Selected Response Items

A) Multiple Choice Items

Measures both simple and complex learning outcomes
Can be highly structured and clearly written
Sample a broad range of achievement
Can be used to easily diagnose student misconceptions
Less influenced by guessing that dichotomous methods
Easy to score and reliable
Objective
Time consuming to develop
Many possible errors associated with their creation
Not useful to measure higher order functions
Validity is impacted by student reading level and short term memory

Guidelines for Multiple Choice:

1. Design each item to measure an important outcome.
2. Present a single, clearly formatted problem in the stem of the item.
3. State the stem of the item in simple, clear language.
4. Put as much of the wording in the stem as possible.
5. State the stem of the item in positive form, whenever possible.
6. Emphasize negative wording in the stem, whenever it is used
7. Make certain that the intended answer is correct or clearly the best.
8. Make all alternatives grammatically consistent with the stem and in parallel form.
9. Avoid verbal clues that enable students to select the correct answer. (6)
10. Make the distracters plausible and attractive to an uninformed student.
11. Vary the length of the correct answer.
12. Avoid using "all of the above" and limit the use of "none of the above".
13. Vary the position of the correct answer.
14. Improve difficulty by making answers more homogeneous.
15. Make each item independent of the others.
16. Use an efficient item format.
17. Follow the rules of grammar.

B) True False Items

Also referred to as alternate response items.
May be used as single items or in a cluster.
Used when there are only two alternatives – true/false, agree/disagree, yes/no, fact/opinion.
Used in concert with Interpretive Exercises.

Guidelines for True/False:

1. Include only one central idea in each statement.
2. Keep the statement short and use simple vocabulary and sentence structure.
3. Word the statement so precisely that it can is definitely either true or false.
4. Try not to use negative statements and never use double negatives.
5. Statements of opinion should usually be attributed to a source.
6. Test only propositions when testing for cause and effect.
7. Avoid extraneous clues to the answer.
8. To measure more complex learning levels used an interpretive exercise.

C) Matching Items

Most useful for testing vocabulary.
Each item contains two lists – (i) premises and (ii) responses.

Guidelines for Matching:

1. The material included should have a common characteristic.
2. Keep the list of premises on the left, short and the responses on the right, brief.
3. The numbers of premises and responses should be different.
4. Some responses should be used more than once and others not at all.
5. Place the responses in alphabetical or numerical order.
6. Clearly specify the directions for matching.
7. Put all the items on the same page.

D) Interpretive Exercise Items

Can be used to measure more complex levels of learning.
Format consists of an opening information section followed by selection items.
Tests skills in interpretation of charts, maps, graphs as well as text.
Key type items can be used to measure analyses and inferences.
Student reading level affects student success.

Guidelines:

1. Match the introductory material carefully to the learning outcomes.
2. Select introductory material that is new to the students.
3. Keep the introductory material readable and brief.
4. Use items that call forth a valid measure of the desired outcomes.
5. Follow the rules for the item type you choose to use (multiple choice, true false)