

Test development

A close-up photograph of a tortoise shell, showing the intricate patterns and colors of the scutes. The shell is dark brown with lighter, yellowish-brown edges. The text is overlaid on the shell, with the title 'Test development' at the top and a list of stages below.

Scope of the presentation

- ✓ Stages in test development
- ✓ Stage 1: Determining test type and test format
- ✓ Stage 2: Planning
- ✓ Stage 3: Item writing
- ✓ Stage 4: reviewing
- ✓ Stage 5: Piloting
- ✓ Stage 6: Validating

Stage 1: Determining test type and test format

- In advance determination of function because of its influence on format and content
- Three factors in determining the function of the test
 1. The characteristics of examinees
 2. The specific purpose of the test
 3. The scope of the test

Stage 2: Planning

- ❑ Content is heavily influenced by the function and form of the test.
- ❑ Three steps in planning:
 1. Determining the instructional objectives
 2. Dividing objectives into manageable topics
 3. Preparing a table of specifications
 - a. Provision of a representative sample of the materials

An example of table of specifications

Instructional objectives	Test format	Test type	Number of items
a. the ability to pronounce words correctly			
b. the ability to know and write the phonetic symbols for words			
c. the ability to utter sentences correctly			
d. the ability to place stress on the correct syllables			
contents			
1. Stress patterns of words (primary stress)			10
a. two syllable words	True or false	recognition	3
b. three syllable words	True or false	recognition	4
c. beyond three syllable words	Multiple-choice	recognition	3
2. Intonation of sentences			8
a. direct questions	True or false	recognition	2
b. indirect questions	True or false	recognition	2
c. statements	True or false	recognition	2
d. imperatives	True or false	Recognition	2
3. Pronunciation of words			30
a. individual words	Read aloud	production	10
b. a set of words	Read aloud	production	5
c. words and phrases in sentences	Read aloud	production	15
4. Writing phonetic symbols of words			15
a. easy words	completion	production	7
b. difficult words	completion	production	8

Stage 3: Item writing

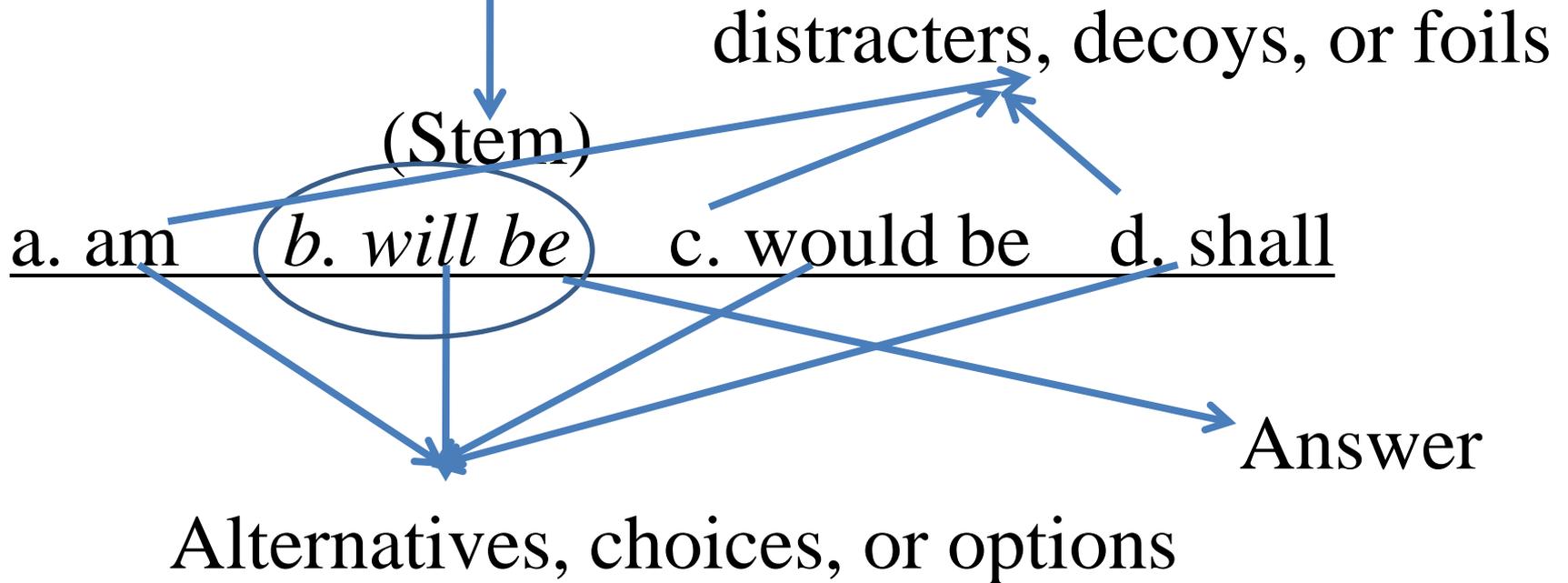
- ❖ Nature of items
- ❖ Subjective in nature
- ❖ Guidelines for writing various item types
 1. Productive response items
 - a. Short answers or short response items
 - b. Fill in items or completion items
 2. Receptive response items
 - a. Matching items
 - b. True or false items
 - c. Multiple choice items
 3. Task items

General guidelines for all item types

1. The item format should be correctly matched to the purpose and content of the items.
2. There should be only one correct answer.
3. The item should be written at the students' level of proficiency.
4. Negatives and double negatives should be avoided.
5. Items should avoid clues used in answering other items.
6. All parts of the item should be on the same page.
7. Only relevant information should be tested.
8. Items should be inspected by at least one colleague.

Receptive response items: Multiple-choice items

Don't call me at 4 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. I
..... giving my students a midterm exam.



1. Multiple-choice questions can be presented in either questions or statements.

A. Which of the following is closest in meaning to “abandon”?

- a. molest b. quit c. reveal d. merge

B. The word “abandon” is closest in meaning to
.....

- a. molest b. quit c. reveal d. merge

2. The stem of the item should be meaningful by itself and present a definite problem.

Poor: The blind man

- a. Was left alone in the street
- b. Had no money with him
- c. Used his stick to walk around
- d. Slipped over the ice and fell down

Better: We helped the blind man to the street.

- a. cross
- b. catch
- c. walk
- d. stop

3. Repeated words in the choices should be included in the stem.

Poor: Don't call me at 4 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. I my students a midterm exam.

- a. Am giving b. will be giving c. would be giving d. should be giving

4. Negative words should be avoided as far as possible.

Poor: Which of the following countries has not just been affected by debt crisis in Europe?

- a. Greece b. Italy c. Cyprus d. Spain

Better: All of the following countries have already been struck by debt crisis except

- a. Greece b. Italy c. Cyprus d. Spain

5. All the alternatives should be grammatically consistent with the stem and correct by themselves.

Poor: She can not stand the party

- a. Because of the noise
- b. It was overcrowded
- c. To keep staying in
- d. Were you step in
- e. Better: she can not stand the party at the moment because
- f. It is very noisy
- g. There were many people in
- h. The guests will be leaving it
- i. She may have been treated badly.

Poor: She you with your math problems next time.

a. is going to help

b. will helping

c. helping

d. will have helped

Better: She you with your math problems next time.

a. is going to be helped

b. will help

c. helping

d. will have helped

➤ There must be one correct or clearly one best answer.

Poor: I will send your regards to my parents when I home.

- a. Arrive
- b. Have arrived
- c. Will arrive
- d. Arrived

Better: I will send your regards to my parents when I Home.

- a. Arrive b. am arriving c. will arrive d. arrived

➤ All distracters should be plausible.

Poor: We had to a scheme to enter the bank.

a. devise b. device c. nervous d. secretly

Better: We had to a scheme to enter the bank.

a. devise b. struggle c. rotate d. orbit

➤ Alternatives should be of similar length and difficulty.

Poor: The taxi driver rushed out of the house

- a. for calling an ambulance
- b. To call an ambulance
- c. He was petrified by a rat
- d. Were he to desire to rescue the afflicted landlord

Better: The taxi driver rushed out of the house
because the landlady was seriously ill.

- a. To ask for help
- b. To hide himself
- c. To cry for her
- d. To stop her death

➤ The stem should be worded as simply as possible.

Poor: We were furious at him, and made up our minds not to let her in because he was for the meeting.

a. absent b. late c. sick d. ready

Better: We were angry because he was for the meeting again.

a. absent b. late c. sick d. ready

❖ All the clues in the stem should be avoided.

Poor: We noticed abreak into your house.

a. thief b. earl c. heir d. entrant

Better:

We noticed a (n)break into your house.

a. thief b. earl c. heir d. entrant

❑ There should be only one blank in each stem.

Poor: The fog with the narrow road
made driving difficult.

- a. heavy-concerned b. thick-coupled
c. dense-nested d. sparse-aligned

Better: The thick fog with the narrow road
made driving difficult.

- a. coupled b. aligned c. concerned d. nested

- The correct answer should appear in each of the alternative positions an approximately equal number of times but in random order.
- Alternatives could range from three to five.
- Make the length of blanks equal in all stems.

Avoid review options

- Special alternatives such as all of the above, none of the above, both a and b, nether c and d should be used sparingly.

Poor: Like a topic sentence, a reworded thesis statement expresses the same meaning in different words and structures, but, unlike a topic sentence, a reworded thesis statement

- a. must be a statement
- b. puts forward two sides of the same argument
- c. expresses the main idea of the whole essay
- d. both b and c

Can you identify two problems with this item?

Avoid hybrid or impure items

Poor: the guests the hostess for her last night's entertainment.

- a. Thank b. thanked c. praise d. praised

Better:

The guests the hostess for her last night's entertainment.

- a. Thanked b. thank c. have thanked d. will thank

Poor: As a vampire, he the city every two year.

- a. visits b. is visiting c. has visited d. visit

Better: As a vampire, he the city every two year.

- a. Visits b. is visiting c. has visited c. was visiting

➤ Arrangement of the alternatives should be either vertical or horizontal.

Pattern A: vertical

a.

b.

c.

d.

Pattern B: horizontal

a.

b.

c.

d.

Pattern C: a mixture of both (not recommended)

a.

b.

c.

d.

True or false items (alternative response items)

I. Broad general statements should be avoided.

Poor: students are always given a placement test to be grouped into various levels. (F)

Poor: students are usually given a placement test to be grouped into various levels. (T)

Usually, generally, often, and sometimes make a statement true.

Always, never, absolutely, all, and only make a statement false.

II. Trivial points should be avoided in statements.

Poor: The colour of the actress's dress in the movie was blue.

Poor: The tree had many braches.

III. Negative statements and double negatives should be avoided.

Poor: None of the poets mentioned in the passage were unknown.

Better: all the poets mentioned in the passage were known.

IV. Including two ideas in a statement should be avoided.

Poor: The stress on the word “dictate” falls on the second syllable because it is a disyllabic word.

Better:

1. The stress on the word “dictate” falls on the second syllable.
2. The word “dictate” is a disyllabic word.

V. long, complex statements should be avoided.

THE longer the euro area's debt crisis drags on, the more it resembles an instrument of economic torture. Like the medieval rack, every turn of the crisis tears Europe further apart. This week Cyprus announced it would seek a bail-out. Spain formally asked for money to recapitalise its banks. The Greek limb is close to being ripped off. How long can the Italian one hold?

Poor: The approximately endemic paralysis of the euro area has just contaminated Cyprus.

Better: Cyprus has just been affected by debt crisis.

VI. Statements should be approximately equal in length and distribution.

1. The author does not know how long the Italian economy could keep moving forward.
2. Greece is still intact.
3. The economic situation in Europe is showing signs of improvement.
4. Debt crisis is yet to affect Cyprus.

Matching items

- The two columns in a matching item should be related to one central theme.

What is wrong with the following item?

1. Invented telescope
 2. Was the first Iranian woman sent to space
 3. Discovered penicillin
 4. Freed slavery in America
- A. Anushe Ansarian
 - B. Abraham Lincoln
 - C. Galileo Galilei
 - D. Alexander Fleming

- An unequal number of responses should be included and the student should be told that the options could be used only once, more than once, or not at all.

1. Easily found
 2. Well-arranged
 3. Unable to decide
 4. Capable of doing
 5. Clever at doing
- A. Available
 - B. Able
 - C. Dead
 - D. Neat
 - E. Hesitated
 - F. mature

- The list of items to be matched should be brief and the shorter options should be on the right column. (between four and seven)

What is wrong with this item?

- A. Taciturn
 - B. Daybreak
 - C. Because
 - D. Inaccessible
 - E. Jury
 - F. Review
 - G. Janitor
 - H. responsible
1. On account of
 2. A person whose job is to look after a school.
 3. out of reach
 4. In charge of
 5. The time when it gets light
 6. A group of judges who listen to the details of a case in court
 7. Go over
 8. Talk little

- The list of responses should be logically ordered.
 1. The impact of a meteorite with Ann Hodges
 2. The explosion of a large object above Tunguska
 3. The smashing of Titan into Earth
 4. The burning of a 150-ton meteorite while travelling through the upper atmosphere
 - A. 1908 (2)
 - B. 1954 (1)
 - C. 1972 (4)