Advantages and Disadvantages:

For Types of Test Items

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| **Test Type** | **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| **Multiple‐****Choice Items** | 1. Large number of items can be givenin a short time period.2. Broad domain can be covered.3. Higher and lower level expectationscan be assessed – if constructed well.4. Scoring is usually quick and objective.5. Less influenced by guessing.6. May provide diagnostic informationby analyzing patters of incorrect responses. | 1. Often only used to test “facts” – teachersnot aware they are suited to higher thinking.2. Takes substantial time to construct.3. Not useful when “show your work” is required.4. Often hard to find suitable options.5. Reading ability can influence studentperformance.6. Generally does not provide feedback tocorrect errors in understanding. |
| **True‐False****Items** | 1. A large number of items can be givenin a short time (e.g., 3‐4 per minute)2. Scoring is usually quick and objective. | 1. Difficult to construct statements that aredefensibly true or absolutely false.2. Strong element of guessing.3. Need a large number for high reliability. |
| **Matching****Items** | 1. An efficient way to assess theassociation between a variety ofitems within a given topic.2. Easy to construct.3. Scoring is usually quick and objective.4. Easily administered to a large number of students. | 1. Difficulty to generate a sufficient number ofplausible premises.2. May limit assessment to lower levels of understanding.3. Homogeneous topics are required.4. May overestimate learning due to influenceof testing. |
| **Short‐****Answer/ Fill‐ in‐the‐Blanks Items** | 1. Guessing is reduced; student mustconstruct an answer.2. Requires increased cognitive ability to generate answers.3. Effective for assessing who, what, where, and when information.4. Relatively easy to construct.5. Broad range of knowledge can beassessed including creativity and spontaneity. | 1. Accuracy of assessment may be influencedby handwriting/spelling skills.2. Scoring can be time consuming and expensive due to subjectivity.3. May overestimate learning due to bluffing.4. Not useful for complex or extendedoutcomes.5. Often criticized for encouraging rotememorization. |
| **Essay Items** | 1. Encourages the organization ofknowledge, integration of theoriesand expression of opinions.2. Promotes original, novel thinking.3. Advantageous for assessing complex learning outcomes such as application, synthesis and evaluation levels.4. Takes less time to construct thanother test item types.5. Stimulates increased studying asstudents cannot answer via simple recognition. | 1. Subjective scoring is less reliable, more timeconsuming and subject to bias.2. Grading may be influenced by handwriting, length of response and writing skills.3. Provides a deep but small sample of students’ performance.4. Bluffing and the quality of writing caninfluence scores. |

Approximate Length of Time for Test Item Answering

This will help you in determining the length of a test and/or how long you will give students to complete a pencil and paper test.

**Item Type Average Time**

True‐false 30 seconds Multiple‐choice 1 minute Multiple‐choice of higher level learning objectives 1.5 minutes Short Answer 2 minutes Completion 1 minute

Matching 30 seconds per response

Short Essay 10‐15 minutes Extended Essay 30 minutes Visual Image 30 seconds