

# Three Key Steps For Evaluating Textbooks

## 3 Guidelines

1. Be systematic
2. Be comprehensive
3. Set aside your biases

## 3 Steps

### 1. Qualitative Review

- a. Personal
  - i. Gut reaction
  - ii. Level of engagement
  - iii. Page density
  - iv. Use of color
- b. Graphical Factors
  - i. Illustrations – too many? Enough detail? Clarity? Add to understanding?
  - ii. Usefulness – Do they work? How complicated are they? Can you understand them?
- c. Editorial Factors
  - i. Chapter/Unit organization – Does it make sense? Can it fit the course?
  - ii. Headings – clearly define hierarchy; consistent
  - iii. Concept Development – sequence makes sense; fully developed; if you were a student, would you “get it?”
  - iv. Tone – formal, casual/friendly, professional
  - v. Voice – 2<sup>nd</sup> person or 3<sup>rd</sup> person
  - vi. Fluidity – read a chunk – does it pull you through?

### 2. Quantitative

- a. Reading level
- b. Side-by-side chapter comparisons
- c. Get the numbers – test questions, illustrations, new chapters, videos, etc
- d. Analyze the test bank – spot check 5-10 questions for quality and clarity
- e. Analyze the ancillaries – both student and instructor
  - i. Determine the base expectation
  - ii. Assess in light of content and how it is taught in the course
  - iii. Do extended/additional offerings make sense?
  - iv. Will they realistically be implemented if they are new or different?

### 3. Rank them

- a. Preferred – 1<sup>st</sup> choice
- b. Alternates – 2 or 3 you can live with
- c. Rejected – books you don't want

## Tools you can use...

### **Textbook Evaluation form**

[http://www.sde.com/Downloads/TeacherResources/di\\_text/textbook\\_evaluation.pdf](http://www.sde.com/Downloads/TeacherResources/di_text/textbook_evaluation.pdf)

### **Reading score information**

Online SMOG (Simple Measure of Gobbledygook) calculator:

<http://www.wordscout.info/hw/smog.jsp>