



User Tips: SmartSkills

DEFINITION: SmartSkills are the levels of thinking expected of students to complete a standards-based instruction or assessment task.

GUIDELINES: Use the templates in this Link to select the SmartSkills levels for planning, teaching, and assessing your standards-based instruction and assessment activities. Read the following background information for learning more about "SmartSkills" and how to use them in TaskBuilderOnline.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

How can every student become a lifelong learner? Each time that you use a standards-based task you say to each student: "You get smarter when you complete my tasks, because you not only learn subject matter, but you also learn how to apply it in real world settings."

TaskBuilderOnline Tips:

Standards-based tasks help you to focus on three sequential learning levels to develop and assess thinking skills in your students.

1. **At the first level your students learn to acquire data.** This means they learn from instructional activities about data in content areas such as art, mathematics, language arts, science, social studies, physical education, technology, and so forth.
2. **At the second level, your students learn to visualize data as information.** This means they learn from instructional activities how to arrange, organize, and store data learned in level one to create patterns and meaning for applying knowledge at level three.
3. **At the third level, your students learn to apply knowledge.** This means they learn from instructional activities how to put information to productive use in school and real world settings. And the more you use all three of these levels in your standards-based tasks, the smarter your students will become. Most school reform programs throughout the country expect and assess student performance at the third level.

HOW DO SMARTSKILLS WORK? Trace each example below across the levels to see how each evolves from data to information to knowledge. Select the level(s) in the SmartSkills template that you expect your students to perform, construct, or do in your standards-based task.

Acquiring Data	Visualizing Information	Applying Knowledge
The process of receiving, gathering, or generating words, numbers, sounds, images, odors, colors, and subject matter content, skills, concepts, and processes to use as a basis for visualizing information.	The process of arranging, organizing, and storing data to create patterns and meaning for applying knowledge.	The process of learning from information and putting information to productive use.
1. The receipts from charges on a credit card (Mathematics)	1. Monthly credit card bill showing charges relative to a credit limit (Mathematics)	1. Using the annual credit card summary to prepare a tax return (Mathematics)
2. Observations of weather conditions (Science)	2. Color-coded weather map (Science)	2. Deciding when and where to take a weekend vacation (Science)

3. Musical notes (Fine Arts)	3. Musical compositions (Fine Arts)	3. Selecting musical compositions and performers for a wedding
4. Ingredients in a food product (Health)	4. Nutrition label on food products (Health)	4. Deciding the types of food to eat (Health)
5. Brainstorming and drafting ideas for a new product in a software company (English)	5. Comparing the written features and benefits of the new software product with competing products (English)	5. Writing a sales letter to persuade customers to buy the new software (English)

SMART SKILLS TEMPLATE

<p>● Data students will acquire in your standards-based task:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vocabulary: 2. Numbers: 3. Images: 4. Odors: 5. Colors: 6. Content: 7. Skills: 8. Concepts: 9. Processes: 10. Other: 	<p>● Data that are visualized as information in your standards-based task:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arranging: 2. Organizing: 3. Storing: 4. Creating patterns: 5. Creating meaning: 6. Other: 	<p>● Visualized information that becomes applied knowledge in your standards-based:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making decisions: 2. Solving problems: 3. Creating solutions: 4. Other:
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Sources:

1. "Learning expectations of the 21st century" by learningFront™.
2. Davis, S. (1996) Future perfect. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

For more information visit: <http://www.learningfront.com>

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