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John F. Kennedy Center

The Design and Use of
Inclusive Surveys in Arts Programs

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>> JENNA GABRIEL: Hello, everyone, and happy new year. Welcome to the January installment of our VSA webinar series, which comes to you from the JFK center for the performing arts and addresses topics related to the arts and special education. I'm Jenna Gabriel and I will be the moderator. Today's webinar, "The Design and Use of Inclusive Surveys in Arts Programs," will be led by Bina Ali and Don Glass, members of the Kennedy's research and evaluation team. If you would like to view live streamed captioning of this webinar, you can follow the link you see on this slide and in the chat box of the control panel located on the right side of your screen. Before we get started, let's touch base on the go to webinar control panel. This control panel can be hidden by clicking on the orange arrow in the top left corner. If you need to leave the webinar early, you lead it by clicking on the "X" in the upper right corner. A recording of the webinar will be available afterwards so you can catch up on any parts you missed. You can connect to the audio portion of the webinar through your telephone or through your computer's microphone and speakers. Select the option that works best for you. If you're calling in from your telephone, please make sure you mute your computer speakers. You can submit comments, questions or answers to questions using the chat panel located near the bottom of the control screen. I will monitor it throughout the webinar. If you prefer to speak your input rather than typing it, please click on the "Raise your hand" icon on the control panel and I will touch base with you and unmute your microphone at the appropriate time.

At the end of today's presentation, there will be an opportunity to ask questions about the material. During this open-ended question and answer time, please click on the "Raise your hand" icon if you wish to speak or type your thoughts into the chat pane.

Within the week, we will send out a follow-up E-mail with a link to the recording of today's presentation, a copy of the PowerPoint presentation and a copy of the webinar transcript. This means you can go back to watch the recording and review supplemental materials, in addition to any notes you take during the webinar itself.

Next month, we will present a Voices From the Field series, pre-service instruction, preparing educators for creative classrooms of students with disabilities. Each Tuesday over the course of February, we'll present 15-minute lightning talks that all address this important theme in our field. Our first lightning talk will be presented by Rhoda Bernard and will take place on Tuesday, February 7th at 12:30 p.m. The registration link can be found in your chat pane.

If you're active on social media, I invite you to connect with us using #VSA webinar, on Facebook, we are VSA International. And on twitter, we are@VSAINTL and we would love to engage with you. And with that, I will turn it over to today's presenters, Bina and Don.

>> DON GLASS: Hi, everybody. This is Don Glass.

>> BINA ALI: This is Bina Ali.

>> DON GLASS: And we are from the Kennedy Center Education Division's Department of Research Evaluation, and today, we are actually really excited to do a presentation about the design and use of inclusive surveys in arts programs.

>> BINA ALI: Before we get started, we want to spend a minute just to talk about what is a survey and why do we use it. So we're going to go on to the next slide. So a survey is really just defined as a process of gathering information, so this is any time you want to collect any information, it certainly would be appropriate for that. An evaluation, useful ways on when to collect information about relevance, and add -- [Inaudible] -- consistent with the overall goal of the program. The kids use surveys when they want to ask about effectiveness of the program. We can ask questions like to what extent were the objectives really achieved, if we want to ask about efficiency, of the program, we can ask whether the objectives were achieved on time. If we want to ask about the impact of the program, we can ask questions like what has happened as a result of the program. And lastly, we could ask questions that are in line with the sustainability of the program. We can ask questions like to what extent the benefits of the program continue even after the funding went away. So for all those reasons, a survey is really useful and an evaluation reveals a lot. So those were just to give you an overview of when to use survey and what it means by survey.

One of the most challenging aspects of survey is getting started with that. What -- how do we even begin developing the survey, how to design one. There are four critical steps to designing a survey. The first one is identifying the goal of the survey. So really just starting with a basic identification of why do we want to do a survey, what is the information we're trying to get at? What's the purpose of the survey? So that's the beginning point.

Once we have that, the next step becomes a little bit easier, developing questions are in line with the goal of the survey, and then identifying the response options are in line with the questions that we have in the survey. In this webinar we are going to focus more on developing writing appropriate questions and identifying appropriate response options. We will talk a little bit more about it, but then once we have those questions

and responses identified for a survey, we usually we do a pilot testing of the questions, and this is just to make sure that the questions are clear to you, and to someone else who is doing the survey, taking the survey.

And then evaluating the question -- [Inaudible] -- the population or the sample that you've selected.

>> DON GLASS: So here's just a quick example of something that we're doing at the Kennedy Center that we started this fall, in 2016, 2017. Performance is for young audiences here. We were actually -- our goal of our survey was to figure -- we were really curious about student engagement, and we knew, you know, students come to the Kennedy Center, and they're most likely going to see a good performance but we wanted to know what kind of factors influence students' engagement at the performance. So for example, we came up with a framework, thinking about is prior knowledge important? Expectations that students bring to the performance important? Is there an emotional connection to the content or the art form important? And what is the relationship to their lives. So we thought these things were important. We wanted to figure out which ones factor into play there so we thought one of the best things to do was to create a short survey, a ten-item survey that we've been giving out to students. This year so far, we've collected around 426 responses and we're shooting to get 1500 over this year's time. So part of that process was getting the goal, figuring out what we want, writing these items, testing them out, and then refining them so that we're asking the best questionnaire possible in the clearest possible way.

So just to let you know what the big ideas for this presentation are, the first thing is, and this will parallel the structure of the presentation, we're really all about encouraging to ask simple questions, simple, direct questions with clear language so that you can avoid confusion, because if you have -- if the question's confusing, you're most likely going to get a confused answer, which is going to give you data that's not that helpful for you.

And relating to that is having clearer response options so that you can get more accurate answers and Bina is going to talk a little bit about that, and then I'm going to talk a little bit about universal design by saying, you know, if you design your surveys well, a good design is a good design for everyone. So we're going to talk a little bit about some of the inclusive strategies that provide access and options to the respondents in your surveys. So the learning goals for the webinar are, again, following the same pattern. Participants will understand basic survey design elements of item writing. We're going to talk about clarity, word choice and language supports later on.

Response options. Selecting appropriate categories and scales. And then taking into consideration a universal design for accessibility and inclusion.

>> BINA ALI: So let's get started talking about item writing. So here, we're focusing on a couple of different things. We're focusing on the wording and the item structure. When thinking of wording of the survey items, there are a couple of things to keep in mind. First using words that are easily understood by respondents, and hear what -- let me give you an example just to clarify what I mean here. If we're using terms like professional development for teachers, that term could have some relevancy, but may not have as much meaning if we're using the word to students or to -- or asking parents to report on -- [Inaudible] -- so just making sure that the words are being used are clearly understood by the respondents. Sometimes we have to provide definitions for those words, and to be able to provide that in the survey as needed.

The second thing is to using the time reference terms whenever needed. So if we're asking teachers to report on the professional development, it's usually better to get them a time line, for example, professional development, and last month, or the last year, sometimes you have to be as specific as saying the last school year, because fiscal year and school year don't always correspond, so just keeping those in mind when writing the survey item.

And another thing to be careful about is structuring the survey item. A good practice is just to create short, complete sentences. Just be as direct as you possibly can be. You don't want to have too many questions, or don't want to provide too much information that's not needed in a question. Along those lines, you don't want to start a question that might be relating to some sort of bias in the response. For example, we don't want to have students -- ask questions a students like doing homework is -- [Inaudible] -- how many hours did you spend on your assignment? Because it's a long sentence, and it might tend students to respond more positively to your question, saying they've spent a lot more time on their assignment because it's good for their academic outcome, so we just want to avoid questions like that.

Another thing is keeping in mind that we only ask one question at a time. I have seen some survey items where I've been asked to put out how much time I spent on yesterday and today, so one question at a time is usually the preference.

Another thing is to avoiding double negatives in a question, so we don't want to use words like, not ineffective, if we're referring to a program. So just being as direct and clear as you possibly can. And it's especially important when we're

working with someone who doesn't have a -- [Inaudible] -- English grammar. So just keeping it clear.

Okay. So I have an example here, and this example, we're going to try to identify the clearest question and corresponding response option. So we have two options here. Option A, I'm going to read those out to you. And the last option A is in the last school year, how much time did you spend on professional writing activities that are important for your professional development? The first category -- the first response category is 20 to 40%. Second response category is 40 to 60%. Third response category is 60 to 80% and the last response category is 80 to 100%.

We have another survey item as option B, and in option B we have in the last school year, how much time can you spend on professional learning activities? Again, four options to choose from. The first answer could be 20 to 39%. Second, 40 to 59%. Third, 60 to 79%. And last one is 80 to 100%. So theoretically, I could use either one of those survey items in my surveys, but there is a better-worded item, and that is option B, and they're just going to highlight a couple of reasons why option B is better than option 1. In option 1, we're using biased language. We're asking students to report on the professional learning activities by saying that those are important for them, and it might lead them to be more -- to lead them a certain way. Another thing in option A is that we're using response options are overlapping so we're using 40% as our first response option. And second response option. Someone who did spend 40% on professional learning activity might be a little confused as to where to circle or which option to circle. So I just want to be clear and be as less wordy as you possibly can be when writing survey items as well as taking the responding options.

Have a reference here, and this is from a survey tool Web site called Qualtrics, and I found this very helpful when I was looking at how to even begin designing a survey, and I thought it might be useful for you if you were at the point where you are developing a survey, so just for your information if you want to read more about it.

Okay. We're going to spend a few minutes talking about how to identify the right response options.

So for -- when working with closed-ended questions, we usually do prefer to have scale as opposed to yes or no questions, and the reason for that is oftentimes when we have yes or no questions, we're putting them on the spot by having them yes or no, like, for instance, did you like the conference? Most of them would be tending to say yes because they're just trying to be nice, but variability is what we want to know,

because we don't want to know just if they liked the conference, but to what extent did they like the conference. Also, it might be more valuable for program improvement if we know that person's not just like the -- if, for instance, like the conference versus loved the conference. If they liked it, that means that there is some room for growth, and we can make it so that they will love it next time they come around. So that's why we usually prefer to have a scale and it will also get the variability.

And also, we like the response options that are exclusive and exhaustive, and an example of that is what we just went over with our previous example. Not having overlapping categories, making sure that someone who is at 40% knows exactly where to circle for their option B.

Another thing to keep in mind is that in having response options, that they are balanced in both spectrums. So, for example, you don't want to have questions with a response option that's like satisfactory or excellent because here we have good and excellent as two positive sides of the spectrum, but we don't have equal number of negatives, and a question like that will not really give you meaningful information.

The last thing to keep in mind is to not have too many response options. It could get really overwhelming, and the surveys get really long if you have too many response options for each question. There's really no correct number of responses. We're just trying to make sure that you're really just asking what you want.

When working with open-ended questions, there are two key things to keep in mind. Using as few items as possible. You don't want to ask -- [Inaudible] -- a lot of information. Each of the text prompts, they'll have to write in each of their responses. They could be -- [Inaudible] -- the second thing is not to ask too many detailed information, so not asking questions about what they did in the conference each hour, because that would be somewhat time consuming, and wouldn't require a lot of thinking. So just being mindful of how much time you expect to spend on the survey, and making sure that the questions are in line with what you want to get out of it.

So I have an example of what I mean by an open-ended versus closed-ended items. So for an open-ended item, we can really get exploratory. So for example, you can ask questions about -- or to identify one thing they're learning in the conference. Closed-ended would be really want to get to the goal of the conference, if the goal was to get -- if we were learning about one particular thing, we can ask them how much did they learn about the diversity. In this comment, we ask questions about their education, it's the use of open-ended question that could

lead to sure, why not. And that's not really getting it. But it's valuable information that we were looking for, so if you have a goal in mind, then the categories -- [Inaudible]. Again, I have some references for developing -- for identifying response options, and I encourage you to look up those resources.

And some other suggestions that I have noted in here -- [Inaudible] -- starting with the purpose of the survey, it's very helpful because it takes information about why you want them to complete the survey. Including a thank you note for the survey, just acknowledging that their time is also appreciated.

Another thing is avoiding long instructions or definitions. We want to value the parish's time and respect their time for taking the survey.

Another thing is avoiding asking sensitive questions. Think of the survey as a conversation. You want to build the rapport. You want to ask general questions first and then get to the sensitive questions later.

Grouping things together and standardizing them is also very helpful. It helps -- it makes the survey user friendly and easy to read. Putting all the closed ended questions together and the open ended questions together is usually the practice.

And then lastly, incentivizing, if you can't pay them, give them some sort of reward for taking the survey. That's always appreciated. Basically just acknowledging participants -- that you appreciate their time. Sometimes we -- [Inaudible] -- get each person some sort of a reward, so just thinking about how you can -- [Inaudible].

>> DON GLASS: Okay. I'm going to talk a little bit about universal design and thinking about how to take some of the things that Bina was talking about. These general guidelines and suggestions for writing clear survey questions or items, and taking the appropriate scales or item types. And talk a little bit more about how to kind of expand your thinking about how to think about accessibility, and inclusion in the design, and things like that. And this one is actually based strongly on Jennifer Sulewski and June Gothberg's Universal Design For Evaluation Checklist, which is now in its fourth edition, which is a fantastic resource, and it's in your handout folder, in the go to webinar side bar. So if you want to take a look at that, that's what I'm referring to. It's basically a two-pager, and what they've done is they've taken the principles from universal design, which is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. So that's a quote from Ron Mace, who really started the movement.

And what Jennifer and June did would say, okay, look, we're doing evaluation. We want to be more inclusive. We know oftentimes we work with different vulnerable populations. Might we use these same principles and apply them to evaluation and survey design? So that's what they've done. I think it's actually very useful to prompt our thinking, and it's a very manageable tool because it's only two pages long. It doesn't quite catch everything, partially because universal design is based on environmental design and product design, and evaluations aren't quite the same thing, but I'm going to show you some examples where there's some good crossover.

So just to let you know, the one image on the slide is a classic example of a really good universally designed way to get from one level to another. It's basically an accessible ramp that's been integrated at a zigzag into a stairwell with some options for some railing. So basically everybody can go from the lower floor to the higher floor or back down in some form or the other and use the same staircase. So it's an elegant solution to provide options for everyone to get to the same goal. Going up or down the stairs.

So the first principle from universal design is equitable use. So in terms of survey design, want it to be useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities. And by marketable, it means valuable. Does it have some kind of worth or value to them. Spending other time doing it or learning from the results. So to the greatest extent possible, we encourage that surveys represent the participant population. So, for example, here, if you're doing work in a school and you could go to the school Web site or maybe the district or state Web site and find out what the school population is for the grade level that you're working in, and say, for instance, 400 students, they may also have the breakdown or the percentage of how many students have disabilities, either through an IEP or a 504 plan, and maybe the percent of English learners in the school. So in this case it's 10%, or about 40. And for English learners, 21%, or about 84. So we'd like to propose, and what the design principles suggest, that if you're going to sample a population, so you, you know, get a smaller amount of people to burden them with responding to the survey, try to make sure that your sampling reflects the community that you're sampling from. So you would also want to take 10% of students with disabilities and 10% English language learners of your sample and try to recruit those folks to be included in your population so you can get a good spectrum of responses, and be inclusive of everybody in the community.

Some other things that are very similar to what Bina was talking about, the instructions and informed consent materials

should be simple and accessible with alternative formats available.

And then respondents that really understand the plan for data use and dissemination. We want to be fair and operate in an ethical manner so that people know that if they're going to take time and share information, that it's not going to be used for a purpose other than what they've agreed to.

The second design principle, and I think this one is quite a good one in terms of evaluation, is flexibility in use. So the survey design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities. So we want to include a variety of data collection tools to accommodate communication preferences or needs. So, for example, if we go back to the Kennedy Center student performance polling, we have a bunch of different options for people to respond to the same team, same ten items. One, we have a paper version with pencils, which -- in some instances is easier for the teacher. The group has to run and they need to take something with them, they can take a packet of these things, and then they can return it so they can enter the data manually. What we prefer and a lot of people like, we also have iPads. So they can actually take the survey while they're in-house and just respond to it electronically, which is actually useful to us because we get access to the data quickly because it's already in a visual format. Sometimes we have a few codes or URLs so that people can respond to the survey at their convenience or leisure instead of having to do it at a specific time. And then we've also learned from some of our school groups that some of the students actually prefer to have the survey not in Spanish, so we've had that translated so that they can have a choice of whether they want to respond in English or Spanish. So the bottom line is we want to get good, accurate information. We want to make sure that the mode that the survey is given to is the best and easiest and most flexible one for the respondent to use.

Strongly related to that is principle three about simple and intuitive use. So we want the design to be easy to understand, regardless of user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration levels.

So some things to think about in this area would be to, like Bina said, eliminate unnecessary complexity. Try to keep things short and clear and direct. Make sure that the questions are available to people with a variety of reading levels and backgrounds. Use simple language, concrete questions, meaning, like, ones that are very clear and practical and not abstract, and show items -- have items that show cultural competency. Things -- make sure your language is free of acronyms, which are very popular in Washington, D.C., but if you don't live here,

you might have zero idea what we're talking about. Jargon, slang and any kind of colloquial terms.

So the images on this page, and let me describe them, the top image is basically a screen shot from Microsoft Word. So this is actually an analysis or readability statistics that I ran on a teacher survey that we're developing. So one of the things you can do is like, get a readability score. And this is very easy for you to do. It will give you a score on how many passive sentences you have, and you don't really want a lot of passive sentences, you want active sentences. So this one I got 7 percent, so that's pretty good. Doing pretty well. The Flesch-Kincaid reading score, it goes up to 100. Usually 100 is very easy to read. Between 60 and 70 is really what's easily understandable by 13 or 15-year-olds, and when you get down to 30, that's really for college graduates. So right now, my flesh reading score may be a little bit low. I might want to think about my language to make it a little more easy for the teachers to read, even though all of them have a college education. But maybe some of them were choices too specific. And then there's a grade level, too. So this is at ninth grade, level 9.5. So this is just to give you an idea of if you want to get a sense of what the readability is and you know the grade level or reading level of your respondents or know that there's a range of it, here's a handy and easily accessible tool for you to check your language.

And then the second image on the page was -- it's a little circle with a kind of a sad face with -- looking up with a line overhead, and this is a symbol that I made for one of our workshops. I thought, oh, I was being very clever. I tried to communicate this idea of going over someone's head. And I thought, oh, that's particularly clear -- going over the head and that's an abstract way of explaining something. Not everybody is going to understand particularly who might have -- might not have the same culture reference as you. So going over your head and turning into the symbol might not mean anything to everyone. So even when creating symbols, you have to think about readability and comprehension of all that kind of stuff. So try to avoid colloquial terms and things like that. There's the red slash across that one so I'm not going to use that, even though I thought it was clever.

Principle four, perceptible information. So we've been developing, and again, a lot of these things, like we're encouraging you to think about these things, so they might not have all the resources do everything all at once, but if you start developing or making them part of your routine, that would be great. So in this case, the design for perceptible information, it means communicate necessary information

effectively to the user regardless of the ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

A lot of the check points for this are about doing interviews or focus groups because of being in a sound space in terms of audibility. But if you think about having large groups of kids and having worked together, you also want to think about like how can we create an environment where people can concentrate and respond to the surveys. We also want to make sure that people pay attention to the sensory issues and provide multiple media options to present the information.

So here, to the left side of the slide, we have two images. One is, we have some iPads that are in these easy-to-carry cases, that we have the surveys pre-loaded and kind of locked in so you can't go anywhere else. You can control the size of the font just with the fingers or swipes, and then this particular one, we have actually some options for if you wanted a headphone for listening to a voiceover. So anybody can respond to the survey, whether you can read or hear, or whatever you prefer or select. And then the bottom image is just a picture of the first item of our survey that is in Braille. So we actually have the survey Brailled as well. So when we're presented with a student audience, sometimes we know that there are some students with disabilities there, sometimes we don't know but we make sure that we have as many options available as possible for people to take the survey, because we want everybody's opinion, and input, and we don't want the mode of the survey to be a barrier to them providing us with information.

And again, this is the final section I'm going to talk about. But the fifth principle that seems to make a lot of sense for survey writing is tolerance for error. So the design minimizes hazards and adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions. So, for example, instruments and protocols are pilot tested with participants who resemble your targeted audience, so you're testing out your questions and make sure they make sense to everybody and getting expert feedback for people who would be responding so you're making sure that they're clear, the language is clear, it's at the appropriate readability level and you can also get some input about the kind of scales or response options that we provided.

Again, avoid lengthy instructions, keeping them to 12 words or less. This means instructions per item. So if you have an item about ranking something, try to keep your instructions short and very clear and concrete so people can understand what they're supposed to do. And then they can use their working memory to respond to the question.

And then avoid confusing instructions. So again, pilot testing is one sure fire way to get some good feedback on those kind of things.

And then a couple other things in this category to think about are allow verbal or written responses outside the standard instrument. So there have been times where we've actually interviewed young people and asked them -- or done a survey where we've asked them the survey questions and provided them the options for -- response options to them. So that was one way to do it. And also we oftentimes -- students may have a question about the meaning of the word, and so we're available to help them understand what that means so we can have a more accurate response.

In addition, include optional probes or explanations to make questions accessible to a wider audience. That's easier sometimes in a digital format. You might be able to have something where you can define a term with a pop-up or something like that. You know, people get the definitions of the terms in the way that you're defining it, so we all have a common understanding of what the question is about.

And then online options are available to say return later. So this is more about if you want to get people to finish the survey, but either maybe they run out of time or they're tired, but they would like to finish it, so providing a way for them to uniquely come back to the same survey that they started later, and finishing that would be a nice option to think about as well.

So really the only resource that I'm going to put up here, and it's in the handout section of the go to webinar, is the actual universal design for evaluation checklist. So I encourage you to take a look at it because it's actually really quite helpful. The link here actually goes to a blog that June and Jennifer wrote about universal design design and evaluation, and in this whole series, there's a lot of other entries that provide some examples of what other people have done in relationship to thinking about their evaluation and universal design principles, including one written by myself about applying universal design for learning and survey and evaluation design. So I encourage you to check that out and browse around and use that as a resource. And that's sponsored by the American Evaluation Association, one of their topics of interest.

So a lot of talking and a lot of information. But we wanted to give you a quick opportunity to think about and reflect on maybe picking out one, maybe two inclusive strategies that you might want to consider next time you design a survey.

So we're going to give you the opportunity to let us know what those are in the chat box, and Jenna is going to take a look at those and provide us some -- share some examples of what people are thinking about trying. And then they're going to move into a section of questions and answers, where you can raise your hand or ask a question.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Great. Thanks, Don. So if you want to go back to that last slide with the prompts, we'll give folks a little while to respond and I'll start reading and whenever you're ready, let me know and we'll move into question and answer. I won't be voicing questions yet at this time.

>> DON GLASS: Okay.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: So some suggestions coming in, offering multiple means of responses, different ways that folks can respond to survey questions. Offering the online option for surveys. I never thought about adding a pop-up box to help define or describe items so thank you for that idea.

>> DON GLASS: Yeah. Let me just add one thing to that one. Not all online survey tools will allow you to do that. I know Survey Gizmo which has been very good about thinking about accessibility, provides that option. So what it looks like in your survey is you have a term, and you can basically it has a little dotted underline underneath, so if you scroll over the word, a pop-up will come up with a definition. Or -- it's really kind of a glossary function.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Other folks saying having the option for both verbal and written answers to surveys. Using a pilot survey with the appropriate population. And we are tapering out.

>> DON GLASS: All right. So why don't we move to the -- thank you, everybody, for contributing those. It's actually really helpful to find out what people are thinking about. And there are lots of things you can think about doing. And again, I encourage you to don't feel like you have to do everything at one time. It's kind of a learning process. But providing the principles of being clear, keeping it simple and providing some different options, and making sure that you pilot and -- with the same kind of people that you're looking for in your respondent population is really going to help you create a very good tool.

All right. So questions, ideas, next steps, comments?

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Great. So we have now reached the question and answer portion of our webinar. So if you haven't already, now is the time to start entering questions into that question box, or you can raise your hand. Take a few minutes and we'll get started.

So if you have just one clarification question, where is the readability statistics tool that you mentioned?

>> DON GLASS: Aha. Okay. It's a little bit, as we call Microsoft products, it's buried a little bit, but it's in the file path under options, which is not where I thought it would be.

And then there's a place that talks about proofing, and under proofing, there's a bunch of check boxes about spelling, grammar checks. The bottom box basically is the option, and it's I think by default not checked. So you want to check that. So then how it actually functions is when you do a spell check of a complete document and it's gone through the whole entire thing, a little pop-up window comes up, like that was in the slide. That will give you readability statistics. So again, you know, how many words are right, but the most important piece are the bottom ones, the readability ones, about the grade level, the ease of reading, and the percent of passive language.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Great. Another question. Is there a survey software that allows for the voiceover option so that people can hear the questions out loud? And how would someone with visual impairments using that listening option choose the desired answer?

>> DON GLASS: That is a very good question. I don't think -- I mean, we've been looking at a bunch of different platforms for the Kennedy Center, and Survey Gizmo is a strong one, and we often use Survey Monkey, but they don't have that actually built in. So what we've been doing with our audience polling is we have some iPads that we've set up through the accessibility feature to turn on voiceover, which is basically a text-to-speech function. And we just turn it on, and we have a certain amount of iPads that are available for that. And if you request it, we'll give you that iPad. So you can -- we usually put head phones on so it's not distracting to other people. So we're basically using the technology that's in the device rather than in the survey platform, which I think is -- it's -- the voiceover kind of thing is pretty ubiquitous I think on most devices.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: How do you handle a large quantity of fill-in responses? My problem is that people use different language, so it's sometimes hard to group.

>> BINA ALI: Can you repeat the second part again? It wasn't clear.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Yeah, she says the problem is that people use different language so it's hard to group together. I'm not sure if you'd like to raise your hand. I'm happy to unmute you to provide clarification, but I would guess that she's talking about when she goes through and starts coding responses.

>> BINA ALI: Right. So what we have done in our surveys at Kennedy Center is we provide different language options for participants. Let's say we have a survey that's in English, and we have translated that in Spanish for our Spanish-speaking audience, participants, what we have done is that we have kept the response options the same, so for English participants who select 2, and for Spanish speaking participants who select 2, their response means the same thing, except that it's in different language. So having -- if possible, having a direct translation of the word and not keeping the response options the same, and that way, when you average out the scores you don't lose any of that English speaking versus the Spanish speaking person. And that's just an example, but that could be done with different languages as well. As long as the wordings of the translated survey is the same as the English survey, you can combine the scores to look at the overall parts of it.

>> DON GLASS: Yeah. And if you're thinking about having respondents respond to open-ended questions in multiple languages, I mean, that does become an issue in terms of translation. So we have -- we actually have a research associate who speaks Spanish who can -- who actually translated the survey, who can do translations the other direction. So we don't right now, for students, we don't have a lot of open-ended questions. We've been testing some, and a lot of them are, for example, one of them is like a -- provide us with a twitter-like response about what you thought about the performance. Another one that we've used is kind of a before and after thinking question. So before I thought this, and after this experience I thought that. So they have sentence frames and they will put in a couple phrases or maybe a sentence about -- or usually it's just a phrase or a couple words. So the amount of information that we have to translate is not so much. We could actually probably do some of it ourselves, because it's not so context dependent, so I think we can do a pretty good job of interpreting a question. If it's a longer, open-ended question, that actually becomes more of an issue, so we would have to get someone to be a translator. There's no way around that.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Are there some best practices for survey responses for people with limited language skills, such as smiley faces?

>> DON GLASS: Yes. Actually, that's a good one. And that's one thing, actually -- I'm kicking myself for not putting this into the -- yes. There are different kinds of ways you can represent scale, the response items. I've seen some good ones from -- that ask questions about affect. So yes, kind of like emoticons, but like having an image that's been tested with the audience to make sure that the image actually corresponds to the

response item that you would have in language, or, like, what does happy actually look like, and you pick an image actually that your audience will equate those two things together.

So yes, actually having images with that is actually a good multi-modal way to provide some items. Done some work with some folks who are English learners and using a rubric and having the categories actually in very simplified language, very direct and simple versions, with a pictorial version of it first. So you always have the language and a picture of what you're talking about, and then an extended kind of version that uses the kind of technical vocabulary that they're supposed to be learning. So I think there are ways that you can design things that kind of scaffold the information or provide different options so that depending on your language level, reading level, you can get at what the question is about. You can get an accurate answer from you. So that yeah, that's a great idea using that.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Can you offer some insights about survey responses that use a rating, so rating something by circling 1 through 5 with little to most?

>> BINA ALI: Just to -- okay. So I'm just going to make sure that I understand it clearly.

So examples of 1 to 5 ratings, is that what you're asking?

>> JENNA GABRIEL: I think she's asking what you think about that as a survey response option.

>> BINA ALI: So with the rating scales, actually we do have a resource on the Web site, the third resource, I think, that's listed under response options. That resource is providing examples of different rating scales, and the way to select rating scales is by looking at what you're really trying to get at. Are you asking about frequency? Are you asking about the likelihood of engaging in a certain behavior? Are you asking about the experience? So, for example, if an item is worded such that they're asking people to rate their likelihood of attending the conference next year, it could range from they're very unlikely to very likely on a five-point scale. A lot of times we look at scale options from strongly to very strongly, to items that you strongly agree, strongly disagree, neither disagree or agree. We can create some of those fields for never, sometimes -- sorry. Never, rarely, sometimes, frequently and always. So that could be the five item scales for frequency options if you're asking teachers rate how often do they view a certain webinar or go to a certain meeting. So it really is based on what question you're trying to get at but I do encourage you to report to that resource that I posted on the slide. I think that will be very useful to you when selecting the appropriate response option.

>> DON GLASS: Yeah. And again, this is Don. I would actually agree with Bina that that resource is really helpful because why come up with a set of scales when people have already done it and tested out, and also, thinking about to some of the things Bina was talking about about making sure your scale was balanced on both ends. Most of these, or all of these -- someone's already thought about that, so whether you have a four-point scale, five-point scale or seven-point scale, the language, there's enough examples there you can probably pick out some language that would be appropriate for the type of item and scale that you're looking for. So use that as a resource. We would encourage you not to just put 1 to 7, and label the 1 and the 7. That might not be enough for people to get their head wrapped around what it is. Sometimes it's helpful to have the descriptors.

On the analysis side, it doesn't really matter. We're just dealing with the numbers, but for the respondents who are taking it, it can be a help.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Are there instances in program evaluation where you wouldn't suggest using a survey?

>> BINA ALI: So survey is usually helpful for closed ended questions. When having open ended questions, surveys could be helpful because it could be more in depth information, but if you're really just trying to gather a small group of people together and you really want to know about their experiences or you want to get their opinions, focus groups, could be more appropriate, or one-on-one interviews, if you really just want to meet with the director of the certain organization and really just want to pick the brain of the director as opposed to gather information from the participants. So it really is based on what's the goal of the survey, and if the goals are really -- [Inaudible] -- then it would be more appropriate to do a focus group or interview. Survey, it's just one form of collecting data. There are other projects available and it really just depends on what's the purpose, and if you think a focus group is going to give you more in depth responses, then that might be appropriate strategy, and not a survey. A survey is more so for specific time limits. So you can think of ten questions of survey, and closed-ended, open-ended, so a survey is more structured. But if you want responses that aren't structured, then a focus group might be more appropriate.

>> DON GLASS: And just to add, sometimes you can use things like interviews or group interviews or focus groups as kind of the exploratory part of you're trying to find something out, or if you're trying to come up with an item but you don't know what the categories are, you could use your findings from a focus group to help you design like okay now I have a -- I understand

the lay of the land. Now I can create a closed-ended item that has these options on it and then people can select from it. So that's easier on the data analysis side because it's less labor in terms of honing open-ended responses.

I mean as someone who is putting out or people who are putting out surveys, the one drawback to doing open-ended is that you actually have to code everything. You have to read everything so if you're sending this out to a huge amount of people, that's going to be very time consuming to do it well. And if it's too time consuming and then you don't use the data, then you probably shouldn't have asked the question in the first place, so just be mindful about we're always thinking about user burden and do we really need to ask this question, or do we need to ask this question now? So be strategic in thinking about how you gather information from people. So surveying at a particular point in time and for particular types of things you want to do. Particularly if it's targeted and you want to get information from a lot of people, that might be the way to go.

So for example, with our audience polling, last year we did a focus group of some students but this year we can get a lot more information by asking a short ten-item survey to 1,500 kids and get a lot of data, and it's all on scale. So it's easier for us to handle.

>> BINA ALI: And something else that I would like to add is that surveys are more appropriate when you want to collect information from a large number of people. So if you want to collect data, or if you would like to collect information from every single student who is attending a school, then that's hundreds of students. It would be really hard for you to code responses for hundreds of students, so a survey with closed-ended questions would be more appropriate. However, if you want to just really get to the gist of some specific content, a specific topic, and if you just wanted to hand select five teachers, then a focus group or interview might be more appropriate. So just thinking about how much time do you have, how much resources do you have, and if you want to collect information from hundreds of people, or just a few people.

>> JENNA GABRIEL: Great. So that concludes today's webinar. I would like to ask you, our webinar participants, to remain online for a few moments longer and complete a short evaluation survey that will open when you close your window. Your feedback is always appreciated.

And thank you for joining us. For questions or comments, you can contact me by E-mail at JGabriel@Kennedy-center.org, or by phone at 202-416-8861. Thanks, and have a great day.

[Webinar concluded].