

Suitability Assessment of Materials

CONTENT		
	√ Rating	Rating Definition
<p>Purpose: It's important that readers readily understand the purpose of the materials. If they don't clearly perceive the purpose, they may miss main points.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior Purpose is explicitly stated in the title, cover illustration or introduction.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate Purpose is not explicit. It is implied or multiple purposes are stated.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable No purpose is stated in the title, illustration or introduction.
		NOTES:
<p>Content Topics: Adult learners usually want to solve their immediate health problem, rather than learn medical facts. The content of most interest and use to readers is behavior information that helps solve problems.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior Thrust of the material is application of knowledge aimed at desirable reader behavior rather than non-behavior facts. Instructions are explicit and require specific actions from readers.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate At least 40% of content topics focus on desirable behaviors or actions.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable Nearly all topics focus on non-behavior facts.
		NOTES:
<p>Scope: Scope is limited to purpose or objective(s). Depending on the type of material, a limited number of "main points" are presented (flyer 1 - 2 main points; brochure no more than 4). Scope is also limited to what the reader can reasonably learn in the time allowed.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior Scope is limited to essential information directly related to the purpose. The appropriate number of main points are presented. Experience
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate Scope is expanded beyond the purpose; no more than 40% is nonessential information. The number of main points slightly exceeds
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable Scope is far out of proportion to the purpose and time allowed. Too many main points are presented.
		NOTES:
<p>Summary and Review: A review offers readers a chance to see the key points in other words, examples or visuals and increases comprehension.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior Summaries are included and retell key messages in different words or examples.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate Some key topics are reviewed.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable No summary or review is included.
		NOTES:

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LITERACY DEMAND

	✓	Rating	Rating Definition
Reading Grade Level: Text reading level is a critical factor in comprehension. Readability formulas provide a reasonably accurate measure of reading difficulty. (see http://www.PrenatalEd.com/readlvl.htm)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	5th grade or level or lower
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	6th to 8th grade
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	9th grade or above
			NOTES:
Writing Style: Conversational style and active voice are easy to understand. Passive voice, embedded information and long or multiple phrases slow reading and reduce comprehension.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	1) Conversational style and active voice are used throughout. 2) Simple sentences are used extensively.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	1) About half the text uses conversational style, active voice. 2) Less than half of sentences are complex with long phrases.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	1) Passive voice throughout. 2) Over half of sentence have long or multiple phrases.
			NOTES:
Sentence Construction: The context is given before new information. We learn new facts/behaviors more quickly when told the context first. Example: <i>To relieve pain</i> (context), <i>put heat on the sore spot</i> (new information).	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Consistently provides context before presenting new information.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Provides context first about half the time.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Context is provided first or not at all.
			NOTES:
Vocabulary: Common explicit words are used. (Example: Use doctor instead of physician). Few or no words express general terms such as categories (Example: Use milk instead of dairy products) or value judgments (Example: Use pain that does not go away in 5 minutes instead of excessive pain). Imagery words are used because these are words that people can “see”. (Example: Use runny nose instead of excess mucus).	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	All three factors: 1) common words are used all the time. 2) Technical, concept, category, value judgment words (CCVJ) are explained. 3) Appropriate imagery words are used.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	1) Common words are used frequently. 2) Technical CCVJ words are explained sometimes. 3) Some jargon is used.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Two or more factors: 1) Uncommon words are used frequently instead of common words. 2) No explanation or examples are given for technical and CCVJ words. 3) Extensive jargon.
			NOTES:

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LITERACY DEMAND (continued)

	✓	Rating	Rating Definition
Learning Enhanced by Advance Organizers (Road Signs): Headers or topic captions tell very briefly what is coming next. These “road signs” make the text look less intimidating and prepare the reader’s thought process to expect the announced topic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Nearly all topics are preceded by an advance organizer (a statement that tells what is next).
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	About 50% of topics are preceded by advance organizers.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Few or no advance organizers are used.
		NOTES:	

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS, LISTS, TABLES, CHARTS

	✓	Rating	Rating Definition
Cover Graphic: People do judge a book by its cover. The cover image often is the deciding factor in a reader’s attitude toward, and interest in, the materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	The cover graphic: 1) Is friendly 2) Attracts attention. 3) Clearly portrays the purpose of the materials
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	The cover graphic has one or two of the superior criteria.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	The cover graphic has none of the superior criteria.
		NOTES:	

Type of Illustrations: Simple line drawings can promote realism without distracting details. Visuals are accepted and remembered better when they portray what is familiar and easily recognized. Viewers may not recognize the meaning of medical drawings or abstract symbols.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Both factors: 1) Simple adult-appropriate line drawings/sketches are used. 2) Illustrations are likely to be familiar to readers.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	One of the superior factors is missing.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	None of the superior factors is present.
		NOTES:	

Relevance of Illustrations: Nonessential details such as room backgrounds, elaborate borders, unneeded color can distract the viewer. The viewer’s eyes may be “captured” by these details. Illustrations should tell key points visibly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Illustrations present key messages visually so the reader can grasp the key ideas from illustrations alone. No distractions.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	1) Illustrations include some distractions. 2) Insufficient use of illustrations.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	No illustrations or an overload of illustrations.
		NOTES:	

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GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS, LISTS, TABLES, CHARTS (continued)

	√	Rating	Rating Definition
Graphics: Lists, tables, charts, forms: Many readers do not understand the purpose of lists and charts. Explanations or directions are essential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Provides step-by-step directions with an example that will build self-efficacy (confidence).
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	“How to” directions are too brief for readers to understand and use the graphic without help.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Graphics are presented without explanation.
		NOTES:	
Captions: Captions are used to “announce” or explain graphics. Captions can quickly tell the reader what the graphic is about and where to focus within the graphic. A graphic without a caption is usually an inferior instruction and missed learning opportunity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Explanatory captions with all or nearly all illustrations and graphics.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Brief captions are used for some graphics.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Captions are not used.
		NOTES:	

LAYOUT AND TYPOGRAPHY

	√	Rating	Rating Definition
Layout: Layout has a substantial influence on the suitability of materials. It includes the following superior characteristics: 1) Illustrations are adjacent to the related text. 2) Layout and sequence of information are consistent, making it easy to predict the flow of information. 3) Visual cueing devices (boxes, arrows, shading) are used to direct attention to key content. 4) pages do not appear cluttered. 5) Use of color supports and is not distracting to the message. Readers need not learn color codes to understand and use the message. 6) Line length is 30 to 50 characters and spaces. 7) There is high contrast between type and paper. 8) Paper has a non-gloss or low-gloss surface.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	At least 5 of the 8 superior factors are present:
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	At least 3 of the superior factors are present.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	1) Two or fewer of the superior factors are present. 2) Looks uninviting or hard to read.
		NOTES:	

Suitability Assessment of Materials

LAYOUT AND TYPOGRAPHY (continued)

	√	Rating	Rating Definition
Typography: Type size and fonts can make text easy or difficult for readers at all skill levels. For example, type in ALL CAPS slows everyone’s reading comprehension. When too many (6+) type fonts and sizes are used on a page, the appearance becomes confusing and the focus uncertain.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	At least 3 of the following 4 factors are present: 1) Text type is in uppercase and lowercase. 2) Type size is at least 12 point (This is 12 point type). 3) Typographic cues (bold type, color, size of type). 4) No ALL CAPS for long headlines and running text.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Two of the superior factors are present.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	One or none of the superior factors are present. Or 6 or more type styles/sizes are used on one page.
			NOTES:

Subheadings: Few people can remember more than 7 independent items. For those with low literacy skills the limit may be 3 or 5 items. Longer lists need to be partitioned into smaller chunks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	1) Lists are grouped under descriptive subheadings. 2) No more than 5 items are presented without a subheading.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	No more than 7 items are presented without a subheading.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	More than 7 items are presented without a subheading.
			NOTES:

LEARNING STIMULATION AND MOTIVATION

	√	Rating	Rating Definition
Interaction: Interaction is included in text and /or graphics. When a reader does something to reply to a question or problem, chemical changes take place in the brain that enhance retention in long-term memory. Readers should be asked to solve problems, make choices, demonstrate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Problems or questions are presented for reader response.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Question & Answer format is used to discuss problems and solutions (passive interaction).
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	No interactive learning or stimulation is provided.
			NOTES:

Motivation: People are motivated to learn when they believe tasks and behaviors are doable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Complex topics are subdivided so that readers may experience small
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Some topics are subdivided to improve readers’ confidence.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	No partitioning is provided.
			NOTES:

Suitability Assessment of Materials

LEARNING STIMULATION AND MOTIVATION (continued)

	√	Rating	Rating Definition
Desired Behavior: Desired behavior patterns are modeled or shown in specific terms. People often learn more readily when specific, familiar instances are used rather than abstract or general concepts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Instruction models specific behavior and skills. Example: nutrition information emphasizes eating patterns, shopping, cooking.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Information is a mix of technical and common language the reader may not easily interpret in terms of daily living. Example: <i>High sugar, low nutrient value foods</i> instead of <i>No fuel foods</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Information is presented in non-specific or category items such as food groups.
		NOTES:	

CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS

	√	Rating	Rating Definition
Cultural Match - Logic, Language, Experience (LLE): A valid measure of the cultural appropriateness of material is how well its logic, language and experience (inherent in the instruction) match the LLE of the intended audience (not the reviewer). Example: Nutrition instruction is a poor cultural match if it tells readers to eat vegetables that are rarely eaten by people in that culture and not sold in the reader's neighborhood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Central concepts of the material appear to be culturally similar to the LLE of the target culture.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Significant match in LLE for 50% of central concepts.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Clearly a cultural mismatch in LLE.
		NOTES:	

Cultural Images and Examples: To be accepted, an instruction must present cultural images and examples in realistic and positive ways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior	Images and examples present culture in positive ways.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	Neutral presentation of cultural images and foods.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Suitable	Negative images such as exaggerated or caricatured cultural characteristics, actions, or examples.
		NOTES:	

Score as follows: Superior = 2 points Adequate = 1 point Not Suitable = 0 points

Source: Doak, C.C., Doak, L.G., & Root, J.H. (1996). Assessing suitability of materials. In Teaching patients with low literacy skills (2nd Ed.) (pp. 41-60). Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company.

Suitability Assessment of Materials

Factor to be Rated	Score	Notes
Content		
Purpose		
Content Topics		
Scope		
Summary and Review		
Total Score: Content		
Literacy Demand		
Reading Grade Level		
Writing Style		
Sentence Construction		
Vocabulary		
Learning Enhanced by Advance Organizers		
Total Score: Literacy Demand		
Graphic Illustrations, Lists, Tables, Charts		
Cover Graphic		
Type of Illustrations		
Relevance of Illustrations		
Graphics: Lists, tables, charts, forms		
Captions		
Total: Graphic Illustrations, Lists, Tables, Charts		
Layout and Typography		
Layout		
Typography		
Subheadings		
Total: Layout and Typography		
Learning Stimulation and Motivation		
Interaction		
Motivation		
Desired Behavior		
Total: Learning Stimulation and Motivation		
Cultural Appropriateness		
Cultural Match		
Cultural Images and Examples		
Total: Cultural Appropriateness		