Task Analysis for Instructional Design

Instructional designers perform detailed task analyses in order to analyze and articulate the skills that learners will be expected to know how to perform upon completion of an eLearning.* Without an in-depth understanding of what learners need to learn, an instructional program may not adequately cover all the essential topics, tasks, or principles.

Task analysis is performed in order to:

- Determine instructional goals and objectives
- Define and describe in detail tasks and sub-tasks that the student will perform
- Specify the knowledge type** that characterizes a job or task:
  - Declarative — awareness of some object, event, or idea, i.e., knowing that
  - Structural — the knowledge of how concepts within a subject are interrelated, or knowing why
  - Procedural — how learners use or apply their declarative knowledge, i.e., knowing how
- Select learning outcomes appropriate for instructional development
- Prioritize and sequence tasks
- Determine instructional activities and strategies that foster learning
- Select appropriate media and learning environments
- Construct performance assessments and evaluation

* Jonassen, Tessmer, & Hannum (1993)
** Jonassen, Beissner, & Yacci (1993)
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How Do I Perform a Task Analysis?

The task analysis process consists of five distinct functions:

- **Classifying** tasks according to learning outcomes
- **Inventorying** tasks – identifying tasks or generating a list of tasks
- **Selecting** tasks – prioritizing tasks and choosing those that are more feasible and appropriate if there is an abundance of tasks to train
- **Decomposing** tasks – identifying and describing the components of the tasks, goals, or objectives
- **Sequencing** tasks and sub-tasks – defining the order in which instruction should occur that will best facilitate learning

When preformed properly, a detailed task analysis sets expectations, clarifies goals, and simplifies the development process, ultimately producing a more effective and memorable tutorial.

Other Resources

- [SCORM Watch](#)
- [PowerPoint to Captivate: A Step-By-Step Guide](#)
- [The Four Instructional Architectures](#)