



## **TEXTBOOK EVALUATION**



## INTRODUCTION

### TEXTBOOK EVALUATION CHECKLIST

One of the goals of the “Eating Well, Living Well” project is to improve the behavior change potential in food and nutrition units of ESL textbooks. To achieve this goal, over one hundred core ESL textbooks were reviewed; ESL instructors were surveyed as to which texts were most commonly used and a ‘textbook checklist’ was developed with a three-fold purpose:

- To provide criteria for instructors to evaluate textbooks as to the depth of nutrition information when they select a text for their class.
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses in commonly used texts so that instructors can supplement the areas of weakness in the texts they use.
- To provide criteria to publishers so that they might revise or plan the nutrition content of their texts.

Over one hundred textbooks from the San Diego Community College District Resource Library were reviewed, at four language levels - beginning low, beginning high, intermediate low and intermediate high. Specifically, food and nutrition content were reviewed. While many books had units on food, typically, the nutrition component and the relationship between food and health was lacking. Few books had examples of ethnic foods. Many had considerable representation of high fat and high sugar foods. Very few had application activities that could promote behavior change.

In addition to the review cited above, a survey of commonly used textbooks was conducted in conjunction with CALPRO, the California Department of Education’s professional development project. CALPRO’s purpose is to provide professional development and support in the field of adult education through seven regional resource centers throughout the state. Representatives at each of these centers were contacted and asked which textbooks were most commonly used in each of their centers in the four levels cited above. The top four, in order of most frequently used listed first, were Side by Side, Stand Out, Crossroads and Expressways.

The result of the reviews is a ‘Textbook Evaluation Checklist,’ designed as a three-part tool to evaluate nutrition content, language development and the behavior change potential of activities and lessons in textbooks. A sub-committee of “Eating Well, Living Well’s” statewide advisory group met - including the project nutrition specialist, external ESL curriculum specialist, SDCCD ESL resource instructor and project coordinator- to review and revise the Checklist,

The ESL books mentioned above, at four language levels (totaling sixteen textbooks) were evaluated using the Checklist. Of those, only six contained information that suggested a relationship between food and health. Side by Side had a few items in two texts, Stand Out had considerable information in three texts, and one level of Expressways had four activities. It is hoped that the Checklist will be useful to the field in identifying for publishers changes that need to be made to promote adult ESL students’ healthy eating behaviors.

## Textbook Evaluation Checklist for Nutrition

**Textbook Title:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Publisher:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chapter Title:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student Language Level:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date of Publication:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*The purpose of this checklist is to evaluate food and nutrition content in ESL textbooks.*



Food/Nutrition Content is represented in the text:    Yes     No     **Comments:**

**If no, stop here. If yes, continue.**

- Does the lesson include any of the following? *Check all that are included.*
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> methods for quick and easy healthy eating              | <input type="checkbox"/> balanced eating                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> benefits of eating fruit and vegetables                | <input type="checkbox"/> accessing community food resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> strategies to influence children to eat healthier food | <input type="checkbox"/> safe food handling                 |

In above is there a relationship suggested between food and health?    Yes     No

**Answer the following questions using the scale below.**

3 = yes     2 = somewhat     1 = no     0 = not applicable

Nutrition Content	3	2	1	0	Comments
Is the content information presented in a way that students will understand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the content relevant to the students' needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the content accurate and up to date?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the content sensitive to the students' cultural background?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are the majority of foods nutritious?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Language Development	3	2	1	0
Are there activities to practice language that is associated with the food/nutrition content? If yes, which skills are covered? Listening <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Writing <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the activities promote critical thinking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the activities recognize/validate students' prior food knowledge or experience in their native culture?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Behavior Change	3	2	1	0
Does the material help to promote healthy food choices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an application of the nutrition content that is real life based?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ If there is an application, does it have the potential to motivate behavior change?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶ Is the application realistic and practical for the students' language level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an assessment tool that documents behavior change?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reviewer's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_