

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD TEST ITEMS**

### **STEMS SHOULD:**

- be linked to one specific enabling objective,**
- contain one complete central problem, and**
- have the choices fall at the end.**

### **ALTERNATIVES SHOULD:**

- be plausible,**
- contain the same types of choices (parallel structure),**
- have about the same length,**
- follow a logical sequence, and**
- avoid “all of the above,” “none of the above,” and “except for.”**

### **STEMS AND ALTERNATIVES SHOULD:**

- be grammatically correct and in agreement with each other,**
- contain only information pertinent to the problem,**
- contain no clues to answers,**
- avoid unnecessary or difficult wording,**
- avoid the use of negatives, and**
- avoid absolutes.**

## **THE STRUCTURE OF MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST ITEMS**

**A Multiple Choice Test Item = 1 Stem + 4 Alternatives**

**4 Alternatives = 1 Correct Answer + 3 Distractors (incorrect answers)**

### **A Closed Stem:**

**Which material produces the most toxic gases during a fire?**

- a. Wood**
- b. Paper**
- c. Cotton**
- d. Plastic**

### **An Open Stem:**

**The material that produces the most toxic gases during a fire is:**

- a. wood.**
- b. paper.**
- c. cotton.**
- d. plastic.**