

"Essential Criteria Checklist for Evaluating Instructional Courseware"

Assessment of Commercial/Published Products

Pick 2 Y/N

The following checklist includes four sets of essential qualities used to discriminate between acceptable and unacceptable software material as well as criteria for specific software functions. If software does not meet all these criteria, it probably should not be considered for purchase. For each item, circle **Y** for yes if it meets the criterion, or **N** for no if it does not.

Title _____ Publisher _____

Content Area _____ Grade Level(s) _____

Cost Information and Pricing Options Available _____

Courseware Functions: _____ Drill and practice _____ Instructional Game

_____ Tutorial _____ Problem Solving

_____ Simulation _____ Other

Objectives: _____

YES NO **Set 1. Instructional Design and Pedagogical Soundness**

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Y | N | Teaching strategy is matched to student needs/levels and is based on accepted methods |
| Y | N | Courseware methods are likely to accomplish the stated objectives |
| Y | N | Presentation on screen contains nothing than misleads or confuses students |
| Y | N | Readability and learning difficulty are at an appropriate level for target students |
| Y | N | Comments to students are not abusive or insulting |
| Y | N | Graphics fulfill important purpose (motivation, information) and are not distracting to learners |

Comments:

YES NO **Criteria specific to drill and practice functions:**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | High degree of interactivity (not just reading information) |
|---|---|---|

"Essential Criteria Checklist for Evaluating Instructional Courseware" (continued...)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Y | N | Appropriate feedback for correct answers (none, if timed; not elaborate or time-consuming) |
| Y | N | Feedback is more reinforcing for correct than for incorrect responses. |

Comments:

YES **NO** **Criteria specific to tutorial functions:**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | High degree of interactivity (not just reading information) |
| Y | N | High degree of user control (forward and backward movement, branching upon request) |
| Y | N | Comprehensive teaching sequence so instruction is self-contained and standalone |
| Y | N | Adequate answer-judging capabilities for student-constructed answers to questions |

Comments:

YES **NO** **Criteria specific to simulation functions:**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | Appropriate degree of fidelity (accurate depiction of system being modeled) |
| Y | N | Good documentation available on how program works (if not intuitive) |

Comments:

YES **NO** **Criteria specific to instructional game functions:**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | Low quotient of violence or combat-type activities |
| Y | N | All content accurate and up-to-date |
| Y | N | No racial or gender stereotypes; not geared toward only one sex or to certain races |
| Y | N | Exhibits a sensitive treatment of moral and/or social issues (e. g., perspectives on war) |
| Y | N | Content matches required curriculum objectives |

Comments:

"Essential Criteria Checklist for Evaluating Instructional Courseware" (continued...)

YES **NO** **Set 2. Content**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | No grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors on the screen |
| Y | N | All content accurate and up-to-date |
| Y | N | No racial or gender stereotypes; not geared toward only one sex or to certain races |
| Y | N | Exhibits a sensitive treatment of moral and/or social issues (e. g., perspectives on war) |
| Y | N | Content matches required curriculum objectives |

Comments:

YES **NO** **Set 3. User Flexibility**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | User normally has some control of movement within the program (e. g., can go from screen to screen at desired rate; can read text at desired rate; can exit program when desired) |
| Y | N | Can turn off sound, if desired |
| Y | N | Interface is easy to use (e.g., similar format from screen-to-screen for forward and back movement in program) |

YES **NO** **Set 4. Technical Soundness**

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Y | N | Program loads consistently, without error |
| Y | N | Program does not break (i.e., stop working), no matter what the student enters |
| Y | N | Program does what the screen says it should do |
| Y | N | Program works on desired platform |
| Y | N | If included, online links work as indicated |
| Y | N | If included, animations and videos work as indicated |

Comments:

Decision:

_____ Is recommended for purchase and use _____ Is not recommended