



Scholarship of Excellence
in Teaching
By Mary Diener

THE OPEN OUTLINE

WHY DO WE NEED AN OPEN OUTLINE?



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WHAT DO I TEACH?

TVRA 134 MEDIA APPRECIATION
MEDIA ARTS AND TECHNOLOGIES DEPARTMENT

Communications

Books

Newspapers

Magazines

Sound Recordings

Radio/Broadcasting

Film/Movies

Television

Internet

Gaming

Advertising

Public Relations

SUCCESS FOR THE STUDENT

- **Problems That Students Have:** Students tend to wait until the last minute to study for a test and then cram the night before. In this scenario, students are not really learning and retaining the information. In order to avoid this, the open outline strategy could be the answer to help them learn along the way.
- I had the students participate online 4 times during the semester in this open outline; once after each unit. Overall, this should have a fabulous effect in reinforcing the students in HOW to learn by allowing them to reflect on their own knowledge, or lack thereof.
- The students will be able to lead themselves and hopefully become independent thinkers. I would like to help them with their metacognition and make them more efficient and effective learners.

- The open outline included questions that were designed to promote the students' thinking and research capabilities.
- I did not GIVE the students answers. The students had to look up answers in their textbook, notes or recordings. This encouraged them to USE the textbook and had them recall answers that they have heard from the lecture.
- In the open outline, the students were asked to recall information from the chapter that we just discussed and to define terminology. They needed to tell me where they found the answers, i.e.. page numbers from the text.
- I experimented with different implementations of the outlines. In remote teaching mode, I broke the students up into small breakout groups on Collaborate Ultra in order to discuss the answers. Another time, I discussed the answers in class as a group.

WHAT IS THE STRATEGY?

MEASURING SUCCESS

- I will compare the grades from the current class with the open outline to the grades of the students that I have had in previous semesters.
- I provided a survey to the students to ask students how they felt about the open outlines and if they believed that they were beneficial to them. I will ask them if the outlines helped them prepare for the tests and helped them to understand the material better.
- I will also look at the discussions and see whether they are more insightful and more articulate later in the semester than they were at the beginning. This should not only help the struggling students to improve, but also reinforce the study habits of the already high achievers.

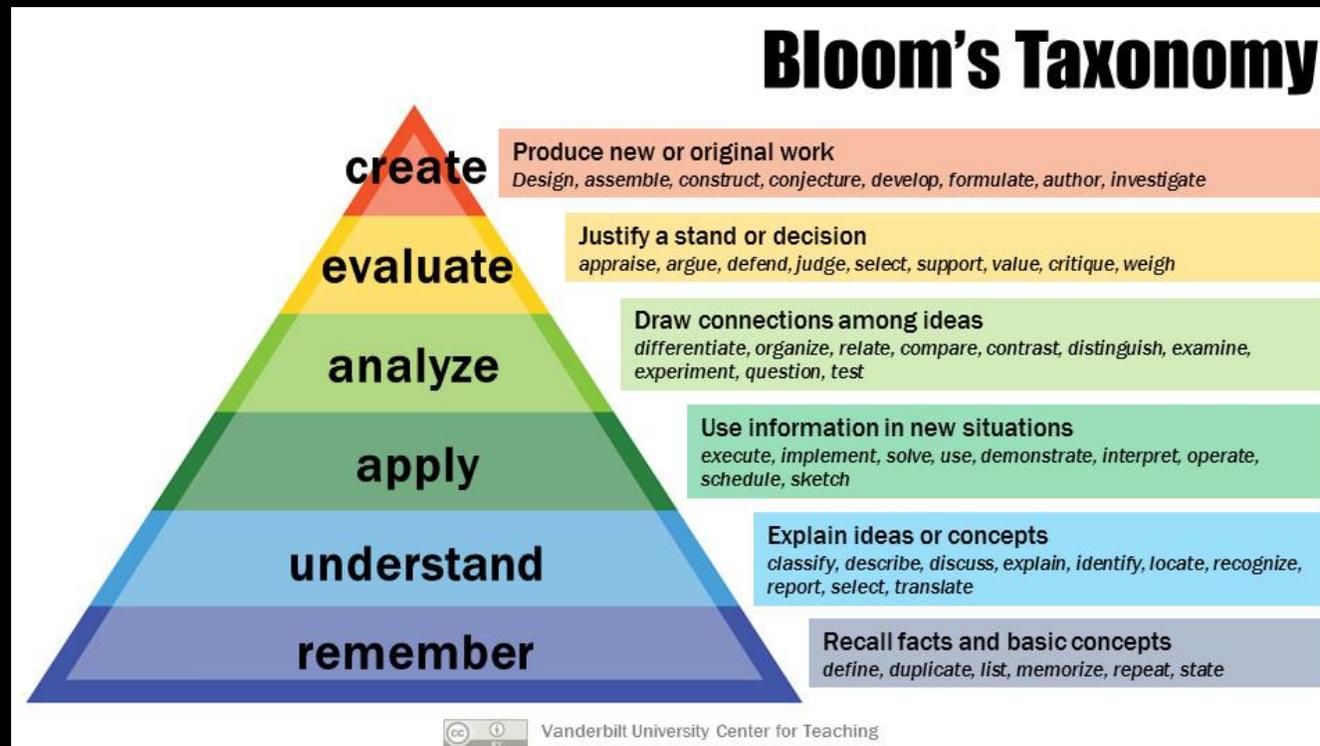
ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING

- This new strategy will help students to think through the material post-class lecture and encourage them, if you will, to understand how to learn the material in advance of the tests. I would be able to elicit information from the students and get them thinking critically about the answers and how they got to them.
- I would like to tie this project into some of the concepts that I learned about in Sandra Yancy McGuire's book, *Teach Students How to Learn*.
- I was instantly hooked with the concept of Bloom's Taxonomy.
 - 1. Ask: what's the difference between studying and learning?
 - 2. Ask: would you study harder to make an A in the class or to teach the class?
 - 3. Explain the hierarchy of Bloom's.
 - 4. Ask at what level are you operating and at what level do you need to be operating now?

My goal is to have them be in LEARN mode instead of STUDY mode.



BLOOM'S TAXONOMY



Bloom's Taxonomy by Vandy CFT (2016) <https://www.flickr.com/photos/vandycft/29428436431/>

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RESULTS COMPARING FALL 2020 GRADES (OPEN OUTLINES) WITH SPRING 2020 GRADES (NO OPEN OUTLINES)

- The number of As were up by 10%
- The number of Bs remained the same
- The number of Cs were up by 5%
- The number of Ds remained the same.
- The number of Fs were none this semester compared with one last semester.

RESULTS— STUDENT SURVEYS

Did the Outlines help you?

Were the outlines too specific or not specific enough?

Were they given out at the appropriate times during the semester?

Which was better:

- Working in Breakout Groups
- Working on your own after class
- Having the professor talk through the answers in class
- The answers were divided almost equally

STUDENT COMMENTS

I believe that the outlines were a bit general and I would have liked for them to be more specific. But, overall, they did help me to zone in on what to study for the test. The Open Outlines were beneficial in helping me because I knew what I should be focusing on. There was a lot of information in class, in the book and in the notes that you posted so I needed help in organizing my thoughts.

---Dan W.

One comment I do have is that the outlines were such a BIG help!! professor, you have no idea how much they helped!! I appreciate that you recorded our classes so much. Also, I just want to say Thank you for such a wonderful class and experience. I had so much fun and I enjoyed it and learned a lot. I know that this pandemic was very different for students but also professors and I just want to say that I appreciate all the hard work you did this semester for us students! This semester was hard for us all but with your patience and passion for teaching us during these times we were able to get by this semester very well! This is my first semester at MC so I just want to thank you for making TVRA one of my first classes in college such a great one!

--Elisa O.

WHAT WOULD I DO DIFFERENTLY OR THE SAME?

- I would like to have the students work in groups in person, but that would be for another semester.
- I might hand the outlines out at the beginning of the semester, so that the students would be able to look them over and have a quick preview of what is important information to watch out for during class.
- I would keep the current format of the outlines and possibly expand upon them in the future.



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