

Creating Effective Multiple-Choice Test Questions*

Content

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| 1. | The stem must include the problem and all relevant information necessary to determine the correct response. |
| 2. | There must be only one correct response. Each 'distracter' must be a plausible response to the problem. |
| 3. | Test questions must be independent so that one question is not based upon another. |
| 4. | Do not place clues in any part of the question. |
| 5. | Avoid overlapping responses. |
| 6. | Use 'soft' (i.e. rounded) conversions rather than 'hard' (i.e. precise) conversions when converting between imperial and metric (SI) systems. |
| 7. | For code-related items use the applicable measurement system. Use the measurement commonly used in the trade. |

Language

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| 8. | Stems and responses should be accurate, brief, complete and clear. |
| 9. | Use plain language and common trade language. |
| 10. | Do not use trade titles or the pronoun 'you'. |
| 11. | Avoid using negative ('not', 'no', 'cannot'), ambiguous ('if', 'should', 'could') and absolute formations ('only', 'never', 'all' or 'none'). |
| 12. | Phrases such as 'all of the above', 'none of the above', 'any of the above' or 'both A and B' must not be used as responses. |

Arrangement

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| 13. | The 'stem' must be in the form of a question. Wherever possible, give all relevant information before asking the question. |
| 14. | Use diagrams or lists for clarity and ensure diagrams are clearly labelled. |
| 15. | Arrange responses in logical order, eg. an ascending or descending numerical sequence. |
| 16. | The responses should be balanced in length, grouped and worded consistently. |

*For further information, including sample Red Seal exam questions, please see Red Seal Interprovincial Standards website at:
<http://www.red-seal.ca/>