

Figure
6.2

Checklist for Creating Common Assessments

All Items

- Is this the most appropriate type of item to use for the intended learning outcomes?
- Does each item or task require students to demonstrate the performance described in the specific learning outcome it measures (relevance)?
- Does each item present a clear and definite task to be performed (clarity)?
- Is each item or task presented in simple, readable language and free from excessive verbiage (conciseness)?
- Does each item provide an appropriate challenge (ideal difficulty)?
- Does each item have an answer that would be agreed upon by experts (correctness)?
- Is there a clear basis for awarding partial credit on items or tasks with multiple points (scoring rubric)?
- Is each item or task free from technical errors and irrelevant clues (technical soundness)?
- Is each test item free from cultural bias?
- Have the items been set aside for a time before reviewing them (or having them reviewed by a colleague)?

Short-Answer Items

- Can the items be answered with a number, symbol, word, or brief phrase?
- Has textbook language been avoided?
- Have the items been stated so that only one response is correct?
- Are the answer blanks equal in length (for fill-in responses)?
- Are the answer blanks (preferably one per item) at the end of the items, preferably after a question?
- Are the items free of clues (such as *a* or *an*)?
- Has the degree of precision been indicated for numerical answers?
- Have the units been indicated when numerical answers are expressed in units?

Binary (True-False) and Multiple-Binary Items

- Can each statement be clearly judged true or false with only one concept per statement?
- Have specific determiners (e.g., usually, always) been avoided?
- Have trivial statements been avoided?
- Have negative statements (especially double negatives) been avoided?
- Does a superficial analysis suggest a wrong answer?
- Are opinion statements attributed to some source?
- Are the true and false items approximately equal in length?
- Is there approximately an equal number of true and false items?
- Has a detectable pattern of answers (e.g., T, F, T, F) been avoided?

Matching Items

- Is the material for the two lists homogeneous?
- Is the list of responses longer or shorter than the list of premises?
- Are the responses brief and on the right-hand side?
- Have the responses been placed in alphabetical or numerical order?
- Do the directions indicate the basis for matching?
- Do the directions indicate how many times each response may be used?
- Are all of the matching items on the same page?

*We writing for
to check for*

Figure
6.2**Checklist for Creating Common Assessments** *(continued)***Multiple-Choice Items**

- Does each item stem present a meaningful problem?
- Is there too much information in the stem?
- Are the item stems free of irrelevant material?
- Are the item stems stated in positive terms (if possible)?
- If used, has negative wording been given special emphasis (e.g., capitalized)?
- Are the distractors brief and free of unnecessary words?
- Are the distractors similar in length and form to the answer?
- Is there only one correct or clearly best answer?
- Are the distractors based on specific misconceptions?
- Are the items free of clues that point to the answer?
- Are the distractors and answer presented in sensible (e.g., alphabetical, numerical) order?
- Has "all of the above" been avoided and has "none of the above" been used judiciously?
- If a stimulus is used, is it necessary for answering the item?
- If a stimulus is used, does it require use of skills sought to be assessed?

Essay Items

- Are the questions designed to measure higher-level learning outcomes?
- Does each question clearly indicate the response expected (including extensiveness)?
- Are students aware of the basis on which their answers will be evaluated?
- Are appropriate time limits provided for responding to the questions?
- Are students aware of the time limits and/or point values for each question?
- Are all students required to respond to the same questions?

Performance Items

- Does the item focus on learning outcomes that require complex cognitive skills and student performances?
- Does the task represent both the content and skills that are central to learning outcomes?
- Does the item minimize dependence on skills that are irrelevant to the intended purpose of the assessment task?
- Does the task provide the necessary scaffolding for students to be able to understand the task and achieve the task?
- Do the directions clearly describe the task?
- Are students aware of the basis (expectations) on which their performances will be evaluated in terms of scoring rubrics?

For the Assessment as a Whole

- Are the items of the same type grouped together on the test (or within sections, sets)?
- Are the items arranged from easy to more difficult within sections or the test as a whole?
- Are items numbered in sequence, indicating so if the test continues on subsequent pages?
- Are all answer spaces clearly indicated and is each answer space related to its corresponding item?
- Are the correct answers distributed in such a way that there is no detectable pattern?
- Is the test material well spaced, legible, and free of typos?
- Are there directions for each section of the test and the test as a whole?
- Are the directions clear and concise?

Adapted from *Measurement and assessment in teaching* (9th ed.), by R. L. Linn and M. D. Miller, 2005, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.