Reading Proficiency Test Development Steps

(Stuff adapted from my BYU testing class that my friends in BILC can use).

Step 1: Select texts/passages that have their **FACTs** aligned

(See *Passage Checklist: Keep your FACTs Straight*).

Step 2: Have at least two people use the *Passage Checklist* to verify that the passage…

• is aligned AND

• has the necessary level of detail to create a level-appropriate question.

Step 3: Change authentic texts (found in real life) to genuine texts (could be found in real life). This will help the passage have a longer test shelf life, avoid exposing personal information to examines, and aid in arguing the passage is not violating copyright as it will have been modified for a new, derivative use.

Step 4: Write the question so that it is **aligned** with the author's intended **function.**

Step 5: Have at least two people use the *Question Checklist* to verify that the functions are aligned.

Step 6: Upload to test delivery system/format for testing.

Step 7: Create proctor instructions and incident log.

Step 8: Pilot-test the items in-house and revise as needed.

Step 9: Administer to examinees to calibrate the items.

Passage Checklist: Keep your FACTs Straight

Any Passage

☐ Is the passage authentic and intended for *adults?

☐ Has the passage been made genuine and an appropriate length for testing by

—changing real world contact information

(phone numbers, addresses, emails, URLs),

—changing specific dates to relative dates

(e.g. March 31, 2002 ->Monday),

—changing proper names such as places, people and brands to alternatives

(e.g. University of Chicago -> the university, President Obama ->the president, BMW->a sports car),

—edited to conform to standard spelling and usage appropriate for the genre,

—removing extraneous comments or combining relevant details for space constraints?

*not part of a language curriculum and not simplified (for example, children's literature).

Level 1 Passages

☐ Is the **Function** of the reader to understand the author's main ideas?

☐ Is the **Accuracy** expectation such that the reader can only understand the passage because its highly contextualized, predictable and there's time for re-reading the passage?

☐ Is the **Content/context** daily life (e.g. food, lodging, transportation, advertisements, social media posts, etc.)?

☐ Is the **Text-type** strings of sentences that could be loosely re-ordered without changing the meaning?

☐ Is the passage length **shorter** than **50 words**?

Level 2 Passages

☐ Is the **Function** of the reader to understand details and relationships?

☐ Is the **Accuracy** expectation such that a reader can easily understand stories and descriptions including details over a variety of topics without needing to reread the passage?

☐ Is the **Content/context** the community or concrete world at large using general vocabulary?

☐ Is the **Text-type** oral paragraphs that are dependent on details/relationships to fulfill the Function?

☐ Is the passage length **shorter** than **150 words**?

Level 3 Passages

- ☐ Is the **Function** of the reader to relate ideas and conceptual arguments to infer the writer's position through understanding literal and figurative meaning and recognizing their tone and intent?
- ☐ Is the **Accuracy** expectation such that a reader can easily understand arguments and read between the lines to infer the writers tone and position without needing to reread the passage?
- ☐ Is the **Content/context** the world of ideas with the use of precise and specific vocabulary?
- ☐ Is the **Text-type** multiple-paragraph blocks of discourse with evidence of choices by the writer to use/not use marked grammatical structures to convey their message?
- ☐ Is the passage length **shorter** than **300 words**?

Question Checklist: Keep the Functions Aligned

Any Question
- ☐ Could the question be answered correctly without having read to the passage?

  (i.e. is it testing general knowledge or language?)
  - o Has anyone tried to answer the question without reading the passage?

Level 1 Questions
- ☐ Is the **Function** of the reader to understand (or be oriented) to the main idea?
- ☐ Can the reader **Function** be accomplished without needing to understand relationships between specific details?

Level 2 Questions
- ☐ Is the **Function** of the reader to understand to the specific details and relationships among the facts?
- ☐ Can the reader **Function** be accomplished without needing to understand specific vocabulary or highly marked grammatical structures?

Level 3 Questions
- ☐ Is the **Function** of the reader to relate ideas and conceptual arguments to infer the writers' position through understanding literal and figurative meaning and recognizing their tone and intent?
- ☐ Can the reader **Function** only be accomplished through understanding Level 3 writing with its characteristic use of specific vocabulary choices, highly marked grammatical structures and nuance?