Thank you for participating on an ABD Item Writing committee. Your contributions are vitally important and will help us enhance our examinations of the future.

The ABD prepared this tutorial to guide you through our online item writing portal. This portal has been updated to accept both our traditional item formats (Types A, B and R) and our new Applied Item format.

All item writers must submit their items via this portal. Items submitted via Word documents, PowerPoint files or other methods will not be accepted.

This guide provides step-by-step instructions for entering each item type on the subsequent pages.

Additional resources for item writers are available. Click here for access to the files listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABD Item Writer Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item Writing Style Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABD Coding Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Applied Items</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Access the portal:


Enter user name and password: *

* This information is provided to you via e-mail by Elysia McGowan (emcgowan@partners.org).

For items to be reviewed at the November meeting, they must be submitted via the Item Writer portal. Other methods of submission are not permitted.
1. After entering your username and password, the main screen appears. This screen lists all recently submitted NEW ITEMS from your committee. To begin creating your own items, click on the Item Add button at the top of the screen.

2. A screen then appears asking you to select the item type you wish to create. The item types are defined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM TYPE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>A multiple-choice item with 5, or occasionally 4, options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type B</td>
<td>A matching item, with 4 or 5 options, built in sets of 2-5 items. <strong>BASIC SCIENCE COMMITTEE ONLY!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type R</td>
<td>A extended matching item, with up to 26 options, built in sets of 2-20 items. <strong>DO NOT USE!!!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Item *</td>
<td>A multiple-choice item, which tests clinical judgement, with 8-10 answer options. There can be 1, 2 or 3 correct options on the list.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Applied Items comprise the majority of your 2015 item writing assignment.

3. Select the desired item type to start building your item.

NOTE: Click on an Item Type in the table below to jump to the instructions for building that type of item. The first set of screen shots in this tutorial follow the process for building an Applied Item. Overviews of Type A, Type B and Type R items appear at the end of this tutorial.
This guide covers the Item Writing process for 3 distinct item types. Click a link below to proceed directly for the item type you wish to construct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied Item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Science committee only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADDITIONAL TIPS**

- [How to Change Your Password](#)
Follow the steps on the subsequent pages for entering **Applied Items** in the ABD Item Writer portal.
The **Item Add** screen consists of text boxes for entering the item stem and distractors.

1. Enter the text of the question in the **Stem** text box at the top of the screen.

2. Enter the distractors into the **DistA**, **DistB**, **DistC**, **DistD**, **DistE** text boxes.

3. If the item has **additional distractors**, beyond A-E, click the Add/Show Next Distractor box.
   
   **NOTE**: Applied items can have a maximum of 10 options (A-J), but 8 is the ideal number of options (A-H).

4. Use the function buttons within each text box to format the text, or perform basic word processing commands.

| COPY | CUT | PASTE | UNDO | REDO | BOLD | ITALICS | UNDERLINE | STRIKE OUT | SUPER SCRIPT X | SUB SCRIPT X | INSERT TABLE | SPELL CHECK | INSERT SYMBOL | STRIP FORMAT
|------|-----|-------|------|------|------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|

* If you copy and paste text from MS Word or a PDF, use the “strip format” button after inserting your text. This ensures proper text display.
# ABD Item Writer

**Applied Items: Answer Key**

## 1. Answer Key Item Structure:
Use the drop-down field to select the item structure. Refer to the table below for an overview of each item structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Structure</th>
<th>Correct Options</th>
<th>How does this item work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Best Answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Examinee must select the 1 correct answer for credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than One Answer: Pick 1 of 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Examinee must select 1 of the 2 correct options for credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than One Answer: Pick 1 of 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Examinee must select 1 of the 3 correct options for credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than One Answer: Pick 2 of 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Examinee must select BOTH of the 2 correct options for credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than One Answer: Pick 2 of 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Examinee must select 2 of the 3 correct options for credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Than One Answer: Pick 3 of 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Examinee must select ALL of the 3 correct options for credit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2. Answer Key Answer Options:
Use the lettered check boxes to select the correct answer options. The lettered check boxes correspond to the lettered distractor fields directly above.

### Checking Your Item Structure
The **AND/OR** field (circled below) is view-only and exists for reference to help you ensure that you selected the proper item structure. In the images below, **EXAMPLE 1** requires an examinee to select \( F \) and \( G \) and \( H \) for credit on the exam. **EXAMPLE 2** requires an examinee to select \( B \) or \( E \) to receive credit on the exam.
1. **Item Critique:**
Enter a detailed item critique. Refer to the guidelines below, for proper critique formatting. This is a required field. An item cannot be saved without a critique.

**ITEM CRITIQUE GUIDELINES**

- In first sentence, explain what the question is asking the examinee to do.
- Then, explain why the answer is correct.
- Next, explain why the other options are incorrect.
- Address each option in order it appears.
- Do not refer to the LETTER options. Instead, reference the words in the answer (i.e. “Dermatitis”, instead of “Option A”).
1. **Item Class:**
Use the drop-down field to classify the item:
- **Image** = Item with associated photo.
- **Written** = Item without an associated photo.

2. **Image Filename/Special Notes:**
For **image** items, enter the filename or any relevant notes about the image file. (Optional)

3. **Keyword/Diagnosis:**
Type the text of the correct answer, or other supporting keywords. This is used to facilitate future searches for this item.

4. **References**
Notate reference(s) for the item. A limited number of references are available for selection from the drop-down field. Otherwise, enter the reference info in the free-text box.

5. **Enemy Of:**
If there are other items that should not be included on the same exam as this item, enter the item number(s).
ABD Item Writer

Applied Items: Images

All images must conform to the following specifications:

- **File Format**: .jpg only
- **File Size**: 4 MB MAX
- **Pixel Dimensions**: 1500x1500 pixels MAX

**Do not** submit PowerPoint slides, or images embedded in Word documents.

1. Click on the Image 1 link to add the first image to the item. The depicted pop-up window appears.

2. Click on the Browse button to locate the image on your computer. A pop-up appears, allowing you to navigate through your folders, to locate the image file.

3. After selecting the image file from your computer, click on the Upload button to upload the file to the Item Writer portal. A confirmation screen appears, with a thumbnail depiction of the image. Click on the Close Window button to return to the main item screen.

4. To add another image to your item, click on the Image 2 link and repeat the process. An item can have a maximum of 4 images attached.
After uploading an image and returning to the Item Add screen, your image will not yet be visible. You must **SAVE** your item for the image to be visible on the item screen and permanently linked to the item. After the item is saved, a large thumbnail of the image appears at the bottom of the Item Add screen.

Furthermore, after saving the item, the image filename will appear adjacent to the Image 1 link, to provide a quick indication that the Image 1 slot has been occupied.

**NOTE:** All images are automatically assigned a **numeric** filename upon upload.

Also, if the image contains identifiable patient features, you must secure permission from the patient to use the image. By clicking the box and entering your name at the “Author” field, you are attesting to having obtained signed patient consent.
1. **Primary ABD and Task Codes**

Assign classification codes for the item by using the “smart search” fields under each category. You may find a code by typing in the numeric identifier or a keyword from the description. Click the link below each section to access a full list of available ABD and Task code. Every item *must* have at least one code assigned. These codes are used during the exam creation process to ensure balanced content. Select the code that best represents what is being tested.

2. **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA) Codes**

Assign at least one, but no more than 3, KSA codes. Use the “+” button adjacent to each major KSA category to reveal the corresponding codes. Assign a code by checking the box for each applicable code.

3. **Curriculum Code**

Assign a content category to the item, using the checkboxes. Assign **ONE** Curriculum Code to each item. This code is used to gather statistical data about exam content.

4. **Score Code**

Assign a scoring category to the item, using the checkboxes. Assign **ONE** Score Code to each item. This code is used to gather statistical data when scoring exams.
**1. Rationale**
Enter the rationale for this item. This field is not required. The text in this field is **NOT** included on the exam.

**2. Comments**
Enter any comments or notes pertaining to this item. The text in this field is **NOT** included on the exam.
After creating the item, click the “Save for Later Editing” button in the bottom right corner of the screen. You **MUST** save an item every time you make edits. Do not navigate away from this page without first saving your changes.

**Save for Later Editing**

Congratulations! You have successfully created an item. To create your next item, click the **Item Add** command at the top of the screen and repeat the process.

**NOTE**: The remaining slides in this presentation cover various topics that may be of interest to Item Writers: changing your password, creating Type A items, creating Type B items.
Follow the steps on the subsequent pages for entering TYPE A items in the ABD Item Writer portal.

Sample Type A Item

(12345). Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>Lichen planus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>Onychomycosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>Psoriasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D)</td>
<td>Sarcoidosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E)</td>
<td>Twenty nail dystrophy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Type A Items: Stem and Distractors

The Item Add screen consists of text boxes for entering the item stem and distractors.

1. Enter the text of the question in the Stem text box at the top of the screen.

2. Enter the distractors into the DistA, DistB, DistC, DistD, DistE text boxes.

3. Click on the appropriate radio button to indicate the correct answer. The system defaults the correct answer as option “A”, so always be sure to update this when entering new items.

4. Use the function buttons within each text box to format the text, or perform basic word processing commands.

* If you copy and paste text from MS Word or a PDF, use the “strip format” button after inserting your text. This ensures proper text display.
# ABD Item Writer

## Type A Items: Item Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Class:</th>
<th>Select...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virtual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Image Filename/Special Notes: | Image 4567.jpg |

| Keywords/Diagnosis: | Onychomycosis |

| Glass Slide #: |  |

| References: |  |

| Enemy Of: |  |

## Instructions:

1. **Item Class:**
   - Use the drop-down field to classify the item:
     - **Glass** = Glass slide dempath item.
     - **Image** = Item with associated photo.
     - **Virtual** = Virtual dempath item.
     - **Written** = Item without an associated photo.

2. **Image Filename/Special Notes:**
   - For image items, enter the filename or any relevant notes about the image file. (Optional)

3. **Keyword/Diagnosis:**
   - Type the text of the correct answer, or other supporting keywords. This is used to facilitate future searches for this item.

4. **Glass Slide #:** (Used for Glass Slide items only)
   - Enter the number assigned to the corresponding slide.

5. **References**
   - Notate reference(s) for the item. A limited number of references are available for selection from the drop-down field. Otherwise, enter the reference info in the free-text box.

6. **Enemy Of:**
   - If there are other items that should not be included on the same exam as this item, enter the item number(s).
ABD Item Writer
Type A Items: Images

All images must conform to the following specifications:

- **File Format**: .jpg only
- **File Size**: 4 MB MAX
- **Pixel Dimensions**: 1500x1500 pixels MAX

*Do not* submit Power Point slides, or images embedded in Word documents.

1. Click on the Image 1 link to add the first image to the item. The depicted pop-up window appears.

2. Click on the Browse button to locate the image on your computer. A pop-up appears, allowing you to navigate through your folders, to locate the image file.

3. After selecting the image file from your computer, click on the Upload button to upload the file to the Item Writer portal. A confirmation screen appears, with a thumbnail depiction of the image. Click on the Close Window button to return to the main item screen.

4. To add another image to your item, click on the Image 2 link and repeat the process. An item can have a maximum of 4 images attached.
After uploading an image and returning to the Item Add screen, your image will not yet be visible. You must **SAVE** your item for the image to be visible on the item screen and permanently linked to the item. After the item is saved, a large thumbnail of the image appears at the bottom of the Item Add screen.

Furthermore, after saving the item, the image filename will appear adjacent to the Image 1 link, to provide a quick indication that the Image 1 slot has been occupied.

**NOTE:** All images are automatically assigned a **numeric** filename upon upload.

Also, if the image contains identifiable patient features, you must secure permission from the patient to use the image. By clicking the box and entering your name at the “Author” field, you are attesting to having obtained signed patient consent.
1. **Primary ABD Codes, Secondary ABD Codes & Task Codes**
   Assign classification codes for the item by using the “smart search” fields under each category. You may find a code by typing in the numeric identifier or a keyword from the description. Secondary Codes are being phased out. Do not assign secondary codes. Every item *must* have at least one code assigned. These codes are used during the exam creation process to ensure balanced content.

2. **Curriculum Code**
   Assign a content category to the item, using the checkboxes. Assign **ONE** Curriculum Code to each item. This code is used to gather statistical data about exam content.

3. **Score Code**
   Assign a scoring category to the item, using the checkboxes. Assign **ONE** Score Code to each item. This code is used to gather statistical data when scoring exams.

4. **Available to Exam**
   Indicate the exam(s) for which this item should be considered. An ABD-R code is required for items designated for the Re-cert exam, and an ABD-I code is an optional classification for items designated for the In-Training exam (ITE).
1. **Rationale**
Enter the rationale for this item. This field is not required. The text in this field is **NOT** included on the exam.

2. **Comments**
Enter any comments pertaining to this item. The text in this field is **NOT** included on the exam.
After creating the item, click the “Save for Later Editing” button in the bottom right corner of the screen. You **MUST** save an item every time you make edits. Do not navigate away from this page without first saving your changes.

**Save for Later Editing**

*This button saves your work, but allows you to make additional edits to this item before it is submitted for review. Once an item is ready for review, click the Finalize and Submit for Review button at the top of this page.*

Congratulations! You have successfully created an item. To create your next item, click on the **Item Add** command at the top of the screen and repeat the process.

**NOTE:** The remaining slides in this presentation cover various topics that may be of interest to Item Writers: Changing your password, creating Type B items.
Follow the steps on the subsequent pages for entering **TYPE B items**

in the ABD Item Writer portal.

This item type should only be submitted by the Basic Science committee.

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**Sample Type B Item**

**Other Text:** For each example of bias in a study, select the most accurate description (A-E).

1. Health-conscious people are more likely to attend skin cancer screenings.
2. The patients in poorest health drop out of a melanoma trial.
3. Patients who see dermatologists are more likely than patients who see primary care physicians to have the diagnosis of seborrheic keratosis in their medical records.
4. Patients who have melanoma are more likely to remember blistering sunburns than control subjects without melanoma.
5. A study reviewing medical records for exposures to a new "black-box" labeled drug fails to include 5% of patients who were importing the medicine from Mexico without a prescription.

(A) Detection bias
(B) Misclassification bias
(C) Recall bias
(D) Response bias
(E) Withdrawal bias
A Type B item is a matching item, with 4-5 answer options, created in sets of 2-5 items.

1. Upon selecting the Type B item type, the Item Add screen appears with an extra text box at the top, labeled Other Text. Enter the introductory text for the entire set into this box.

2. Enter the first item in the set at the Stem field.

3. Continue building the item by entering all distractors. Designate the correct answer by clicking on the radio button above the proper option. Then, enter the item details and codes. Click on the Save button to save this first item in the set.

4. After saving the item, you will be prompted to link another item to the set. Click on YES to add your next item.

5. An Item Add screen appears for the next item in the set. The Other Text and Distractors will already be populated with the data from the prior item. Simply populate the Stem field with the next item in the set, enter the item details, select the codes and save this next item.

6. After saving this next item, you will be prompted again to add another item to the set. Continue adding items to the set until the set is complete.
Users are assigned a password when they are first given access to the Item Writer portal. All users have the ability to change their own password, from directly within the Item Writer portal.

1. Click on the **Profile** link at the top of the page.

2. Enter your new password at the **Password** field. Then, enter it again at the **Confirm** field.

3. Click on the **Update Profile** button to save your changes.