BLOOM'S TAXONOMY OF THINKING PROCESSES
Adapted from Sirpa Grierson

PURPOSE:

Bloom’s taxonomy can be used to create questions that aid students in discovering what they know and comprehend about a given topic. It also allows them to utilize higher order thinking skills to answer questions that require them to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. The higher the level of thinking, the more complex the cognitive process required.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose any given topic, theme, chapter selection, or character. Use the chart on the last page to formulate questions and activities that focus on the level of learning described. The difficulty of the questions should increase as you move down the taxonomy. Earlier steps (knowledge and comprehension) should prepare students for the more difficult levels of thinking later on.

KNOWLEDGE:

Question—What is the spell Ella is under?
Answer—She has to obey any command given to her by anyone (3).
Knowledge questions: (LIST, RECALL, RECORD, DISCUSS)
COMPREHENSION:
Question—In your own words, why was Lucinda’s blessing a curse?
Answer—As we find throughout the novel, having to obey anything anyone tells you is at the very least inconvenient and at the worst dangerous. The early example on page 4 shows how Ella could be exploited by her peers, whereas on page 97, Ella has to obey an ogre who wants to eat her. There are some situations in which not obeying is a really good thing.

Comprehension questions: (PARAPHRASE, INTERPRET, EXPLAIN, DISCUSS)

APPLICATION:
Question—Ella tries as hard as she can to protect her friends. Rather than hurt Areida, Ella just ran away and risked her own life. Rather than hurt Char by marrying him, Ella found the courage to refuse. Write about a time when you had to sacrifice something in order to protect your friends or those who you admire.
Answer—When I was in high school, my best friend asked me to take him to his soccer game. I had a huge project to finish and a test to study for. But I knew that my friend needed a ride and that he was the kind of kid who would try to walk to his game if he couldn’t get a ride. The part of town where we lived was pretty rough, and he would have to walk home in the dark. I didn’t want to have to risk that, so I took him even though I didn’t have time to study.

Application questions: (ILLUSTRATE, SHOW HOW, FIND)

ANALYSIS:
Question—Olive and Hattie both use Ella’s curse to their advantage. However, they seem to differ slightly in their misuse of her. Compare Olive and Hattie’s abuse of Ella.
Answer—Hattie figures out Ella’s curse pretty quickly, and Olive is close behind. Hattie’s misuse usually requires Ella to serve her or be belittled. Hattie’s motivation is that she hates Ella for being nice, popular, and beautiful. Olive, on the other hand, is simply selfish in a childish way. She likes Ella because she talks to her. When she figures out what Ella’s curse is, she uses it to make Ella talk to her and give her money. She just wants someone to talk to; she never tries to hurt Ella.

Analysis questions: (ANALYZE, EXAMINE, DISSECT, COMPARE)

SYNTHESIS:
Question—Discuss what would have happened if Ella had actually said yes to Char at the end before she’d broken her spell. Write a “bad ending” to the novel to balance out the “happily ever after we recited.
Answer—(A chapter based on Ella Enchanted)

(CONSTRUCT, WHAT IF . . ., PROPOSE, CREATE)

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EVALUATION:
Question—Who was the most selfless of all the characters, and who was the most selfish? What are the criteria for your definitions? Back your choices up with textual evidence.
Answer—Ella would have to be the most selfless. I’d pick Mandy as a close second, though. Ella, however, shows that she’s not only willing to give up things that are convenient for her in order to protect others. She’s willing to give up what would have made her most happy—marrying Char. The most selfish character would have to be Dame Olga. Even though Hattie abuses her more frequently, Dame Olga’s reasons for manipulation are worse because she’s older and in a position of stewardship. Dame Olga has plans in mind for when Ella marries Char and is already thinking of how to exploit her. Hattie is just mean and Olive is unaware.

(EVALUATE, JUDGE, DECIDE, ASSESS, VERIFY)

ASSESSMENT: When students are able to answer more than literal comprehension questions, they are using higher order thinking skills. There are three types of questions: (1) **textually explicit** questions lead to answers directly in the text, (2) **textually implicit** questions require students to think about what they have read and organize ideas from the text to formulate an answer, while (3) **schema-based** questions rely on a student’s prior knowledge and experience. Answers to questions can be judged on originality, completeness, organization, and many other factors. What matters most is that you as the teacher ask the right kind of question to elicit the type of response that you are interested in.

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## BLOOM’S TAXONOMY OF THINKING PROCESSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF TAXONOMY</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>WHAT STUDENT DOES</th>
<th>VERBS FOR ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Recall or location of specific bits of information</td>
<td>responds absorbs remembers recognizes</td>
<td>tell -- list -- define -- name -- recall -- identify -- remember -- know -- recognize -- repeat -- state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension (understanding)</td>
<td>Understanding of communicated material or information</td>
<td>explains translates demonstrates interprets</td>
<td>transform -- change -- restate -- describe -- explain -- review -- paraphrase -- relate -- generalize -- summarize -- interpret -- infer -- give main idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application (using)</td>
<td>Use of rules, concepts, principles, and theories in new situations</td>
<td>solves novel problems demonstrates uses knowledge constructs</td>
<td>apply -- practice -- employ -- use -- demonstrate -- illustrate -- show -- report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis (taking apart)</td>
<td>Breaking down information into its parts</td>
<td>discusses uncovers lists dissects</td>
<td>analyze -- dissect -- distinguish -- examine -- compare -- contrast -- survey -- investigate -- separate -- separate -- classify -- organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis (creating new)</td>
<td>Putting together of ideas into a new or unique product or plan</td>
<td>discusses generalizes relates contrasts</td>
<td>create -- invent -- compose -- construct -- design -- modify -- imagine -- produce -- propose -- what if . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation (judging)</td>
<td>Judging the value of materials or ideas on the basis of a set of standards or criteria</td>
<td>judges disputes forms opinions debates</td>
<td>judge -- decide/select/justify -- evaluate -- critique -- debate -- verify -- recommend -- assess</td>
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