

# The Massage Educator

Fall 07

**66%** of massage therapists had two or more occupations before starting massage school, according to the Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB) 2007 Job Task Analysis survey.

Created by Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals • [philosophy for instructors](#)



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### BLOOM'S TAXONOMY & ITS RECENT REVISION

#### PART ONE

Based at the University of Chicago, Benjamin Bloom was a teacher, university examiner, scholar, and researcher in the field of education. In 1948, at the Convention of the American Psychological Association, Bloom gathered a group of educators for an important initiative: to develop a system for classifying educational objectives. In 1956 the group published *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1: Cognitive Domain*, most commonly called Bloom's Taxonomy. Fifty-one years later, this classification of education goals remains

in widespread use by educators around the world. Good learning objectives define the behaviors and knowledge educators believe students need to achieve success in massage school and as a professional. Objectives help educators map meaningful learning experiences and organize courses or programs to provide continuity and sequence for learners. **Bloom's aim was to aid communication between instructors about educational goals and to stimulate thought about educational problems.**

#### THE THREE DOMAINS

Bloom's team categorized learning behaviors in three broad domains. The cognitive domain dealt with recall, recognition of knowledge, and each student's development of intellectual abilities, such as critical thinking. The affective domain looked at learning behaviors that dealt with interests, attitudes, and values, and how these are developed through learning experiences. The psychomotor domain described changes in motor skills. Educators and researchers had difficulty precisely describing objectives and learning experiences specific to the affective and psychomotor domains, and focused first on the cognitive classifications. (A handbook for the affective domain was produced in 1964, but Bloom never participated on the development of objectives for the psychomotor domain. This came later as other educators and researchers

## An Artful Idea



This exercise helps students recognize movement in everything around them, while determining which muscles are contracting and lengthening to maintain various postures.

Ask each student to bring in a favorite image—a painting, a photo, a comic book graphic, a CD or magazine cover. The only stipulation: the graphic must include people. Break students into pairs. Have one student act out the movements shown in the image. The other student's assignment is to record the movements (abduction of the glenohumeral joint, extension of the coxal joint, etc.).



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# ABMP's Student Success Program

## Curriculum Tools for *You*

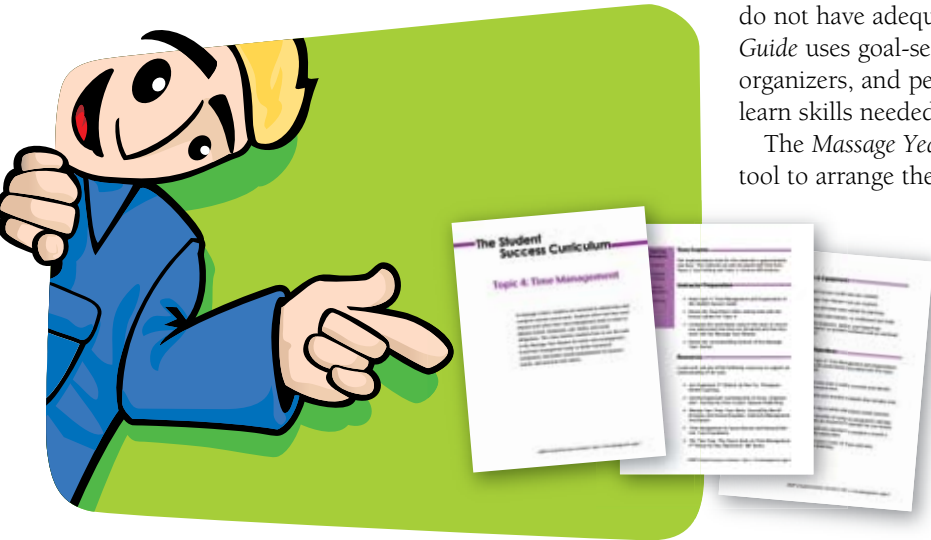
Educators know students often begin a massage program unprepared for its academic nature. Students may have gaps in their education or may lack the interpersonal skills needed to interact optimally with classmates and instructors. *ABMP's new Student*

*schools, was developed to complement ABMP's new materials for student members and to help schools and instructors address these challenges.*

Many capable adult students experience frustration, and even failure, in school. This is not because they lack ability, energy, or enthusiasm, but because they do not have adequate study skills. The *Student Success Guide* uses goal-setting exercises, charts, graphic organizers, and personal assessments to help students learn skills needed to achieve academically.

The *Massage Year Planner* provides students with a tool to arrange their schedules and assignments, plan study sessions, and organize life. Throughout the colorful pages, goal-setting exercises, tips for success, and positive affirmations keep the process of staying organized interesting. More than just a time management tool, this planner provides a place for photos and notes from classmates, becoming a keepsake at the end of training.

To complement the guide and planner, the Student Success Curriculum is available for schools' use, making it easy to bring this material into the classroom. *The curriculum provides everything the school needs to use these materials in a variety of settings.* Each topic is a stand-alone teaching kit; topics can be mixed and matched to best fit the needs of each school. Teaching kits include teaching strategies, resources, a supply list, learning objectives, activities, self-assessments, lecture outlines, and PowerPoint presentations. To review the curriculum, visit [www.abmp.com](http://www.abmp.com) and click on the Massage School Alliance section. 🍏



Success Curriculum, available free to

## EVALUATE YOUR TEACHING

Most massage teachers know what they do very well and what they struggle with in the classroom. Teaching is a lifelong learning opportunity, and massage instructors are a dynamic group of learners who require constant adjustments and adaptations.

Evaluation and self-awareness are integral to learning, promoting good ethics, enhanced leadership behaviors, better communication skills, and innovative teaching methods. Most often, administrators are the individuals who evaluate teachers and evaluations are sometimes tied to pay. Brief evaluations do not illuminate each teacher's true strengths and weaknesses. Some administrators are actively involved with the development of teachers and help them set goals for improving teaching skills, providing feedback on the development of new skills. Administrators are often simply too busy, though, and effective plans for growing teaching skills are low on the priority list. How can a teacher grow without regular and specific feedback? One way is a personal plan for goal setting and regular self-evaluation.



### DEFINING SKILLS

Some teaching skills are definable, while others are difficult to identify. Teachers can arrive at the same positive endpoint, with the same material, in

different ways.

Some elements of a good lecture are clear. The instructor's voice should be easy to understand, and the teacher should use a variety of visual aids, have mastery over the material, demonstrate enthusiasm for the topic, get students involved appropriately, and use real life examples to illuminate core concepts. Still, some instructor qualities are impossible to capture. It's easy to list "use of humor" as a skill, but how do you quantify and qualify humor? Some teachers are very funny and students laugh and joke throughout classes, but is every joke appropriate? Does the time spent joking impact productivity? How does an instructor improve his sense of and use of humor? Like many other skills, use of humor requires the teacher to contemplate the question from various angles. The funny teacher still must analyze how humor supports the learning objectives in his/her classes. For each teacher, consideration of each skill set will mean something slightly different.



### GOAL SETTING AND SELF-EVALUATION

The **Instructor Growth Self-Evaluation Form** available at the Massage School

Alliance section of [www.abmp.com](http://www.abmp.com) provides a template for self-appraisal and self-improvement. Before completing the form, think through the last academic year and write two stories about your classes. In one, describe a successful class or learning activity: students were invested, the learning objectives were met, and you felt innovative and exhilarated by the session. In the second, describe a class or learning activity that didn't work: students were withdrawn and bored, the learning objectives were not achieved, and you felt depressed and exhausted at the end of the session. Recalling these experiences will help you tap into your strengths and weaknesses and answer all questions on the self-evaluation honestly.

Complete the self-evaluation form and review it. Set two teaching goals for the next month and describe your plan to achieve the goals. Give yourself deadlines and make the tasks as specific as possible. If one of your goals is to improve your ability to facilitate classroom discussions, you might complete the tasks below.

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"SETTING AN EXAMPLE IS NOT THE MAIN MEANS OF INFLUENCING ANOTHER, IT IS THE ONLY MEANS."

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

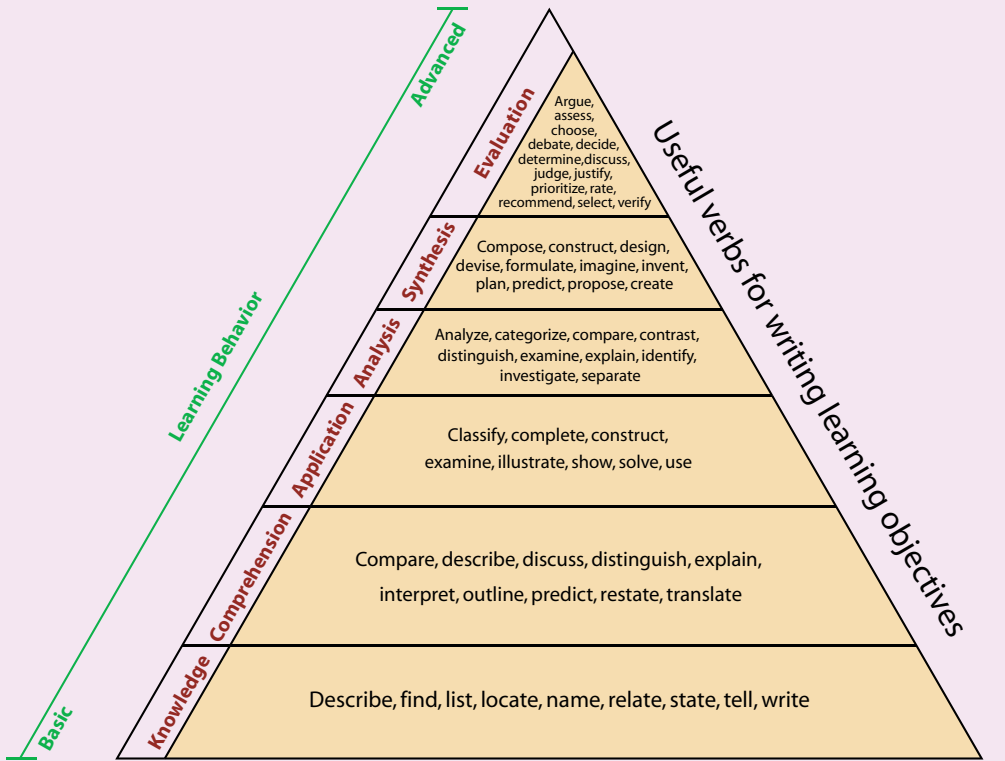
built on Bloom's work.) This article looks at the cognitive taxonomy. The affective and psychomotor domains are explored in part two of this article in the winter issue of *The Massage Educator*.

### BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

The cognitive taxonomy contains six major areas. They are, from most basic to most advanced: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Simple learning behaviors (knowledge, comprehension, and application) are involved in more complex learning behaviors (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), so the taxonomy helps instructors plan experiences that promote greater complexity of learning behaviors as students progress.

The taxonomy seeks to classify the intended behavior of students, not the content, instructional methods, teaching materials, or the way in which the student and instructor relate. A foundation for the development of effective curricula, the taxonomy provides perspective on program design. For example, an instructor comparing the program's existing learning objectives to the taxonomy may find that all of the learning objectives fall into the knowledge category. She must then create learning experiences that grow each student's application and critical thinking skills. The focus will be the expansion of learning objectives in the comprehension, application, and analysis categories.

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Bloom's Taxonomy

### Bloom's Taxonomy Resources

Anderson, Lorin, ed. 2001. *Taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: a revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Bloom, Benjamin S., ed. 1984. *Taxonomy of educational objectives: book 1: cognitive domain*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman Publishing.

Harrow, A. 1972. *A taxonomy of psychomotor domain: a guide for developing behavioral objectives*. New York: David McKay Co., Inc.

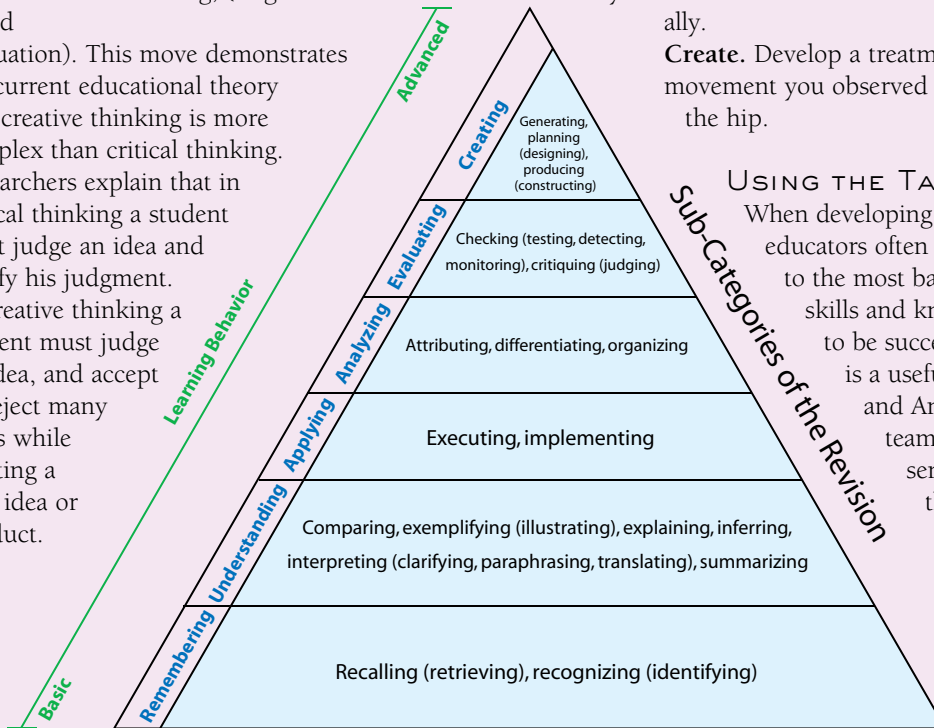
Krathwohl, D. R., Bloom, B. S., and B. B. Masia. 1973. *Taxonomy of educational objectives, the classification of educational goals. handbook 2: affective domain*. New York: David McKay Co., Inc.

Simpson, E. J. 1972. *The classification of educational objectives in the psychomotor domain*. Washington, D.C.: Gryphon House.

## A REVISED TAXONOMY

In 2001, a group led by Lorin Anderson, a former student of Bloom, published a revision of Bloom's original taxonomy. Composed of cognitive psychologists, curriculum theorists, and instructional researchers, the group evolved Bloom's work based on current learning theory. The revised taxonomy is illustrated below.

The first change was a replacement of Bloom's nouns with verbs (e.g., changing knowledge to remembering), based on the idea that thinking is an active process best described by verbs. The taxonomies are both designed as hierarchies and a major structural change was the movement of creating (originally referred to as synthesis) to a more advanced position than evaluating, (originally called evaluation). This move demonstrates the current educational theory that creative thinking is more complex than critical thinking. Researchers explain that in critical thinking a student must judge an idea and justify his judgment. In creative thinking a student must judge an idea, and accept or reject many ideas while creating a new idea or product.



**Revised Taxonomy**

Anderson's group created a multi-tiered system with sub-categories. Understanding is broken out into its sub-categories of interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, etc. The goal is to make the taxonomy easier to apply in the classroom. For example, it might be applied this way:

**Remember.** Describe where the hamstrings are located.

**Understand.** Summarize the general actions of the hamstrings.

**Apply.** Construct a theory about why hamstrings perform the actions they perform.

**Analyze.** Differentiate between the actions of the biceps femoris, semitendinosus, and semimembranosus.

**Evaluate.** Judge the quality of movement exhibited by your client when he/she rotates the hip (coxal joint) laterally and medially.

**Create.** Develop a treatment plan to address the quality of movement you observed during lateral and medial rotation of the hip.

## USING THE TAXONOMIES

When developing a curriculum for a massage program, educators often start at the most advanced and work to the most basic. They ask the question, "What skills and knowledge must our graduates possess to be successful in the massage profession?" This is a useful strategy, which Bloom's *Taxonomy* and Anderson's revision, help curriculum teams carefully define. The result is a series of purposeful learning events that lead to the attainment of specific objectives, forming a sequence that allows learners to integrate what might otherwise be viewed as isolated experiences. 🍏

- By November 1, read a book on how to facilitate groups.
- Plan and research three group discussion topics related to class content by November 15.
- Sit in and observe Debby as she facilitates a class discussion and ask her for tips by November 15.
- Ask Debby to sit in on one of my classroom discussions and give honest feedback by November 20.

At the end of the month, evaluate your improvement and set two new goals. Asking peers for feedback is a useful way to get objective input without involving an administrator.

Retain copies of your self-evaluation forms and goal assessments; present these to your administrators during your next review. These documents can help him/her fine-tune the feedback given to you during a formal evaluation. Self-evaluations also demonstrate your willingness and commitment to improve your teaching skills.

Don't forget to celebrate when you make strides and achieve your goals. While the self-evaluation process can feel challenging at times, it places the teacher back in the role of learner and inspires new and positive advances in lesson planning. 🍏

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