Traditional Textbooks vs. OER: What's the same and What's different?

	Traditional Textbook	Open Textbook	Open Educational Resources (OER)
What is its purpose?	Provides basic course content for student reading and reference	Provides basic course content for student reading and reference	Provides basic course content for student reading and reference
What does it look like?	A single one-size-fits all book (or e-book)	A: A single book (or e-book) adopted as-is B: A single book (or e-book) adopted with customization by the instructor	A: An online collection of resources curated, remixed and customized by the instructor B: The same as (A) above, in printable format for those students who prefer print
How does an instructor choose it?	A. Through evaluation of sample copy provided by the publisher, in print or online. B. Peer review by publisher often assumed but not shared.	A. Through evaluation of free online copy. In some cases a print sample copy is available. B. Peer reviews often available	A. Through searching and evaluating component resources found in OER repositories. Search is based on specific learning outcomes and content needs defined by the instructor B. Peer reviews are often available
How is it adopted by an instructor?	Selection is made and approved by colleagues, department head and/or dean, depending on the policies of the college. The bookstore is also included and notified of changes to text selection.	Selection is made and approved by colleagues, department head and/or dean, depending on the policies of the college. The bookstore is also included and notified of changes to text selection.	Selection is made and approved by colleagues, department head and/or dean, depending on the policies of the college. The bookstore is also included and notified of changes to text selection.
How do students use it?	A. Students bring the text (or e-book equivalent) to class and back as needed. B. Students may choose to read and annotate in print or with a mobile device	A. Students bring the text (or e-book equivalent) to class and back as needed. B. Students may choose to read and annotate in print or with a mobile device C. Customization ensures that the book is only as big as it needs to be.	A. Students print those portions that are needed for class. B. Students may choose to read and annotate in print or with a mobile device. C. Customization ensures that the resources shared are all relevant to the course
How much do students pay?	The average cost of a college textbook is around $175 per course	A. Free for online access B. Around $30-$60 for printed and bound copies, or cost of printing PDF	A. Free for online access B. Cost of printing PDF