



SAMPLE MATERIAL: Checklist: Creating and Evaluating Student Assessment Items

Purpose: District or school staff may want to use assessment instruments in addition to existing state and district tests, to measure students' academic achievement in magnet theme areas. These sample checklists provide practical guidelines for creating and evaluating effective and valid assessment items—constructed-response and multiple-choice—tailored to specific content. They evaluate for both the significance and technical quality of the assessment item.

Note: The sample checklists were developed for evaluating student assessment items in the visual arts, but can be used in other content areas. “Constructed-response” items require students to generate answers using words, pictures, diagrams, numbers, etc..

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers (1999). “Checklist for creating and evaluating student assessment items.” In State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) Arts Education Consortium, *Arts assessment: Developing performance tasks* (pp. 33-34). Washington, DC: Author

CHECKLIST FOR CREATING & EVALUATING MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

USE THE CHECKLIST BELOW IN DRAFTING, REVIEWING, EVALUATING, REVISING, AND FINALIZING MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS.

Significance of the Item

(Use a check mark to indicate “yes.” All boxes must be marked “yes” before submitting item to Coach.)

- 1. The item relates directly to a national standard.
- 2. The item deals with information or a concept of importance, not with trivia.
- 3. The item is tightly focused so that it will be clear why a student gets it right or wrong.
- 4. If beyond recall or knowledge level, the item asks students to use higher-order thinking skills such as:
 - Comprehending an important concept or information
 - Applying a concept/skill to a different situation
 - Making an interpretation/drawing a conclusion
 - Comparing/contrasting concepts or information
 - Analyzing and/or evaluating a claim or generalization
- 5. The item addresses sensitivity issues and the concept of “universal design” for the broadest audience.

Technical Qualities of the Item

(Use a check mark to indicate “yes.” All boxes must be marked “yes” before submitting item to Coach.)

- 1. The stem is a complete question or statement; the intent of the stem is clear without reading the options.
- 2. Information in the stem does not cue the key.
- 3. Negative stems are avoided.
- 4. There is one and only one clearly correct answer, and the key is indicated.
- 5. The position of the key is varied, while the order of the options is logical and appropriate.
- 6. All distractors are plausible, yet incorrect.
- 7. Overlapping options are avoided.
- 8. Options are parallel in concept, language structure, and appearance.
- 9. Options are of equal or nearly equal length.
- 10. Language usage and grammar in the stem and options are correct.
- 11. The stem and options fit correctly/appropriately with each other, grammatically and conceptually.
- 12. Complex formats in the stem, options, and overall item are avoided.
- 13. Repetitive language in the stem and the options is avoided.
- 14. Superfluous wording in the stem and options is avoided.
- 15. The item conforms to the SCASS Item Pool Style Guide for Item Format.
- 16. The use of “all of the above” and “none of the above” as options is avoided.
- 17. Items are independent to the extent possible; distractors are not used in more than one item.
- 18. Any stimulus materials fit with the stem, are of high quality, and are adequately identified.
- 19. Any stimulus materials conform to the specifications of the Item Pool.

CHECKLIST FOR CREATING & EVALUATING CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ITEMS

Significance of the Item

(Use a check mark to indicate “yes.” All boxes must be marked “yes” before submitting item to Coach.)

- 1. The item relates directly to a national standard.
- 2. The item deals with information or a concept of importance, not with trivia.
- 3. The item is tightly focused so that it will be clear why a student gets it right or wrong.
- 4. If beyond recall or knowledge level, the item asks students to use higher-order thinking skills such as:
 - Comprehending an important concept or information
 - Applying a concept/skill to a different situation
 - Making an interpretation/drawing a conclusion
 - Comparing/contrasting concepts or information
 - Analyzing and/or evaluating a claim or generalization
- 5. The item addresses sensitivity issues and the concept of “universal design” for the broadest audience.

Technical Qualities of the Item

(Use a check mark to indicate “yes.” All boxes must be marked “yes” before submitting item to Coach.)

- 1. The intent of the stem and what the student is expected to do is clear.
- 2. Information in the stem does not inadvertently cue the response.
- 3. Negatives in the stem that would unnecessarily complicate understanding are avoided.
- 4. There is at least one plausible, accurate response to the stem.
- 5. The task demanded of the student is manageable within the timeframe.
- 6. The item is in “user-friendly” format.
- 7. Language usage and grammar in the stem are correct.
- 8. Superfluous wording in the stem is avoided.
- 9. Complex formats in the stem and overall item are avoided.
- 10. Scoring Criteria for 4 (highest), 3, 2, 1, and 0 are unambiguous and complete.
- 11. The stem and the scoring criteria fit correctly/appropriately with each other, grammatically and conceptually.
- 12. The item conforms to the SCASS Item Pool Style Guide for Item Format.
- 13. Any stimulus materials fit with the stem, are of high quality, and are adequately identified.
- 14. Any stimulus materials conform to the specifications of the Item Pool.
- 15. A task description (for other than short constructed-response items) is provided.
- 16. Any special materials, equipment, or setup have been adequately described.
- 17. Directions and script for assessment administrators have been provided (for other than short constructed-response items).