



*Vermont Northern Lights
Career Development Center*

Designing Achievable Learning Objectives

to instruct groups of adults

Adults Learn by Doing

Learning Objectives are statements about what the instructor wants the participants to gain as a result of the training or course.

They provide the structure for the learning activities.

They are

- **Observable**
- **Achievable** during the training
- **Active** because adults learn by doing



Are these Learning Objectives

Observable . Achievable . Active

YES? or NO?

- Instructor will share information about brain science.
- Participants will help children use the toilet and follow the steps for hygiene while toileting.
- Participants will describe the developmental domains of childhood ages birth to five.

Observable . Achievable . Active

YES? or NO?

- Instructor will share information about brain science.

NO, learning objectives are what the participants will do, not what the instructor does.

- Participants will help children use the toilet and follow the steps for hygiene while toileting.

NO, it cannot be achieved *during the training* as the children are not there.

- Participants will describe the developmental domains of childhood ages birth to five.

YES, “describing” is active, achievable and one can observe if the learner has completed the task

Observable . Achievable . Active

YES? or NO?

- Participants will explain to families how to prepare nutritious meals.
- Participants will analyze two child assessment tools to determine their validity, and when and with whom to use them.
- Participants will understand how children develop.

Observable . Achievable . Active

YES? or NO?

- Participants will explain to families how to prepare nutritious meals.

NO, it cannot be achieved *during the training* since families are not there.

- Participants will analyze two child assessment tools to determine their validity, and when and with whom to use them.

YES, participants can do this during the training and the instructor can observe if they are successful.

- Participants will understand how children develop.

NO, you cannot observe if someone “understands” something.

Getting Started:

Identify Your Main Content

Example: The workshop is about **Children's Nutrition**.

3 Main Content areas:

- 1) Children who are hungry and malnourished have difficulty focusing, difficulty learning, may have more behavior problems, are more likely to get sick, miss more days of school, and may have chronic disease as adults.
- 2) Professionals can provide strategies and resources that help families meet their child's nutritional needs.
- 3) Food and nutrition can be part of the early childhood curricula, supporting healthy growth and learning.



What will learners DO?

Ask yourself:

“What can I ask the learners **to do** with this content during the class that would **demonstrate** to them (and *me* as the instructor) that they **understand** and can **apply** the content?”

What will learners DO?

(Find the *ACTIONS*)

1. **REMEMBER** - can the learner *restate* the information?
2. **UNDERSTAND** – can the learner *explain* ideas or concepts?
3. **APPLY** – can the learner *use* the information in a new way?
4. **ANALYZE**– can the learner *describe or show* differences that distinguish between the parts?
5. **EVALUATE** – can the learner *justify* a stand or decision?
6. **CREATE** – can the learner *create* a new product or point of view?

This is a learning sequence....

The first 2: **Remember** and **Understand** help learners **ACQUIRE** information.



The remaining 4: **Apply, Analyze, Evaluate** and **Create** help them **EXTEND** what they know.



Strive to move from **ACQUIRE**



to **EXTEND!**



MORE Actions!

ACQUIRE.....

1. **Remember** (define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce, state)
2. **Understand** (classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase)

EXTEND.....

3. **Apply** (choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write)
4. **Analyze** (appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test)
5. **Evaluate** (appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate)
6. **Create** (assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write)

Describe what learners will DO with the **content** in *Children's Nutrition* training

1) Children who are hungry and malnourished have difficulty focusing, difficulty learning, may have more behavior problems, are more likely to get sick, miss more days of school, and may have chronic disease as adults.

Learning Objective: (ACQUIRE)

Participants will **recall** and **list** the effects of hunger and malnutrition on children they have worked with.

...and with the next **content...**

2) *Professionals can provide strategies and resources that help families meet their child's nutritional needs.*

Learning Objective: (ACQUIRE)

Participants will **identify and share** resources that can be shared with families to support good nutrition at home.

... and what they will do with the last **content** area.

3) *Food and nutrition can be part of the early childhood curricula, supporting healthy growth and learning.*

Learning Objective: (EXTEND)

Participants will **design and demonstrate** a curricula activity that could engage children in learning about good nutrition.

Now you try it!
WRITE a LEARNING OBJECTIVE for this
CONTENT:

Spaces for infants and toddlers in groups should be designed to ensure safety and child initiated interaction, movement, and exploration using all of the senses.

What could the participants DO that helps them understand (ACQUIRE) or apply (EXTEND) this content?

*Remember to use VERBS that are
observable, achievable, active...*



Participants will...

What was *your* Learning Objective?

- Participants will *identify* which elements of learning spaces meet the criteria
- Participants will *design* an infant toddler learning space that meets the criteria
- Participants will *analyze* different infant toddler learning spaces to determine which meet the criteria

Each of these are observable, achievable and active.

Did you notice which help learners ACQUIRE and which help them EXTEND their learning?

Keep in mind...

- ❑ You may have more than one learning objective for each content statement
- ❑ On average you should plan to have *one learning objective per hour* of training (allow time to do/learn!)
- ❑ Strive to have learning objectives move from ACQUIRE to EXTEND

A word about Content

- In Vermont, there are **Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies** for early childhood and afterschool professionals. They include standards for licensed teachers in Vermont.
- **They describe what professionals in these fields should know and do.**
- **They provide a framework.**



5 Core Knowledge Areas

- Child and Youth Development
- Curriculum/Teaching and Learning
- Families and Communities
- Healthy and Safe Environments
- Professionalism and Program Organization

Your training CONTENT should fit into to one or more of these Core Knowledge areas.

Core knowledge are -

- ❑ A foundation of our professional development system
- ❑ A tool for those who work with children and families
- ❑ **A tool for professionals who support those who work with children and families - including instructors.**

Core Knowledge is broken down into Core Competencies

CORE KNOWLEDGE:

Child and Youth Development

SUBHEADING:

How Children Develop

CORE COMPETENCY:

Describes principles of child growth and development

Instructors can use **Core Competencies** to develop achievable learning objectives!

Resources

Northern Lights website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

- **Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies:**

Early childhood:

<http://northernlightscdc.org/career-pathways/professional-competencies-and-standards/early-childhood-competencies/>

Afterschool/school age:

<http://northernlightscdc.org/career-pathways/professional-competencies-and-standards/core-competencies-for-afterschool-professionals/>

- **Instructor Registry:**

<http://northernlightscdc.org/your-role/adult-instructors/>

Writing Learning Objectives

- Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence:

<http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/Tools/LearningObj>

A Model of Learning Objectives

- <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/effective-practice/revised-blooms-taxonomy/>