

Revisiting Bloom's Taxonomy

The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, or Bloom's Taxonomy, is a potentially useful tool in the evaluation of professional learning, particularly when undertaken by individuals who are evaluating their own learning against Bloom's domains and their characteristics.

In 1956, the educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom identified educational objectives and split them into three domains: Affective, Psychomotor and Cognitive. His approach is hierarchical; learning at lower levels is required before moving on to higher levels.

In a nutshell, this is a breakdown of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (note that it is the cognitive domain that is most frequently referred to):

Affective Domain: to do with attitudes

- Receiving: passive attention
- Responding: active participation
- Valuing: attaching value to information
- Organising: making links and connections in learning
- Characterising: values and beliefs influence behaviour

Psychomotor Domain: to do with skills

- The ability to manipulate tools and instruments

Cognitive Domain: to do with knowledge

Split into six levels:

- Knowledge – memory of previously learned matter
- Comprehension – understanding
- Application – use of knowledge
- Analysis – examination of knowledge
- Synthesis – compilation of knowledge
- Evaluation – making judgements on knowledge

Find out more:

If you are interested in learning more about Bloom's Taxonomy and how it can be used, you may be interested in *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, edited by Lorin W. Anderson and David Krathwohl (2001, Addison Wesley Longman), which takes an up-to-date look at Bloom's work.