

## **OPERATIONAL VERBS**

### **For Writing Learning Outcomes Statements**

From Adelman, C. (2015, February). *To Imagine a Verb: The Language and Syntax of Learning Outcomes Statements*. (Occasional Paper No. 24). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

- A) Verbs describing student acquisition and preparation of tools, materials, and texts of various types (including digital and archival):**  
access, acquire, collect, accumulate, extract, gather, locate, obtain, retrieve
  
- B) Verbs indicating what students do to certify information, materials, texts, etc.**  
cite, document, record, reference, source (v)
  
- C) Verbs indicating the modes of student characterization of the objects of knowledge or materials of production, performance, exhibit**  
categorize, classify, define, describe, determine, frame, identify, prioritize, specify
  
- D) Verbs describing what students do in processing data and allied information**  
calculate, determine, estimate, manipulate, measure, solve, test
  
- D1) Verbs further describing the ways in which students format data, information, materials**  
arrange, assemble, collate, organize, sort
  
- E) Verbs describing what students do in explaining a position, creation, set of observations, or a text**  
articulate, clarify, explicate, illustrate, interpret, outline, translate, elaborate, elucidate
  
- F) Verbs falling under the cognitive activities we group under “analyze”**  
compare, contrast, differentiate, distinguish, formulate, map, match, equate
  
- G) Verbs describing what students do when they “inquire”**  
examine, experiment, explore, hypothesize, investigate, research, test
  
- H) Verbs describing what students do when they combine ideas, materials, observations**  
assimilate, consolidate, merge, connect, integrate, link, synthesize, summarize
  
- I) Verbs that describe what students do in various forms of “making”**  
build, compose, construct, craft, create, design, develop, generate, model, shape, simulate
  
- J) Verbs that describe the various ways in which students utilize the materials of learning**  
apply, carry out, conduct, demonstrate, employ, implement, perform, produce, use

**K) Verbs that describe various executive functions students perform**

operate, administer, control, coordinate, engage, lead, maintain, manage, navigate, optimize, plan

**L) Verbs that describe forms of deliberative activity in which students engage**

argue, challenge, debate, defend, justify, resolve, dispute, advocate, persuade

**M) Verbs that indicate how students value objects, experiences, texts, productions, etc.**

audit, appraise, assess, evaluate, judge, rank

**N) Verbs that reference the types of communication in which we ask students to engage:**

report, edit, encode/decode, pantomime (v), map, display, draw/ diagram

**O) Verbs, related to modes of communication, that indicate what students do in groups:**

collaborate, contribute, negotiate, feed back

**P) Verbs that describe what students do in rethinking or reconstructing**

accommodate, adapt, adjust, improve, modify, refine, reflect, review