

INSTRUCTIONAL LANGUAGE



One of the goals of a learning organization is to adopt a common language that is shared among colleagues. A common language infuses our practices with clarity, promoting both teaching and learning outcomes.

As the SWUC transitions to standards-based learning, this becomes particularly important. We are beginning to use new vocabulary to describe instructional practices, so we all need to become familiar with the following terms and their descriptors.

1. Three types of learning goals that identify the nature of outcomes:

Acquisition—This goal seeks to help learners acquire factual information and basic skills, as noted in the content standards.

Meaning—This goal seeks to help students construct meaning of important ideas and processes, facilitated by Essential Questions and Big Ideas (further defined below).

Transfer—This goal seeks to support the learners' ability to transfer their learning autonomously and effectively in new situations, facilitated by overarching standards or the 7Cs.

- 2. Big Ideas**—The important ideas and processes that students should come to understand so meaning is attained.
- 3. Essential Questions**—Companions to Big Ideas that point beyond the particulars of a lesson or a unit to larger, transferable ideas.
- 4. Learning Intentions (Targets)**—A brief statement that describes what a student is expected to learn in the course of a lesson. A learning intention is often expressed as an *I Can Statement*. Ex.—I can identify important details in the text.
- 5. Success Criteria**—Scoring guidelines that refer to something students will say, do, make, or write to indicate the Learning Intention is being achieved. Ex.—A rubric.

Further Reading

Hattie, J., Bustamante, V., Almarode, J. T., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. 2020. *Great teaching by design: From intention to implementation in the visible learning classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

McTighe, J., & Curtis, G. (2019). *Leading modern learning: A blueprint for vision-driven schools*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.