



## AAPA Quiz Writing Tips, Tricks, and Format

The most common types of questions are: multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank and open ended. The AAPA utilizes all of the above with some restrictions. Our multiple choice questions are A, B, C, D with the occasional E (discussed below). The typical 10 question quiz should have no more than two true/false questions. Any fill in the blank questions have no more than two blanks and opened ended question answers should be as short as possible.

**\*\*REMEMBER:** The objective is not to confuse the taker, but to test their knowledge and understanding of the article/presentation/poster they have just reviewed.

### General

- When writing your quiz, it is recommended to write at least 11 questions, giving the proofreader the chance to throw out a question that is too difficult to fix/requires more back and forth to refine.
- Keep a close eye for lists (ie, characteristics, symptoms, differential diagnoses, etc.) that can be used as multiple choice questions.
- Avoid percentages and non-pertinent numbers. Though this information lends itself to questions well, it is typically not information that is retained by takers post-quiz. Be selective and ask yourself if you will remember it in two days, two week, or two years.
- Avoid questions or answer options based on opinion.
- Make sure to double check acronyms and spell them out at first use.
- Check grammar, spacing, spelling and punctuation.
- Be aware of any cues from questions that could later provide the answer to another question.
- Be aware of grammar articles; the taker will immediately know that the answer starts with or without a vowel. *( ...is an example of a/an: )*

### Multiple Choice

- AAPA uses lower case followed by a parenthesis for answer options.

*( a) )* *( b) )* *( c) )* *( d) )* NOT → *( A) )* *( B) )* *( C) )* *( D) )* *( 1) )* *( 2) )* *( 3) )* *( 4) )*

- Questions should be meaningful with information covered.

*( Which of the following is a true statement? )*  
*\*NOT a meaningful question\**

- Be sure of the question you are asking. After writing your question, ask yourself 'How could it be better?' or 'Is it possible to take this question to another level?'
- Incorrect answers, otherwise known as distractors, should be plausible and functional (homogeneous content). Avoid silly, humorous distractors.
- Minimize the use of 'none of the above' and 'all of the above'...as stated above with the occasional 'E' option. Make this type of answer options a last resort and avoid all together if possible.
- Try to avoid questions and answers with terms like 'all', 'never', and 'always'.
- Evenly, yet randomly, distribute your correct answer options as to not create a pattern (ie. A, A, B, B, C, C, etc.). You may have to change the order of your questions as to correct this problem if it arises which will ultimately make sure that your questions are all independent from one another.
- Answers should be in alphabetical, logical, or numerical order.

[
  
*a) 6 months – 2 years*
  
*b) 2 -5 years*
  
*c) 7- 10 years*
  
*d) 15 years and older*
]

- Correct answers should be no longer or shorter than the incorrect, distracting answers.

[
  
*a) abdominal distention*
  
*b) left arm numbness*
  
*c) lower extremity edema*
  
*d) shortness of breath*
]
  
 NOT →
  
[
  
*a) tumor*
  
*b) metastases*
  
*c) cartilaginous to non-cartilaginous ratio*
  
*d) resection*
]

#### True/False

- Make sure that the answer is clear and can in no way be either true or false.
- Avoid writing a negative question ie. use of the word 'not'. If it cannot be avoided, be sure to highlight 'NOT' either in all CAPS or **bold**.
- FYI: Questions with false answers more often require a deeper level of understanding.

## Fill in the Blank

- These questions are typically word-for-word from a sentence within the article or key point listed on a poster, but not always.
- The blank space should come at or near the end of the question/statement. If two blank spaces, separate the information into a beginning and end to limit confusion

*Inflammatory breast cancer tumor cells are distributed as foci of \_\_\_\_\_ and adjacent parenchyma studded with \_\_\_\_\_ lymphovascular tumor emboli.*

- Be consistent with the number of spaces used for your blank; five consecutive underscores are typically used

## Open Ended

- Be sure that all answer options end with a period and can fluently complete a sentence.
- The use of articles may be needed for clear transition between question and answer.

*Metastasis was not initially suspected in the presented case because the:*  
*a) surgical margins were free of tumor.*  
*b) surrounding soft tissue was absent of tumor cells.*  
*c) evaluated lymph nodes were negative.*

Questions for articles should not be in order as they arise as it makes it easy for takers to skim for answers. Questions for recorded lectures are exactly opposite and should be kept in order as they arise. Why, you may ask? If a viewer watches an entire lecture and cannot recall a specific detail, they are forced to tediously fast forward/ rewind to review the information. This can be confusing, time consuming and makes them less likely to participate. In addition, those with less than optimal internet connections will have delays and often less likely to participate. \*\*\*This does not mean make the questions easier or harder depending on the source (lecture/article).

There may be instances where takers find possible errors in questions and/or answer choices. Should this happen, the AAPA will contact you to confirm the correct answer. Make note within the article/presentation notes/on a draft of the poster of the location of each question with the correct answer. This will insure quick resolution.

The most important part of constructing a quiz comes once it is complete. Let the quiz sit for a morning, afternoon or day. Return to your quiz and take it yourself! You will be surprised at the small details that slip through during construction; not just punctuation, but grammar and tense. If possible, have others take it to help identify any areas that may need revision. Be sure to supply AAPA with your answer key.