# Do High Performing MBA Students Engage More in Bloom's Higher Order Thinking, Lower Order Thinking, or Both?

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## Abstract

Online education has grown dramatically over the past 15 years. Questions about the effectiveness of online education have also increased as well. One issue that educators continue to address is "Can students engage in higher level thinking while taking a course completely online?"

This paper examines that question by using Bloom's Taxonomy as a framework to examine student end-of-the-term responses to an extra credit question on the final exam:

 *"Explain one way in which you will be able to use what you have learned this semester in this course in your current job position, your next job position or your personal life?"*

Seven different sections were surveyed from four different courses: Introduction to Financial Accounting, Introduction to Managerial Accounting, Value Based Marketing and Value Based Leadership. Over 370 students wrote a one-paragraph response to the question above.

Key words and synonyms were identified by the authors at each of the six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy – remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. Responses were coded using the *Wordstat* software package and segregated between students receiving higher grades in the course (A/A-) and lower grades (B+ or below).

Results of the study found that students receiving higher grades use a statistical significant number of more words in their responses  hat indicate a higher order of thinking *and* a lower order of thinking as well. Implications from the results of this study are also discussed.