



Assessment Validity Checklist

Section 1: General Assessment Construction Factors

The construction of the assessment and questions can lead to poor or weak validity.

- Clearly Written Questions:** Questions that are too wordy or confusing lead to students not understanding what the questions are asking. Each question should be direct and clear.
- Clear Graphics/Images:** Visuals within an assessment need to be copied clearly, not pixelated or difficult to read.
- NO Trick Questions:** Trick questions measure a student's ability to answer a trick question...not understanding of skill or content. Trick questions should be eliminated.
- Vocabulary is Appropriate:** Questions with unnecessarily (or maybe unrelated) complex vocabulary will measure ability to read a question, not the aligned skill or content objective. Be sure to check vocabulary of questions.
- Questions Written at Student Reading Level:** All questions, diagrams, etc should be written at or below student reading ability. Remember you are not measuring the student's ability to read the question, but the information embedded in the question.
- NO Biased Questions:** Biased questions measure student experiences or cultural background.
- Avoid Negative Questions:** The negative question can be confusing to answer especially for English Language Learners. Often it can be easier to find the correct answer without knowing the correct answer with this type of question.
- Avoid Blanks Within the Question:** Interior blanks force student to focus on holding partial sentences in working memory, rather than measuring skill or content knowledge it is measuring cognitive load.
- Eliminate Teacher Errors:** Questions with spelling errors, grammar errors, or other mistakes by the assessment writer can confuse students and lead to poor validity.



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Section 2: Selected Response

Forced Choice, multiple choice, questions are a great way to measure learning, but small issues left unchecked can lead to poor or weak validity.

- Homogenous Answer Choices:** All answer choices are in the same tense, and of similar construction. For example, all choices start with the same phrase or end in a similar way.
- Answer Choices Should Be Plausible:** Remove answer choices that can be too easily eliminated because they are not plausible or obviously incorrect.
- Similar in Length:** Answer choices should not point out one option that is much longer or shorter than other options. Use consistency across choices.
- Similar Grammatical Form:** Avoid options that are constructed inconsistently; keep subject, verb order consistent within all choices or similar across 2 choices/2 choices. (ex: 2 positive, 2 negative)
- Answer Choices In Logical Order:** Placing answer choices in logical order ensures random placement of the correct response and less likely to confuse the student.

Section 3: Constructed Response & Performance

The open ended, performance or constructed response questions are great ways to measure learning but small issues can lead to poor or weak validity.

- Question Expectation Clearly Stated:** Questions and how students are to respond are clearly detailed. (ex: provide 3 examples, or use complete sentences, etc.)
- Prompt is Novel:** Passage, prompt or task is a new “cold read” to students (unless assessment is designed to measure rote memorization of a single task).
- Avoid Giving Too Many Options:** Prompts should be designed to gather a particular type of response which is measurable. (ex: Write a rhythm. Be creative! vs. Write a rhythm. The rhythm should be at least 4 measures long. The composition must include at least 4 of the rhythms from the box below...)
- Measurable Responses:** Student responses can be identified as right or wrong and measurable using a rubric.
- Adequate Space for Response:** Sufficient space is provided for expected student response.
- Descriptive Rubric:** A detailed descriptive rubric has been developed to measure student knowledge and determine level of proficiency.