Tips for Writing Objectives from: www.ulm.edu

What are instructional objectives?
Instructional objectives are S.M.A.R.T.: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.

• An objective is a description of a performance you want learners to be able to exhibit before you consider them competent. (Note from: http://www.uams.edu/oed/teaching/objectives.htm)
• An objective describes an intended result of instruction, rather than the process of instruction itself. (see http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/LP/LP_resources/lesson_objectives.htm)

Why have objectives?(http://www.ucalgary.ca/files/careers/learn_obj.pdf)

• To provide direction to instruction.
• To provide guidelines for assessment.
• To convey instructional intent to others.

How do I write objectives?

• Don’t make writing objectives tedious, trivial, time-consuming, or mechanical. Keep them simple, unambiguous, and clearly focused as a guide to learning.
• The purpose of objectives is not to restrict spontaneity or constrain the vision of education in the discipline; but to ensure that learning is focused clearly enough that both students and teacher know what is going on.
• Express them in terms of student performance, behavior, and achievement, not teacher activity.
• Three components of an instructional objective:
  1. Identify the type of activity in which competence is required
  2. Specify the criteria or standards by which competence in the activity will be assessed
  3. List any conditions or circumstances required for students to meet the objective
  4. Answer the question: "What should the students be able to do?"

What are their characteristics?

• Objectives must be clear and attainable.
• Focus on knowledge/skill acquisition or reinforcement.
• A recommended wording format is: "Students will be able to…” This phrase is followed by a specific performance verb and the desired learning outcome.

What words or phrases should I avoid?

know, think, appreciate, learn, comprehend, remember, perceive, understand, be aware of, be familiar with, have knowledge of, grasp the significance, (these are NOT measurable). Thus the following are NOT observable or measurable objectives (https://www.assessment.gatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/writing_instructional_objectives_v2.pdf):

 Appreciate the beauty of a circuit
 Really understand relativity theory
 Be familiar with the law
 Understand the process of osmosis
 Enjoyspeaking French
 Change the spark plugs on an engine
 Learn about erosion
### Writing Objectives for Lesson Plans Using Bloom’s Taxonomy and Associated Action or Performance Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning level</th>
<th>Associated action verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>define, describe, state, list, name, write, recall, recognize, label, underline, select, reproduce, outline, match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>identify, justify, select, indicate, illustrate, represent, name, formulate, explain, judge, contrast, classify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>predict, select, assess, explain, choose, find, show, demonstrate, construct, compute, use, perform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>analyze, identify, conclude, differentiate, select, separate, compare, contrast, justify, resolve, break down, criticize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>combine, restate, summarize, precise, argue, discuss, organize, derive, select, relate, generalize, conclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>judge, evaluate, determine, recognize, support, defend, attack, criticize, identify, avoid, select, choose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives could include more criteria or parts:**

**ABCDs of Writing Objectives** (available at: [http://itc.utk.edu/~bobannon/writing_objectives.html](http://itc.utk.edu/~bobannon/writing_objectives.html))

- **A-Audience:** The who - "The student will be able to…"
- **B-Behavior:** What a learner is expected to be able to do or the product or result of the doing. The behavior or product should be observable.
- **C-Condition:** The important conditions under which the performance is to occur.
- **D-Degree:** The criterion of acceptable performance. How well the learner must perform in order for the performance to be considered acceptable.