

All aboard the L'ARKmead Learning Ark



LARKMEAD
School

Do we reward children for thinking nothing new but only what others already knew?

We should not be asking how intelligent someone is but how they are intelligent.

"Intelligence is what you use when you don't know what to do." Piaget

You can't follow the herd and lead the field at the same time.

The Larkmead Learning Ark sets out a way of thinking and behaving that aims to enable everyone to enjoy their learning and to make progress in whatever they do.

It places an emphasis on **developing skills** rather than **acquiring information**, and on looking at the ways in which those skills can unlock potential and stimulate success.

The Larkmead Learning Ark aims to support us in creating a learning community that is:

- Involved and Independent
- Curious and Creative
- Adaptable and Adventurous
- Responsible and Resourceful
- Excited and Engaged

We all need a wide range of different skills in order to learn, progress and feel a sense of achievement in any area of our lives. The **Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)** approach to Teaching and Learning focuses on encouraging and enabling people to develop the skills that will ensure their learning is **deep** and **active** and therefore profound and long-lasting.

The Larkmead approach to the **Higher Order Thinking Skills** looks at Anderson's Taxonomy. This is an adaptation of Bloom's Taxonomy, and places **Creativity** as the Highest Order Thinking Skill.

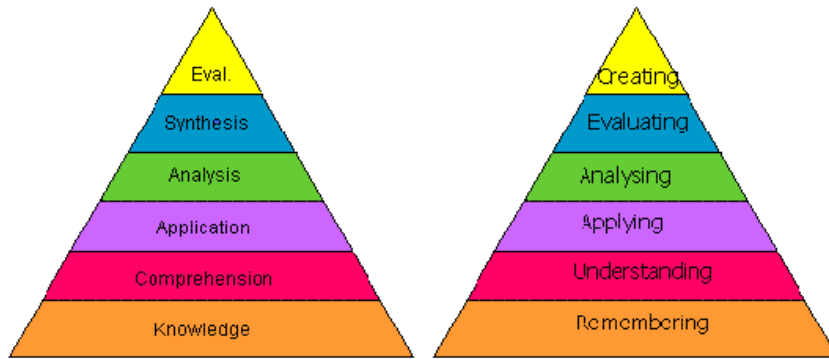
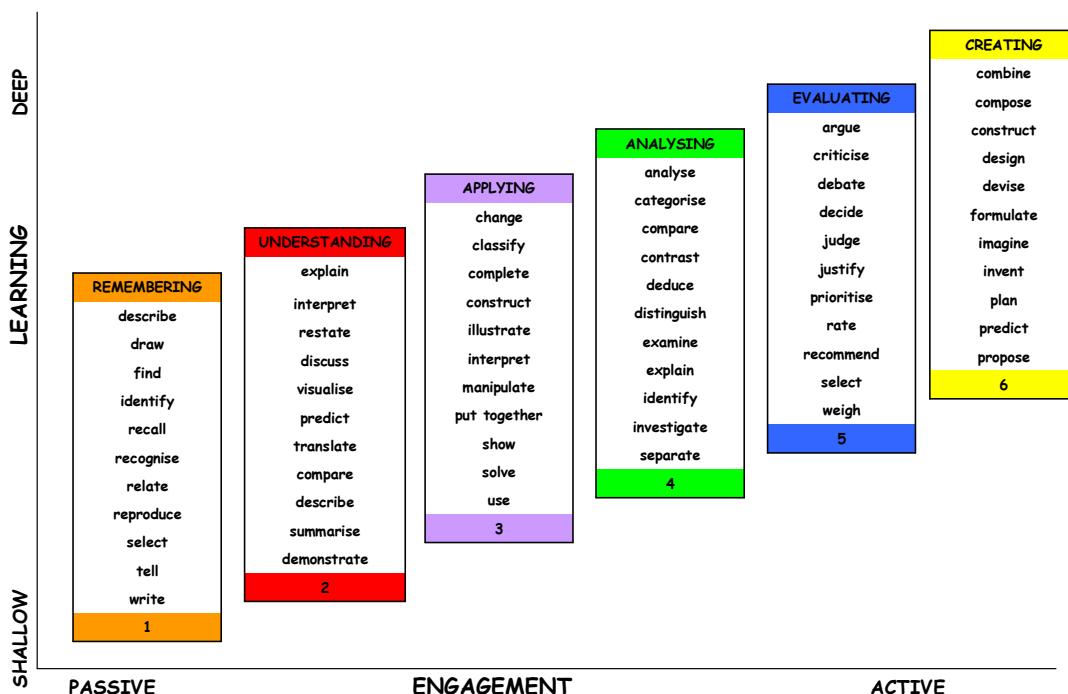


Figure 6 Bloom's (left) and Anderson's Taxonomy (right)(Schultz 2005)

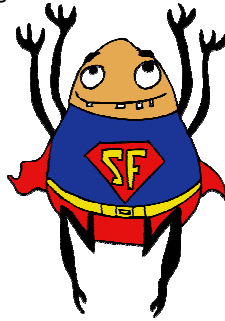
Each of the six skills in the Taxonomy is important and necessary in order for us to develop and make progress. Anderson's Taxonomy builds up from **Remembering** to **Understanding** to **Applying**, putting into action the skills, processes and information that have been learned. It is by applying skills that we see how well they work, bringing learning to life. **Analysing** is the next step, getting deeper into **how** something works, followed by **Evaluating**, encouraging us to make judgements, to reflect and to ask questions. **Creating** is the pinnacle here, but we believe that creativity should run through everything that we do. Being imaginative and inventive makes it easier to remember, and so on. Creativity is vitally important at Larkmead, reflecting our Visual & Performing Arts Specialist status as well as the enthusiasm, energy, power and potential of staff and students.

ANDERSON'S TAXONOMY REVISED
HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS
MAKE LEARNING ACTIVE, EMBEDDED AND ENGAGING



The Higher Order Thinking Skills are set out in the progression above. Each headline skill is supported by a wide range of other skills or activities, helping to make sense of our learning and offering guidance on a variety of ways to approach different activities.

On one level this progression reflects the way in which examination questions are structured, with students gaining more marks and working at higher grades as they move up the hierarchy of skills. Students' results will improve when they get the HOTS. On a wider level, from learning a language to taking a better free kick, from solving a problem to making a tastier cake, from producing an essay to putting up a straighter set of shelves, the HOTS approach will help to make everything we do more rewarding.



At Larkmead we have a character called SuperFlea. Fleas are amazing creatures, with mighty strength, endurance and resilience. SuperFlea represents the belief in the great power and potential of each of us, and that this power and potential should not be limited by the lid of any negative perceptions. To build upon the power of SuperFlea, students and staff have been thinking about ways in which different animals can characterise and embody the different elements of the Higher Order Thinking Skills. Working in their PDC sessions, students have gone through the HOTS to:

- **Select** different areas on which to work
- **Understand** how the **H**igher **O**rders **T**hinking **S**kills work and will make a difference to them
- **Apply** these ideas to the things they do and the ways they can learn the best
- **Analyse** what each creature does and investigate which animal shows off these skills
- **Evaluate** the key approaches by arguing their case and making judgements
- **Create** exciting characters that will get everyone hooked on these ideas

Using the students' ideas we aim to agree on animals that represent these different skills, acting as a hook or a shorthand approach towards embedding these skills and approaches into students' everyday lives. Creative approaches will drive how the word is spread throughout the school.

Students may characterise these skills as elephants with massive memories, dogs demonstrating understanding, chimps applying their skills through tools, eagles analysing, owls evaluating or creative spiders spinning webs and making connections.

Whatever they decide, the Larkmead Learning Ark aims to encourage students to be a whole zoo full of animals, hunting in packs hungry for new ideas or striking out on their own to explore stimulating experiences.

The Larkmead Learning Ark, ready to set sail on a sea of challenges and adventures accompanied by a marvellous menagerie of curious and creative creatures.

Dn April 2009