Assessment Items Checklist
Stems & Responses

Stem of the Assessment Item should:
- ✓ Provide sufficient information
- ✓ Avoid extraneous information
- ✓ Be grammatically correct
- ✓ Avoid clues that help give away answers
- ✓ Avoid negatives and absolutes
- ✓ Avoid second person
- ✓ Be written in the language of the standard
- ✓ Be authentic—as realistic and close to performance setting as possible to ensure transfer of skills

Responses of the Assessment Item should:
- ✓ Be plausible and homogeneous
- ✓ Be grammatically consistent with the stem
- ✓ Be of approximately the same length and grammatical form
- ✓ List answer choices in logical (alphabetical or numerical) order
- ✓ Be structurally parallel
- ✓ Avoid "all" or "none of the above"
- ✓ Incorrect answers called **distracters** should not be too obvious
- ✓ Distracters should point out errors in thinking

References

http://712educators.about.com/cs/assessment/a/assessments.htm
http://www.unc.edu/~painter/docs/TestPreparation.pdf
http://www.itma.vt.edu/modules/spring03/instrdes/lesson7.htm
http://fcit.usf.edu/assessment/selected/responseb.html