

Explain

Years 7–10 cognitive verb toolkit

What is explaining?

To explain is to make an idea, concept, situation, relationship or meaning clear by communicating more in-depth information. To explain how to solve a problem might include writing down the steps needed to achieve a result or talking to someone to guide them to a solution. Explanations enable an audience to gain insight into, and make deeper connections with, questions such as who, what, when, where, why and how.

This term is described in the notes section of the standard elaborations:

Term	Description
explain	provide additional information that demonstrates understanding of reasoning and/or application

Cognitive verb use in the Australian Curriculum

The cognitive verb explain appears in various learning area achievement standards and content descriptions in the Australian Curriculum. The table below shows the use of explain across the whole Australian Curriculum.

Explain in the Australian Curriculum achievement standards (AS) and content descriptions (CD)																
Year level	English	Health and Physical Education	HASS	History	Geography	Civics and Citizenship	Economics and Business	Mathematics	Science	Design and Technologies	Digital Technologies	Dance	Drama	Media Arts	Music	Visual Arts
Year 7	AS CD	CD	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS		AS	AS	AS					AS
Year 8	AS CD	AS		AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS	AS					AS
Year 9	AS CD			AS	AS CD	AS	AS CD	AS CD	AS	AS CD	AS					
Year 10	AS CD			AS	AS CD	AS	AS CD		AS	AS CD	AS					

Cognitive process

The cognitive verb **explain** is part of the comprehension category of cognitive process.

Cognitive skills to help explain are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify• make connections• share.	Cognitive skills that follow explain are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• analyse• determine• justify.
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Learning area/subject examples include, but are not limited to:

Year level	Learning area	Achievement standard	Content description
Year 7	English	Students explain issues and ideas from a variety of sources, analysing supporting evidence and implied meaning.	Analyse and explain the effect of technological innovations on texts, particularly media texts (ACELY1765)
Year 8	Science	Students explain how evidence has led to an improved understanding of a scientific idea and describe situations in which scientists collaborated to generate solutions to contemporary problems.	
Year 9	Geography	Students analyse interconnections between people, places and environments and explain how these interconnections influence people, and change places and environments.	Reflect on and evaluate findings of an inquiry to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic, political and social considerations; and explain the predicted outcomes and consequences of their proposal (ACHGS071)
Year 9 and 10	Design and Technologies	Students explain how people working in design and technologies occupations consider factors that impact on design decisions and the technologies used to produce products, services and environments.	Explain how products, services and environments evolve with consideration of preferred futures and the impact of emerging technologies on design decisions (ACTDEK041)

More information

This factsheet is part of a suite of resources to support teachers in the explicit teaching and assessment of students' thinking. The suite of resources includes cognitive verb overviews, cognitive verb year-level overviews and categories of common cognitive verbs. The cognitive verbs are categorised using Marzano and Kendall's (2007) four levels of cognitive process: retrieval, comprehension, analysis and knowledge utilisation.

The suite of resources can be found here: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/aciq/frequently-used-resources/cognitive-verbs/years-7-10-cognitive-verb-toolkit.

Reference: Marzano, R & Kendall, J 2007, *The New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.



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