

# **The Process Approach To Writing Remediation**

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Collect a small number of samples of your students' writing (5-6 *short* pieces, preferably of different types). Discuss the difficulties they appear to have writing in English, and discuss how a *process* approach to writing might help them.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This essay discusses student difficulties with writing in English from examining five student writing samples, and proposes remediation possibilities via a process approach to writing. Following from the introduction is an overview of the process approach to writing employed in this essay. Section 3 presents the analysis of student difficulties while Section 4 offers remediation suggestions for the samples analyzed before the essay is concluded. The discussions reveal the suitability of the process approach in helping students become more effective writers, advocating its application to current education systems.

## **2. THE PROCESS APPROACH TO WRITING**

In traditional teaching and learning contexts, product-oriented approaches to writing that focus on form and emphasize final product are the norm. While these may effectively prepare students for examinations, the recognition that an understanding of context and audience would heighten writers' awareness of function and purpose, thus increase effectiveness of their content (Hedge 1988) inspired development of process approaches to writing, where the actual writing process is as important as its end. Explicit teaching of the processes in writing would reinforce contextual knowledge and thus improve quality of student writing.

A process approach to writing would comprise a set of planned learning instructions that aims to familiarize students with the processes involved in writing, mainly planning, drafting, revising and editing (Seow 2002), emphasizing teacher modeling at each stage. At the planning stage, students undertake discussion and brainstorming activities that would highlight contextual background and generate ideas for writing content. The drafting stage requires students to write fluently for a conceptualized

audience, upon which completion, specific feedback responses on writing difficulties observed are provided. Students would then revise and edit their writings to improve content quality and organization as well as language use. Completed works would be evaluated analytically via scoring or holistically via examination of text effectiveness. Post-writing activities such as publishing of student work serve to provide recognition of writing achievement and increase student motivation to achieve higher competency in writing. Students would be required to undertake all planned stages, which may be employed in non-sequential orders, to achieve their writing objectives.

In the next section, linguistic, content and textual errors and difficulties in five student writing samples will be identified and examined while the following section details the administration of the above seven-stage process writing model to these concerns in discussing remediation possibilities.

### **3. ANALYSIS OF WRITING DIFFICULTIES**

This section examines five student writing samples and discusses the difficulties they are observed to have writing in English. The rationale behind the selection of samples will be iterated, following which the analysis of samples will be presented.

#### **3.1 SELECTION OF SAMPLES**

The samples comprise writings of different genres created by five students at different standards. Selected from students' most recent school writing tasks and written without external assistance, these reflect current and authentic errors generated in attempting the writing tasks. Sample 1, written by a Primary 1 student, is a narrative around a set of four related pictures, which provide a logically sequenced visual prompt to aid text creation. Sample 2 is an excerpt from a personal recount by a Primary 4 student, written around two of three pictures offered for selection. Samples

3 to 5 are functional texts written for particular purposes, comprising a formal letter and excerpts from an incident report and a discursive essay by a Primary 5, Secondary 2 and Secondary 3 student respectively. These samples can be found in appendices 1a to 1e alongside their corresponding writing tasks. An analysis of these writings would provide insight into the difficulties students face when writing in English.

### **3.2 ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES**

The samples were analysed for errors, which were broadly categorized as linguistic, content or textual difficulties. They were then tabulated under specific subcategories such as tenses or grammar and finally reclassified under one of the three areas of concern observed: treatable errors, untreatable errors and insufficient content. Treatable errors are errors that “occur in a patterned, rule-governed way” (Ferris 1999:6) such as subject-verb agreement errors, while untreatable errors are “non-idiomatic, idiosyncratic errors in word choice and sentence construction” (ibid.). Of mention is the application of treatable and untreatable error categories to textual issues in this essay. While these categories have traditionally been applied solely to linguistic, content and sentence structure miscues, that various text types exhibit different rhetorical patterns (Coulthard 1994) implies the possibility of remediating content arrangement problems through reinforcing knowledge of such structural conventions, allowing for the classification of such issues as treatable errors. Inadequate combination of related content and lack or misuse of signalling connectives, being of idiomatic nature, were classified as untreatable errors. Table 1 summarizes the occurrences of these errors in each of the samples; detailed tabulations of errors may be found in appendices 2a to 2e.

<b>Difficulties/ Errors</b>		<b>Type</b>	<b>Sample 1</b> Narrative Story Female P1	<b>Sample 2</b> Personal Recount Male P4	<b>Sample 3</b> Formal Letter Male P5	<b>Sample 4</b> Incident Report Male Sec2	<b>Sample 5</b> Discursive Essay Female Sec3
Linguistic	Punctuation (capitalization)	Tr	5	0	5	1	1
	Punctuation marks	Tr	5	1	4	2	4
	Spelling	Tr	3	2	0	3	1
	Tenses	Tr	6	1	1	5	3
	Grammar	Tr	2	1	1	6	7
	Word choice	Untr	4	1	3	2	9
Content	Unnecessary content	Untr	1	1	0	0	0
	Unsuitable content	Untr	1	0	2	1	4
	Insufficient content		1	3	5	4	0
Textual	Content arrangement	Tr	1	1	1	2	0
	Content combination	Untr	2	0	0	0	1
	Signalling connectives	Untr	1	1	0	0	2

*Table 1: Error Types and Occurrences*

Treatable linguistic errors were observed to occur most frequently across all samples.

In Sample 1, errors of tenses, capitalization and punctuation marks such as misuse of present tense ‘pat’ in line 1 ‘Shane pat his dog’ and unnecessary quotation marks in line 4 ‘Shane’s dog called “Poppy”’ occurred most frequently at 6, 5 and 5 instances respectively while Sample 2 had most spelling errors at 2 instances, ‘tommorow’ in line 1 and ‘moder’ in line 7. Sample 3 had most errors in capitalization and punctuation marks at 5 and 4 instances respectively such as non-capitalization of proper noun ‘tim koh’ in line 3. Samples 4 and 5 had most frequent miscues in grammar at 6 and 7 instances respectively, such as missing preposition ‘at’ before ‘around 12pm’ in Sample 4 line 3, followed by 5 instances of tense miscues in Sample 4 such as incorrect use of present perfect ‘has injured’ in line 2, and 4 instances of missing punctuation marks in Sample 5 such as the required comma after ‘and yes’ in line 1. These intermittent lapses into errors revealed student difficulties in

remembering and applying linguistic rules of punctuation, spelling, tenses and grammar while attempting to maintain correct linguistic conventions.

For tense errors, while Sample 1 exhibited solely temporal past-present tense miscues, samples 2 to 5 from increasingly challenging writing tasks revealed more complex errors of lack of use of past participle verb forms such as using ‘wanted’ rather than ‘had wanted’ in Sample 2 line 7, and usage of wrong verb forms such as ‘fracturing’ instead of ‘fractured’ in Sample 4 line 11 and ‘takes’ rather than ‘would take’ in Sample 5 line 10. Tasks at Secondary standards also appeared to elicit more grammatical errors such as lack or misuse of pronouns and prepositions ‘that’, ‘which’ and ‘to’ in Sample 5, compared to tasks at Primary levels. These miscues highlighted students’ problems with using more complex verb forms and appropriate grammar items at higher levels of writing, where more sophisticated sentence structures and content organization are required.

For untreatable linguistic errors of word choice, a total of 19 instances were surfaced from the samples. These revealed students’ struggles with collocation choices, such as the confusion of ‘never’ with ‘ever’ and the awkward ‘met’ that could more appropriately be replaced by ‘had’ to signal ownership of Poppy by Shane in Sample 1 line 2 ‘best dog I never met’. Similarly, ‘accept’ in Sample 3 line 8 could more suitably be replaced with ‘accede to’ to accompany ‘request’ while ‘hand’ would be more appropriate than ‘arm’ in ‘his index finger on his right arm’ in Sample 4 line 11 to 12. These instances exemplified students’ lack of collocational knowledge for generating more appropriate word combinations. Word choice issues also surfaced students’ non-understanding of required writing styles and structures, particularly rampant in Sample 5; frequent occurrences of awkward phrasing such as ‘and yes I am very very guilty’ in line 1 exhibited missing punctuation and word repetition while

‘maybe it is not very important to them to get it done’ from line 4 to 5 could be reworded more formally as ‘the perception that the task is not very important’, befitting of the genre. Use of inappropriate slangs such as ‘crappy’ in line 5 further signalled student’s lack of understanding of the genre’s formal language requirement.

Problems of insufficient content occurred most frequently in samples 2, 3 and 4 at 3, 5 and 4 instances respectively. Sample 2 saw most difficulties in generating sufficient content for explicit plot development compared to other aspects, occurring at line 3, where the student could have written about extending his party invitation to his friends before writing about ‘the next day’, at line 5 with missing circumstance of time such as ‘when I entered my house’ in the sentence ‘They all shouted, “Happy birthday!”’ and at line 8, where information pertaining to the existence of a birthday cake was omitted between the writer’s receipt of the ‘moder car’ and cutting of the birthday cake:

five friends.” I said, “Okay, I’m off to school. Bye!” The next day, when I came back 3  
from school, I was very surprised as my friends had come to my house earlier than 4  
me. They all shouted, “Happy birthday!” I saw balloons and a streamer saying 5  
‘Happy Birthday’. After that, my friend Jason gave me a birthday present. I was 6  
deeply touched by the present he gave me as it was a moder car which I wanted very 7  
badly. Then, we cut the birthday cake and ate it, it was delicious! 8

Samples 3 and 4, being official correspondences that require content accuracy, were found lacking in information specificity. In Sample 3 line 4, student did not specifically name the flyer nor did he formally iterate recipient’s relation to the organization, a requirement for facilitating further communication. In line 6, the specific month that was to be the school’s Reading Month was not indicated,

following which in line 7, October was mentioned without explicitly referencing it as the Reading Month. Details of preferred day, time and talk topic were also omitted:

showed me the flyer from the Reading Promotion Board. and she had asked me to 4  
write to you to arrange for a free assembly talk for all the pupils from primary 1 to 5  
primary 6 during the school's Reading Month. We would like to have the talk in 6  
October 7

In Sample 4, lack of specificity was observed pertaining to circumstance of location of 'one of the obstacles' in line 3, missing numerative pre-modifier for "'Run Mat Run' obstacle' in line 5 and circumstance of location for the slip and fall in line 8, which could have been included as 'slipped and fell in the pool on which the activity took place'. In line 10, explicit iteration of subjectivity characteristic of the report genre was lacking for the clause beginning with 'he has severely sprained', which could have been remediated by appending 'I found that' before it:

around 12pm on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August while attempting one of the obstacles. 3  
My friend, Jim has overcome the first two obstacles easily. When we arrived at 4  
the 'Run Mat Run' obstacle, we realized it was already noon. Therefore, we wanted to 5  
finish the run as soon as possible so that could have lunch. Jim and I ran on the mats 6  
as fast as we could to challenge ourselves. However, while we were half-way on the 7  
mat, Jim slipped and fell and started groaning in pain while trying to stay a float in the 8  
water. 9  
When I went over to check his injury, he has severely sprained his left ankle and 10

Interestingly, the observation that male students had generated these samples, which lack content to a greater extent than those by the female students, is in line with research findings from Engelhard Jr, Gordon and Gabrielson (1992) that revealed female students as better writers in terms of content and organization, both of which

might be explained by Cleary's (1996) observations that male students more likely perceive writing as a strategic game in which meeting teacher expectation and attaining self-satisfaction are of equal priorities, while female students tend to "please the teacher instead of themselves" (ibid.50), adhering more strictly to teacher requirements. Thus, gender perception and motivation need be considered in proposing remediation.

Problems of unnecessary content such as formal address 'Mrs Tan' in personal recount Sample 2 line 1 and unsuitable content as generalization 'students like me' in Sample 5 lines 7 and 13 for the opinionated stance required revealed students' difficulties in ensuring appropriate content for the genres undertaken. Textual issues with connectives use such as missing chronological signaller 'after that' at the beginning of Sample 1 line 5 and inadequate content arrangement and combination such as the inappropriate positioning of 'my friend' in Sample 4 line 4, which would otherwise have increased textual cohesion if repositioned to the beginning of line 2, further highlighted struggles in presenting content effectively for cohesion and coherence. These and the afore-mentioned concerns will be addressed in the next section via the administration of a process approach to writing.

## **4. REMEDIATION VIA PROCESS APPROACH TO WRITING**

This section discusses remediation possibilities to students' writing difficulties via Seow's (2002) seven-stage model described in Section 2, presented in the following subsections.

### **4.1 PLANNING**

In samples 1 to 4, omission of essential information resulted in a decrease in textual coherence; in samples 1 and 2, plot development was hampered while information specificity required in functional texts as samples 3 and 4 was reduced. Undertaking planning prior to writing would help students generate content ideas and eliminate such problems of insufficient content.

For samples 1 and 2, sufficient plot content could be obtained by having students examine the visuals provided and brainstorming for ideas, then classifying them under each section of the plot, for example in the narrative structure of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution (Freytag 1863, cited in Herman, Manfred and Marie-Laure 2010:189) while ensuring wh-questions applicable to each are adequately answered. An unformatted sample planning activity sheet tailored for young writers can be found in Appendix 3. For samples 3 and 4, students could begin similarly by examining the scenario information provided in the writing tasks, then clustering them chronologically as required by the formal letter and incident report genres respectively. Additional information could be generated via viewing of authentic text samples or class or group discussions, then filled in to prior created chronological lists to build comprehensive and realistically specific accounts of events.

## 4.2 DRAFTING

Drafting allows writers to focus on using appropriate content to create fluent writing. By adopting the process genre approach for both creative text types as samples 1 and 2, and functional text types as samples 3 to 5, the social contexts in which the various text types exist could be highlighted to students (Badger and White 2000), hence increasing awareness of targeted audiences and specific purposes for which such texts are written. This would reduce problems of unnecessary or unsuitable content and aspects of inappropriate word choice, and remediate textual issues of content arrangement and combination.

In texts for personal expression as Sample 1 narrative and Sample 2 personal recount, students are required to express viewpoints about real or fictitious worlds and retell personal experiences respectively. With visuals depicting real-world contexts, the requirement for a non-fiction writing style could be highlighted, reducing inappropriate content such as the fictional ‘happy ever after’ in Sample 1 line 8. Ideas obtained during the planning stage could now be organized into coherent paragraphs befitting the genres, eliminating problems of unnecessary content as the redundant ‘Mrs Tan’ in Sample 2 line 1 and inappropriate content arrangement and paragraphing such as the lengthy introduction paragraph in Sample 2, in which new information beginning with ‘the next day’ in line 3 could start a new body paragraph.

For functional texts as samples 3 to 5, explicit iteration of their contexts and targeted audiences would help students structure and use content more effectively. In Sample 3 formal letter, an understanding of the purpose and requirements of the task as making an official request for service as a designated persona would prompt student to adopt a more formal writing style, appending ‘member of the’ before ‘student council’ in line 3, replacing the curt-sounding signoff ‘regards’ with the more polite ‘yours sincerely’

and ensuring correct signoff as the designated person rather than himself. Iteration of the formal letter format would also remind student to begin a new body paragraph with the main point ‘and she had asked me to write to you to arrange for’ from line 4 to 5, which could be rephrased as ‘I am writing to arrange for’, all of which above could improve content and structure, as below:

I am Tim Koh, a member of the student council in Star Bright Primary School.	3
My teacher had showed me the “Reading Is Fun” flyer from your organization, the	4a
Reading Promotion Board.	4b
I am writing to arrange for a free assembly talk for all the pupils from Primary	5
1 to Primary 6 during the school’s Reading Month. ...	6
Yours sincerely,	9
Tim Koh	10

For Sample 4, highlighting the purpose of writing an incident report as a witness acquainted with the incident victim would eliminate the use of the impersonal ‘a 33-year-old man’ in line 2 and prompt movement of important information such as ‘my friend’ in line 4 to the beginning of line 2 to relate the writer to the victim at first instance. While not mandatory, listing details in increasing magnitude of specificity from day to time in line 3 would improve textual coherence:

My friend Jim Lee had injured himself during the 5k Foam Run on the 24 <sup>th</sup> of	2
August at around 12pm, while attempting one of the obstacles.	3
Jim had overcome the first two obstacles easily. ...	4

In Sample 5, an understanding of the requirements of the discursive essay genre and the objective of providing a personal commentary would eliminate lapses into generic stances such as ‘students like me’ in lines 7 and 13 and ensure content is structured to support the discursive style; ‘take a lot of our time’ in line 9 could be written as ‘take

more time compared to individual, text-based assignments’ while ‘the easier homework’ in line 10 could be appended with the rank ‘first’ in explaining preferable activities less likely to be procrastinated over others. By highlighting the purpose of the text as a presentation of personal ideas to a teacher reader, casual structures such as repetition of ‘very’ for emphasis in line 1 would be eliminated and ‘procrastination is when one has a habit’ in line 2 would be refined into more crisp writing as ‘procrastination is the habit’, while lengthy content spanning several sentences such as from ‘in my case’ at line 9 to the end could be reorganized into a more succinct and effective statement as ‘In my case, I will definitely choose to complete the easier and more straightforward homework first, which takes lesser time and dedication compared to project research and procrastinate the latter.’:

I agree that “procrastination is the thief of time” and yes, I am very guilty of 1  
 procrastinating as I do it most of the time. Procrastination is the habit of putting off or 2  
 delaying something which has to be done as soon as possible. ... 3

For instance, I will tend to procrastinate when it comes to doing tedious or hard 7  
 homework. When teachers assign us project work, we normally have to do to 8  
 research, which would definitely take more time compared to individual, text-based 9a  
 assignments. In my case, I will definitely choose to complete the easier and more 9b  
 straightforward homework first, which takes lesser time and dedication compared to 10  
 project research and procrastinate the latter. 11

### 4.3 RESPONDING

At this stage, text-specific feedback on linguistic errors will be provided, together with responses on adequacy of content and text structure, upon which receipt students would proceed to revise the content and edit the language of their writings. Such feedback would alleviate student difficulties with language rules, sentence structures, content arrangement and textual cohesion and coherence. While issues of capitalization, spelling and grammar may be rectified by explicit teaching of conventional rules, remediation of other specific difficulties will be discussed below.

In Sample 1, student exhibited incorrect temporal tense, and together with samples 2 and 3, lacked appropriate punctuation marks such as using comma rather than full stop to end ‘you are a good dog’ in line 1 and missing a comma after ‘walk’ in line 7. These reflect a spoken style of iteration, where information is stringed via commas rather than separated by periods, while the intermittent use of present tense that typically go unnoticed in speech is ungrammatical by written standards (McCarthy 1991). Students need be made aware of the different contexts, hence purposes and styles required of written discourse compared to spoken discourse; written discourse does not allow for instantaneous feedback between participants, thus meaning need be conveyed explicitly through linearly structured content in grammatical sentences.

In samples 2 to 5, students struggled with making appropriate tense choices. For samples 2 to 4, students applied the correct tense rule in using past forms of verbs to describe past events but failed to consider using the more suitable past perfect tense for events that began and continued up to a time in the past, such as ‘wanted’ in Sample 2 line 7. Sample 4 had 2 instances of continuous verbs ‘fracturing’ and ‘dislocating’ in line 11 which would more aptly be replaced with their simple past forms if the dependent clause in which they appeared would be rewritten as a new

sentence beginning with ‘he also fractured... and dislocated’. Sample 5 had misuses of ‘will’ in lines 6 and 12 and present tense ‘takes’ in line 10, which would more appropriately be replaced with ‘would’ and ‘would take’ respectively, to signal situations that are possible but not actually happening. These issues could be rectified via reinforcement of tense rules and further grammar practice.

Punctuation issues such as the unnecessary comma in ‘my friend, Jim’ in Sample 4 line 4 and missing commas before instances of ‘which’ in Sample 5 may be resolved by explication and practice of sentence structure rules, while inappropriate connectives such as ‘for instance’ in Sample 5 line 7 could be resolved by reiterating the availability of connectives and their suitability in signalling chronological or procedural information, thus improving textual cohesion. Unnatural collocations as ‘accept’ with ‘request’ in Sample 3 line 8 and inappropriate word use as ‘personal work’ to denote individual work in Sample 5 line 12 represent untreatable idiomatic errors that could be reduced through discussions of collocation possibilities, thus expanding students’ knowledge of words that could more suitably be used together.

#### **4.4 REVISING AND EDITING**

At the revising stage, students correct linguistic errors and improve on content and textual organization issues highlighted at the responding stage. An examination of well-written essays by other students could be performed to generate students’ awareness of effective text structures, content organization and language use in writing, following which students could be led to reorganizing their content into more coherent paragraphs to improve text structure. Further rearrangement and restructuring of sentences and use of suitable signallers would improve content organization. At the editing stage, students perform language checks, editing their drafts into final outputs that communicate information effectively to their audience.

Building on the pairwork model proposed in Seow (2002) and reinforced by Chuang's (2009) findings that peer interaction and student-teacher interaction can facilitate learning of linguistic knowledge, teachers could perform collaborative editing with students via activities such as reformulation, following which students could participate in peer discussions to obtain further comments for their writings. This process of teacher and peer feedback could be repeated until the student and/or teacher is satisfied with the final product.

#### **4.5 EVALUATING AND POST-WRITING**

Following submission of final output, teachers would evaluate students' writing holistically or analytically for formative or summative assessment purposes respectively. Similar to the editing stage, peer evaluation may be incorporated with teacher evaluation, allowing students to view one another's writings from the teacher's perspective, raising their awareness of the requirements of good writing. Upon evaluation, post-writing activities such as publishing or sharing of final output with peers would further reinforce the purpose of, add meaning to and hence increase student motivation for writing.

Addressing the issue of gender differences in writing motivation, with female students tending to tailor their writing according to perceived teacher preferences (Cleary 1996), the class could be reminded of task (hence teacher) requirements prior to drafting, as reassurance to female students. That positive feedback correlates positively and negatively with intrinsic motivation for male and female students respectively (Deci 1975, cited in Cleary 1996:51) implies encouraging responses could be applied to male students at the responding stage to motivate them further. During revising and editing, female students may be informed that autonomy is desired, while male students could be affirmed for achievements prior to making

further demands for writing improvements. Finally in evaluating, female students should be encouraged to develop a personal sense of purpose while male students should be spurred towards the next level of writing competency, both of which will develop students into more effective writers.

Concluding this discussion, it is essential to reiterate the importance of teacher modeling at the various stages presented, so that students learn the correct ways of generating content, writing and editing, and explicitly examining the written product at each stage of the process to understand what has been achieved and what is further required for good writing. Feedback and evaluation should also be given in a “favorable and encouraging” manner (Page 1958, cited in Lalande 1982:142), which would provide students with objective motivation to improve quality of writing.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

In proposing a process approach to writing to remediate student difficulties surfaced from five writing samples, emphasis has been on the undertaking of a series of activities that develop skills in generating and presenting content effectively to serve different purposes, thus incorporating the product and genre views of imparting linguistic knowledge and generating contextual awareness respectively. These complement the process approach and together, provide students a comprehensive skillset to become competent writers. What stands in the way are institutional constraints of time, which could be overcome if students are taught to self-edit, automating the writing process. What would remain is the onus on language teachers to provide authentic writing situations as compiling book reviews to the school library for book recommendations, thrusting students into real-life contexts to address real audiences for truly meaningful purposes, and enjoy doing so, which are the ultimate objectives of writing.

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## APPENDIX 1A: SAMPLE 1 (PRIMARY 1 NARRATIVE)

Task:

Look at the pictures carefully. Write a story of at least 80 words based on the pictures below.



### Helping words

pet                  pat                  feed                  bone                  wait  
bark                  walk

## **APPENDIX 1A: SAMPLE 1 (PRIMARY 1 NARRATIVE) CONT'D**

One monday morning, Shane pat his dog and said, “you are a good dog, you are the 1  
best dog I never met.” 2  
Shane’s dog was so happy that he wagged his tail. 3  
Shane’s dog called “Poppy” was very hungry, so Shane feed the dog with bones. 4  
Shane said, “I have to go to school,” poppy bark sadly. Shane said, “nevermine you 5  
will be allright.” 6  
When Shane came back, Shane change his clothes and bring poppy for a walk and 7  
they live happy ever after. 8

(84 words)

## APPENDIX 1B: SAMPLE 2 (PRIMARY 4 PERSONAL RECOUNT EXCERPT)

Task:

Write a composition of at least 120 words about a **birthday party**.

The pictures, not arranged in sequence, are provided to help you think about this topic. Your composition should be based on one, two or all of these pictures.

Consider the following points when you plan your composition:

- When and where was the party held?
- What were you doing at the party?
- What was the reaction of the other children at the party?
- What did you do after the party?

You may use the points in any order and include other relevant points as well.

*Helping words:*

- *beautifully decorated*
- *invited*
- *party game*
- *pinata*
- *embarrassed*



**APPENDIX 1B: SAMPLE 2 (PRIMARY 4 PERSONAL RECOUNT EXCERPT)**

**CONT'D**

“Mum, can I have a birthday party tommorow?” I asked my mother, Mrs Tan, 1  
as I packed my school bag. She replied, “Sure, but you can only invite a maximum of 2  
five friends.” I said, “Okay, I’m off to school. Bye!” The next day, when I came back 3  
from school, I was very surprised as my friends had come to my house earlier than 4  
me. They all shouted, “Happy birthday!” I saw balloons and a streamer saying 5  
‘Happy Birthday’. After that, my friend Jason gave me a birthday present. I was 6  
deeply touched by the present he gave me as it was a moder car which I wanted very 7  
badly. Then, we cut the birthday cake and ate it, it was delicious! 8

(122 words)

## APPENDIX 1C: SAMPLE 3 (PRIMARY 5 FORMAL LETTER)

Task:

Below is a flyer from the Reading Promotion Board.

# Reading Is Fun

**Do you enjoy reading?**

**What different genres of books do you read?**

**How do you choose suitable books for yourself?**



**Do you have the answers?**

Our librarian, Mr David Lee, will give a comprehensive talk on the different genres of books available and how to choose suitable books for yourself.

Contact Ms Judy at 6278 5233 or write in to book a date for a speaker.

Time slots available:  
September to November 2014  
9 am to 12 noon

**Free talks available only on the first Tuesday of every month.**

Topics:

The different genres of books (suitable for P4 – P6)

Choosing suitable books (suitable for P1 – P6)

## **APPENDIX 1C: SAMPLE 3 (PRIMARY 5 FORMAL LETTER) CONT'D**

Your task:

Imagine you are Tim Koh, a student council member, in Starbright Primary School. Your teacher showed you the flyer from the Reading Promotion Board and she has asked you to write to Ms Judy to arrange for a free assembly talk for all the pupils from Primary 1 to Primary 6 during the School's Reading Month in October.

In your letter, include the following information:

- who you are and the school you represent
- why you are writing the letter
- which day you would like to have the talk
- which topic you have chosen and why

You may reorder the points. You should write in complete sentences.

## APPENDIX 1C: SAMPLE 3 (PRIMARY 5 FORMAL LETTER) CONT'D

Dear Ms Judy,	1
Re: Arrange for a free assembly talk	2
I am tim koh a student council in, star bright primary school, my teacher	3
showed me the flyer from the Reading Promotion Board. and she had asked me to	4
write to you to arrange for a free assembly talk for all the pupils from primary 1 to	5
primary 6 during the school's Reading Month. We would like to have the talk in	6
October	7
we hope you will accept our request.	8
Regards,	9
Sherman Ng	10
(83 words)	

## **APPENDIX 1D: SAMPLE 4 (SECONDARY 2 INCIDENT REPORT EXCERPT)**

Task:

You and your friends participated in The 5k Foam Run recently. One of your friends, Jim, has injured himself during the 5km run event. Since you were with your friend and had witnessed the whole situation, the organisers requested that you provide an eye-witness account to form part of the records for this incident. Write an eye-witness report to the organisers.

You must include the following details:

- when and where your friend got injured
- how severe the injury was
- how the organisers responded to the incident

Write your report in clear, accurate English and in a formal and serious tone to report the events in a chronological sequence to the organisers. You may add any other details that might be of interest.

You should use your own words as much as possible.

**APPENDIX 1D: SAMPLE 4 (SECONDARY 2 INCIDENT REPORT EXCERPT) CONT'D**

Report on injury during The 5k Foam Run 1

Jim Lee, a 33-year-old man, has injured himself during the 5k Foam Run 2  
around 12pm on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August while attempting one of the obstacles. 3

My friend, Jim has overcome the first two obstacles easily. When we arrived at 4  
the 'Run Mat Run' obstacle, we realized it was already noon. Therefore, we wanted to 5  
finish the run as soon as possible so that could have lunch. Jim and I ran on the mats 6  
as fast as we could to challenge ourselves. However, while we were half-way on the 7  
mat, Jim slipped and fell and started groaning in pain while trying to stay a float in the 8  
water. 9

When I went over to check his injury, he has severely sprained his left ankle and 10  
it was beginning to swell, also fracturing his shoulder and dislocating his index finger 11  
on his right arm. He was not able to walk unless I helped him up and also not able to 12  
lift his shoulder as it was extremely pain. 13

(174 words)

**APPENDIX 1E: SAMPLE 5 (SECONDARY 3 DISCURSIVE ESSAY EXCERPT)**

Task:

“Procrastination is the thief of time.” To what extent are you guilty of procrastination?

I agree that “Procrastination is the thief to time” and yes I am very very guilty 1  
of procrastinating as I do it most of the time. Procrastination is when one has a habit 2  
of putting off or delaying something which has to be done as soon as possible. People 3  
procrastinate because of their laziness or maybe it is not very important to them to get 4  
it done, resulting in crappy work and last-minute work. These are some of the 5  
situations that I would procrastinate and others I will not procrastinate. 6

For instance, students like me will tend to procrastinate when it comes to doing 7  
tedious or hard homework. When teachers assign us to project works, we normally 8  
have to do to research which definitely would take a lot of our time. In my case, I will 9  
of course choose to complete the easier homework which takes lesser time compared 10  
to doing project research. This suggest that students are required to put in more time 11  
and delication to complete research while completing “personal” work will be more 12  
straightforward as it is easier. Therefore students like me will tend to procrastinate a 13  
lot more when doing homework. 14

(195 words)

## APPENDIX 2A: SAMPLE 1 ERRORS

Difficulties		Entity (Correction)	Line
Linguistic	Punctuation (capitalization):	monday	1
		you	1
		poopy	5
		nevermine	5
		poppy	7
	Punctuation marks:	comma (full stop)	1
		quotation marks (not required)	4
		comma (full stop)	5
		comma (required)	5
		comma (required)	7
	Spelling:	poopy (Poppy)	5
		nevermine (never mind)	5
		allright (alright)	6
	Tenses:	pat (patted)	1
		feed (fed)	4
		bark (barked)	5
		change (changed)	7
		bring (brought)	7
		live (lived)	8
	Grammar:	he (it)	3
		his (its)	3
	Word choice:	never (ever)	2
		met (had)	2
		the dog (it)	4
		happy (happily)	8
Content	Unnecessary content:	monday	1
	Unsuitable content:	happy ever after	8
	Insufficient content:	(Plot development – proposed new content: Shane waved goodbye to Poppy and went to school.)	6
Textual	Content arrangement:	Shane's dog called "Poppy" (Amendment: Shane has a pet dog named Poppy. Move to line 1)	4
	Content combination:	Shane's dog was so happy that he wagged his tail. (Append behind line 2)	3
		Shane said, "I have to go to school," poopy bark sadly. Shane said, "nevermine you will be alright." (Append behind line 4)	5-6
	Signalling connectives:	after that (required)	5

## APPENDIX 2B: SAMPLE 2 ERRORS

Difficulties		Entity (Correction)	Line
Linguistic	Punctuation (capitalization):	NA	NA
	Punctuation marks:	comma (full stop)	8
	Spelling:	tomorrow (tomorrow)	1
		moder (model)	7
	Tenses:	wanted (had wanted)	7
	Grammar:	me (I)	5
Content	Word choice:	saying (that read)	5
	Unnecessary content:	Mrs Tan	1
	Unsuitable content:	NA	NA
	Insufficient content:	(Plot development – proposed new content: When I got to school, I invited five of my best friends to my birthday party.)	3
		(Plot development – proposed new content: when I entered my house)	5
		(Plot development – proposed new content: After that, my mother brought out my birthday cake. My friends sang me the birthday song while I blew out the candles on the cake.)	8
Textual	Content arrangement:	(Begin new paragraph at "the next day")	3
	Content combination:	NA	NA
	Signalling connectives:	after that (not required)	6

## APPENDIX 2C: SAMPLE 3 ERRORS

Difficulties		Entity (Correction)	Line
Linguistic	Punctuation (capitalization):	tim koh	3
		star bright primary school	3
		primary	5
		primary	6
		we	8
	Punctuation marks:	comma (required)	3
		comma (not required)	3
		comma (full stop)	3
		full stop (required)	7
	Spelling:	NA	NA
	Tenses:	showed (had shown)	4
	Grammar:	arrange (arrangement)	2
	Word choice:	(member of the)	3
		and (not required)	4
		accept (accede to)	8
Content	Unnecessary content:	NA	NA
	Unsuitable content:	Regards	9
		Sherman Ng	10
	Insufficient content:	(Specificity – amendment: the “Reading Is Fun” flyer)	4
		(Specificity – amendment: your organization, the Reading Promotion Board)	4
		(Specificity – amendment: on the first Tuesday of the school’s Reading Month, October)	6
		(Specificity – amendment: on the first Tuesday of the school’s Reading Month, October)	6-7
		(Specificity – proposed new content: We would like Mr David Lee, your librarian, to talk to us about choosing suitable books. Please tell him to come from 11am to 12noon.)	7
Textual	Content arrangement:	(Possible new paragraph)	4
	Content combination:	NA	NA
	Signalling connectives:	NA	NA

## APPENDIX 2D: SAMPLE 4 ERRORS

Difficulties		Entity (Correction)	Line
Linguistic	Punctuation (capitalization):	the	2
	Punctuation marks:	comma (not required)	4
		comma (required)	8
	Spelling:	overcomed (overcome)	4
		half-way (halfway)	7
		a float (afloat)	8
	Tenses:	has injured (had injured)	2
		has overcomed (had overcome)	4
		has severely sprained (had severely sprained)	10
		fracturing (fractured)	11
		dislocating (dislocated)	11
	Grammar:	(at)	3
		(we)	6
		on (across)	7
		not able (unable)	12
		not able (unable)	12
		pain (painful)	13
	Word choice:	(and had)	11
		arm (hand)	12
Content	Unnecessary content:	NA	NA
	Unsuitable content:	a 33-year-old man	2
	Insufficient content:	(Specificity – amendment: one of the obstacles in your event)	3
		(Specificity – amendment: the third obstacle 'Run Mat Run')	5
		(Specificity – amendment: in the pool on which the activity took place)	8-9
		(Specificity – amendment: I found that he has severely sprained)	10
Textual	Content arrangement:	around 12pm on the 24 <sup>th</sup> of August (Amendment: on the 24 <sup>th</sup> of August at around 12pm)	3
		my friend (Move to line 2)	4
	Content combination:	NA	NA
	Signalling connectives:	NA	NA

## APPENDIX 2E: SAMPLE 5 ERRORS

Difficulties		Entity (Correction)	Line
Linguistic	Punctuation (capitalization):	Procrastination	1
	Punctuation marks:	comma (required)	1
		comma (required)	9
		comma (required)	10
		comma (required)	13
	Spelling:	delication (dedication)	12
	Tenses:	will (would)	6
		takes (would take)	10
		will (would)	12
	Grammar:	to (of)	1
		which (that)	3
		that (in which)	6
		(in which)	6
		to (not required)	8
		works (work)	8
		suggest (suggests)	11
	Word choice:	very (repetition)	1
		when one has a (the)	2
		maybe it is not very important to them to get it done (the perception that the task is not very important)	4-5
		crappy (slipshod)	5
		work (not required)	5
		procrastinate (not required)	6
		to (not required)	9
		definitely would (would definitely)	9
		personal (individual)	12
Content	Unnecessary content:	NA	NA
	Unsuitable content:	students like me	7
		take a lot of our time	9
		the easier homework	10
		students like me	13
	Insufficient content:	NA	NA
Textual	Content arrangement:	NA	NA
	Content combination:	(Recombine as: In my case, I will definitely choose to complete the easier and more straightforward homework first, which takes lesser time and dedication compared to project research and procrastinate the latter.)	9-14
	Signalling connectives:	these (here)	5
		for instance (firstly)	7

## APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE PLANNING ACTIVITY SHEET

## Brainstorm!

Write down everything that comes to mind for your topic in the space below. Let your thoughts flow:

Now let's group the ideas you got into the plot sections here:

<b>Introduction (Exposition):</b>	<b>Rising Action:</b>	<b>Climax:</b>	<b>Falling Action:</b>	<b>Ending (Resolution):</b>
<b>How</b> does your story begin? <b>Who</b> are the characters in your story? <b>When</b> and/or <b>where</b> does your story take place?	<b>What</b> happens next?	<b>What</b> is the most interesting idea in your story?	<b>What</b> happens next?	<b>What</b> happened to the characters in the end? <b>How</b> does your story end?