Chapter 6: Activity 6.3

Evaluating and Improving Multiple-Choice Items

# 1. Directions

Review the multiple-choice items below, in conjunction with tips for developing and scoring items presented in Chapter 6. Evaluate both items finding one main flaw in each item. Can you think of some ways to improve the items? Rewrite them. Then develop two multiple-choice items that you could use with a class to assess some aspect of learning.

# 2. Multiple-Choice Items

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I** | The lungs in mammals are examples of:  A. Breathing  B. Organs  C. Reptiles  D. Species |
| **II** | Lara is 7 years old. Lara has red hair. She has 4 big red apples. Jan has black hair. Jan has 7 green apples. How many more apples has Jan than Lara?  A. 2  B. 3  C. 4 |

# 3. Evaluating the Items

The rating scale below will help you to evaluate the quality of the items. Apply this scale to each item and then revise each item to improve it.

I. Lungs in mammals

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **No** | **Unsure** | **Yes** | **Major flaw identified** |
| 1 | The item assesses higher levels of learning. |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | The item consists of one clear problem to solve. |  |  |  |
| 3 | Students could identify the correct answer without viewing the options. |  |  |  |
| 4 | Extraneous or superficial detail is avoided in the item. |  |  |  |
| 5 | Unnecessary negative phrasing is avoided. |  |  |  |
| 6 | Options are laid out logically. |  |  |  |
| 7 | All options are plausible. |  |  |  |
| 8 | All options are grammatically consistent with stem. |  |  |  |
| 9 | There are no unintended clues in the item. |  |  |  |
| 10 | Item does not require students to express personal opinion. |  |  |  |

II. Lara is 7

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **No** | **Unsure** | **Yes** | **Major flaw identified** |
| 1 | The item assesses higher levels of learning. |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | The item consists of one clear problem to solve. |  |  |  |
| 3 | Students could identify the correct answer without viewing the options. |  |  |  |
| 4 | Extraneous or superficial detail is avoided in the item. |  |  |  |
| 5 | Unnecessary negative phrasing is avoided. |  |  |  |
| 6 | Options are laid out logically. |  |  |  |
| 7 | All options are plausible. |  |  |  |
| 8 | All options are grammatically consistent with stem. |  |  |  |
| 9 | There are no unintended clues in the item. |  |  |  |
| 10 | Item does not require students’ to express personal opinion. |  |  |  |

# 4. Revising Items

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I** |  |
| **II** |  |

# 5. Developing Multiple-Choice Items Suited to Your Own Teaching Context

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **III** |  |
| **IV** |  |