

Life Skills and Workplace Literacy

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This practice can be used in preparation for the CASAS. The instructor obtains multiple copies of paperback catalogs or advertisements from an office supply store. Questions are then formulated based on the information in the catalogs. The questions can be designed for any reading level and needs of learners. Questions can also be designed for all of the CASAS competencies. To design an exercise for safety, there are free brochures available. To design exercises for driver's education, free manuals are available from the Department of Motor Vehicles. Local papers can be used with questions from the want ads or even the news.

The learners develop reading comprehension skills and can work on scanning skills as well. The general feedback from learners is that they prefer practical handouts to published educational materials. The opinion is that these handouts allow them to work with material that they are far more likely to encounter in real life.

Following are example questions that were designed from an office supply catalog:

- 1) If you have an OfficeJet Pro 1170C/1171C Series printer and you ran out of ink, what brand of ink cartridge would you get and how much would it cost for each if you ordered four?
- 2) You need a pen that is .2mm micro. What brand is cheaper? What is the price per three dozen?
- 3) How much for a Sanford Uniball .2mm Micro Green pen?
- 4) I want six High Mark Quality Ruled Pads. How much would six cost in canary color 5" x 8"?
- 5) How many calculators give me one dozen calculator rolls free with purchase?
- 6) What is the cheapest roll of tape in this catalog?
- 7) I need tissue to blow my nose in my office. What is the best value tissue and how much is it?
- 8) What percent do I save on Bic WiteOut instead of QuickDry stuff?

Since many different varieties of catalogs, manuals, advertisement, etc., can be obtained at no cost, the practice is only limited by time and the imagination of the instructor. It is easy to see that it can be duplicated anywhere, even in prison settings.