

Writing Ability As Assessed By Paper-and-Pencil Multiple-Choice Tests

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Writing Ability Assessment Methods

- Direct Method:
Rating of Writing Sample
- Indirect Method:
Multiple-Choice Tests

Two Types of Multiple-Choice Test Items

- Traditional Verbal Ability Items
- Biodata Items

Verbal Ability Items

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Spelling
- Reading Comprehension

Verbal Ability Items

Vocabulary Example

- RAISE means most nearly:
A. drag B. unload C. deliver D. lift E. guide
- Foot : Shoe Thumb :
A. head B. glove C. finger D. clasp

Verbal Ability Items

Grammar Example

- Choose the correct use of grammar:
 - A. A report of this kind is not hardly ever given in such detail as this one.
 - B. Reports like this is not generally given in such great detail.
 - C. A report of this kind is not ordinarily presented in such detail as this one.

Verbal Ability Items

Spelling Example

- Identify the correct spelling:
 - A. Occassion
 - B. Occasion
 - C. Ocassion
 - D. None of these

Writing Ability Biodata Items

- Self-Report of Supervisor's Assessment
- Self-Report of Teacher's Assessment
- Self-Report of Peer's Assessment
- Also: Supervisor's Direct Assessment;
Self-Report of Writing Accomplishment

Biodata Items Example

- My previous supervisors (or teachers if not previously employed) would most likely rate *my writing skill* as:
 - A. Superior
 - B. Above Average
 - C. Average
 - D. Below Average
 - E. Do Not Know

Biodata Items Example

- Which of the following qualities would your peers consider your *strongest*?
 - A. learning new things quickly
 - B. composing effective written reports
 - C. working with and getting along with other people
 - D. speaking and expressing yourself effectively to others
 - E. working well under pressure

Advantages of Multiple-Choice Approach

- Easier to administer
- Easier to score
- More objective approach
- Strong support for validity

Disadvantages of Multiple-Choice Approach

- Verbal Ability: Only assessing component parts of writing ability
- Biodata: Rely on self-reports of writing ability
- Not adaptable to specific jobs

Conclusions

- Indirect assessment is clearly useful/valid
- However, if writing ability is critical to job in question-- direct method should be used if feasible