



盲人領導盲人!!

基準試 9 月版

基準試評審會評定以下，令人「錯」愕之英文，精湛無比(A Superior Piece of Writing)，無論文法，句子結構，用詞等全獲「滿分」。此「錯漏百出」文章，竟被譽為頂級模範英文

Dear Mr. Leighton,

Many thanks for your letter dated 25th Jan., 1999, I am sure... My name is Norris Wong, I have recently... Our school is an EMI school, this means that we have been selected one of the hundred schools... As a result, the students and teachers have a relatively-strong grasp of the language, although I would say that we could all do with a 'polish', and common errors are still consistently heard in the classroom.

Our school policy towards the teaching of English is very straightforward; English is to be used... We would be most appreciative if you could use English... Our school has earned a strong... I think it is only fair to warn you that, although \$13,000. may sound a lot of money, it will only rent you a small, two-bedroom apartment. You can... look around for a reasonable apartment. If you have any friends, or other NET teacher, who would like to pool housing allowance... Obviously, the more money you pay for an apartment, the better the facilities... If you write... looking for I will do...

Having been to Hong Kong before I am sure... I think you will notice... past six years, our economic downturn has effected certain aspects... Hong Kong remains a vibrant, and diverse and exciting place to live and work and I think... happy here.

On behalf of Mrs. Chans, the staff and students we would like...

(Pages 40 - 43)

- Letter writers now use 'of', not 'dated'.
- It should be a full stop, not comma. (Current letter-writing books.)
- Comma fault. A coordinating conjunction is missing.
- Comma fault. (Comma splice.) (High school grammar books.)
- Our school (ours) has been selected not 'we'.
- 'Have been selected' does not keep a retained object 'one'. An infinitive 'to be one' should take its place as a complement. (Any dictionary.)
- An ambiguous result. 'Result' structurally refers to 'becoming an EMI school', but semantically it refers to 'using English as a medium of instruction'.
- 'Although I would say' is not a concessive clause. 'Although errors are still consistently heard' is. We turn "I would say... 'polish'" into a comment clause by adding a comma before 'I', and cross out 'and'.
- Wrong use of preposition. 'Policy' uses 'on'. (Any dictionary.)
- A colon should replace the semi-colon. The second clause explains or expands on the first clause. (Chamber Guide to Grammar & Usage. 1996, p.363.)
- 'Appreciative' is followed by a noun, or a preposition + a noun. It doesn't stand alone. (Any dictionary.)
- Wrong spelling. It should be 'earned'. (Any dictionary.)
- Improper diction. 'Warn' is a strong word implying danger. 'Advise' or 'alert' is more suitable for describing a friendly place like Hong Kong.
- The period must be missing. (Guide to Punctuation and Style. 1995, p.171.)
- 'Only' should not qualify 'rent'. Everyone knows \$13,000 can't buy a flat. The point here is the size of a flat the money can rent, and it can rent only a small two-bedroom flat. (Any high school grammar books.)
- 'Reasonable apartment' is a vague expression. 'Reasonable' may refer to the size, facilities, location and so on. A clear phrase should be 'an apartment of reasonable rent'.
- No comma required. 'Who would...' is a defining adjective clause. (Any high school grammar books.)
- Missing a finite verb. 'The better the facilities (are)'. (A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language. Longman. 1999, p.1111.)
- Missing a comma. (Any high school grammar books.)
- Dangling participle. The other party has been in Hong Kong, not 'I', the writer. (Any high school grammar books.)
- Comma fault. (Comma splice.) See (3)
- 'Effected' means 'to accomplish'. 'Affected' means 'to influence'. Here we should choose 'affected'. (Any English usage books.)
- There are four and's within a short distance of ten words. We cross out the first and the last 'and'. A full stop should come after 'work' and this turns 'I think that you...' into another independent sentence.
- Improper diction. 'Diverse' means 'different' referring to a group or range of things. Rewrite: 'A vibrant, exciting place for people from diverse cultures to live and work.' (CoBuild Dictionary.)
- Incoherent information. So far, we deal with only one Mrs. Chan, the Principal. We don't know anything about other Mrs. Chans.
- 'I' should replace 'we'. 'We' repeats 'Mrs. Chans, the staff and students'.

ERRORS ON OTHER PAGES

- Faulty capitalization in titles.
 - 'Published' on the Supplement cover.
 - 'Ideas' on page 4. (Any high school grammar books.)
- Wrong use of 'corrigendum' for 'corrigenda'. 'Corrigendum' is an error to be corrected; but 'corrigenda' is a list of errors in a book or other publication. (Webster's Dictionary.)
- Incorrect use of 'facilitate'. (P.1)

'To facilitate readers to better understand...'

'You facilitate what is being done; you do not facilitate people.'

Rewrite: 'To facilitate readers' understanding of the...'

(The Complete Plain Words. Penguin Books. 1987, p.228.)
- Faulty comparison. (P.23)

'Living in the place... different from being a tourist in a hotel.'

Rewrite: 'Living in the place will be quite different from staying in a hotel as a tourist.' (High school grammar books.)
- Wrong use of question mark. (P.23)

'With regard to my academic duties, I wonder... public speaking?'
- Wrong spelling. 'Importment' should be 'important'. (P.54)
- A wordy, prolonged sentence in 100% passive voice. (P.1)

'Readers are invited to note that the information provided in this document is drawn from the pilot test conducted between late 1998 and mid 1999 when the benchmarks were developed.' (P.1)

 - Winston Churchill regarded this padding sentence as clumsy and obtrusive because official prose called for plainness not elegance.
 - Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in his Cambridge lectures 'On the Art of writing', said: "Generally use transitive verbs, and use them in the active voice."
 - George Orwell in 1946 said: "Never use the passive where you can use the active."