

# **Big Bend Community College**

## **Faculty Assessment**

### **Handbook and Workbook**



**Updated July 2020**  
**By the Assessment Committee**

# Faculty Assessment Handbook

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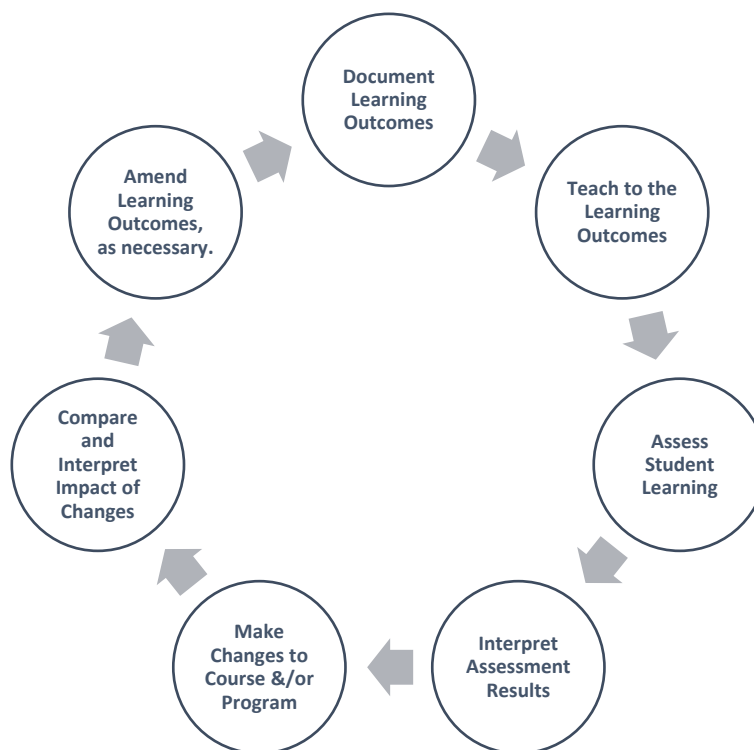
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## Assessment at Big Bend Community College

Welcome to Big Bend Community College. Assessment is part of your job while you are here. Assessment provides continuous instructional improvement. It needs to be meaningful and not simply a check box activity. When we assess a learning outcome it needs to be connected to a bigger question or initiative. Further, assessment data should be meaningful and inform instructional decisions. Assessment is a part of regular faculty duties and this manual will help explain the process and reasoning behind the documentation of what has been assessed. With assessment we can produce positive change for students on campus. Accreditation standards need to be addressed, but you will find that effective, regular assessment for the purposes of continuous instructional improvement will almost naturally do just that. The following document is intended to provide a basic understanding of assessment at Big Bend Community College. Additional resources can be found on the college website under Information Center>Assessment>Tools. Before continuing, please watch the videos titled Assessment 101: [https://youtu.be/ZDtp8\\_QQSpC](https://youtu.be/ZDtp8_QQSpC) , Example Assessment from Start to Finish: <https://youtu.be/BzHr0hUn2UM> , and Completing Assessment for 2019-2020: <https://youtu.be/UEUkyKWn-CY> .

### Assessment of Student Learning Cycle

At Big Bend Community College we aim to “close the loop” in our assessment. This means we hope to make our assessment meaningful and informative to what we do as educators. We expect to make some change to or draw conclusions about our program/course as a result of our assessment. We may even support or encourage change at an institutional level based on what we discover through assessment. The figure below represents our “Assessment Cycle” and encourages us to continually improve.



## Assessing for Improvement Instead of Assessing for Compliance

Previous to reading this section, please watch the video “Assessing for Improvement” at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2O-QHglAi5c> .

**Assessment to Confirm Compliance:** Outcomes define the exit expectations for a course. They create an understanding of what skills and knowledge a student will have upon leaving a program, course, or college. In this way, assessment is sometimes done to confirm compliance, competency, or proficiency. For example, if you have a Course Outcome that says “Students will be able to find and use scholarly resources” then your assessment might be to look at a set of essays and determine whether or not the students are leaving your class with that skill. This assessment is very basic and should be (and often is) happening without prompting by an assessment committee.

- **Benefits:** The benefit of assessing to confirm compliance is that it is easy and can often be done without any significant change to the course. If I want to know whether “Students will be able to find and use scholarly resources” then I can look at a set of essays to see whether that is happening.
- **Weaknesses:** The weakness of assessing to confirm compliance is that it does not complete the assessment cycle. It does not necessarily show that a course or program is being pushed toward excellence through improvement.

**Assessing for Improvement:** When assessing for improvement, you are really starting out further along in the assessment cycle. Instead of focusing your assessment activity on the question of *whether or not there is a problem*, assessing for improvement focuses on the question of *what to do about a problem you have already found*. For example, if you have noticed that only 50% of your students found and used scholarly resources on an essay, you might create an assessment plan which attempts to change some aspect of instruction in order to improve the outcome. You might add another assignment around scholarly resources, or change a lesson plan, or add a library lab session.

- **Benefits:** The benefit of Assessing for Improvement is that you will get further along in the assessment cycle, you will have comparative data, and your assessment will generally have more meaning.
- **Weaknesses:** Assessing for Improvement takes more planning and work.

## Assessment Definitions

Below are definitions for the accreditation terms that we feel are generalizable across the institution as students complete their education at Big Bend. They are hierarchical and students should complete many course learning outcomes on the way to completing their program/degree (AAS, AA&S, AS-T, etc.). Students should encounter the three Institutional Outcomes by the time they finish their degree. The specific Course and Program Outcomes can also be found in materials listed below. Also, in each row, the outcomes created should be the same in every place they are required to be listed.

Type of Outcome	Definition of Student Learning Outcomes	Where they can be found
Course Learning Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Discrete skills or knowledge that a student will master while taking a specific college course.</li> <li>■ A learning outcome is what the student will know or be able to do as a result of taking the course.</li> </ul>	MCO, syllabus
Program/Degree Learning Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Broad sets of skills or knowledge that students will be able to show or demonstrate as a result of taking a set of courses and/or completing a degree/credential.</li> <li>■ These outcomes are broader, fewer, and perhaps more abstract than individual course outcomes.</li> </ul>	MCO, catalog, website, program materials
Institutional Learning Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Overarching behaviors, knowledge, or skills that students will be able to show or demonstrate after taking BBCC courses in different areas.</li> <li>■ These outcomes are broad, cross curricular, and embedded in the requirements of the degree.</li> <li>■ AAS degrees and certificates of 45 credits or more include outcomes in the areas of Human Relations, Communication and Computation.</li> </ul>	MCO, portal, catalog, assessment site (Canvas), website, program materials
College Strategic Plan and Mission Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A broad/overarching goal of the institution, which relates to the college's Mission Statement and the Academic Master Plan.</li> </ul>	College Website
<b>Other Definitions</b>		
<b>Transfer Faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These are the faculty that primarily teach students who are trying to complete a Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) or Associate's Degree.</li> <li>■ For these faculty, Program Outcomes include the three Institutional Outcomes as well as two additional Program Outcomes. These five Program Outcomes Guide the Transfer Degrees.</li> </ul>	
<b>Workforce Education Faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These faculty primarily teach students who are trying to complete professional technical degrees (AAS or AAS-T).</li> <li>■ For these faculty, Program Outcomes include the three Institutional Outcomes as well as unique additional Program Outcomes made for their respective programs. The number of these additional Program Outcomes varies by program.</li> </ul>	
<b>Support Faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These faculty are from the library, counseling department, and BEdA (Basic Education for Adults)</li> <li>■ For these faculty, assessment occurs much more robustly at the program level. Their assessment is often grounded in specific tasks related to their function at the college.</li> </ul>	

## Parts of an Assessment Program

The goal of assessment at Big Bend Community College is to “close the loop” and have meaningful improvement of student learning. The assessment cycle includes:

- Learning Outcomes
- Teach to the Learning Outcome
- Assess Student Learning
- Interpret Assessment Results
- Make Changes to Course and/or Program
- Compare and Interpret Impact of Changes
- Amend Learning Outcomes, as Necessary

The assessment program includes the following:

### Outcomes

- **Course Learning Outcomes** for each course in your department that is relevant to your program.
- **Program Learning Outcomes** as appropriate for your program/degree. Workforce education faculty will have these related to their programs and certificates (of 45 credits or more). For Transfer Faculty, these are the five Program Outcomes.
- **Institutional Outcomes** as appropriate. All faculty should connect these to courses they teach and they should be listed on course MCOs. Some courses will only include one Outcome.

### Outcome Connections

In the same way that your instruction should always be tied to a course and program outcome, your assessment activity must be connected to both a course outcome and a program outcome.

### 7-Year Plan

This schedule will show your plan to assess all outcomes over a multi-year plan. Ideally accreditors would like to see 7-8 years of planning. You can find your 7-year plan in the Faculty and Staff portal under Assessment Documents.

### Assessment Plan and Submission

At the beginning of an assessment cycle (typically in the fall), you will create an assessment plan. The plan for that assessment should be saved on a template which can be found at <https://www.bigbend.edu/assessment/>. Once your assessment is done (at any point during the year, but for many, in the spring), you submit that assessment into SharePoint by copying and pasting your answers in the template, into the online form in the portal under Faculty and Staff Workplace/MCOs Assessment Reporting. Please watch the assessment videos at <https://www.bigbend.edu/assessment/> for further clarification.

## Learning Outcomes

This section of the document will touch on outcomes at Big Bend Community College. Documenting outcomes is the first step in the assessment cycle. For most of you, these outcomes are complete and require minimal (if any) change from year to year. These changes, when they occur, come about as part of the assessment cycle, institutional changes, program changes, and changes to the professional area to which the course or program belongs. The following section is divided into two parts. In the first part, it describes a change in outcome names and categorization. This section is primarily for faculty who have already been at the college and might be confused by the change. The second section is about the process of creating and determining good outcomes.

### Transition to Program Outcomes and Institutional Outcomes

During the 2019-2020 year, it was decided that the term “General Education” was confusing. This term was being used to refer to both the three “Institutional Outcomes” and the five Transfer Program Outcomes. To clarify this, Workforce and Transfer Faculty both have adopted three “Institutional Outcomes” (Communication, computation, and human relations) and the Transfer side of the college is now being categorized as a program. In this way, the Transfer Degrees have three “Institutionalized Outcomes” which are imbedded within the five “Program Outcomes”. Each program within the Workforce side of the college includes the three “Institutional Outcomes” imbedded within their Program Outcomes. The number of the Program Outcomes in the Workforce side varies by program.

The current General Education Outcomes are listed below. During the outcome revision it was also decided that the General Education Outcomes were general enough that they could also be applied to the Institutional Outcome areas of Communication, Computation, and Human Relations. Both Transfer and Workforce Education faculty can benefit from these outcomes and should try to include them on their Master Course Outlines (MCOs) where appropriate.

The five Program Outcomes for the Transfer Program are listed below (the three Institutional Outcomes are the first three of these):

1. Students will be able to communicate clearly and effectively.
2. Students will be able to reason mathematically.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate teamwork, ethics, appropriate safety awareness and/or workplace specific skills.
4. Students will be able to recognize or articulate personal/interpersonal aspects of, or connections between, diverse cultural, social, or political contexts.
5. Students will be able to solve problems by gathering, interpreting, combining and/or applying information from multiple sources.

## Writing a Good Learning Outcome\*

\* Modified from “Learning Outcomes: Learning achieved by the end of a course or program” by Shirley Lesch, George Brown College <http://liad.gbrownc.on.ca/programs/InsAdult/currlo.htm>

### What is meant by Learning Outcomes?

Think for a moment about a course or training session with which you are currently involved. Identify one skill that you think would be essential to know or do by the end of this learning period. If you were able to do this, then you are beginning to construct a learning outcome.

### Definition of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that students have achieved, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program. In other words, learning outcomes identify what the learner will know and be able to do by the end of a course or program.

Spady (1994), an educational researcher who spearheaded the development of outcomes based education, suggests that the ability to *demonstrate* learning is the key point. This involves a performance of some kind in order to show *significant* learning, or learning that matters. He claims that significant content is essential, but that content alone is insufficient as an outcome. Rather, knowledge of content must be manifested through a demonstration process of some kind.

An outcome statement that incorporates this knowledge within a performance demonstration might include:

- The learner will have demonstrated the ability to make engine repairs on a variety of automobiles.

In the above statement, the ability to make engine repairs implies that the person has the requisite knowledge to do so. Performance statements include higher level thinking skills as well as psychomotor skills.

Spady also addresses the context or setting in which the performance demonstration occurs. He suggests a range of performance contexts from that of demonstrations of classroom learning to those which involve living successfully in the larger society. Thus, his highest level outcomes refer to generic skills such as the preparation of learners to be problem solvers, planners, creators, learners and thinkers, communicators etc., regardless of subject areas studied.

Learning outcomes refer to observable and measurable

- *knowledge*



- *skills*
- *attitudes*

*(Source: Guidelines to the Development of Standards of Achievement through Learning Outcomes, 1994. College Standards and Accreditation Committee)*

## Characteristics of Learning Outcomes Statements

Learning outcomes should:

- reflect broad conceptual knowledge and adaptive vocational and generic skills
- reflect essential knowledge, skills or attitudes;
- focus on *results* of the learning experiences;
- reflect the desired end of the learning experience, not the means or the process;
- represent the *minimum* performances that must be achieved to successfully complete a course or program;
- answer the question, "Why should a student take this course anyway?"

Learning outcomes statements may be considered to be exit behaviors.

## Background and Context for Development of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes reflect a movement toward *outcomes based learning (OBL)* in elementary, secondary, and post secondary educational systems throughout North America, and beyond. This movement is, in turn, influenced by public pressure to ensure a greater accountability and consistency within educational systems. Through the creation of outcomes statements, and the evaluation of learner performance in relation to those statements, it is believed by some that a more accountable educational system will result.

Outcomes-based education is thought to provide greater:

- consistency - in course offerings across the educational system
- accountability - expectations for learning are clearly stated, and frequent assessment processes help both educator and student identify progress toward meeting the outcomes
- accessibility - clearly defined outcomes enable learners to demonstrate achievement of those outcomes through prior learning assessment processes

At Big Bend Community College, learning outcomes are written at the course, program, and institutional level.

### Learning Outcomes written at the *course* level should:

- State clear expectations: Learners know what they have to do to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes.
- Represent culminating performances of learning and achievement.: This means the highest stage of development, or exit, end performance.
- Describe performances that are *significant, essential, and verifiable*: Performances can be verified or observed in some way and that they represent more than one small aspect of behavior. Also, performance is considered to be essential for success in the course.
- Preferably state only ONE performance per outcome.
- Refer to learning that is *transferable*: The learning can readily be transferred from a class to a work place environment, or from one workplace environment to another, etc.
- Not dictate curriculum content: There could be a number of different ways to achieve the outcome.
- Reflect the overriding principles of equity and fairness and accommodate the needs of diverse learners.
- Represent the minimal acceptable level of performance that a student needs to demonstrate in order to be considered successful. (Source: Guidelines to the Development of Standards of Achievement through Learning Outcomes, 1994. College Standards and Accreditation Committee)

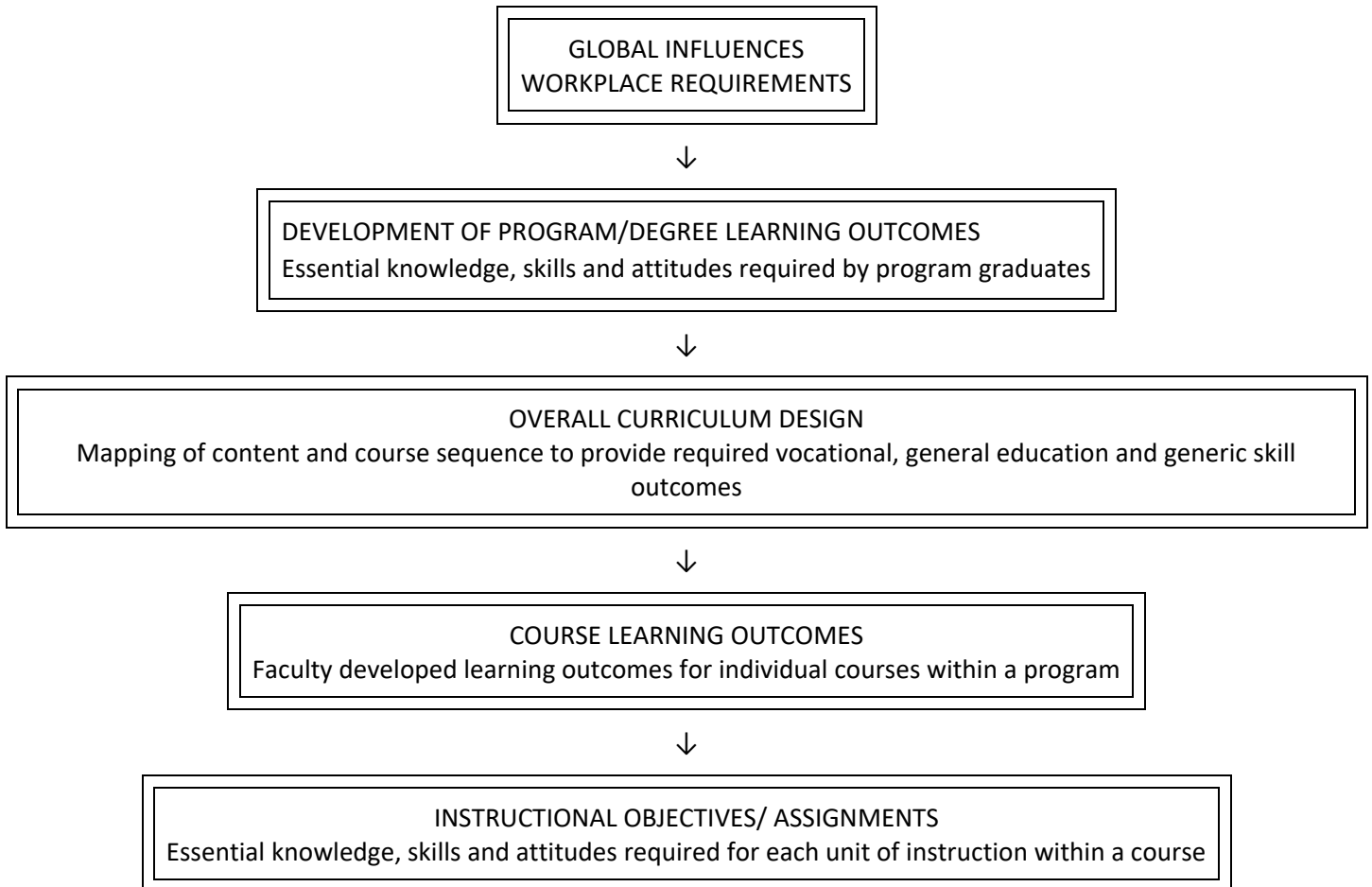
### Learning Outcomes written at the *program* level should:

- Be broader, fewer and perhaps more abstract performance expectations compared to the course level outcomes.
- Reflect performance requirements seen as a culmination of several courses or completion of a program/degree.

### Learning Outcomes written at the Institutional level should:

- Reflect overarching behaviors, knowledge, or skills that students will be able to demonstrate after taking BBCC courses in different areas.
- Be broad, cross curricular, and embedded in the requirements of the degree. Not just related to specific area of study.
- Be relevant in degrees or certificates of 45 credits or more.

## Overview of Learning Outcomes Structure in Community Colleges



### Anatomy of Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome statements may be broken down into three main components:

1. an *action word* that identifies the performance to be demonstrated;
2. a *learning statement* that specifies what learning will be demonstrated in the performance;
3. a broad statement of the *criterion* or standard for acceptable performance.

#### For Example:

ACTION WORD (performance) Use Bloom's	LEARNING STATEMENT What you expect students to do.	CRITERION How or When do you expect students to complete the learning?
Applies	principles of asepsis	when executing psychomotor skills
Produces	Documents	using word processing equipment
Analyzes	global and environmental factors	in terms of their effects on people

(Source for categories: Developing Learning Outcomes Self-Study Guide, Humbler College of Applied Arts and Technology, March, 1996)

## Performance Elements

Learning outcomes statements can be supported by the inclusion of *performance elements*. Performance elements or indicators as they are sometimes called, provide a more specific picture of an ability. They define and clarify the level and quality of performance necessary to meet the requirements of the learning outcome.

In effect, the elements are indicators of the means by which the learner will proceed to satisfactory performance of the learning outcome. That is, they help to address the question, "What would you accept as evidence that a student has achieved a certain level, or is in the process of achieving the outcome?"

(Source: Generic Skills Learning Outcomes for Two and Three Year Programs in Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. The College Standards and Accreditation Council, May, 1995)

For example, suppose you have the learning outcome "Applies analytical skills when addressing contemporary social issues."

Some performance elements might include:

- identifies assumptions underlying various points of view
- presents a cogent argument with supporting evidence

Verbs to avoid when writing learning outcomes include:

appreciate, enjoy, know, realize, be aware of, perceive

These words are vague and abstract. There is really no way to concretely assess them.

Some common verbs seen in learning outcomes include the following:

use, develop, analyze, express, evaluate, organize, create, write, plan, apply, produce, implement, compile, incorporate, construct

## Learning Outcome Activity

Using the table below and the Blooms Taxonomy Chart on the next page, try to come up with two sets of learning outcome components for a **course** you teach. (The examples are given from the page before.

ACTION WORD (performance) Use Bloom's	LEARNING STATEMENT What you expect students to do?	CRITERION How or When do you expect students to complete the learning? (the conditions of the performance demonstration)
Analyzes	global and environmental factors	in terms of their effects on people
1.		
2.		

One you have written your learning outcome components, translate them into learning outcome statements.

**Example from above:** "Students in Environmental Science 101 will be able to analyze global and environmental factors in terms of their effects on people." (You could even add the assignment as part of the end of the outcome "...as indicated by successful completion of assignment 5.").

1.

2.

### CHECKLIST FOR INTEGRATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

- I know what the learning outcomes are for my course and program.
- I have designed learning activities and resources which reflect the learning outcomes.
- I have designed assessment/evaluations with feedback opportunities for students.  
The evaluation strategies reflect the learning outcomes.
- When necessary, course learning outcomes have been developed in consultation with program advisory committees, and groups of other faculty; not by individuals working in isolation.
  - Since learning outcomes reflect the present and anticipated future needs of society, their development is most sound when there is discussion and input from a variety of sources.
- Course learning outcomes dovetail with program learning outcomes for the program in which I am working.

Some learning outcome statements may receive more weighting or importance within a course than others. This differential course weighting would be reflected in the percentage of a course grade attached to each outcome.

## Application

## Ar

## Synthesis

## Evaluation

**To justify.** Presenting and defending opinions by making judgements about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria.

Questions:	Questions:	Questions:	Questions:	Questions:	Questions:
Can you list three...?	Can you explain what is happening... what is it...?	How would you use...?	What are the parts or features of...?	What changes would you make to solve...?	Do you agree with the actions/outcomes...?
Can you recall...?	How would you describe the type of...?	What examples can you find to...?	How is... related to...?	How would you improve...?	What is your opinion of...?
Can you select...?	How would you compare...? Contrast...?	How would you solve... using what you have learned...?	Why do they think...?	What would happen if...?	How would you resolve/dispose...?
How did... happen?	How would you rephrase the meaning...?	How would you organise... to show...?	What motive is there...?	What would happen on the reason...?	Can you assess the value/importance of...?
How is...?	How would you summarise...?	How would you show your understanding of...?	Can you list the parts...?	Can you propose an alternative...?	Would it be better if...?
How would you describe...?	What can you say about...?	What approach would you use to...?	What inferences can you make...?	Can you invent...?	What did they (the character) choose...?
How would you explain...?	What facts or ideas show...?	How would you apply what you learned to develop...?	What conclusions can you draw...?	Can you... to create a different...?	How would you rate the...?
How would you show...?	What is the main idea of...?	What other way would you plan to...?	How would you classify...?	How could you change (modify) the plot (plan)...?	How would you cite to defend the actions...?
When did... happen?	Which is the best answer...?	What would you use to plan to...?	How would you categorise...?	What could be done to minimise (plan)...?	How would you evaluate...?
Where is...?	Which statements support...?	What would result if...?	Can you identify the difference parts...?	What would be done to minimise (maintain)...?	How could you determine...?
Which one...?	Will you state or interpret in your own words...?	Can you make use of the facts to...?	What is the relationship between...?	What way would you design...?	What choice would you have made...?
Who was...?	Who were the main...?	What elements would you choose to change...?	Can you make a distinction between...?	Suppose you could... what would you do...?	What would you select...?
Why did...?	What questions would you ask in an inter-	What facts would you select to show...?	What is the function of...?	How would you test...?	How would you prioritise...?
			What ideas justify...?	Can you formulate a theory for...?	What judgement would you make about...?
				Can you predict the outcome if...?	Based on what you know, how would you explain...?

## Bloom's Taxonomy: Teacher Planning Kit