Best Practices:

Writing Fill in the Blank/Short Answer Questions

Pros and Cons of Fill in the Blank Questions

**Pros**

- Provide a wide sampling of content
- Minimize guessing compared with multiple choice and true/false
- Vocabulary can be assessed in a minimal time
- Construction is relatively easy

**Cons**

- Difficult to construct in order to measure more than simple information recall
- Difficult to construct without providing relevant clues to correct answer
- More time-consuming to score than other objective questions

**Best Practices**

- Ensure only one correct answer to avoid confusion and difficulty grading.
- Blank area should appear at the end or close to the end of a statement.
- Omit only significant words from the statement. Do not omit so many words that the statement becomes ambiguous.
  **Poor:** The Constitutional Convention met in ____________ in ____________.
  **Better:** The Constitutional Convention met in the city of ____________ in 1787.
- If possible, write completion items that have a single correct answer.
  **Poor:** Abraham Lincoln was born in ____________.
  **Potential answers:** Kentucky, 1809, February, a log cabin, etc.
  **Better:** Abraham Lincoln was born in the state of ____________.
- Use blank areas of the same length throughout the test so that the length does not reveal answer.
- Avoid lifting text from study materials or other resources to avoid answer memorization.

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**WHEN TWO COMPANIES THAT HAVE NO COMMON BUSINESS AREAS MERGE IN ORDER TO DIVERSIFY, THEY ARE FORMING A(N) ____________ .**