

Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Analyze your Readings

What should writers do with the ideas they borrow from books, journal articles, or technical material? They should give credit to the authors by using citations and/or quotations according to the formatting style required for their papers. However, other writers' ideas should not only be restated or summarized in a new paper. They should be compared and contrasted with other ideas, evaluated by the new writer, and applied to solve the new proposed problem to justify their use in the paper.

Benjamin Bloom's levels of cognition can serve as a guide to help writers self-assess the use they make of citations and quotations within their texts. Writers should attempt to go beyond the lowest remembering and understanding levels of cognition, in which they only describe and explain other researchers' ideas, to the highest applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating levels, in which they apply these ideas to new contexts or even challenge the validity of these concepts in different situations.

Levels of cognition	Description
Remembering	<p>What it is about: Recalling information by restating, describing, defining, or listing it.</p> <p>Tip: This is the thinking level which a writer should use when they address the content of the research in the first step, that is, when they are reading and taking notes of the main ideas in journal articles, books, and other sources.</p>
Understanding	<p>What it is about: Explaining, simplifying, summarizing, or giving examples of a concept.</p> <p>Tip: This is the cognition level the writer should use to address the information they have gathered through research in a second stage, that is, when they are trying to make sense of it.</p>
Applying	<p>What it is about: Using information in new ways by predicting, demonstrating, solving, or applying it to new problems. Tip: This is the depth of thinking required from writers at undergraduate level studies and on when they are presenting the ideas collected in their research through citations and quotations: they are expected to apply these ideas to adequately answer their research question.</p>
Analyzing	<p>What it is about: Breaking down information into parts to be able to compare/contrast, relate, categorize, or analyze it.</p> <p>Tip: This is the depth in which both undergraduate and graduate writers should address the ideas they have gathered in their papers in general, but in literature reviews in particular regardless of whether the literature reviews are stand-alone or parts of larger papers.</p>

Evaluating	What it is about: Judging, assessing, evaluating, or measuring the value of an idea based on clear evidence or select criteria. Tip: This is the depth required by writers of theses, dissertations, and journal articles, given that these genres are supposed to present new ideas alongside the evaluation of ideas previously developed by themselves or others.
Creating	What it is about: Putting together parts of an idea and creating, organizing, arranging, or proposing a new structure or pattern. Tip: This is the cognition level writers should show towards their citations and quotations when writing at graduate (or post-graduate level), since graduate study papers are expected to add something new to the academic discussion in process in the field of knowledge to which they belong.

References:

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Student Learning Centre

Call: 905.721.8668 ext. 6578

Email: studentlearning@ontariotechu.ca Downtown Oshawa Location: 61 Charles St.

Website: ontariotechu.ca/studentlearning North Oshawa Location: Student Life Building

