

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES for CREATING Print Materials

***Simply Put.* Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).**

This guide from the CDC helps you translate technical and scientific language used in many fields into information that captures and holds the interest of your intended audience. It provides tips for writing simply, using visuals, and organizing information for easy recall and understanding. *Simply Put* is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/simpput.pdf>

***Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines.* Developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).**

These updated Guidelines, released in August 2006, were developed to assist those involved in the creation of Web sites to base their decisions on the most current and best available evidence. The Guidelines are particularly relevant to the design of information-oriented sites, but can be applied across the wide spectrum of Web sites to improve the dissemination of health information in an effective and efficient manner. *Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines* is available at <http://www.usability.gov/pdfs/guidelines.html>.

***Clear and to the Point: Guidelines for Using Plain Language at NIH.* Developed by the National Institutes for Health.**

This 12-page summary provides guidelines and useful examples of how to write in plain language, engage readers, display information and evaluate materials. *Clear and to the Point* is available at <http://execsec.od.nih.gov/plainlang/guidelines/index.html>

***Writing and Designing Print Materials for Beneficiaries: A Guide for State Medicaid Agencies (October, 1999).* Author: Jeanne McGee. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Care Financing Administration. Center for Medicaid and State Operations. Publication Number 10145.**

This guide, focused on the development of print materials for Medicaid beneficiaries, offers a thorough explanation of key issues for all health related materials assessment and development processes. The guide provides useful advice and excellent tips for writing, designing, and pre-testing written materials. The author offers clear examples throughout. The design and layout of the guide itself provides an excellent model for the presentation of information and concepts and adds to our understanding. You can order this text from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services free of charge.

Citation: Rudd RE. How to create and assess print materials. Harvard School of Public Health: Health Literacy Website. 2005. Available at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/materials.html>. Accessed [insert date].

Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills, Second Edition (1996).
Authors: Doak, Doak and Root. Philadelphia, PA: J.B. Lippincott Company.

This 212-page 'classic' is for health educators and health care providers who wish improve communication with adults who have limited literacy skills. The book covers a wide range of topics, including: educational theories, how to test for literacy skills, how to assess the suitability of materials and how to create easily understandable visuals. The authors discuss how to test and revise health education materials. The book includes directions for using the Fry formula, a copy of the REALM and a copy of the Suitability Assessment of Materials (SAM). The SAM, an assessment tool, was created by Doak and Doak. This text is now available for free download on the web site noted below.

The Right to Understand: Linking Literacy to Health and Safety Training,
by Szudy and Arroyo (1994). Labor Occupational Health Program,
University of California at Berkeley.

This 200-page manual is designed to help safety and health trainers meet the needs of workers with limited literacy skills. However, it offers clear and focused tips and processes for the development of any materials. Contents include sections on how to develop easy-to-read materials, how to evaluate materials, and how to conduct suitable trainings for a wide range of literacy skills. The 'How To' section includes writing, design and illustration tips. The 'Evaluation' section provides a quick checklist, instructions on using the Fry formula, a guide to field testing materials, sample questions for focus groups and many case studies on field testing. This manual is available from the Labor Occupational Health Program, Tel: (510) 642-5507. The cost is approximately \$20.

Creating Plain Language Forms for Seniors: A Guide for the Public,
Private and Not-for-Profit Sectors (1998). National Literacy and Health
Program and the Canadian Public Health Association.

This 30-page guide, developed with attention to the needs of seniors, offers clear guidelines for creating forms in plain language. However, the many tips offered can be applied to all health related forms. The guide includes a section on how to use clear verbal communication with clients who need help filling in forms. The guide also includes sections on the benefits of plain language, forms as barriers, and a Plain Language Forms Tool Kit. Appendices include a [glossary of plain words \[Acrobat Reader required\]](#) and [instructions on how to use the SMOG \[Acrobat Reader required\]](#). For more information, contact the Canadian Public Health Association, Tel: (613) 725-3769, Email: comm@cpha.com or see www.cpha.ca.

Citation: Rudd RE. How to create and assess print materials. Harvard School of Public Health: Health Literacy Website. 2005. Available at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/materials.html>. Accessed [insert date].

Clear & Simple: Developing Effective Print Materials for Low-Literate Readers (1994). National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute.

This guide outlines a process for developing materials with, and for, people with limited-literacy skills. The guide contains five sections. Each section highlights specific considerations for materials development: defining the target audience, conducting audience research, developing a concept for the product, developing content and visuals and pre-testing and revising materials. *Clear & Simple* is concise and easy-to-use, with key information presented in bulleted lists. It contains many illustrations and offers real world examples. The 61-page guide includes a list of low-literacy publications and software. A free copy of *Clear & Simple* is available from the National Cancer Institute:

<http://www.nci.nih.gov/cancerinformation/clearandsimple>.

Beyond the Brochure: Alternative Approaches to Effective Health Communication (1994). AMC Cancer Research Center and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Beyond the Brochure was developed by the AMC Cancer Institute in the mid 1990s. The goal of the writers is to help readers consider multi-media education materials. The 67-page guide presents innovative interventions and strategies to reach audience. The guidebook begins with a section on audience assessment and participatory processes. The section on pre-testing materials includes basic guidelines for discussion guide development. This publication is available at no cost at www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp, click on 'Publications' or by calling CDC at: (770) 488-4751.

Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planner's Guide (1989). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health and Office of Cancer Communications, National Cancer Institute.

This guide has become a standard reference and is often referred to as the 'pink book'. It was developed by the Office of Cancer Communications and sets out key principles for each stage of a communication program development. The section on developing and pre-testing materials includes considerations for message construction, tips for developing PSAs, and methods for pre-testing. It offers practical steps for evaluation of communication programs. Appendices include the SMOG formula, a focus group moderator's guide and helpful resources on designing a PSA. A free copy of *Making Health Communication Programs Work* is available from the National Cancer Institute: <http://www.cancer.gov/pinkbook>.

Citation: Rudd RE. How to create and assess print materials. Harvard School of Public Health: Health Literacy Website. 2005. Available at: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/healthliteracy/materials.html>. Accessed [insert date].