

Programme

Day 1

9.30 – 12.30
Why evaluate textbooks?
What are we evaluating?
Practical and theoretical approaches
Aims and outcomes
Lunch

14.00 – 16.30
Two parallel sessions
Session 1: The pedagogical approach of textbooks
Session 2: Evaluating the publisher

Day 2

9.30 – 12.30
Presentation and summary of conclusions
Case study
Lunch

14.00 – 16.30
Two parallel sessions
Session 1: Selecting and organizing content
Session 2: Textbooks and the curriculum
key issues:
Coverage of the curriculum; use of activities; skills development; language level; relevance to the reader; gender and stereotyping issues.

Day 3

9.30 – 12.30
Presentation and summary of conclusions
Case study
Textbook design and presentation:
key issues:
Format; typeface and typesize; use of illustrations; headings; printing quality; binding style
Lunch

14.00 – 16.30
Case study
Final summary and conclusions

Course leaders:

Arno Reints, Director CLU; University of Utrecht, The Netherlands

James McCall, Centre for Publishing Studies, University of Stirling

Venue:

The course will be held at the University of Utrecht, The Netherlands

Cost:

The cost for the three day course will be 550 Euros.
Payment should be made by bank transfer to:

U-CLU BV
Account: 8028340
IBAN: NL 48 PSTB 0008028340
BIC: PSTBNL21

Registration

For registration and information, please send an email to: a.reints@clu.nl
website: www.clu.nl



Universiteit Utrecht

Centre for Educational Studies and Consultancy



Centre for Publishing Studies

Good Books, Bad Books:

What makes an effective textbook?

A three day course on textbook writing and design

Audience: Educational Publishers, Teachers, Educational Quality Managers, Ministries of Education etc.

Venue: University of Utrecht, the Netherlands

Date: February, 20-22, 2008

Organized by:

- o CLU, University of Utrecht
- o Centre for Publishing Studies, University of Stirling



Universiteit Utrecht

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Centre for Publishing Studies

What makes a good textbook?

This is an important question for authors, teachers and publishers – and for anyone working on evaluating textbooks worldwide.

This short course has been developed by leading experts in the field who have experience of writing, publishing, evaluating and teaching.

Why and how should we try to evaluate textbooks?

First, we can compare and contrast textbooks from different countries and try to discover what common features make a 'good' textbook – one that fulfils its purpose.

The broad categories for evaluation are:

- Quality of content
- Pedagogical approach
- Design and presentation
- Production standards

How well does the book fulfil its role as a mediator of information between author and reader?

Are its *pedagogical principles* sound and effective?

Of central importance is the degree to which the book meets the requirements of the *school or subject curriculum* for which it has been devised.

Quality of content

A critical evaluation of the quality of content is likely to include the following questions:

- Does the book successfully reflect the contents of the appropriate curriculum?
- Does the content cross-refer and integrate with other subjects in related areas of the curriculum?
- Will the book engage the reader, i.e. does it appropriately reflect his/her concerns and interests?
- Does the book help to foster an awareness of international as well as domestic issues?

Pedagogical approach

- Are there sufficient supplementary activities or assignments and are these appropriately integrated with the text?
- Do the activities develop problem-solving skills both at an individual and group level?
- Do the activities and assignments reflect the different learning styles of students?
- Are the instructional strategies appropriate?

Design and presentation

Although the assessment of design is highly personal and subjective, there are questions to be asked which ought to be universal and which will enable a sensible evaluation to be carried out. These questions may include the following:

- Do the headings and sub-headings make it easy to navigate around the book?
- Is the language level suitable for the intended reader?
- Is there a reasonable and appropriate balance between text and illustration?
- Are the illustrations clearly cross-referenced to the text, directly relevant to the content and not simply decorative?

Product standards

- Is the format suitable for the environment in which the book will be used?
- Is the book well-bound?
- Is there any evidence of loose pages?
- Is the printing clear and even?