Examples of Verbs for Specifying Learned Behaviors at Each Level of the Cognitive Domain

If you want students to recall

Know common terms
Know specific facts
Know methods and procedures
Know basic concepts
Know principles

Ask them to
Recall, identify, describe, define, cite, count, list, name, memorize, match, tell who or what, label, fill in the blank, reproduce, select, state, outline, record, underline

If you want students to comprehend

Understand facts and principles
Interpret verbal material
Interpret charts and graphs
Translate verbal material to mathematical formula
Estimate future consequences implied in data
Justify methods and procedures

Ask them to
Summarize, paraphrase, translate, explain, interpret, convert, defend, write a short answer, distinguish, estimate, generalize, give examples, infer, predict, compute, identify, rewrite in their own words, restate, review

If you want students to apply

Apply concepts and principles to new situations
Apply laws and theories to practical situation
Solve mathematical problems
Construct charts and graphs
Demonstrate correct usage of a method or procedures

Ask them to
Apply, show, make, illustrate, demonstrate, teach, use, tell how…, change, compute, manipulate, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, solve, calculate, employ, examine, practice, interpret

If you want students to analyze

Recognize unstated assumptions
Recognize logical fallacies in reasoning
Distinguish between facts and inferences
Evaluate the relevancy of data
Analyze the organizational structure of a work

Ask them to
Compare, contrast, classify, categorize, dissect, distinguish, determine, deduce, investigate, break down, diagram, infer, differentiate, discriminate, identify, outline, separate, subdivide, debate, test, examine
If you want students to **synthesize**

Write a well organized theme  
Give a well organized speech  
Produce a design, prediction, hypothesis, invention, formula, solution, synthesis, project, or plan

**Ask them to**

Categorize, combine, compile, compose, create, design, predict, hypothesize, invent, solve, infer, imagine, devise, explain, generate, modify, organize, reconstruct, revise, reorganize, write, arrange, assemble, construct, formulate, integrate, prescribe, propose, plan, manage

If you want students to **evaluate**

Judge the logical consistency of written material  
Judge the adequacy with which conclusions are supported by data  
Judge the value of a work by using internal criteria  
Judge the value of a work by using external standards of excellence

**Ask them to**

Appraise, compare, conclude, contrast, criticize, describe, discriminate, explain, justify, interpret, summarize, support, assess, choose, estimate, rank, score select

**Adapted from:**

Ford, Charles W. Clinical Education for the Allied Health Professions. Mosby: St. Louis, 1978
