

Bloom's (Revised) Taxonomy

in the 1950's, Benjamin Bloom described the various levels of reasoning skills teachers will look for in their classroom. College education students will come across this sooner or later, and practicing teachers are reminded of this regularly. Here's a summary, with examples.

Each level should be mastered before a student is asked to reason at the next one, as each succeeding skill is more difficult. Asking students to think at higher levels, beyond simple recall, is an excellent way to stimulate students' thought processes.

After describing the six levels, I'll show an example that illustrates how they might be used in an elementary classroom.

Level 1: **Remembering** (Knowledge)

Students are asked to recall previously learned information.

Key Words for teachers to use:

describe, identify, label, list, match, name, recognize, select, state.

Level 2: **Understanding** (Comprehension)

Students are asked to explain the meaning or show their thinking.

Key Words for teachers to use:

distinguish, estimate, explain, give an example, , predict, rewrite, summarize

Level 3: **Applying**

Students are asked to apply what they have learned in new situations.

Key Words for teachers to use:

apply, change, construct, demonstrate, modify, predict, prepare, relate, show, solve

Level 4: **Analyzing**

Students are asked to break a problem into parts and analyze it. They also could be asked to distinguish facts from inferences.

Key Words for teachers to use:

analyze, compare, contrast, distinguish, illustrate, infer, outline, relate, separate

Level 5: **Evaluating**

Students are asked to make judgments about the value of ideas or materials, or select the best solution to a problem.

Key Words for teachers to use:

compare, conclude, contrast, criticize, defend, discriminate, interpret, justify, summarize, support

Level 6: **Creating** (Synthesis)

Students are asked to build a structure or pattern from different elements, put parts of a solution together to form a whole to create something new.

Key Words for teachers to use:

categorize, combine, compose, create, devise, design, generate, modify, organize, plan, rewrite, summarize

Here's an illustration of how these levels might be used in an elementary classroom to encourage students to think a little more deeply. The sample questions would be asked after reading 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'.

Remembering

Who was the biggest bear?

What food was too cold?

Understanding

Why didn't the bears eat the porridge?

Why did the bears leave the house?

Applying

List the events in the story in the order in which they happened.

Draw three pictures showing the beginning, middle and end of the story.

Analyzing

Why do you think Goldilocks went to sleep?

How would you feel if you were Baby Bear?

What kind of person do you think Goldilocks is, and why?

Evaluating

Write a book review for the story. Who would enjoy it?

Why is this story still being told to children after so many years?

Could Goldilocks take the bears to court? Write about or act out the trial.

Creating

Rewrite this story with a different ending.

Write a set of rules to prevent what happened in the story.

Bloom's taxonomy helps you to ask questions that make learners think. Higher level thinking occurs with higher level questioning. This works at every level.