# Sample User Tests

I’ve included instructions for conducting user tests in each of the categories referenced in *The Content Strategy Toolkit*: findability, readability and comprehension, and favorability. You can use this as a starting point to develop a testing plan to walk through your own user tests with actual users.

## 1: Findability

Go back to the user scenarios you prioritized in Chapter 7 to plan this test. You’ll want to recruit participants who have experienced one of the priority scenarios or could realistically experience one in the future.

For example, a parent of a grade school child whose child has needed emergency dentistry such as in the case of the emergency dentist example from the book would be a perfect recruit. Alternatively, a parent of a grade school child who participates in sporting activities might be likely to need emergency care at some point in the future.

You’ll want a total of three tests per scenario—some of your participants can complete more than one scenario test. Others might complete only one.

Start by reading a user-friendly version of the scenario to the participant. For example:

*Imagine your child was out playing tag with friends and fell down on the pavement. It looks to you like he broke a tooth, and you Google emergency dentists to find where you can take him.*

Then, show them the website you’re testing, and ask them to show you where they would find content related to the scenario. You can ask them what information they would be looking for and have them attempt to find it, or you can ask specific questions such as “Where would you find emergency hours?”

## 2: Readability and Comprehension

For this test, pick a few pages or excerpts from pages that you deem to be most important to your business and to your users and ones that you feel are fairly representative of the content across the site. Then, ask participants to read the content on their own and answer a few questions about it.

Consider having each participant read one page on a desktop computer and one page on a mobile device. Two tests per user are about all you want to ask them to do. In the end, you want each tested page to have been read three times on mobile or desktop.

Let’s say you’re testing the page about dental emergency services for children. You might ask the following questions after they’ve read the content:

• What kind of dental emergencies do we handle?

• How do you make an appointment?

• What will happen if we can’t get you in right away?

• What ages of children do we see?

• In what circumstances should you go to the ER instead of seeing a dentist?

When they are answering the questions, do not to lead them to the right answer or express any disappointment if they don’t know the answer. When they don’t know or are unsure, ask them to go back to the content and talk through what they’re looking for and what challenges they are having finding the information. Listen and observe body language, facial expressions, and so on.

## 3: Favorability

For this test, you’ll show participants two versions of the same or similar content. Use one chunk that’s an exact copy of something that’s on your site today and another version that is either a rewrite of that content or similar content from a competitor site.

I recommend doing three or four of these tests with each participant, but keeping the content pretty short. For each test, have them take a minute or two to read the two versions. Then, ask them which one they like better and why. That should be the only question you need to get some good feedback and insights, but you may need to ask some follow-up questions of the more quiet participants, such as “How did this one make you feel compared to the other one?” or “What information seemed to be missing from either option?”

Here’s an example of what you might have them compare:



