

Attachment A: Questions to be Tested

Item Categories and Initial Wording for Testing

For each of the categories in the table on the next page, participants will be asked in the interview whether they have had the expense and, if they have, what they paid. The wording below shows the possible question stems that will be used with the categories. The question stem used will depend on the data needs of the category being tested.

1 (purchased)

Since the first of [the reference month], have you or any members of your household purchased ...

2 (purchased or rented)

Since the first of [the reference month], have you or any members of your household purchased or rented ... [for your household or for someone outside of your household]

3 (purchased, for own household or someone outside of household)

Since the first of [the reference month], have you or any members of your household purchased, either for members of your household or for someone outside your household, ...

4 (had expenses for)

Since the first of [the reference month], have you or any members of your household had expenses for...

5 (had expenses, either for own household or someone outside of household)

Since the first of [the reference month], have you or any members of your household had expenses, either for you or any members of your household or for someone outside your household, for... (note this is very long and awkward but corresponds to the wording in the CEQ that introduces a list of items: *Since the first of the reference month, have you or any members of your household had expenses for any of the following, either for you or any members of your household or for someone outside your household?*)

6 (Trips -- spend anything)

How much did you or any members of your household spend for ... other than what the package deal covered?

[for all costs except for transportation]: What costs, including taxes, won't be reimbursed?

Cluster	Question Number	Lead-in Number	Question Wording For Testing ¹
A	1	2	Dishwasher, garbage disposal, or range hood?
A	2	4	Paneling, roofing, siding, patios, walkways, gutters, windows, awning, etc.
A	3	4	Material for patio, masonry, etc.?
A	4	4	Heating, cooling, or electrical work, labor, or materials?
A	5	4	Other repair or maintenance including labor and materials?
A	6	4	Maintenance or repair of other property?
A	7	1	Construction materials for jobs not yet started?
A	8	4	Materials for remodeling, maintenance, or repair, etc.?
B	9	4	The rental of an RV, boat, or camper?
B	10	4	The rental of any vehicle: a car, truck, motorcycle, or plane?
B	11	1	An RV, boat, trailer, or plane?
B	12	n/a	Was any portion of the purchase price financed?
B	13	n/a	How did you dispose of the recreational vehicle?
C	14	4	Tuition (not college), tutoring, test prep, and all other school-related expenses?
C	15	4	Day care, nursery, or preschool expenses including tuition?
D	16	4	Oil change and tune-up?
D	17	4	All other vehicle maintenance and repair?
D	18	4	Vehicle registration?
E	19	n/a	How much [do you/does your household] currently spend for your health insurance plan [including payroll deductions]?
E	20	n/a	Do you or any members of your household have any other types of health insurance?
F	21	4	Rental of small household equipment?
F	22	4	Purchase of tools?
F	23	4	Rental or repair of tools, lawn or garden equipment?
F	24	4	Rental of office equipment for non-business use?
F	25	4	Rental or repair of VCR, TV, radio, or sound equipment?
F	26	4	Installation or repair of computers?
G	27	4	Purchase of sports or exercise equipment?
G	28	4	Rent or repair of sports equipment?
H	29	1	Any window coverings?
H	30	3	Living room furniture?
H	31	3	Wall units, cabinets, occasional furniture?
H	32	3	Bedroom furniture?
H	33	3	Lamps and household decorative items?
I	34	3	Suits or tailored jackets?
I	35	3	Women's tops or suits?
I	36	3	Girls' dresses or suits?
I	37	3	Boys' suits, sportcoats, or vests?
I	38	5	Rented clothing or storage outside the home?
I	39	5	Watches or jewelry?

¹ As noted in the text above, the wording in this table serves as an initial starting point. Question wording may change in later rounds of testing.

Cluster	Question Number	Lead-in Number	Question Wording For Testing
J	40	5	Photography-related things?
J	41	5	Pet-related services including veterinarian services?
J	42	n/a	Do you or any members of your household use mass transportation services such as bus, subway, or train for commuting or trips?
J	43	6	Rental of vehicles on out-of-town trips?
J	44	6	Alcoholic beverages on out-of-town trips?

Attachment B: Cognitive Testing Protocol

I. Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to help us out today. My name is [and this is my colleague () who will be taking notes for us today. We also have () from the Bureau of Labor Statistics who is observing the session.]

II. Purpose and Consent Procedure

First, I'll give you a little background about what we'll be doing.

I will be asking you a series of questions from the Consumer Expenditure Survey, an ongoing survey that BLS conducts. The survey provides information about the buying habits of American consumers. This information is used for a lot of things, but its primary purpose is to help calculate inflation.

I'll be asking you to answer the questions and share your reactions to them. The purpose of this session is to find out what you think each question is asking about, and how easy or hard it is to answer. We are not evaluating you. We are looking to improve the questions, so there are no right or wrong answers. All the information you give us will be kept completely confidential, and will be used to improve the survey questions.

Please read this consent form, and I'll answer any questions you may have. [ANSWER QUESTIONS, IF ANY.] Please sign the form.

[START RECORDER AND GET ORAL PERMISSION TO RECORD; WHICH RECRUITER EXPLAINED AT TIME OF SCHEDULING CALL.] With your permission, I would like to record the interview in case I miss anything while taking notes. Do you give your permission to participate in this interview and to be recorded?

Do you have any [other] questions before we begin?

General Probes, etc.

If a participant asks "What does that mean?" "Does that include...?" etc.:

[Neutral responses]:

- "What does it mean to you?"
- "Whatever it means to you."
- "What do you think it includes?"
- "Whatever you think it includes."

If a participant hesitates for long time or says nothing when a response is needed:

- What are you thinking about here?

If a participant doesn't know what cost to report:

- Your best estimate is fine.

If a participant appears to be waffling/having trouble:

- What makes it hard to [decide/answer]?

If a participant asks whether a certain item qualifies for reporting for an expenditure question:

- [There are no right or wrong answers.] What do you think?

If a participant goes into excruciating detail when giving details for items, costs OR has trouble remembering specifics:

- [Can you describe for me] **how** you would figure this out?
- **How** would you figure out what to say -- for what you [bought/paid for], and how much it cost?

For questions with no "name 5" activity (and no judgment or list to show):

"Did talking about various travel expenses for the past three months remind you of [any / other] trip-related expenses for [question wording]?"

[INTERVIEWER: GO THROUGH THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS III – V BASED ON THE CLUSTERS OF EXPENDITURE QUESTIONS DESIGNATED FOR TESTING IN THE PARTICULAR TESTING ROUND]

III. Expenditure Questions: If Applicable, Total Expenditures (REPORTING ACCURACY)

- FOLLOW ASSIGNED CLUSTER ORDER.
- ASK EVERY EXPENDITURE QUESTION DESIGNATED FOR CLUSTERS IN TESTING ROUND, TO DETERMINE APPLICABLE EXPENDITURES.

1. Since the first of [the reference month 3 months prior], have you or any members of your household [FILL ADVANCE TEXT] [FILL QUESTION WORDING]?

[FOR ANY "YES ANSWER]; RIGHT AWAY ASK:

- a. How much did you spend? [We're now asking for one total across the three months]

IV. Details for Expenses (REPORTING ACCURACY AND ESTIMATION ACCURACY)

- A. [START BACK WITH P'S FIRST YES AND GO THROUGH **EACH YES**, ONE AT A TIME]. ASK:

1. You said you [or others in your household] spent money on [FILL].
 - a. What was **one [item you (others) bought?/thing you (others) spent money on on/expense you (others) had]**?

- b. How much did it **cost**?
- c. In what **month** was it [bought/paid for]?

2. Any other items?

[IF YES, REPEAT a. – c. UNTIL PARTICIPANT HAS NO MORE ITEMS TO REPORT FOR QUESTION]

- a. What was **another [item you (others) bought?/thing you (others) spent money on on/expense you (others) had]**?
- b. How much did it **cost**?
- c. In what **month** was it [bought/paid for]?

Etc. for item(s) 3 - X

B. Was there anything you thought of, but decided not to [include/say] for [FILL]?

[IF YES]:

1. Can you say more about why you decided not to mention [FILL]?
 - a. What was **one item** [you/others spent money on]?
 - b. How much did it **cost**?
 - c. In what **month** was it [bought/paid for]?

2. Any other items?

[IF YES, REPEAT a. – c. UNTIL PARTICIPANT HAS NO MORE ITEMS TO REPORT FOR QUESTION]

- a. What was **another [item you (others) bought?/thing you (others) spent money on on/expense you (others) had]**?
- b. How much did it **cost**?
- c. In what **month** was it [bought/paid for]?

[IF NEEDED] Etc. for item(s) 3 – X

Part B may be difficult for respondent. Move on quickly if respondent cannot answer readily.
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V. Comprehension

A. Name Some Examples

[FOR ASSIGNED EXPENDITURE QUESTIONS, SEE HOW MANY THE RESPONDENT CAN PRODUCE], ASK ALL RESPONDENTS

1. Can you think of some examples of expenses for... [FILL]?
2. What else can you think of that would belong in this category?
3. Anything else?
4. Write down the examples of the global expense category that R can think of.
5. These can be either things you have bought or have never bought before.

[FOR EACH EXPENDITURE REPORTED]

B. Recheck of Expenditures Reported in III

1. Check both number of items and reported cost of each item.
2. Note any under or over reporting of both:
 - a. Number of expenditure items
 - b. Cost of expenditure items
3. PROVIDE RESPONDENT WITH LIST OF IN-SCOPE EXPENDITURE TYPES. PROBE ON ANY REPORTING (E.G., MISSED EXPENDITURES) OR ESTIMATION ERRORS [TRY TO ELICIT CAUSE SO WE CAN DETERMINE IF IT WAS A RECALL, COMPREHENSION, OR OTHER ISSUE]
Can you say more about that?
 - a. What was the **[item you (others) bought?/thing you (others) spent money on on/expense you (others) had]**?
 - b. How much did it **cost**?
 - c. In what **month** was it [bought/paid for]?
4. Any other items/things?

[IF YES, REPEAT a. – c. UNTIL PARTICIPANT HAS NO MORE ITEMS TO REPORT AS PREVIOUSLY NOT REPORTED]

VI. Closing

We appreciate your help today. Thank you for your time.

[PROVIDE THE \$40 INCENTIVE.]