

A Union of Insufficiencies:

Measurement, Assessment and Judgment

1948: Meeting of College Examiners at American Psychological Association

Benjamin Bloom

Need for a shared lexicon and conceptual
framework for the evaluation of
undergraduate general education

Bloom et al Taxonomies

Cognitive

Knowledge

Comprehension

Application

Analysis

Synthesis

Evaluation

Affective

Receiving

Responding

Valuing

Organizing

Internalizing

Four Questions

- Admissions: whom do we teach in what kinds of institutions?
- Accountability: how well do they learn what is most worth learning?
- National comparisons: how well do we compete?
- Teacher Quality: What kinds of teachers are most competent to teach what is most worth learning?

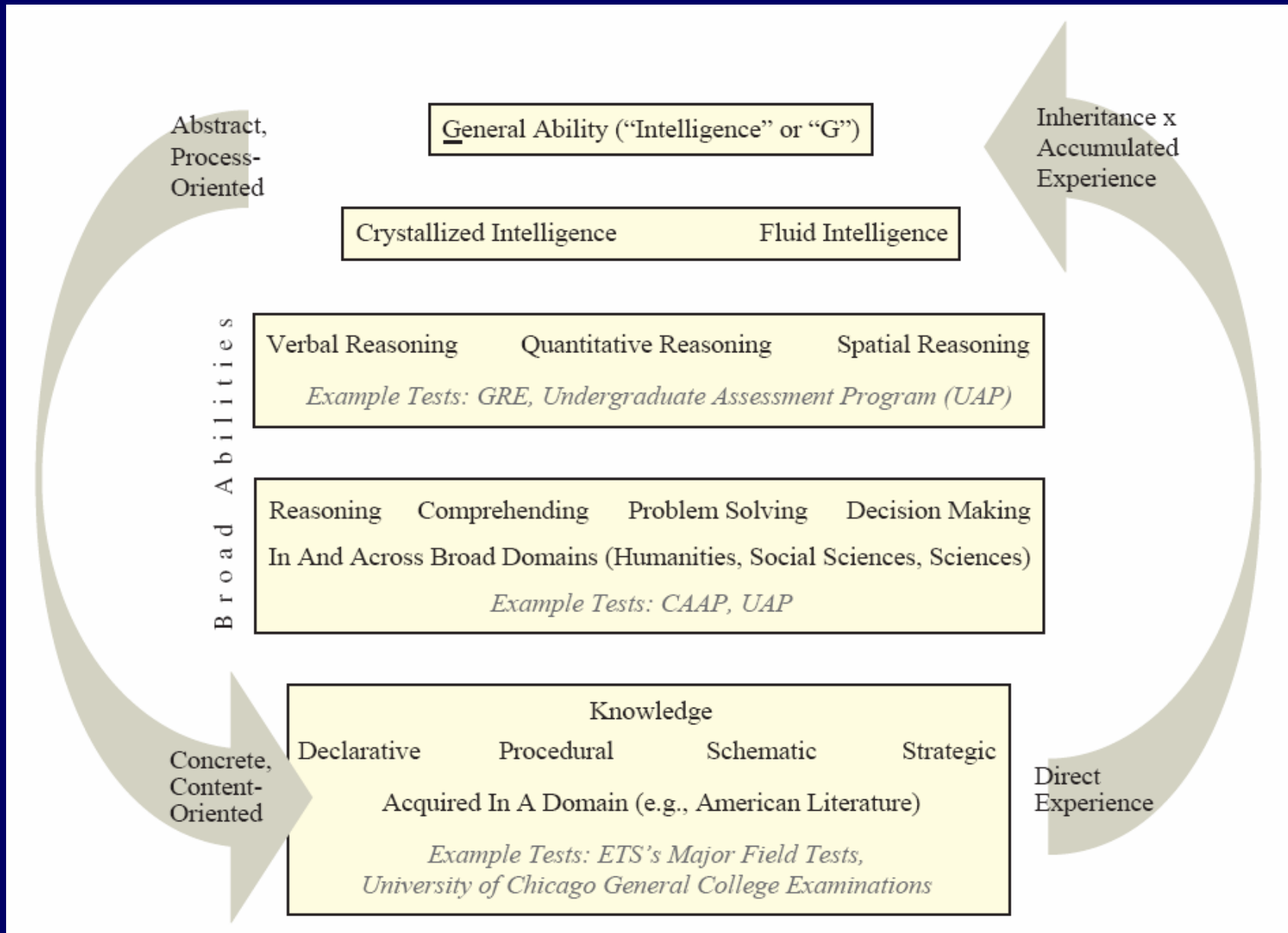
Shared underlying questions

What knowledge is most worth?

What knowledge is most worth...learning?

What knowledge is most worth...assessing?

e.g., TIMSS and PISA; GRE, CLA, ACT Comp



Shavelson and Huang's Model of Ability and Achievement

Professional Learning

(with implications for liberal learning)

- Habits of Mind
- Habits of Practice (hand)
- Habits of the Heart

Generally assessed by visible, public performances of understanding, skill and disposition either embedded in the course of instruction/residencies or as "signature performances"

Thought experiments: Unions of insufficiency

- Selecting a spouse or partner
- Buying a car
- Judging the health of the economy
- Evaluating an athlete
- Evaluating marriages or families
- Evaluating priests, ministers and rabbis
- Making a legal decision in an appeals court

Models of practical arguments: uses of indicators
(premises) in the service of decisions and action

The truncation of Merit...

Broadening the indicators

And Method...

the persistent mystery of method variance

(Heisenberg meets Campbell & Fiske)

Five Principles

- Error of the single instrument: Designed insufficiency
- Multiple indicators: Unions of insufficiency
- Aggregating for validity: Transparent policies of aggregation (Shavelson' challenge)
- *High stakes/low yield* must give way to *Low stakes/high yield*: Timing, embedding, coaching and repeating
- Resistance to corruption: Educative assessments

A Theory of Action: What motivates faculty and institutions to take responsibility for the quality of education?

- Mirrors: Seeing your teaching and student learning (classroom research; scholarship of teaching and learning)
- Lenses: See teaching and learning in new ways unavailable simply by looking or documenting (NSSE; CLA; clinical interviews; comparing to standards)
- Windows: See how you compare via windows and/or lenses with your peers (NSSE comparisons; CLA comparisons; studying others' portfolios)
- Reflection for action: Convene to consider data and explore options (faculty inquiry groups; NBPTS support groups)

The Future: Collapsing Distinctions

- Between formative and summative
- Between high stakes and low stakes
- Between lower and higher level understanding
- Between cognitive, affective and formational
- Reversing the validity argument: where's the critieron?

Practices of classroom research and the scholarship of teaching
and learning

Trust in the judgments of educators

Invent a next-generation psychometric theory and practice

- Have a nice day...and a fine century!

- (attributed to Bond, 2006)