

Procedures for Conducting Content and Bias Review

Content Review

MSDE and CTB content specialists prepare the materials by organizing materials into folders following these guidelines (MSDE and CTB prepare their own materials). CTB will bring folders to the meeting for MSDE materials. MSDE should make copies of each passage or stimulus and have materials organized into sets.

English I	Red file folders, each containing 4 or 5 reading passages
Biology	Blue file folders, each containing 4 Technical passages or 6-10 other types of stimuli, depending upon length
Government	Green file folders, each containing 6-10 stimuli, depending upon length

Make 15 copies of each passage or stimulus, clipped together with one content/bias review form. (see attached)

Make a Master List of Passages/Stimulus Materials organized alphabetically within type or genre. (format to be determined by each content area)

The number of folders prepared should be divisible by 5 (in order to result in approximately even distribution to Bias Review Committee subgroups). Make adjustments in the number of passages/stimuli in each folder to accomplish this.

Each committee member will need a copy of the passage/stimulus specifications and the eligible Core Learning Goals indicators (CTB provides).

CTB staff will be responsible for facilitating the group and for organizing the task. CTB will also provide an overview of the purpose and importance of selecting passages and stimulus materials (e.g., to plan item writing task, seek copyright permissions, obtain appropriate range and diversity of materials).

MSDE content staff will be responsible for clarifying the Core Learning Goals and for responding to committee members' questions about difficulty or appropriateness of passages or stimulus materials for Maryland students.

Together, CTB and MSDE will manage the task of distributing and collecting materials and for documenting the results of the content and bias review committees' recommendations on the Master List of Passages/Stimulus Materials.

Task Sequence within each content area group (there is no general session):

1. Overview of HSA (Janet, Trudy, or Bill)
2. Introductions
3. Explanation of Content Review Committee task, agenda, daily schedule, flow of work (CTB)
4. Divide group members into subgroups (English: 4 groups of 3, Biology and Government 2 groups of 4). Change the groups each day or half-day.
5. Each subgroup selects a leader/recorder. This role can change each half-day.
6. Give each subgroup a file folder containing stimulus materials. The leader distributes a copy of each passage/stimulus in the folder to each group member and sets a period of time for

reading/reviewing all the materials in the folder. After the designated period of time, the leader initiates the discussion of each passage or stimulus material. The subgroup discusses the following (these questions should be written on a chart :

- Does the passage/stimulus meet the passage/stimulus specifications?
 - Is the material appropriate for assessing the Core Learning Goals?
 - Can several CLG indicators be assessed by the passage/stimulus?
 - Is the material of appropriate readability/difficulty/complexity?
 - Is the topic of the material interesting or engaging to students?
 - Would the material be accessible to students of different ability levels, or background characteristics or from different regions of the state, and to students with disabilities or limited English proficiency (level III or higher)?
 - Are any modifications to the material recommended? If so, they should be clearly marked on ONE copy.
7. The subgroup leader records the recommendations of the subgroup on the Content/Bias Review form for the passage/stimulus. After all materials in the folder are reviewed, the subgroup leader collects and organizes the materials in the folder and returns the folder to the CTB/MSDE facilitators. Subgroups may determine that the whole committee should review and discuss certain passages/stimulus materials and reach consensus before passing the material on to the Bias Review Committee. Content review groups may also flag materials to be reviewed by the Bias Review Committee for particular purposes (gender, ethnic, disability, limited English). (See attached Review Request slips.)
 8. The CTB/MSDE facilitators review the recommendations of the group and mark the recommendation (accept, reject, modify) on the Master List. The folder is then passed to the Bias Review Committee.
 9. When the folder is returned from the Bias Review Committee, the CTB/MSDE facilitator marks the recommendation of the Bias Review Committee on the Master List.

Bias Review

CTB (Rhonda, Margie, Valerie) will facilitate the work of the Bias Review Committee. MSDE (Janet, Trudy, or Bill) will be responsible for providing an overview of the HSA program and for explaining or interpreting MSDE decisions or policy in response to questions.

The following is a description of the procedures that will be used to organize the Bias Review Committee. After MSDE welcomes the committee and provides the overview, CTB will manage the meeting.

Introduction

MSDE provides the Bias Review Committee members with an overview of the purpose of the testing program. CTB then explains the role of the Bias Review Committee, the tasks to be accomplished, and the schedule for the meeting. Participants introduce themselves. Then, materials are distributed.

Activate Prior Knowledge

The Bias Review Committee members probably have some prior knowledge about what they think “test bias” includes. Have the Bias Review Committee do a *Think-Pair-Share*. Instruct the participants to write down key words, phrases, or ideas in response to the question “What is test bias?” Allow one minute. Have participants share their ideas with a partner and add other ideas to their lists. Allow three minutes for this step. Next, have each pair share one or two ideas with the whole group. A scribe (Valerie) will write the key words or phrases on a chart. Ask participants to look at the chart and detect any patterns or common themes among the key words and phrases listed. Summarize the activity by acknowledging that the participants already have essential prior knowledge about the task that they will be performing. The training that they are about to receive will add detail to their knowledge.

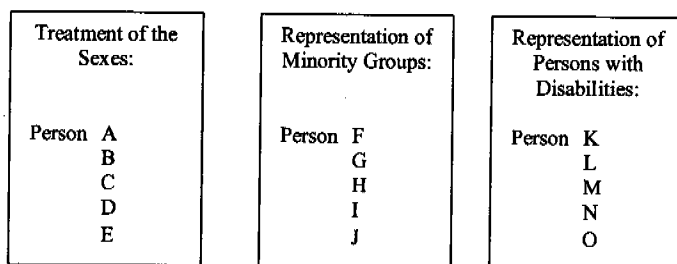
Double Jigsaw

In order to review and discuss the information in *Guidelines for Bias-Free Publishing*, the Bias Review Committee members will each become an “expert” about a portion of the information in the publication. Distribute the *Guidelines* to the participants. The Double Jigsaw is a two-step activity. In Step 1, participants learn a portion of the information in one of the three sections of the document and discuss the information with others who learned information in the same section:

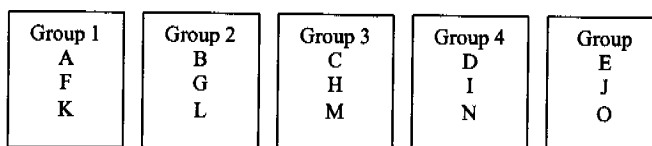
1. Guidelines for Equal Treatment of the Sexes
2. Guidelines for Fair Representation of Minority Groups
3. Guidelines for Fair Representation of Disabled People

In Step 2, new, three-person groups are formed using one person from each of the three previous groups. Each person “teaches” the other two group members the information contained in the section of the document. The diagram illustrates the formation of groups in each step:

Step 1:



Step 2:

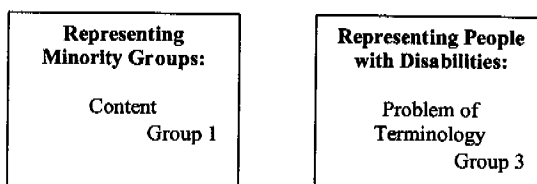


Step 1: Give each participant a 3x5 card with an assignment for reading a part of the *Guidelines for Bias-Free Publishing*.

Tell the participants that they have 5 minutes to read and study their assignment.

Next, the committee members present the information they learned to others who studied information in the same section. Each group discusses the section, ensuring that all members understand all the information in the document section. On a piece of chart paper, a scribe for the group writes key words, phrases, and ideas to summarize the section. Announce that 10 minutes are allotted for this activity.

Step 2: Next, new three-person groups are formed with one representative from each of the three sections. The assignment cards distributed in Step 1 will also indicate to which group each person is now assigned. Examples of assignment cards are shown below.



Each person is now responsible for summarizing the information in the entire section. Announce that 10 minutes are allotted for this activity.

Form Subgroups

Reorganize members of the Bias Review Committee into five subgroups of three people each. These will be the working subgroups for reviewing materials. Prior to the meeting, group members will be assigned to a subgroup based on the population they represent (ethnic minority group, religion, special education, limited English proficiency, etc.) Identify each subgroup using a color (red, blue, yellow, green, orange, etc.). Subgroup assignments will be designated on nametags by using a colored dot.

Sample Review

Distribute a sample reading passage and one or more sample stimulus materials from another content area. Allow time for all committee

members to read or review the material individually and to discuss the material in their subgroup. Then discuss the material as a whole group, pointing out the language or content that violates the *Guidelines for Bias-Free Publishing*. Allow 10 to 20 minutes for this activity, depending upon the number or length of sample materials to review.

Review Forms

Review the forms that will be used for documenting the findings of the Bias Review Committee. Use the results of the sample review to illustrate how to record information. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

Managing the Task

At this point, explain how materials will flow into and out of the subgroups. Each subgroup will select a leader; the role of leader may change every half-day. Folders containing sets of materials will be given to each subgroup. The subgroup leader will distribute a copy of each passage/stimulus material in the file to each subgroup member. The leader will set a time limit will for reading or reviewing the materials. Subgroup members will read or review independently. The group leader will monitor to determine whether subgroup members need more or less to review the materials in the set. The group leader will initiate discussion of each passage or stimulus material and will record the recommendations of the subgroup. Subgroups may determine, on occasion, that a particular reading passage, stimulus material, or test item should be reviewed by a person representing a particular sub-population (gender, ethnic, religious, disability) or by the entire Bias Review Committee. A Request for Review slip can be attached to the folder. There will be a procedure in place for designating specific times for reviewing flagged materials (e.g., right after lunch). Post a chart listing these subgroup procedures or have a printed copy of the procedures for each subgroup.

AGENDA

Sensitivity Review Committee Maryland High School Assessment July 22-23, 1999

Thursday, July 22:

8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome and Introductions
9:10 – 9:45	Training
9:45 – 12:00	Mathematics items
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch
12:45 – 2:30	Mathematics items
2:30 – 2:45	Summary Report of Mathematics Items with MSDE & CTB content specialists
2:45 – 3:30	Government items

Friday, July 23:

8:00 – 8:30	Registration
8:30 – 9:15	Government items
9:15 – 9:30	Summary Report of Government Items with MSDE & CTB content specialists
9:30 – 11:45	Biology items
11:45 – 12:00	Summary Report of Biology Items with MSDE & CTB content specialist
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch
12:45 – 3:15	English items
3:15 – 3:30	Summary Report of English Items with MSDE & CTB content specialists

Temporary note to CTB/MSDE:

If math moves quickly, hopefully Government can be completed on Thursday. For English, I think the committee should be divided into 6 groups of 3 people. Four groups get the 2 folders of literature items (approx 50 items per group); two groups get 2 folders of language items (approx 100 items per group). The language items should go very quickly (at least more quickly than literature items). If the agenda runs significantly ahead of schedule, then we may not need to subdivide the committee for the English items.

Review rates per the schedule as presented above:

Math: 47 items/hour

Government: 29 items/hour

Biology: 33 items/hour

English: Literature 20 items/hour; Language 40 items/hour

Content Review Guidelines

- Does the item measure the indicator?
- Does the item measure important content?
- Does the item represent an appropriate application of the content for the grade level?
- Is the information in the item true and accurate?
- Is the level of difficulty appropriate?
- Is the reading level appropriate?
- Is the item accessible to various student subgroups (varying ability level, LEP, students with disabilities)?
- Is the topic appropriate?
- Is the stem clear, precise, and unambiguous?
- Is negative wording avoided or used only when necessary?
- Is the item grammatically correct?
- Does the item avoid the use of clues to the correct answer?
- Is there one and only one correct answer?
- Are there key words in the correct response that are not in other answer choices that provide clues to the correct response?
- Are the distractors plausible and attractive to those who do not have the knowledge or skill being assessed?
- Do the distractors represent common misconceptions and mistakes?

Sensitivity Review Guidelines

For the purpose of this checklist, *groups* refers to people of different races, sexes, ages, religions, ethnic backgrounds, socio-economic backgrounds, linguistic backgrounds, or geographical regions. These are the guiding questions to consider when reviewing the test items.

Does the test item avoid:

Context that

- may be offensive to one or more groups?
- includes stereotypes of one or more groups?
- may elicit an emotional response from some groups?
- characterizes any roles or occupations in an offensive manner?
- may be significantly more familiar to some groups than others?
- shows insensitivity to a group's history or to the way the group has been represented over time?

Language that

- could be offensive to one or more groups?
- may elicit an emotional response from some groups?
- is unnecessarily complex or inaccessible to all students?
- may be significantly more familiar to some groups than to others?

Content Review Form

Item Code: _____

Content Area: _____

Content:

- The item does not measure the Core Learning Goal indicator.
Specify: _____
- Information is not true or is inaccurate.
Specify: _____
- The item represents an inappropriate application of concepts for the grade level.
Specify: _____
- The topic, vocabulary, or reading level is inappropriate.
Specify: _____
- The wording of the item is unclear, ambiguous, or misleading.
Specify: _____
- There is more than one correct answer or clues to the correct answer within the item.
Specify: _____
- The item is inaccessible to particular student populations (varying ability level, LEP, disability).
Specify: _____
- Other
Specify: _____

Recommendation: Usable as revised Do not use

Explain the reason for the recommendation or suggest a revision to the item (if possible):

Content Committee Chairperson: _____

Sensitivity Review Form

Item Code: _____

Content Area: _____

Please check if any of the following appear:

- Contains offensive, disturbing, insensitive, or inappropriate language or content

Specify: _____

- Contains stereotyping:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> gender stereotypes | <input type="checkbox"/> age stereotypes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> racial stereotypes | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic stereotypes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> religious stereotypes | <input type="checkbox"/> occupation stereotypes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> socio-economic stereotypes | <input type="checkbox"/> regional/geographic stereotypes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stereotyping of persons with disabilities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> insensitivity to historical representation of groups | |

Specify: _____

- Material may be significantly more/or less familiar to some groups based on:

- language
- socio-economics
- regions/geographical areas
- prior knowledge or experiences

Specify: _____

- Other

Specify: _____

Recommendation: Usable as revised Do not use

Explain the reason for the recommendation:

Sensitivity Committee Chairperson: _____

**Maryland High School Assessment
Content and Bias Review Form**

Content Area _____

Passage/Stimulus Title _____

Content Committee:

- Meets passage/stimulus specifications
- Appropriate for measuring content
- Appropriate for grade level/course
- Appropriate difficulty level
- Appropriate topic
- Interesting or engaging topic
- Accessible to diverse student population (gender, race/ethnic, region, LEP, disability, socioeconomic, etc.)
- Usable as is
- Usable as revised
- Do not use

Content Review Committee Chairperson

Bias/Sensitivity Review:

- No gender bias
- No racial bias
- No ethnic bias
- No religious bias
- No age bias
- No other bias

Recommendation: Usable as is Usable as revised Do not use

Bias Review Committee Chairperson

**Maryland High School Assessment
Content and Bias Review Form**

Content Area _____

Passage/Stimulus Title _____

Content Committee:

- Meets passage/stimulus specifications
- Appropriate for measuring content
- Appropriate for grade level/course
- Appropriate difficulty level
- Appropriate topic
- Interesting or engaging topic
- Accessible to diverse student population (gender, race/ethnic, region, LEP, disability, socioeconomic, etc.)
- Usable as is
- Usable as revised
- Do not use

Content Review Committee Chairperson _____

Bias/Sensitivity Review:

- No gender bias
- No racial bias
- No ethnic bias

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request Review by whole Content group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review specifically for:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty/readability
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility for LEP
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility for students w/disabilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate topic/content
	Notes _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request Review by whole Content group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review specifically for:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty/readability
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility for LEP
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility for students w/disabilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate topic/content
	Notes _____

Bias <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request Review by whole Bias group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review specifically for:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender bias
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial/ethnic bias
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious bias
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Age bias
	Other _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request Review by whole Bias group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review specifically for:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender bias
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Racial/ethnic bias
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious bias
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Age bias
	Other _____

Passage & Stimulus Committee Meeting Maryland High School Assessment

Workshop Information Sheet

The meetings will be held at the **Burkshire Conference Center, 10 West Burke Avenue, Towson, Maryland, 800 435-5986**. Please refer to the enclosed sheet for directions. Parking for day guests is available in the Burkshire's outdoor parking lot across the street from the site. An overpass walkway takes you directly from the parking lot to the second floor of the Conference Center, where our meetings are being held. For overnight guests parking is available in the basement garage.

Continental breakfast will be from 8:30 A.M. to 9:00 A.M. each morning in the break area of the second floor of the Conference Center. Registration on Wednesday, December 2 will also take place in the break area of the second floor. Lunch will be served from 12:00 to 12:45 P.M., and our meetings will finish at 3:30 P.M. each day.

If your commute is over 55 miles one way, and you would like hotel accommodations during the workshop, please contact Valerie Jasmine. Either fax the enclosed form to her at **fax: 888 282-9579** or contact her at **phone: 800 538-9547, x7733**. She must have your request, including the dates of your stay and request of a smoking or non-smoking room, by 5 P.M. Pacific Standard Time, Friday, November 6, 1998. The cost of the hotel room will be billed directly to CTB; however, you will be responsible for the cost of any incidentals.

We will provide a continental breakfast, snacks, and lunch both days. A buffet dinner for those participants staying overnight at the Burkshire is included with their room and will be available from 5:00 to 6:30 P.M. in the Burkshire dining room. For those commuting, dinner on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, December 2, 3 & 4, 1998 may be reimbursed up to \$25 per day with receipts. In addition, we will reimburse mileage at a rate of \$.29 per mile. At the workshop, we will provide **Travel Reimbursement Forms** and **Substitute Reimbursement Forms**. The Substitute Reimbursement Form requires your school's Federal I. D. number and substitute rate of pay. Payment for reimbursement shall be made 45 days following receipt of your signed *Nondisclosure Form* and required reimbursement forms.

Because the materials you will see during the review are confidential, you will be asked to sign a *Nondisclosure Form* when registering at the meeting. This form **must** be signed in order for you to participate in the review process.

Again, if you have any questions about the upcoming meetings, please call Valerie Jasmine at (800) 538-9547, x7733.