Tricks of the Trade: Effective Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which health reform became effective in 2010 as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act?

   A. Insurance exchange
   B. Closure of the Medicare Part D doughnut hole
   C. Young adults <26 years may remain on their parents' health insurance plan
   D. Individual health insurance mandate

What kind of question is this?

2. Over the past decade, the percentage of Americans who obtain health insurance as an employer sponsored benefit has:

   A. Increased
   B. Decreased
   C. Remained the same

How can we improve this question?

3. The most beneficial health policies are those that are improve healthcare quality, increase healthcare access, and are of low cost. Using these criteria, which of the following policies would be considered most beneficial?

   A. Offering neonatal intensive care at the local community hospital
   B. Initiating a routine mother baby home visit by a nurse following hospital discharge of teen mothers
   C. Offering robotic surgery at each hospital within a county
   D. Providing healthcare to all Medicaid patients at one hospital site within a county

What kind of question is this? Do you want to change this question?

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4. On examination of a 10 year old, you note a red, friable canal, pain on moving the pinna, and a tympanic membrane with normal landmarks. What is the most likely diagnosis?
   a. Otitis externa
   b. Otitis media
   c. Red reflex of the drum

Is this a good question? Why or why not?

5. An afebrile 14 year old female presents with a history of back pain localized to the waist. She denies any weakness or any trauma. The physical exam is remarkable for a positive one-legged extension test. What is the most likely diagnosis?

   a. Fractured disc
   b. Spondylolysis
   c. Muscular strain
   d. Osteomyelitis

What kind of question is this? Do you want to change this question?

Let's look at p(diff) and point biserial as we get them from the testing service

	P(diff)	Point biserial	Choice	Response index	Point biserial
40.	0.586	.608	A	.103	-0.073
			B	.276	-0.624
			C	.586	0.608
			D	.034	0.011

Is this a good question?
Should I revise the distractors?