td>
<td>Exemplifying instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Classifying</td>
<td>Classifying instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Summarizing</td>
<td>Summarizing instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Inferring</td>
<td>Inferring instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Comparing</td>
<td>Comparing instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Explaining</td>
<td>Explaining instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Carrying out or using a procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Executing</td>
<td>Executing a procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Implementing</td>
<td>Implementing a procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Breaking material into constituent parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Differentiating</td>
<td>Differentiating instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Organizing</td>
<td>Organizing instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Attributing</td>
<td>Attributing instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Making judgements based on criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Checking</td>
<td>Checking instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Critiquing</td>
<td>Critiquing instructional messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Creating a novel, coherent whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Generating</td>
<td>Generating a novel, coherent whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Planning a novel, coherent whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Producing</td>
<td>Producing a novel, coherent whole</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Appears as Exhibit 3.5 in: Fink, L. Dee. "Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses." (2003).*