

Checklist for Designing Nutrition Pamphlets for Low Literacy Clients

The average reading level for adults in 8th grade

Layout

- Used portrait orientation rather than landscape
- Didn't print text on top of photographs or patterned backgrounds
- Did not justify the right margin
- Used visual devices (cues) to call attention to key points (arrows, underlining, circling, magnifying the text, bolding, boxes, and a splash of color)

Fonts

- Font size = at least 12 points
- Picked only 2 or 3 different fonts per document
- Used serif font (Futura, Garamond, Minion, Caslon, Palatino)

Characters

- Length of the lines of text = ~5 inches or 30-50 characters and spaces
- Sentences = 8 to 10 words per sentence
- Used short paragraphs; but there is no specific number of sentences
- Did not underline
- Did not use all caps
- Did not use bolding and italics in combination
- Avoided all hyphenation
- Only listed a maximum of 7 bullets per item

Graphics

- When using tables and charts = Used less lines and differentiated with shading
- Photos and graphics should relate to text
- Made sure the background of the photo is uncluttered
- Used same style throughout, either clipart or photos
- Used graphic design of contrast, indentation, and bullets
- Used simple line drawings; Kept them basic

Content

- Uncluttered pages
- Generous margins
- Plenty of white space
- Should be eye catching
- Used culturally appropriate terms and examples
- Separated material into sections; labeled each one with a heading
- Used conversational styles that use contractions (I'd instead of I would)
- Used active voice (1st person = I, we, our, ours and 2nd person = you, your, yours)
- Used present tense
- Made sure the words are generally short, simple, and direct
- Gave simple and more specific explanations
- Fostered a more positive and upbeat tone
- Didn't put too much text or graphic elements on a page
- Title should be on the left side of the page