

# Erasing Blind-Spots and Providing Action-Based Corrective Advice in the Marking of Exposition Essays

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ELIS

The background of the slide features a panoramic view of a modern city skyline, likely Singapore, with several prominent skyscrapers and a bridge spanning across a body of water in the foreground. The sky is a clear, bright blue. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo consisting of a red circle with the letters 'ELIS' inside, surrounded by a network of white dots and lines.

# INTENTION

What do we  
aim to do  
with our  
feedback?

# Asking for Opinion? Giving Our Opinion?

## Question:

What are some study techniques or habits that students can adopt to prepare themselves for examinations?

## Introductory Para:

Students have many different study techniques or habits which they use to prepare for examinations. The most common ones are of course the “everyday non-stop study” and “last - minute study”. Depending on the student’s opinion attitude?, they may choose how they want to study. However, some study techniques often have more bad outcomes than good outcomes. Today, I will share *You are not giving a speech!* some study techniques and habits that students can adopt to prepare for examination.

# Here Only or Always?

## Question:

Co-curricular activities (CCAs) are a source of enjoyment and stress. Discuss.

## Conclusion Para:

In conclusion, CCAs can be a source of stress and enjoyment. Students should manage their time well in order not to consider CCAs as stressful. They should learn to enjoy their CCAs and at the same time, learn a thing or two from ~~it~~ them.

# Asking for Directions or Giving Directions?

## **Question:**

What are some advantages and disadvantages of technology?

## **Conclusion Para:**

In conclusion, there are many more advantages and disadvantages of technology. It can either make us happy or sad and every decision we make is all in our hands. I think if we could just use it properly, it will make the world a much better place for everyone.

Where is the summary of the points?

# Too Much or Too Little? Why?

## Question:

‘Every child should be encouraged to take up a hobby’. Do you agree?

## Conclusion Para:

In conclusion, [despite being time consuming] no need to mention this, I strongly agree that every child should be encouraged to take up a hobby as it acts is a form of as a stress reliever and enlarge widens his or her their social circle. Conclusion is quite brief.

# Write More? Of What? Maybe, Smiley Eyes?

## Question:

Is it better to study in a group or alone?

## Conclusion Para:

All in all, I feel that studying in group is more effective than studying alone as there can also be more encouragement. ^^

# DIRECTIONS

Feedback is one of the most important components of formative assessment. It is the lynchpin in the three formative questions (i.e. “Where am I going?” “Where am I now?” and “what do I do next?”).

*(Brookhart 2009).*



# DECISIONS

“the function of formative assessment is to help teachers and students decide whether they need to make any adjustments in what they’re doing”

*(Popham; 2008)*

# DEMONSTRATION (of competency)

If assessment is “used to ensure students who experience difficulty are given...support...as well as additional opportunities to demonstrate their learning, it is formative; if additional support is not forthcoming, it is summative”

*(Dufour, Dufour, Eaker & Many 2006).*

# Background Information

At the end of 2015, a large sample of marked exposition essays were collected from Secondary One and Two students of Anglican High School → Pattern in marking behaviour identified:

- lack of specificity in providing action-based feedback

# Background Information

The findings of the study were intended to be shared with the department over a series of Time-tabled Time for Professional Sharing sessions, and a set of guiding principles were suggested, so as to aid teachers in providing corrective feedback to their students that were:

- Based on students' writing behaviour
- Needs-based for students
- Customised by the teacher
- Specific
- Action-based

# Process: Collection of Data

To preserve a safe and collegial professional development environment, the collection (and eventual presentation) of data was done in the following manner:

- Call for sample scripts was on a voluntary basis. Students were not forced to submit their chosen written work nor was there a specific number of scripts per class that had to be collected.
- There was no attempt at all to tag sample scripts to markers.
- There was no attempt to identify scripts by class or student.
- The overall aim was to identify and present facts and suggestions for improvement through the description and analysis of writing behaviour and assessment behaviour by the level and not by the individual.
- Scripts of Sec 1 and 2/ 2015 students were collected

# Observations

<b>Annotation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Purpose: Evaluative (E) or Corrective Advice (CAd)</b>
<b>Exp</b>	Expression	Unclear
<b>Prep</b>	Preposition	E, lightly CAd
<b>Pron</b>	Pronoun	E, lightly CAd
<b>P/Punc</b>	Punctuation	E, lightly CAd
<b>Sp</b>	Spelling	E, lightly CAd

# Observations

Annotation	Meaning	Purpose: Evaluative (E) or Corrective Advice (CAd)
<i>SV/ SVA</i>	Subject Verb Agreement	E, usually unclear CAd
<b>T</b>	Tense	E, usually unclear CAd
<b>V</b>	Vocabulary	E, usually unclear CAd

# Observations

Annotation	Meaning	Purpose
???	Meaning unclear	Unclear
<u>XXXXXXXX</u> (where X is a phrase that is underlined by the marker and the annotation is not accompanied by any other remark)	Meaning unclear	Unclear
^^^	May mean any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Missing word/ idea</li><li>- Insert X (where X is any of the annotations listed above or not specified)</li></ul>	Unclear CAd



# Action-Based Corrective Advice – Some Eggs

Action-Based Corrective Advice	
<b>^ Subj</b>	Insert a missing Subject
<b>^ Object</b>	Insert a missing Object
<b>^ Det</b>	Insert a missing Determiner
<b>^ Aux</b>	Insert a missing Auxiliary
<b>^ Conj</b>	Insert a missing Conjunction
<b>Δ DS</b>	Change to Direct Speech
<b>Δ RS</b>	Change to Reported Speech
<b>✖ EC/Modifier/Phr</b>	Remove Embedded Clause/Modifier/ Phrase *
<b>→ EC/Mod/Phr</b>	Move Embedded Clause/ Modifier/Phrase* to ... (Arrow points to specific spot)
<b>-/-</b>	Break here to form a new sentence

# Action-Based Corrective Advice – Some Eggs

Action-Based Corrective Advice	
$\Delta V+/V++/V+++$	Change the word to something stronger in scale/degree
$\Delta V-/V--/V---$	Change the word to something milder in scale/degree

Some User Feedback

'Essential life skills are best learnt  
outside of the classroom.'

Do you agree?

# Grammar and Language

# Students' Work - Original

Importance values such as adaptability, responsibility, and integrity shape the way a person encounters problems and how well he or she is going to perform.

△Adj

# Students' Work - Corrected

Importance values such as adaptability, responsibility, and integrity shape the way a person encounters problems and how well he or she is going to perform.

△Adj

Important values such as adaptability, responsibility, and integrity shape the way a person encounters problems and how well he or she is going to perform.

# Students' Work - Original

The importance of one's image is thus greatly emphasise in the media industry.



**ΔPastT**



# Students' Work - Corrected

The importance of one's image is thus greatly emphasise in the media industry.



**ΔPastT**

The importance of one's image is thus greatly emphasised in the media industry.

# Students' Work - Original

Secondly, the classroom impart communication skills to students.

**△Sing**

# Students' Work - Corrected

Secondly, the classroom impart communication skills to students.

**△Sing**

Secondly, the classroom imparts communication skills to students.

# Introductory Paragraph

# Students' Work - Original

'Essential life skills are best learnt outside of the classroom.' I strongly agree with this statement. Inside the classroom, teachers teach their students about the lessons from the school curriculum and other students may have extra lessons that train personal skills. However, outside of the classroom, there is a whole different world out there, which each student must handle in different ways. Therefore, essential life skills and the main lessons of life are learnt outside of the classroom.

**Avoid** repeating Qn as hook

# Students' Work - Original

'Essential life skills are best learnt outside of the classroom.' I strongly agree with this statement. Inside the classroom, teachers teach their students about the lessons from the school curriculum and other students may have extra lessons that train personal skills. However, outside of the classroom, there is a whole different world of skills that students must handle in different ways. The most important skills and the main lessons of life are learnt outside of the classroom.

**Make** clear link to Qn.

**Avoid** vague statements.

# Students' Work - Original

'Essential life skills are best learnt outside of the classroom.' I strongly agree with this statement. Inside the classroom, teachers teach their students about the lessons from the school curriculum and other students may have extra lessons that t **Give clear outline/ roadmap** r, outside of the classroom, there is a whole different world out there, which each student must handle in different ways. Therefore, essential life skills and the main lessons of life are learnt outside of the classroom.

# Students' Work— Corrected

Tom Bodett, a famous American author once said, "The difference between school and life? In school, you are taught a lesson and then given a test. In life, you are given a test that teaches you a lesson." This statement acknowledges that essential life skills are best learnt outside of the classroom. Thus, I agree with the statement that students do not learn how to be independent in schools as it is not an environment where they are given numerous chances to fail. In life, they are placed in an excessively competitive environment where they aim to triumph over others. However, it can sometimes be observed that a safe environment like that of school is necessary for students to learn to pick themselves up after a setback, but such opportunities can be easily found through camps as well, where one learns and attain valuable life skills and values to better survive in the real world.

Hook given (instead of repetition of question statement)



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Clear PoV/ Stand  
addressed directly  
and immediately

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Clear Points of Discussion listed

-C

# Substantive Paragraph

# Students' Work - Original

A skill that I think is best picked up outside the classroom is problem solving. Questions and problems might be given in class, but these are **Vague TS.** ed on real life situations one is likely **ATQ + Include reason** of problems we typically encounter in our classrooms are most probably not ones we are likely to encounter in real life. Hence, problem-solving skills are best picked up outside the classroom and our surroundings. Also, one can learn from one's experience and solve a similar problem one faces in the future. Hence, it is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom.

# Students' Work - Original

A skill that I think is best picked up outside the classroom is problem solving. Questions and problems might be given in class, but these are not necessarily based on real life situations one is likely to face. ~~The types of problems we typically encounter in our classrooms are most probably not ones we are likely to encounter in real life.~~ Hence, problem-solving skills are best picked up outside the classroom and our surroundings. Also, one can learn from **Avoid repetition** and solve a similar problem one faces in the future. Hence, it is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom.

# Students' Work - Original

A skill that I think is best picked up outside the classroom is problem solving. Questions and problems might be given in class, but these are not necessarily based on real life situations one is likely to face. ~~The types of problems we typically encounter in our classrooms are most probably not ones we are likely to encounter in real life.~~ Hence, problem-solving skills are best picked up outside the classroom and our surroundings. Also, one can learn from one's experience and solve a similar problem one faces in the future. Hence, it is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside.

**Give clear e.g.**

# Students' Work – Corrected

An essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom is the ability to deal with competition and failure, something the sheltered environment in the classroom does not often provide. For example, many schools have recently done away with the practice of releasing students from class in order to protect students' self-esteem between classmates. However, there would not be a problem in the real world, where it works on 'the survival of the fittest' and losing would result in one possibly losing his job. Students should be allowed to encounter challenges and failure to learn resilience and be able to face real life problems in the future, something we do not get much in school. Hence, learning to pick oneself up from failure is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom, where one is less able to rely on their teachers to solve their problems for them.

Clear TS that ATQ + provides reason



# Students' Work – Corrected

An essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom is the ability to deal with competition and failure, something the sheltered environment in the classroom does not often provide. For example, many schools have recently done away with the practice of releasing students' class and level ranking in order to protect students' self-esteem and avoid competition between classmates. However, there would not be such a practice in the real world, where it works on 'the survival of the fittest' and losing would result in one possibly losing his job. Students should be allowed to encounter challenges and failure to learn resilience and be able to face real life problems in the future, something we do not get much of in the classroom. Learning to pick oneself up from failure is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom, where one is less able to rely on their teachers to solve their problems for them.

Clearer e.g. with justification.

# Students' Work – Corrected

An essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom is the ability to deal with competition and failure, something the sheltered environment in the classroom does not often provide. For example, many schools have recently done away with the practice of releasing student level ranking in order to protect students' self-esteem and competition between classmates. However, there would not be such a practice in the real world, where it works on 'the survival of the fittest' and losing would result in one possibly losing his job. **Students should be allowed to encounter challenges and failure to learn resilience and be able to face real life problems in the future, something we do not get much in school.** Hence, learning to pick oneself up from failure is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom, where one is less able to rely on their teachers to solve their problems for them.

Clear exp  
of PoV.

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An essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom is the ability to deal with competition and failure, something the sheltered environment in the classroom does not often provide. For example, many schools have recently done away with the practice of releasing students' class and level ranking in order to protect students' self-esteem and avoid competition between classmates. However, there would not be such a practice in the real world, where it works on 'the survival of the fittest' and losing possibly losing his job. Students should be allowed to encounter challenges and failure to learn resilience and be able to face real life problems in the future, something we do not get much in school. Hence, learning to pick oneself up from failure is an essential life skill that is best learnt outside the classroom, where one is less able to rely on their teachers to solve their problems for them.

[Clear link to Qn.](#)

# General Reflections

- Some teachers expressed that the suggested assessment behaviour was too time-consuming. They were assured that the annotations were not to be applied wholly but selectively based on class needs. Also, the set of annotations was not exhaustive and teachers could always add or subtract from the list as they deemed fit.
- To ease teachers into the suggested assessment behaviour, the Head of Department suggested that teachers showed one another a few scripts marked using the list of annotations, to gather user feedback.
- Two Upper Secondary teachers (the presenters of this sharing) piloted the suggestions in one set of marking each.
- Students' response to annotations were varied but there were early signs of positive response towards action-based corrective advice.

# Contact Details

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*THANK YOU*

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