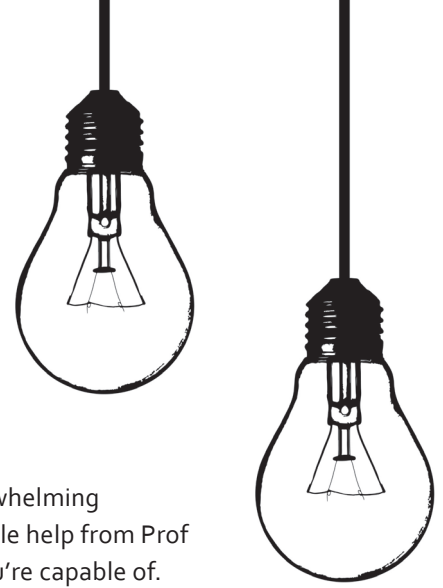# BLOOM'S

TAXONOMY

Ever felt as though, no matter how hard you study, you're just not getting the good marks that you used to get in high school?

You are not alone! Many students find the workload, the tests and the exams overwhelming once they get to a university, a university of technology or a college. But with a little help from Prof Bloom, you can learn how to study smarter and get those marks that you know you're capable of.

what's the secret?

Prof Bloom's secret is that he understands that there are different levels to learning: you must master each level before you can move on to the next and, as you move through the different levels, you gain a deeper understanding of your course work and of life.

Understanding Bloom's Taxonomy may give you some insight into preparing better for tests and exams so that you can achieve the results that you know you're capable of. Bloom's Taxonomy helps you to understand the various levels of learning. When you master one level, you'll be able to progress to the next and so you grow. Now, let's look at the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy:

1 remember

During the early stages of your academic career it is important that you learn the concepts and definitions that are central to your chosen field. However, trying to memorise and recall everything is an impossible task because there is too much information and the information is always changing.

While you are studying, ask yourself: which facts are important to memorise? Make sure you know all your terminology and definitions, and when you read an unfamiliar term, look it up immediately.

Test questions that require **recollection of facts** include:
Can you list three...
Define...
How would you explain...

Don't think that you are not smart enough to get excellent marks – the problem may lie with your study method!

2 understand

On this next level of the hierarchy you should begin to understand the information and interpret some data. Where the first level only requires that we memorise the facts, the second level requires that we use those facts to answer questions or solve problems.

Test questions that require **understanding** include:
How would you classify the type of...
How would you rephrase the meaning...
Which statements support...

3 apply

This is the level at which you use or demonstrate the information. You can motivate the choices behind your actions. This is the level at which crib notes would be absolutely useless, because you are asked to apply your knowledge to a given situation.

Test questions that require **application of your knowledge** include:
Predict what will happen if...
From the information given, can you develop a set of instructions about...
Tell how much change there would be if...

4 analyse

When you analyse information you break it into smaller components and you look for relationships between the components. You may be required to look at a lot of data in order to draw a conclusion from the facts.

Test questions that require **analysis** include:
What is the relationship between...
Can you make a distinction between...
Based on the scenario, what conclusions can you draw...

5 synthesise

To synthesise data means to put it together in a unique way. This process requires creativity and originality and it involves problem solving and predicting. You will have to draw on your memory and your understanding, but you may also need to analyse the question in order to synthesise information. Often you will have to draw on a wider knowledge pool than simply what you have learned in this particular subject.

Test questions that require information synthesis include:
How would you adapt...
What changes would you make to solve...
Can you construct a model for...

6 evaluate

Evaluating means making judgements and noting the value of the information that you have at your disposal. You will be required to make decisions and to support your views and you will need to have a clear understanding of your own values.

Test questions that require evaluation include:
Why is it better than...
Based on what you know, how would you explain...
What would you cite to defend...

the way forward

Your learning journey is your responsibility. Only you can determine how successful you will be and how hard you will work to achieve that success. We leave you with the following helpful hints:

- Prepare for your lectures.
- Memorise the terminology and definitions of your study field, but don't try to memorise everything else.
- If there is something you don't understand, ask your lecturer to explain it again.
- Try to get hold of past papers and practice answering the questions.

When you have this level of understanding of your work, you'll be able to discuss, describe and evaluate ideas and concepts easily. You'll even be able to create new ways of engaging with information. But do take note: It takes dedication to master all the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy!

evaluate
synthesise
analyse
apply
understand
remember
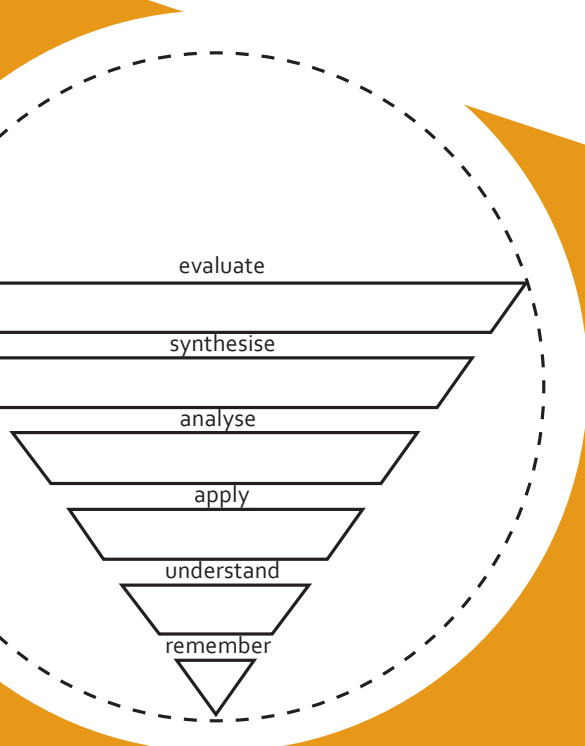
Instructions at each level:

6 write, propose, design, collect, prepare
5 select, support, value, judge, predict
4 examine, compare, calculate, experiment
3 solve, sketch, choose, practice, write
2 translate, describe, review, report
1 name, repeat, label, recall, define