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An exploration of formative assessment strategies that can provide constructive feedback on essays written in English as a First Additional Language

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A Masters in Education Research Report

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Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for examination at any other university.

Date: 30 June 2015

Signature:

ABSTRACT

This research explored the formative assessment strategies of giving constructive feedback on essays written in English as an additional language in a South African township school.

Following an action research format, eight lessons were carefully planned and conducted in two Grade 11 English First Additional Language classes. I taught learners in both classes the qualities of a good essay, discussed the assessment criteria and showed them how to plan a reflective essay. The learners wrote two drafts, received individual (written) and whole class (oral) feedback from the teacher and oral feedback from peers after each draft, and then submitted a final essay for marks. The data consisted of learners' essays, my lesson plans and notes, my comments on learners' drafts, evaluation forms and one lesson recording.

Learners' first, second and third essays, my comments and evaluation sheets were analysed. My supervisor and a critical colleague also read and analysed some learners' essays and my comments. The analysis showed that learners' quality of improvement corresponded with the quality of comments I had given.

In conclusion, formative assessment strategies and constructive feedback used in the current study enabled learners to improve the quality of their work as well as promote deep learning. However, giving constructive and dialogical feedback are skills that teachers can only master with time.

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Great credit goes to my principal and deputy principal for having allowed me to conduct my study. My grateful thanks go to all the learners who through their commitment made this study a success. Thanks to my colleagues who also played a crucial role in my study.

My favourite brother, Phumzi, who always encouraged and gave financially support that also contributed to the success of this report. To you brother I say I owe it to you. Keep being a blessing to the family. My sincere gratitude goes to my one and only sister, Caroline for her invaluable help, effort and patience in editing my report.

Lastly, I would also like to thank Mr. Rafiki and Ms. Zulu for also assisting me in conceptualizing the ideas I had for the study.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved sons and favourite brothers and sister for their unconditional support, love and faith in me.

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION I

ABSTRACT II

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS III

DEDICATION IV

TABLE OF CONTENT V

FIGURES AND TABLES IX

ABBREVIATIONS X

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Background 1

1.2 The Problem Statement 3

1.3 Purpose statement 5

1.4 Aim of the research 6

1.4 .1 Research questions 6

1.5 Clarification of terms 6

1.6 Structure of the Research Report 7

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK 9

2.1 Introduction 9

2.2. Assessment 9

2.2.1 Formative Assessment 10

2.3 Feedback 13

2.3.1 Constructive Feedback 14

2.3.2. The Strategies that can be used to provide constructive feedback 17

2.3.2.1 Teacher feedback strategies 17

2.3.2.2 Criterion-Referenced Assessment 21

2.3.2.3 Peer Assessment Strategy 22

2.3.2.4 Self-Assessment Strategy 23

2.4 Conceptual Framework **24**

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS **27**

3.1 Introduction **27**

3.2. Empirical Qualitative Design Approach **27**

3.3 Action Research **28**
3.3.1 Stages of Action Research Cycle 30
3.3.2 Living contradictions 31
3.3.3 Advantages of Conducting Action Research 32
3.3.4 Validity and Reliability of Action Research 32

3.4 Collection of Data **34**

3.4.1 Sampling **34**

3.4.2 Methods of Data Collection **35**

3.4.2.1 Documentary Evidence **35**
3.4.2.2 Documents 36
3.4.2.3 Notes 36
3.4.2.4 Audio-taping 37

3.5 Data Analysis **38**
3.5.1Analysis of learners' essays 39
3.5.2 Analysis of written comments 39
3.5.3 Diary notes 39
3.5.4 Analysis of data from evaluation sheets 40
3.5.5 Analysis of oral feedback (transcript) 40

3.6 Ethics **40**

3.7 A description of how I enacted the teaching processes. **41**
3.7.1 Cycle 1 41
3.7.2 Cycle 2 43
3.7.3 Cycle 3 46

3.8 Limitations of the study **47**

3.9 Conclusion **49**

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION **50**

4. 1 Introduction **50**

4.2. Description of the Quality of the Work Produced by 20 Participants 50
4.2.1. Description of Categories used to Describe the Quality of Improvement in Learners' Essays 51
4.2.1.1 Description of Learners Quality of Improvement.....53

4.3 Description of my Comments Made in Learners' Essays 84

4.4 Relationship of my Comments with Learners' Quality of Work Produced 93

4.5: Findings obtained from the evaluation forms 95

4.6 SUMMARY OF INSIGHT GAINED 99

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION..... 100

5.1 Introduction 100

5.2 Teacher Assessment Strategy: Grade 11A 100

5.2.1 Nature of Feedback I gave to Grade 11A 106

5.2.2 Quality of Improvement in Relation to Feedback Given 110

5.3 Conclusion 111

CHAPTER SIX: FINAL REFLECTIONS..... 113

6.1 What were my research intentions and were they achieved? 113

6.2 Any 'Living Contradictions'? 114

6.3 What needs to be improved? 115

6.4 What do I think were the benefits of my research? 116

6.5 Recommendations 116

6.6 Conclusions 117

REFERENCES..... 118

APPENDICES 122

APPENDIX A: LITERATURE REVIEW CHART FLOW 122

APPENDIX B: THE ASSESSMENT INTERVENTION PLAN OF MY ACTION 123

APPENDIX C: RUBRIC FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF A REFLECTIVE ESSAY 124

APPENDIX C1: DBE PRESCRIBED RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING ESSAYS IN GRADE 11 127

APPPENDIX D: LESSON PLANS 128

APPENDIX D1: TRANSCRIPT OF LESSON BASED ON TEACHER FEEDBACK 149

APPENDIX D2: FEEDBACK PRESENTATION TO GRADE 11 A LEARNERS 162

APPENDIX E: TABLE SHOWING QUALITY OF IMPROVEMENT FOR LEARNERS 168

APPENDIX H: SAMPLES OF GRADE 11 A ESSAYS 181

APPENDIX F: TEACHER'S COMMENTS FOR THREE ESSAYS PER LEARNER AND DESCRIPTION OF COMMENTS 199

APPENDIX G: EVALUATIVE SHEET 219

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF APPROVAL TO CONDUCT MY RESEARCH 220

FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1 Conceptual framework 25
Figure 2 : Action Research cycle model adopted from Kemmis & McTaggart (1988) 30

Table 1: Summary of collected data for my study comments 38
Table 2 : The quality of work produced by Penelope in the three essays 54
Table 3: The quality of work produced by Bokang in the three essays 57
Table 4: The quality of work produced by Bogie in the three essays 64
Table 5 : The quality of work produced by Lisa in the three essays 68
Table 6 : The quality of work produced by Thandekile in the three essays 73
Table 7: The quality of work produced by Gladness in the three essays 77
Table 8 : The quality of work produced by Precious in the three essays. 80
Table 9: Number of learners against quality of improvement 83
Table 10: Comments made on Penelope's three essays 85
Table 11: Comments made on Thandekile's three essays 86
Table 12: Comments made on Tzepo's three essay 90
Table 13: Comments made on Nolanga's three essays 91
Table 14 : Overall findings from evaluation forms 96

ABBREVIATIONS

DBE : The Department of Basic Education

AR: Action Research

EFAL**:** English First Additional Language

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Giving constructive feedback has never been an easy task to achieve, as is argued by Brookhart (2008:31) when she says:

> *If only using "descriptive" versus "evaluative" feedback were simply a matter of wordsmithing! We could all learn how to write descriptive feedback just as we learned to write descriptive paragraphs in elementary school. Unfortunately, part of the issue is how the student understands the comment. Students filter what they hear through their own past experiences, good and bad.*

As giving constructive feedback is a recurrent and acknowledged challenge, teachers need to explore strategies and work on how to give constructive feedback that will enable a high quality of learning and improve our practice. This research report presents the findings of an action research study that investigated the effects of my teacher feedback on the quality of improvement produced by grade 11 learners in their English First Additional Language essays. I conducted the research in a township school where most of the learners come from a poor socio-economic background and English is their second or third language. I taught learners how to write a reflective essay, use given criteria and engage in peer feedback. Then learners wrote 2 draft essays and a final essay, during the process I gave learners feedback with the intention of improving their writing skills and metacognitive skills.

1.1 Background

South Africa's participation in international achievement studies in recent years has proven that most learners performed badly in Mathematics and English as stated in the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality reports (SACMEQ). It is further stated by Beckmann and Fussel (2013) that on the Preliminary Analysis of SACMEQ III, South Africa ranks 10th out of the 15 SACMEQ countries for student reading performance and 8th out of 15 countries for student Mathematics performance. The analyses of achievement against national and international benchmarks reveal that improvement in the quality of the above mentioned learning areas remains a great challenge facing most of the SA educational system.

This raises the question, how then can learners' performance or the quality of student learning be improved? One way in which this problem can be approached is through the use of constructive feedback which is dialogical. Constructive feedback does not refer to a particular type of feedback; it is any value neutral, objective description of a learner's performance in relation to a given criteria. The feedback should enable learners to implement feedback information which helps them reflect on their learning and to improve the quality of their learning (Wiggins, 1998; Sadler, 1998; Miser: 2007; Nicol 2010).

Researchers in assessment, such Sadler (1989), Hattie (1992), Black & Wiliam (1998), Juwah et al (2004) and Brookhart (2008) have found that constructive feedback is an essential tool for improving learners' achievement and should thus form an integral part of the teaching and learning process. With regard to writing in English, the SA Examination Board Umalusi claims that feedback is central to the development of the learner's cognitive skills and knowledge (http://www.Umalusi.org.za). The National Department of education (2007:1) further states that formative assessment should be used to provide feedback to both learners and teachers. Teachers should use the feedback to improve their teaching strategies in order to enhance learners' performance and achieve the desired outcomes. Summarizing the notion of constructive feedback, Hattie (1999) posits that feedback which provides information of why and how work may be improved is the most powerful single moderator that enhances achievement or develops learners.

In order to promote constructive feedback in class, formative strategies can be used. These strategies include: a routine clarification and discussion of criteria and standards for the task, teacher modelling (e.g. modelling how to structure an essay), involving learners in peer and self-assessment, and providing learners the opportunity to rework their task. Wiggins (1998) argues that "Excellence is attained by such cycles of model-practice-perform-feedback-perform." This implies that for learners to acquire deep learning, teachers have to engage in the cycle presented by Wiggins.

Nonetheless, implementation of such strategies has never been an easy task, especially in township schools where English is a second language and class sizes are large. Furthermore, teachers in South Africa generally use summative rubrics instead of formative rubrics to assess the informal tasks that are meant to improve the quality of learning during a programme or

teaching. In addition, when teachers do give feedback, much attention is given to spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. I rarely gave descriptive feedback that would help learners to bridge the gap between current and desired outcomes. Furthermore, the criteria used to assess their essay skills were never discussed in class and learners seldom had a second chance to rework their tasks.

1.2 The Problem Statement

At the township school where I work, I have come to realise that my colleagues and I often have difficulties in providing constructive feedback during our assessment of learners' essays. In most instances, the comments and strategies we use to give feedback do not seem to enable learners to engage in actions that generate improvement in their essay writing skills.

There could be a number of factors contributing to this problem. Firstly, we do not give comments that take into cognisance the language level of our learners, since the majority of our learners come from a poor socio-economic background and English is their second language. Besides they are exposed to English only during school hours. In addition, our school's current essay marking system for essays tends to be more evaluative than formative. That is, when we mark learners' essays we tend to focus on correcting errors in learners' writing (such as spelling, grammar and punctuation errors) as well as grading their work rather than giving descriptive comments that will enable learners to improve their learning. In my school, we rarely focused on providing learners with corrective advice, suggestions and engaging them in peer feedback to enable skill development, personal development and high quality learning.

The exposure to the assessment course at Wits University led me to rethink my strategies of giving feedback so as to improve the quality of learning in my classroom. This then made me to meet with my colleague who also was practicing the same form of assessment and had an interest in improving the quality of learning. My colleague and I discussed possible strategies for improving learners' writing skills. We agreed that we would hand out and discuss the criteria with learners, but I soon found out that only giving criteria to learners was not enough to their performance. So for this Masters research, I decided to investigate how giving feedback through teacher and peer assessment strategies could be used to improve English as First Additional Language (EFAL) learners' writing skills and also to develop their self-regulative skills.

I decided to explore these particular teacher assessment and peer-assessment strategies because many a times I struggle to give constructive comments and feedback that will enable learners to improve their work. Research has shown that comments given by teachers often do not seem to enable learners to improve their learning. Reed (2006) argues that feedback given to learners work "should enable them to move forward and achieve satisfaction in their work" (p1). Furthermore, Nicol (2010) has reported that ever since feedback survey began it has been found out that feedback has always received the least ratings, for example in England, it has been reported that 39 % of learners found feedback to be insufficient, 44% of learners reported that it did not help to clarify things that they did not understand and 44% said that it was not well delivered. In addition, Nicol (2010) points out that written comment do not promote interaction of learners with the comments and thus chances of discussions emanating from the feedback are limited. Thus the survey showed that most learners were not satisfied with the type of feedback given to them because it did not enable them to improve the quality of their learning.

I also intend that by engaging in formative assessment strategies I will improve in my ways of giving comments on learners' work and this in turn will result in my learners moving forward, closing the gap between where they are in their learning and attaining good results.

The teacher assessment strategy involves teachers giving feedback on learners' written work, verbal responses given and reviewing any misconception, so as to enable learners to correct, improve and have a better understanding of concepts. Teachers can model the desired responses (Clarke, 2005) or use an error correction strategy to respond to learners' written work. This can help to improve the writing proficiency of learners (Corpuz, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, Black and William (1998), Hargreaves (2005) and Hattie (1992) point out that constructive feedback is the central aspect in bringing about effective learning. At the same time, these researchers found that teachers have serious challenges when it comes to giving constructive feedback to learners, as the kind of feedback given often falls short of what is actually necessary to close the gap between the current and desired performance (Sadler, 1989). This is further supported by Alistair, (2008) who argues that even though teachers have shown the desire to provide learning activities and opportunities that will enable learners to think critically or even engage in self-assessment, providing constructive feedback as a vehicle to enhance that potential has been a great dilemma. A variety of

factors have contributed to this dilemma. For instance, research has made visible factors such as: inadequate teacher knowledge on how to give constructive feedback, the quality of feedback given is either irrelevant or overwhelming, and learners paying more attention to marks rather than to comments (Butler, 1987). In addition, written comments are sometimes not only illegible but also not specific/ descriptive enough for learners to use.

It has been argued by some proponents of feedback that under-conceptualisation of feedback in the theoretical literature in Higher Education and elsewhere makes it difficult to design effective practices or to evaluate their effectiveness (Juwah et al., 2004). They further state that even though there has been a move to conceptualise learning from the constructivist point of view, approaches to feedback have remained obstinately focused on a simple 'transmission' perspective. This perception has led to teachers transmitting feedback messages based on strengths and weaknesses of learners' work with the hope that these will be decoded and put into action (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2004). From this argument, it is then clear that not only do teachers face challenges in providing constructive feedback, but they also experience challenges in monitoring how learners use feedback in order to achieve their goals.

1.3 Purpose statement

My key purpose in embarking on this study is to explore strategies for and ways of providing constructive comments that can be used to enhance learning that promotes the improvement and development of EFAL learners' essay writing skills. Following Black and Wiliam's (1998) research findings that teachers need to know what constitutes feedback and develop the ability to engage learners in constructive feedback, I intend to improve my methods of providing feedback. Following Sadler's (1989) contention that learners also need the evaluative skills that teachers have, I intend to teach learners feedback skills in the process. I plan to do this in two of my EFAL classrooms by experimenting with two feedback strategies, namely written and oral feedback from the teacher, as well as oral and written feedback from peers. Through experimenting with giving oral and written feedback to my learners and reflecting on given comments, my knowledge and skills of giving constructive feedback will be enhanced. This process will also help me to learn to see what is in an essay and thereby to describe what is present, thus improving my teaching practice.

1.4 Aim of the research

In this research study, the general aim is to explore the formative assessment strategies of giving constructive feedback so as to enhance learner's writing skills in an EFAL classroom context. This study is embedded in the context of improving my teaching practice through using strategies and reflecting on comments given, so as not only to help learners use given feedback to close the gap between current performance and the desired outcome, but also to develop their metacognitive skills. The research seeks to:

- Explore, implement and evaluate the formative assessment strategies of providing constructive feedback in my EFAL classroom.
- Examine the nature/ type of feedback given to learners

1.4 .1 Research questions

The overall research question is:

How can the teacher use constructive feedback to improve learner performance in the context of essay writing in an EFAL classroom?

The following empirical questions will inform the research question further:

1. How did the formative assessment strategies enable learners to improve their learning?
2. What is the nature of the feedback given by the teacher?
3. How did learners make use of the feedback they received so as to bridge the gap between their current and desired performance?

1.5 Clarification of terms

Formative Assessment: For the purpose of this study, Gipps, McCallum and Hargreaves (2000)'s definition of formative assessment will be used. They define formative assessment as

"… Using assessment information to feed back into the teaching process, and to determine for individuals or groups whether to explain the task again, to give further practice on it, or move onto the next stage (p.6)."

Constructive feedback: This refers to comments made or given to learners that encourage them to take action that will lead to bridge the gap and led to improvement of future tasks and quality of learning as is defined by Saddler (1998), Wiggins (1998) and Brookhart (2008).

Deep learning: when activities and assessment tasks enable learners to experience understanding at a deeper level i.e. learners are able to critically reflect on and integrate the new knowledge.

English First Additional Language (EFAL): In the South African context, the Department of Basic Education (2009), declared 'First Additional Language' as the formal term for a compulsory second language. This is studied at a more elementary level than the home language.

1.6 Structure of the Research Report

Chapter 1 introduces the background to the study, purpose statement, and aim and research questions. It also defines key concepts.

Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature on strategies used to give constructive feedback. It focuses on formative assessment in general and on the value of and strategies for giving constructive feedback in particular. Then it pulls the literature together into a conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 provides theoretical insight into the advantages and limitations of action research as a methodology and then describes the research design. The chapter describes how I gathered data from teaching lessons presented, essays written by learners, recording of teacher feedback and the evaluation forms. Overall, the chapter explains how data collection and analyses were done in reflective and trustworthy ways.

Chapter 4 presents the description of data collected from learners' essays, and teacher comments as well as the evaluation forms completed by learners. The chapter presents a description of

learners' performance in three written essays and the relationship between teacher comments and learner improvement

Chapter 5 provides the analysis and discussion of the main findings of the research.

Finally Chapter 6 presents reflection on the research intention, 'living contradictions' (Laidlaw, 1994) and the benefits of the research. These are then followed by recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Formative assessment as an integral part of learning is argued to be a catalyst for improvement of learners' learning (Beaumont, O'Doherty and Shannon, 2011). However, sometimes the way learners are being assessed in South African township schools has limited them from improving and accelerating their learning, or even attaining lifelong learning. My study aims to investigate the importance of constructive feedback in ensuring that formative assessment enhances learning. Improvement in learners' learning can be attained if formative assessment is strategically done, and constructive dialogic feedback is given to learners. Nicol (2010), Sadler (1998) and Brookhart (2008) posit that for feedback to enable learners to bridge the gap between current and desired performance and to promote lifelong learning, it has to be constructive and dialogical. Therefore, this literature review seeks to show the weaknesses of feedback that is not constructive and highlight the need for innovative strategies that will enable learners to use given feedback to bridge the gap between their current and desired outcome, improve their quality of learning and also improve teachers' professionalism.

2.2. Assessment

In any educational system, there are two core forms of assessment that play a vital role in teaching and learning: summative and formative. Summative assessment involves collecting information through tests and examinations mainly to "make judgements about levels of competence and achievement" (Black & Wiliam, 1998b) and for accountability purposes. However, summative assessment, which is also referred to as assessment of learning, has proven to be insufficient in promoting and accelerating learners' learning. Summative assessment is often done at the end of a programme, mainly to ensure that learners meet the programme goals and objectives and for accountability purposes. For example, at the end of term, learners are given tests to assess whether they have met the objectives of the programme or course. This provides the mark for grading and certification of learners at the end of their course (Gipps,

1994) but comes too late, making it insufficient to boost learners' learning. Sadler (1989) argues that summative assessment is "essentially passive and does not have immediate impact on learning although it often influences decisions which may have profound educational and personal consequences for students". This is further supported by Black and Wiliam (2003) who posit that present regimes of external testing blocked the full potential of raising standard of learning and teachers' professionalism. Furthermore, studies conducted by Pryor and Akwesi (1998) cited by Brookhart (2004) have revealed that most teachers felt that summative assessment hindered nurturing of learners' growth and understanding. The nature and purpose of summative assessment might be a contributing factor to its negative impact on learning, hence this chapter argues for the use of formative assessment in helping learners to improve and accelerate their own learning.

2.2.1 Formative Assessment

In contrast to summative assessment, formative assessment is an ongoing instructional process and a fundamental aspect of a teacher's classroom work which has great potential to promote and accelerate learning. Several scholars (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Sadler, 1998; Shepard, 2000) describe formative assessment as a collection of practices carried out during the instructional process primarily to provide feedback that improves and accelerates learners' learning. Clarke's (2005) definition of formative assessment is similar to Black and Williams', as she also describes it as a "complex process of furthering pupils' learning during the learning process, enabling the targets to be met" (2005:1).the mentioned authors all claim that the activities are undertaken by both teachers and learners. Biggs and Collis (1982) describe it as part of the on-going instructional process carried out by the teacher so as to understand what is involved in learning a particular unit and further devise ways of improving learners' learning.

However, Biggs and Collis' (1982) definition of formative assessment emphasises three aspects: it is concerned with what is intended to be taught, it requires an analytical understanding by the teacher of what is involved in learning a particular unit and it depends on the teacher knowing what steps might be taken to improve learning. In addition it regards the process as the responsibility of teacher not the learners. Even though Biggs and Collins' definition is similar to Black and Williams', they differ in terms of responsibility. Biggs et al (1982) regard the process

as the teacher's responsibility while Black and Wiliam state that it is a shared responsibility. For the purpose of this study I will adopt Black and Williams' definition since formative assessment is more concerned with issues that involve both teachers and learners and feedback is used to adjust teaching and learning.

For formative assessment to enhance learning and improve teacher professionalism, there are conditions to be met. Black and Wiliam (1989) state that teachers must align the assessment event or task given with the contents and standard set. Shepard (2000) develops the idea further by proposing that there be alignment between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. All assessment activities given need to match with what has been taught or will be taught, as well as with the approach used to teach the content. The type of assessment given should enable learners to reason critically, solve problems, as well as use their acquired knowledge to solve real life problems.

Furthermore, Chappuis and Stiggins (2002) posit that the quality of learning is enhanced if the assessment information is formatively used. This occurs when classroom activities involve learner engagement and are learning-oriented rather than focusing on merely grading learners' performance. Formative use of assessment can be done in various ways. For instance, a teacher can give learners a pre-test before a unity of study and adjust instructions for individuals or the entire class (Chappuis and Stiggins, 2002).

More so, the quality of learning can be enhanced if the information gathered is used as feedback to advance learners' learning understanding (Hargreaves, 2005). For Black and Wiliam (1989), what matters most is how teachers and students use that information to bring about an improvement in their teaching and learning, not the type of assessment used. For instance, information gathered from summative assessment can be used formatively if the "results reveal significant problems with learning that has to be addressed through re-teaching' (p.6). This implies that the information got from summative assessment can then be used to involve learners in the process of improving areas of concerns as well as enhancing their learning not merely to award a mark. For instance after exams or end of term test, learners can also be given an opportunity to rework the problematic sections with the help of a teacher.

In addition, for assessment to be formative and accomplish the purpose of formative assessment, Black and Wiliam (1998) state that the information gathered needs to enable teachers and learners to determine what action needs to be taken next. For instance, the gathered information needs to help them decide whether they need remedial work or need to move to the next unit and how/ what adjustments need to be done in teaching and learning to advance learners' learning. The two authors further support Sadler's argument that if information gathered is mainly used for recording purposes and does not lead to adjustment of teaching and learning nor prompt teachers and learners to take action, then that assessment does not accomplish the purpose of formative assessment (Black & Wiliam 1989), which is to improve learning.

Additionally, the information gathered should provide sufficient details to point out specific problems (such as misconceptions).This then will enable the teacher to decide on what action to take and with whom. Supplying learners with detailed information also enables them to also seek clarity thus enhancing their learning. To further motivate learners to use information given to improve the performance, teachers need not include a grade. It is argued that where a grade is awarded learners focus more on the mark than comments given, thus defeating the purpose of the feedback.

To generate improved work and quality learning Black and Williams' studies (1998a), Nicol (2009) and Boud (2015) posit that formative assessment needs to be designed in such a way that it encourages learners to engage in a dialogical interaction. According to Black and William (1998b), the dialogical interaction should be thoughtful, reflective, focused so as to evoke, or explore understanding, as well as to enable learners to think and express their understanding of the concepts taught. This again enables teachers to monitor their learners' progress and difficulties. Any failure to fulfil all of the conditions discussed above is "at best an incomplete attempt, and at worst harmful to learning" (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Therefore, to at least make sure that all the conditions are met it is advisable that teachers change the culture of teaching and learning in their classrooms. To do so teachers should use approaches that promote active engagement of learners. Such approaches include use of assessment as an instrument to make learners take active responsibility of their learning rather than merely for evaluative purposes.

2.3 Feedback

Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and learners achievement. However, research has shown that feedback given by teachers or even in higher educational institutions is often unclear and deficient in quality. It is further argued that given feedback seems to serve social and managerial functions (Black and Wiliam, 1998). This has led to many researchers arguing for feedback that can generate improved work and lifelong learning. Hence my study aims at exploring strategies that one can use to provide constructive feedback which will lead to improved quality of work. Various researchers have provided different definitions of feedback. The behaviourist theorists view feedback as something given to learners with the intention to correct an undesirable behaviour as pointed out by Price, Handley and O'Donovan (2004). Learners who showed a desired change in behaviour were either given rewards such as hugs, stars etc. while undesirable behaviour was punished. Central to the traditional definition of feedback is correction of behaviour.

Contrary to the behaviourists' ideology, constructivist theorists view feedback as information given to learners to enhance their learning. For instance, Ramaprasad (1983) and Sadler (1989) define feedback as information given to learners so as to bridge the gap between the current and desired performance. Hattie and Timperley (2007) define feedback as "consequence of performance", that is the outcome provided either by a teacher, learners or parents in regard to one's performance. Winne and Butler (1994) cited in Hattie and Timperley (2007) further add by claiming that feedback is any type of knowledge which learners can confirm, add to, tune or restructure in order to generate improved work. This information given about learners' work is in relation to given criteria / standards. From the given definitions, the key element brought forth about feedback is that information can be given by teachers or learners that can be acted upon to generate improved work. For purposes of this research project, feedback means information that is given to learners so that they are motivated to bridge the gap between current and desired outcome.

However, researchers have argued that the traditional forms of feedback have impoverished the teaching and learning practice –there are forms of feedback that do not motivate learners to improve quality of work and learning. Such forms of feedback include awarding a mark or grade, rewards, oral and written feedback. Sadler (1989) refers to grading as assigning of a grade or mark to a learners' work after having reflected on the evaluation of a task. Proponents of formative assessment argue that grading/ assigning a mark on learners' work is not an effective way of providing feedback. Black and William (1989) posit that even though marking is "conscientious", it often fails to give guidance on how work can be improved. Furthermore, the two researchers state that there is under emphasis on giving useful advice in contrast to giving marks and grading functions.

Written comments are usually non-verbal responses made on any written work, rubric or coversheets (Brookhart, 2008). Oral and written communication is argued to be more effective in enhancing learning than grading and awarding of marks, (Sadler 1989). However, researchers such as Black and Wiliam (1989), Sadler (1989), Brookhart (2008) and many other researchers have argued that teachers' comments often discourage learners to act on the comments. Baron (1988) describes this type of feedback as destructive feedback. This type of feedback is comprised of comments that are too general, inconsiderate and not informative enough to lead learners to take action in improving their work or current performance. Clarke (2005) argues that traditional forms of feedback lead to regression in student progress.

2.3.1 Constructive Feedback

For the purpose of this study, the term constructive feedback is conceptualized as any written or oral communication given either by teachers to learners, or learners to learners with the intention of not only adjusting teaching and learning but encouraging learners to act on given feedback to improve quality of work and attain lifelong learning. The classroom context in which feedback is given, feedback practice and nature of feedback given are the fundamental key to the success of enabling learners to improve the quality of work produced and quality of learning and teaching. A constructive feedback practice promotes positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem. It is argued that appraisal of teaching enables learners to enhance their motivation and that in turn

will motivate them to be directed and energized to take action in improving their learning (Ramaprasad, 1983; Baron, 1988).

Learners need to view constructive criticism as a good thing and understand that learning cannot happen without practice (Brookhart, 2008). In a classroom context, where learners value getting things right, they should also value the importance of feedback as this will enhance improvement. Brookhart (2008) argues that in a classroom environment where learners value getting tasks right, they tend to think that if something needs improvement, it is wrong and therefore feedback given will limit improvement in their learning. Therefore it is vital that teachers develop a classroom culture in which learners' value findings and suggestions, as this will enable learners to use feedback to plan and engage in action for improving their performance. That is, they should view teachers' comments as a way of improving their quality of learning rather than as a sign of them having a limited knowledge. To enable that to happen, teachers need to engage in good feedback practice.

Various researchers have proposed seven principles of constructive feedback practice. They all argue that a good feedback practice (i) clarifies good performance (goals, criteria and expected standards) which facilitates the development of reflection and self–assessment in learning, (ii) delivers high quality information to learners about their learning, (iii) promotes teacher to learner and learner to learner dialogue around learning, (iv) enables learners to reflect, analyse and self-regulate their learning, (v) promotes positive emotional beliefs and self-esteem, (vi) provides learners with opportunity to bridge the gap and lastly (vii) enables teachers to use the information obtained to adjust their teaching (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick ,2006; Sadler, 1989; Brookhart, 2008). They argue that any good feedback practice governed by such principles enhances quality learning.

For constructive feedback to be more effective in generating bridging the gap and resulting in life-long learning, any constructive feedback practice needs to conceptualise feedback as dialogical. Dialogical feedback is a two-way interaction between a teacher and a learner or learner and his/her peers regarding ways in which the learner could enhance his/her strengths and address any weaknesses in academic work(Black and Wiliam, 2003; Nicol & Milligan 2006; Boud, 2015). Nicol (2010) defines dialogical feedback as a cyclic process that involving

learners' discussions of the feedback with concerned agents. The learners interact with information as individuals, analysing, asking and reflecting on the information given so as to improve their performance. It is argued that through this engagement learners become active constructors of feedback information than mere receives of transmitted feedback. For this process to yield effective results it has to be an ongoing cyclic process.

Nicol (2010) citing Laurillard (2002) posits that there are four characteristic of dialogical feedback. It needs to be adaptive i.e. it has to be related to learner's needs. It needs to be discursive –encourages a two way communication. This can be achieved if learners are given an opportunity to discuss given comments, ask questions in connection to given responses. Thirdly, dialogical feedback needs to be interactive- encourage the learner to engage in action. Lastly it has to be reflective – allow teachers and learners to think critically on the goal-action-feedback cycle. It is claimed that dialogical feedback promotes an understanding of concepts, ideas as well as enabling learners to apply their understanding in the learning task (Nicol, 2010). Hence, if a dialogue occurs around a feedback, the impact of constructive feedback is enhanced; there are much greater chances of learners engaging in appropriate action to improve the quality of their work.

In addition, a constructive feedback practice does not only focus on providing information about how to assist learners to improve the quality of their work, but it also provides teachers with information to modify their own teaching. As Yorke (2003:482) notes*:*

> *The act of assessing has an effect on the assessor as well as the student.*
> *Assessors learn about the extent to which they (student) have developed expertise and can tailor their teaching accordingly.*

Basing my understanding on Black and Wiliams' studies (1998a), Brookhart (2008), Nicol (2010) and Boud (2015), learners' learning can be improved if the key fundamental element of formative assessment, which is feedback, is designed in such a way that it encourages learners to engage in a dialogical interaction to generate desired outcomes. Such feedback also enables teachers to grow in their professionalism. This can be achieved if teachers use strategies that can provide constructive feedback.

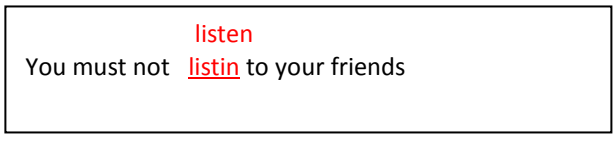
2.3.2. The Strategies that can be used to provide constructive feedback

Seeing that there is deficiency in assessment and feedback used in schools which hinders quality of learning and work produced, the purpose of my study is to explore the formative strategies that provide constructive feedback that enhances learning. It is vital that a teacher engages in assessment strategies that will motivate learners to actively engage with given comments to generate quality work and long life learning. These teacher strategies include teacher providing learners with teacher feedback, peer and self-feedback.

2.3.2.1 Teacher feedback strategies

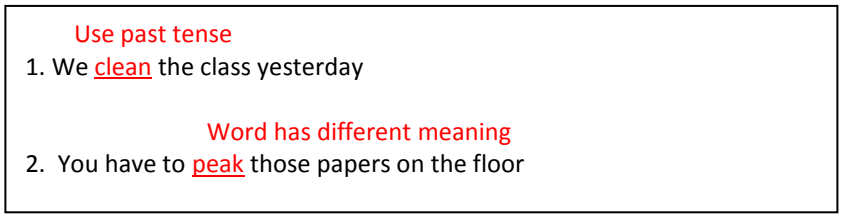
To boost quality learning it is vital that the teacher engages in teacher feedback strategies. Gipps, McCallum and Hargreaves (2000) define teacher feedback strategy as a one -way communication of giving direct judgement of learner's work, learner's strategies and skills as well as giving information about the judgement with intention of improving learning. The teacher gives feedback on learners' written work, responses given and reviewing any misconception to enable learners to correct, have a better understanding of concepts and improve quality of learning either through using error correction strategy, making use of a scheme or engaging learners in dialogic feedback.

Error correction strategy or error feedback strategy also referred to as corrective feedback by Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken (2012) is one strategy that can be used to provide constructive feedback in response to learners' written work. Error feedback involves giving either direct or indirect feedback on learners' written work, (Ferris, 2003; Corpuz, 2011). Direct feedback, also referred to as explicit or overt involves a teacher writing what the learner should have written Ferris (2003). The teacher corrects the term or structure to explicitly show the error in the linguistic structure of the learner's work as is illustrated below



This strategy is believed to be appropriate for beginners and where errors are "untreatable," and where learners are not able to self-correct language error such as syntax and vocabulary (Ferris, 2003). Ferris (2003) however, argues that using the direct correction strategy can be a danger. A teacher might misinterpret the learner's word and put words into his / her mouth.

Indirect error correction (also referred to as implicit / suggestive) refers to giving learners a clue of what the error is without providing corrections. Teacher may underline, encircle or use correctional symbols to identify type of error (e.g. sp for spelling, ww for wrong word, gr for grammar) as below



Studies conducted by researchers suggest that indirect error feedback is effective to learners' long term writing and development than direct error feedback (Ferris, 2003). The indirect error feedback enables learners to engage with the given clues to correct own work. Through using this approach learners will in due course be at least able to write, understand language convections and use them correctly. Research has proven that error correction leads to improvement in learners' writing skills or proficiency. Corpuz (2011) and Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken (2012) have produced evidence that show that comprehensive corrective feedback on learners' writing has a positive effect on learners' learning. In their research, learners who received corrective feedback made greater improvement in their learning than those that did not receive both direct and indirect corrective feedback.

Using a scheme to follow when giving written feedback is another effective strategy that teachers can use to enable learners to interact with given feedback so as to bridge the gap between current and desired or expected standard. Brookhart (2008) building on Hattie and Timperley (2007) argues that good quality content feedback should be given in a set of categories: focus (focus on

task and process), comparison, function and valence. The scheme also describes the qualities of constructive feedback that allows learners to have a conversation with given comments.

It is always vital to use a scheme when analysing tasks as it enables a teacher to construct comments that will describe specific qualities of the work in relation to set targets, specify areas that need to be reworked. It further allows teachers to describe learners' work without being judgemental or personal and to strive to give positive comments that will encourage learners to take action. In addition the scheme used also enable teachers to see areas of deviation and thus plan on how to help learners to improve their work and produce quality work. Below is Brookhart's (2008) example of constructive written feedback that makes use of the set of categories to feedback on a learner's quality of work produced. From the illustrated example, the comments made need to be task –focused. Feedback that is tasked -focused gives information about the quality of work in relation to the criteria given. In addition it involves making comments that focus on the strength and weaknesses of a learner's performance. Hattie & Timperley, 2007 cited in Brookhart (2008) state that feedback about the task has been found to be more powerful when it corrects misconceptions than when it alerts students to lack of information.

In addition, she states that feedback given should give learners information about the quality of work they produced as well as to show connection between what they did and the result they got. To boost learning, Brookhart suggest that learners need to be given a chance to figure out the reasons for errors identified. Suggestions and recommendations may be given to enable learners to improve the quality of work. For a teacher to make such comments there need to be a criteria. Comments need to be criterion-referenced. In addition they need to be descriptive and positive so that learners will act on them.

Your details strongly support your claim that we should recycle newspapers. That's great. Where did you find all those facts?	**Focus**—Task, process, self-regulation **Comparison**—Criterion-referenced **Function**—Descriptive **Valence**—Positive This is an example of **good feedback**. It confirms for the student that the work meets one of the targets (strong supporting details) and connects this success to student effort (the student did research to find out facts, and the teacher noticed).

Brookhart (2008:29)

The quality of work produced can be improved if comments given as feedback are task focused. The comments given need to focus on correcting misconception rather than alerting learners of what is lacking in their work. Giving such specific advice is believed to be the key to improvement of performance.

More so, Brookhart (2008) suggests that comments given should have valence. This implies that the agent of feedback should give comments that are positive and not destructive criticism. Positive comments entail giving a description of the strengths and weaknesses and offer suggestions on how to improve the quality of work. Furthermore comments that are general praise and general criticism should be avoided as these do not enable learners to engage with the information to enhance the quality of work and learning.

Additionally, for feedback to lead learners to engage with it, it should be given timely. Most proponents of constructive feedback propose that feedback be given to learners while they are still eager to engage with the task / mindful of the learning target (Brookhart, 2008). Brookhart (2008) supports a suggestion by Hattie (1992) that feedback should be given in time and as often as possible for all activities.

Another strategy is to provide learners with suggestions or action points that will help them know what to do so as to improve their performance. For example, Brookhart (2008) states that

after providing feedback one can offer additional information on what the learner has to do, for instance, researching more on a particular topic as explained below.

> *You do a good job of summarizing Rankin's arguments in your own words and the few ideas you chose to quote are vivid examples. This is well done. But, you sound as though you buy every argument Rankin is making. What are some of his underlying assumptions? What are possible objections to his arguments? Just because he is famous does not make him right! Try reading him again from a skeptic point of view. Doing that is what makes a critical response critical,* (Walk, 2000:8).
>
> This example uses questions to enable learner to present an argument and be more objective. And at the same time the comments given are positive and motivating the learner to interact with them to bridge the gap.

2.3.2.2 Criterion-Referenced Assessment

In order for feedback to be relevant and informative, most researchers and educational institutions advocate for assessment that is criterion–referenced. This form of assessment involves evaluation of learner's performance against a set of specified levels of standards. Since the introduction of outcome based education and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), most of the South African school teachers have been advised to include the assessment criteria for a task along with the task instructions as is stipulated by Reed (2006). These assessment criteria can be in the form of rubrics, scoring grids or even a series of statements. Criterion-referenced assessment is of great benefit to both learners and teachers.

It is believed that criterion -referenced assessment permits learners to improve their quality of learning as it presents a vivid picture of what is quality work and what is expected of them.

Based on the criteria, learners are able to strive towards quality work. They visualise the expected standard and discuss around a particular task in order to achieve high quality results. Davies (2007) and Hattie (1992) agree with the latter views as they also argue that criterion based assessment helps learners to appreciate what quality work and success looks like and

understand the learning destination, they are then able to compare their work to criteria given, talk about and reflect on their work using the language of criteria and destination. In addition, they acquire knowledge needed to help them to make decisions on what they need to do to close the gap.

The most effective ways of enabling learners to understand and possess the same set of goals, criteria and standards as the teacher include; (i) providing learners with better definitions of requirements using carefully constructed criteria sheets and performance level definitions; (ii)teachers may increase discussion and reflection about criteria and standards in class (e.g. before any given task); (iii) involving learners in assessment exercises where they mark or comment on other students' work in relation to defined criteria and standards; (iv) provide workshops where students in collaboration with the teacher devise or negotiate their own assessment criteria for a piece of work, (Juwah et al., 2004).

2.3.2.3 Peer Assessment Strategy

An effective strategy that promotes quality work and lifelong learning is peer assessment. Peer assessment engages learners in giving and receiving criticism of their work more freely than through the traditional strategy of teacher / learner interchange (Clarke, 2005). Peer assessment is described as an organised event in which learners give feedback on the quality of work produced by their peers (Harrison, 2010). More so, Harrison (2010) states that learners are more likely to interact with feedback given, weigh up options suggested by the peers and make own decisions, since peer assessment is less authoritative. During this process, learners can also allocate a grade or mark to a peer's work as well as provide feedback on the judgement they have reached.

Sadler (2010), Nicol (2006), Harrison (2010) and Earl (2013) advocate the use of peer assessment as it enables learners to be actively involved in constructing their own knowledge, developing reflection skills, critical thinking and increasing social interaction. It also develops learners' ability to use their talent and knowledge to solve real life problems through assessing each other's work. It also encourages them to reflect on the content of work and on methods of improving their work (Juwah e.t al., 2004), developing their evaluative skills. Additionally,

Hernandez (2010) posits that peer assessment leads to the development of "desirable graduate attributes" like the ability to work cooperatively, taking charge of their learning, becoming more responsible and self-sufficient. For instance, learners may be given an opportunity to give each other descriptive feedback in relation to given criteria before submission. This strategy further allows learners to monitor and take charge of their learning provided the standards and criteria are clearly articulated by the teachers.

However, Earl (2013) states that developing independent and responsible learners who embrace assessment as a positive part of the learning process is a great challenge. Learners may find it a challenge to engage in peer assessment and will require teachers to motivate them. It also requires ample time for learners to master the evaluative skill, which can be time consuming and increase teachers' work load (Juwah et al., 2004:30). Additionally, comments and grades given may not be reliable due to quite a number of factors. For instance, peer pressure may cause one to elevate or underscore grades. And learners may be subject to bias when marking of a friend or a foe. Sometimes learners have a tendency to award everyone the same mark (The National Capital Language, 2003, 2004). Learners may find both self and peer assessment a frightening and challenging task (Juwah, 2004; Clarke, 2005). Nevertheless, if executed effectively, peer assessment can provide relevant feedback, allow teachers to monitor learners' work and reduce teachers' marking load.

2.3.2.4 Self-Assessment Strategy

Another strategy that can be used by the teacher to help learners to develop self-regulative skills, problem formulation and problem solving skills and ability to learn with others as well as to give constructive feedback is the self-assessment strategy (Ovando, 1994; Juwah et al., 2004; Brookhart, 2008). Hernandez (2010) suggests that learners be allowed to evaluate themselves through self-assessment using a given set of criteria or one constructed by the class under the guidance of the teacher. Next, learners may be asked to complete a self-assessment sheet in which they identify areas of strength and weakness. Learners may also state what needs to be improved and how. They may then be asked to make the improvement as part of a lesson or at

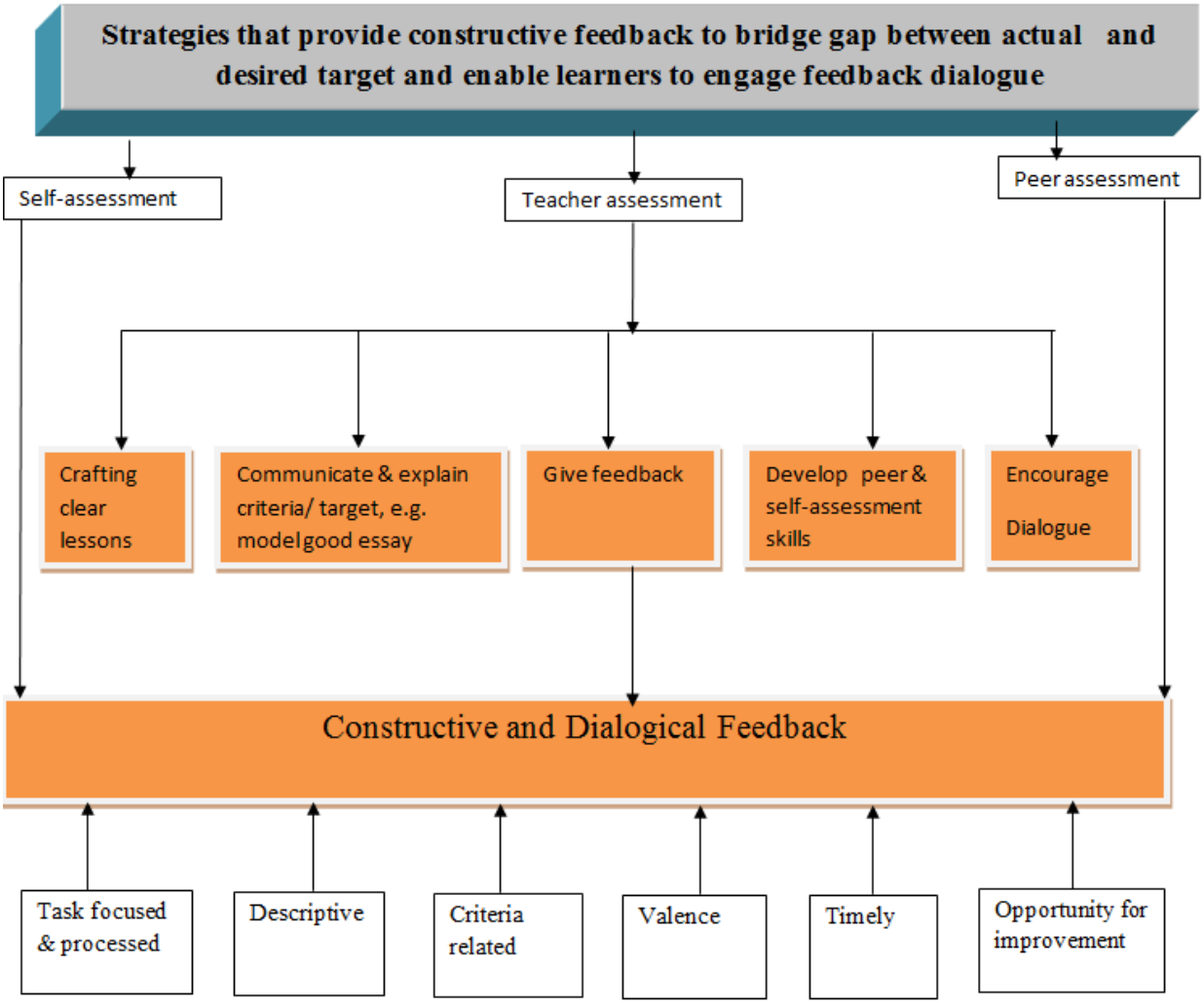
home (Clarke, 2005). Thereafter the teacher engages positively with the comments made by learners and gives own feedback (Juwah et al., 2004).

To conclude, to uplift the standards of learning and development of teacher professionalism, classroom culture need to be changed so that formative assessment becomes an integral part of teaching and learning in which feedback given is dialogical. Teachers need to engage learners in criterion –referenced assessment and give feedback through either using teacher, self and peer feedback strategies. Engaging in these different formative feedback strategies will not only enable teachers to assist learners to narrow the gap between current and desired outcome but also help teachers to review, reflect and take action in helping learners to acquire quality learning. Appendix A gives a chart flow of my literature review.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Main concept from literature review: formative assessment strategies and constructive feedback that is dialogical enhances learning, bridges the gap between current and desired performance as well as facilitates the development of self and peer assessment skills. The framework which follows provides the lens through which my study was conducted.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework



The conceptual framework above draws on fundamental key concepts in the literature which inform this study. As depicted in the conceptual framework (Figure 1), a key factor underlying the study is that the feedback given has to be constructive. For feedback to be constructive, the quality of feedback given should possess the following criteria: be task focused, descriptive in nature, criteria related, timely given, valence (constructive criticism) and gives learners an opportunity to rework their task. If feedback possesses such elements, then the given feedback has the potential to enrich the teaching practice as it will encourage learners to actively engage with given comments to enhance quality of work produced.

In addition, for feedback to be much more constructive and enable learners to use given information to close the gap and improve quality of learning, construe the concepts better and promote lifelong learning it has to encourage a conversation between teachers and learner or learner and learner as well as a learner interaction with the response given (i.e. dialogical). Dialogic feedback builds on constructive feedback which is the vital component in improving quality of assessment. Therefore in future I am going to use both terms to constantly emphasis that feedback needs to be constructive as described and dialogical.

In conclusion, for constructive feedback to yield productive results, the comments given need to be task focused, task processed and criteria referenced. In addition, learning goals and any expected standards need to be made available to learners. Furthermore, discussion and training of learners on how to use the given criteria to improve their work as well as encouraging learners to interact with the feedback given are vital. This enables learners to internalise and understand the criteria of assessment so that they can engage in self and peer evaluation of their work. Through that process learners can reflect on their learning and learning needs (metacognition skills are developed). That is they are able to identify strength, weaknesses and strategies on how to bridge the gap between the current and desired performance. In addition, the impact of constructive feedback is enhanced if a dialogue occurs around the given feedback.

Drawing from the literature and conceptual work presented, the key fundamental aspects presented are: (i) constructive feedback should be an integral part of teaching and learning culture and (ii) constructive feedback given should enable dialogical communication between the teacher and learners as well as between learners. The following chapter discusses the research design and methods that the research used.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the procedures that were taken in the collection of data for the project. It further gives a justification of methods and instrumental tools used. An outline of merits and challenges of the method is given. Furthermore, discussions on issues of validity and reliability, description of teaching processes, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations are presented.

3.2. Empirical Qualitative Design Approach

A qualitative design approach was used in this study to explore the strategies of providing constructive feedback in two grade 11 EFAL classrooms as well as the nature of feedback given in response to EFAL learners' essays. The qualitative design approach is a scientific research that involves "systematic ways of collecting data on naturally occurring phenomena" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010 p.23) with intention of exploring, interpreting or obtaining a deeper understanding of a particular problem or issue of concern (Greenhalgh & Talyor, 1979). The data collected using this approach is in the form of descriptive words. This implies that it classifies (what is X), contrary to a quantitative approach that is concerned with enumerations (i.e. how many Xs). Collection of data can be done either through observation, casual interviews, prolonged fieldwork or documentary study with the intention of understanding a given research problem or topic. I decided to use the qualitative design approach as my research was aimed at exploring strategies that provide constructive feedback with intention of bringing about a change to my practice.

The qualitative design approach is categorized into five methodological designs which are ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, critical studies case study and action research. In my study I used an action research methodology. Action research (AR) is classified as a qualitative approach since it integrates the methods and techniques of observing, documenting, analyzing, and interpreting characteristics, patterns, attributes, and meanings of human phenomena under study (Gillis & Jackson, 2002; Leininger, 1985) cited in MacDonald (2012:34). Since the nature of data collected is descriptive and interpretive, it then qualifies it to

be regarded as qualitative. Koshy (2010) argues that qualitative data are suitable for action research because it focuses on the 'naturally occurring, ordinary events in a natural setting'. In addition, it allows one to capture the 'richness and holism of a situation'.

3.3 Action Research

Action research, according to Kasbolah & Sukaryana (1988) investigates everyday problems experienced by one on his/ her own teaching with the core intention to improve an unsatisfactory condition and to increase the quality of teaching practices in the classroom in order that those practices become more professional and also gain a better understanding of practice. Building on what has been presented by other researchers, Burns (2010) posits that action research involves taking a self –reflective, critical and a practical systematic approach to explore own teaching context/ classroom.

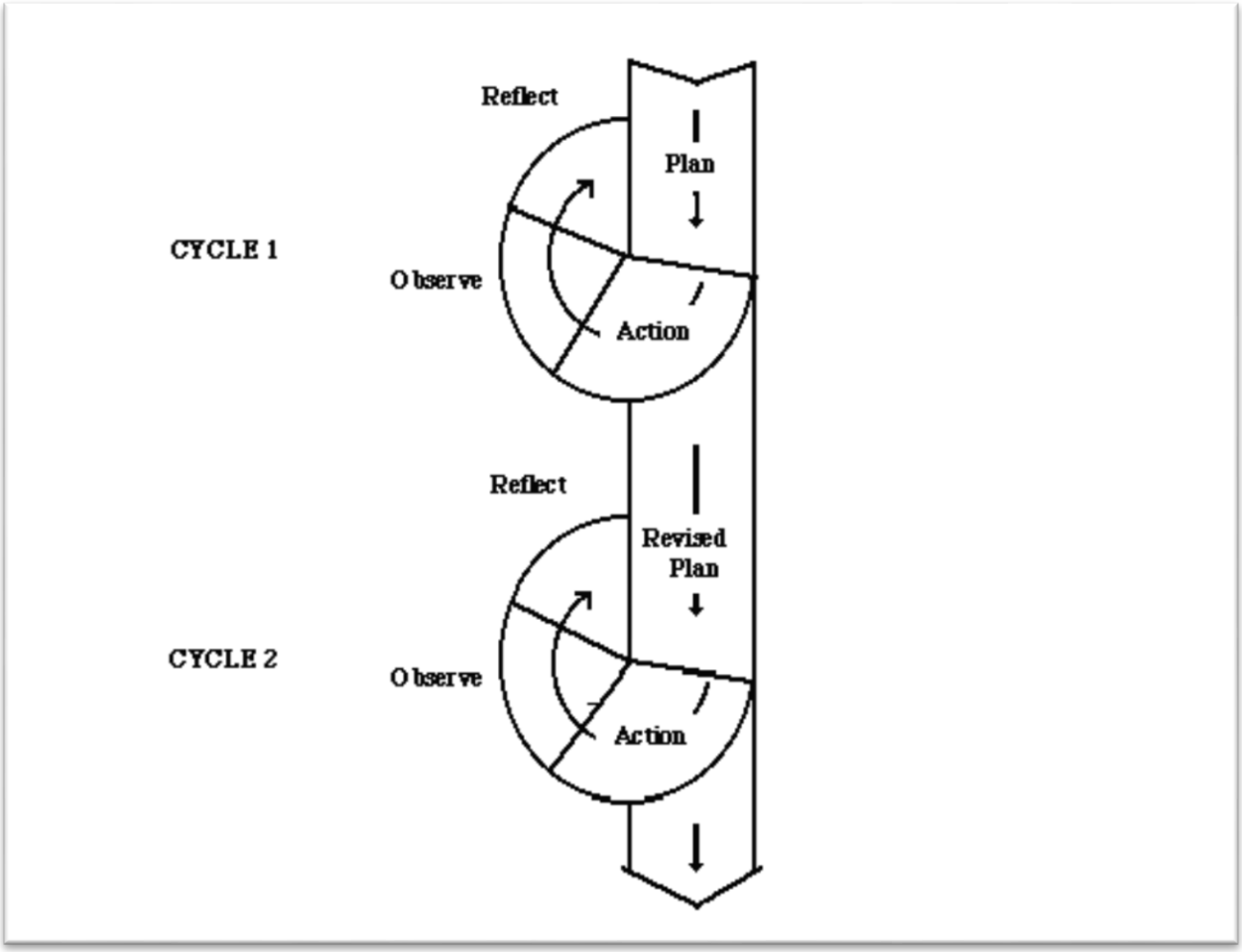
Action research differs from other traditional sciences research. According to McNiff and Whitehead (2010) the researcher in a traditional science research observes what others are doing, whereas the researcher in AR is the centre of the research. More so, the AR researcher adopts an inside, self-study perspective since the focal point of action research is about personal improvement and training (McNiff and Whitehead, 2010), which is contrary to the traditional science researcher (Stenhouse cited in Koshy, 2010). Another difference presented by McNiff and Whitehead (2010) is that with the traditional science research, quality is evaluated through findings being generalisable and replicable, while for AR the researcher's values are said to be the criteria and quality is evaluated according to whether the researcher lives in the direction of his value and whether there is a form of professional development. Furthermore, McNiff and Whitehead (2010) state that action research differs from the traditional science research in that it is a participatory action research. Kemmis & McTaggart (2005) describe participatory action research as involving people doing action research 'on' themselves either individually or collectively, which according to Mills (2007), can be conducted in a social situation, that is, in education, medicine or social service sectors. The researchers further describe it as collaborative, as it engages a group of participants in exploring their social practice that links them with others in social interaction (p: 267). This study involves me as the researcher doing an individual self-

study. Through engaging in participatory research, people can devise ways of dealing with social changes that shape and constrain their practices.

Unlike the traditional science research, action research involves a spiral of action. The researcher who first coined AR, Lewin (1946) cited in Kemmis (1980), described action research as involving a spiral cycle that consists of 'analysis, fact finding, conceptualisation, planning, execution, more fact finding or evaluation and repetition of the same activities' (p.4). The key aspects in the cycle are planning, implementing and evaluating. Kemmis (1980) states that the formulation of these processes by Lewin was more technical oriented as they related to social management and social engineering. The plan according Lewin referred to a plan of a program of social action (Kemmis, 1980).

For this study I adopted the Action – research cycles presented by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) as illustrated in figure 2. I adopted Kemmis and McTaggart model because it is argued to offer one an opportunity to re-visit the phenomena at a higher level and thus progressing towards greater overall understanding, (Koshy, 2010). It further allows one to understand an issue in an educational context and thereby make informed decisions. The model is also argued to be about empowering the researcher, which for me is a fundamental purpose of my study.

Figure 2 : Action Research cycle model adopted from Kemmis & McTaggart (1988)



3.3.1 Stages of Action Research Cycle

Before embarking on the action research process, the researcher needs to develop a general idea of how something might be improved, (Wilson, 2009). This requires the researcher to refine the problem, which involves the researcher narrowing his or her focus and arriving at a manageable research question for the pilot intervention as is stipulated by Wilson (2009). This then will enable one to engage with the action reflection processes with the desire to change practice.

This is then followed by the four stages of action research cycle 1

A. Planning the action research: This stage involves planning how to change the practice and improve one's practice as well as strategizing on the means of collecting reliable evidence so as to monitor the effects of the new approach and how data could be analysed.
B. Acting : this involves implementation of the plan, systematically observing the effects of the action and documenting the context , action and opinions, Burns (2010:8)
C. Observe: in this stage the researcher monitors and evaluates the action
D. Reflection: reflect on the issues that arise from the intervention and this will then prompt the teacher to re-plan or modify their teaching, Wilson (2009). Burns (2010) further suggests that the researcher has to share the story as it is part of ongoing professional development.

The researcher then engages in cycle 2 which requires re-planning, further action, observation and reflection. This allows the researcher an opportunity to make informed decisions through enhanced understanding (Koshy, 2010).

3.3.2 Living contradictions

When carrying out an action research, a researcher's aim is to improve his or her practice and live the values more fully, however, during the process there are tensions that can be experienced by the researcher. These tensions are said to be inherent, universal phenomena and need to be acknowledged by the educator in the real world (Whitehead in Laidlaw, 1994). Laidlaw (1994) states that there are two living contradictions and these are: internal and external. The internal living contradictions are the values one holds but does not live them out. That is, one may believe he/she is doing one thing but is actually enacting the opposite values into what he/she is actually doing. For example, a researcher may value the importance of improving the quality of essays written by all learners through focusing on using both weak and strong quality essays as samples for oral feedback. However, during data analysis, one discovers that, despite his intention to help all learners to improve their quality of work, he/she has failed to also use samples from learners that have written good essays or even provide them with comments that will help them to improve. The researcher has promoted the value of improving quality of work but did not live up to that value she / he intended to enact.

The external contradiction is described as a conflict between the research's intentions and what the institutional conditions support, Laidlaw (1994). For example, a researcher may intend to use a learner-centred approach, yet find that the approach contradicts the teacher- centred approach in that context. Laidlaw posits that the discovery of these living contradictions enhance educational development and improve learning.

3.3.3 Advantages of Conducting Action Research

Carrying out an action research has great advantages. The benefit is that the research can be set within a specific context or situation, the researcher to be a participant, hence the research can relate to his/her own experience. This empowers the researcher to understand the problem better and to engage in continuous evaluation and modification of the theories of action as the action process progresses. Furthermore, MacDonald (2012) argues that the AR has been found to improve teaching practice as it helps a teacher to be capable of discriminating and evaluating human experience as well as enabling him/ her to improve performance in the field.

Through engaging in AR, a teacher further develops an in-depth understanding of the practice (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Herr and Anderson, 2005; Koshy, 2010). The approach allows me as a researcher to explore and experiment with different strategies and thus develop a better understanding of the practice. It was hoped that through my action research process, my learners would develop their metacognitive skills and enhance their essay writing skills.

3.3.4 Validity and Reliability of Action Research

Since the aim of action research is to bring about a change in one's practice, the approach needs the researcher to use systematic methods of collecting data that can be reliable and validated. Reliability and validity are the vital aspects of all research as these two aspects determine the credibility, trustworthy and transferability of any research. Reliability of research is dependent on the repeatability or reproducibility of its findings (Brink, 1993; Wilson, 2009). Factors that enhance reliability include accuracy and consistency with which the researcher collects data, the appropriateness of the data analysis, and the soundness of interpretations of the analysed data.

This implies that if the study were to be repeated in the same context with same participants and research methods, it will yield replicate results. However, as Fidel and Marshall and Rossman cited by Shenton (2004:71) note, the changing nature of the phenomena researched by qualitative researchers limits the issue of reproducibility of their research findings.

Validity is the extent to which research findings are a true reflection or representation of the reality that is being investigated (Brinks, 1993). Internal validity refers to the credibility of the research, while external validity is the extent to which research findings can be generalised (Brink, 1993). Validity is enhanced by such measures as having more than one person collecting data and applying different data collection methods, (Wilson 2009). He further states that validity also refers to the extent to which the researcher investigates what has been intended to be investigated.

According to Koshy (2005:143), validity in action research can be achieved by "sound and robust data collection and the consensus of accurate interpretations". A triangulation approach may be used to construct a more reliable picture and strengthen validity of research. Koshy (2005) and Wilson (2009) describe the triangulation as a way of collecting data from multiple sources and diversified contexts through multiple methods. Triangulation of investigators refers to the use of more than one person in collecting or analysing data (Wilson, 2009). According to these authors, the triangulation of methods may include observation, documentary evidence, interviews and questionnaires. If there is careful documentation and clear articulation of procedures, a researcher is then able to engage in cross-referencing of data from different methods. This process enables the researcher to clarify the presented issues and reflect on areas that could not have been illuminated by another method.

I used multiple and diversified sources of data such as learners' essays, an audio-tape of my own teaching and comments from my supervisor and critical colleagues. This approach helped me to record and notice things that could not have been illuminated from other sources and reflect on them, thus it led me to be more objective. To ensure that the quality of what is gathered is robust and without bias I had continuous consultation with my supervisor as well as my critical colleagues with regard to emerging findings. Clarifications of any assumptions with participants assisted me to provide valid data. After I had assessed my learners' work and made comments, my supervisor also read my learners' work and my comments and we discussed the comments.

However, positivists have critiqued the validity and reliability of the AR results on the ground that the findings are often unique to the specific research and therefore cannot be generalised (Carr and Kemmis, 1986) and Shenton (2004). The researcher posits that it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are replicable or transferable to other situations since the findings of a qualitative research are specific and small. For instance, if I or another researcher carried out the same research with a different group within same context or even different context, the results would not be exactly the same. Therefore due to students and context or situation being unique, findings may be relevant to a specific classroom investigated. In their defence, Carr and Kemmis (1986) and Koshy (2010) posit that action research does not seek generalisability.

Dana and Yendol-Hoppey (2009) posit that AR is not meant to be generalisable to all teachers everywhere as it is does not deal with extensive numbers and statistical analyses or 'white lab coats". They believe that action research is about improving one's practice, improvement of understanding of the practice, improvement of the situation in which the practice takes place and understanding what one can do to ensure his/her values and intentions are realized in his/her teaching (Carr and kemmis, 1986). AR can generate knowledge based on action within one's situation (Koshy, 2005). Issues on subjectivity of the AR approach have been also cautioned as it has been argued that it limits reliability and validity especially with regard to data collection. However, Koshy (2005) posits that one can maintain strict standards by sharing data with critical friends.

3.4 Collection of Data

3.4.1 Sampling

Sampling refers to a systematic selection of each unit in a specified way and under controlled conditions. It involves defining the population, procuring an accurate and complete list of the units in the population, drawing the representative unit and obtaining a satisfactory sample to represent the whole population. Since I was interested in improving my professionalism and quality of work produced by learners in the township school I work at, I used convenience sampling to select the participants. The targeted population was the grade 11 learners from my

township school at which I was teaching English as First Additional language (EFAL). I selected the two grade 11 classes that I was teaching EFAL. From the group that had received teacher feedback, 20 learners who had written 3 draft essays and had signed consent forms were selected for the purpose of the study while 10 learners in the peer assessment group were selected on the basis of having signed the consent form.

3.4.2 Methods of Data Collection

There are quite a number of commonly used methods to collect data for an action research. These include questionnaires, conducting interviews, systematic observation, field diaries and notes. The use of each instrumental tool relies heavily on the task at hand. For the purpose of my study I employed a triangulation approach. This is a principle that involves a careful choice of a range of data gathering techniques, of which each might illuminate a different aspect of the same issue. Different sources used enable the research to note issues that might have been missed by other sources and also enables one to reflect on the issues. The use of multiple and diversified techniques add to the overall reliability of the research processes and further strengthen the validity of the findings (Wilson, 2009; Koshy, 2010). My data were collected through various techniques such as documentary evidence, diary notes and I also audio-taped myself while I was giving oral feedback. I requested my critical colleagues to assess samples of my learners' essays and my comments. Below is the discussion of the methods of data collection I used for my study.

3.4.2.1 Documentary Evidence

Since I was interested in seeing whether the strategies used to provide learners with constructive feedback enabled them to improve their performance and build their metacognitive skills, and to improve my practice, I gathered information using documentary evidence. Documentary evidence is of great benefit as it can provide insight into situation where the research is situated. Through documents, one is able to analyse and reflect on the quality of work produced.

However like any other data collection tools, documentary evidence has its shortcomings. For instance, Koshy (2010) and Hopkins (2008) point out those participants may not be willing to give the researcher certain confidential documents. In addition, obtaining data may be time consuming which may limit effective analysis of data. In some cases, it may involve voluminous

amounts of data that will result in difficulties in analysis of data collected (Hopkins, 2008). The following documents were used to gather information for the research.

3.4.2.2 Documents

To help my learners to write quality essays, assess each other's work and to enable me to assess grade 11 A learners' work, I had to develop a reflective formative assessment rubric (see Appendix C). It comprises of seven categorise got from the DBE prescribed rubric for assessing essays in grade 11 (ref Appendix C1). Each category gives a descriptive description of the quality of work to enable learners and myself to identify the strength and weakens of the work produced. Koshy (2010) state use of such documents can provide insight into a situation. I had to construct this document since the DBE is evaluative and not specific.

I also used documents such as learners marked essays, peer assessment sheets, the transcript of a lesson on feedback (Appendix D1), feedback presentation(Appendix D2) and the comments (see Appendix F) that I wrote to explore how I could use teacher and peer assessment strategies to provide constructive feedback. The first drafts written by learners helped me to plan for the feedback lesson. Through the learners' first draft I was able to identify areas that I needed to give feedback on to improve their essay writing skills. The second and final drafts written by learners were used to determine whether the feedback given had enabled learners to improve their performance and to develop their self- regulative skills. The comments that I wrote enabled me to see whether there was a relationship between my feed-back and the quality of improvement made by the learners in their essays. I also created an evaluation sheet for learners to assess the study (Appendix F).

3.4.2.3 Notes

In addition, reflective notes of what happened during each lesson were maintained. The notes offered a close-in-time mechanism that could aid memory for the analysis that followed by providing a "reflective picture" (Koshy, 2005). Hopkins (2008) describes reflection notes as a way of reporting observations, reflections and reactions to classroom problem. The use of reflective notes enabled me to reflect on the strategies and oral feedback given to my learners.

The notes I made assisted me to personalise the project. In addition, the notes helped me to plan, give an on-going record of the process, reflect, keep a progress check on the project and make any appropriate changes as argued by Koshy (2005). This also enabled me to relate incidents and explore emerging trends. Another significant benefit is that the contents of notes can allow one to construct a research story and 'contributes to professional development of the researcher', (Koshy 2010:91).

There are challenges that might be encountered through the use of this tool. Hopkins (2008) and Koshy (2005) posit that personalising information or incidents may result in one being subjective thus leading to bias and information not being valid or reliable. One may decide not to diarise events if things are not working. Koshy (2005) states that diarising each and every event becomes a challenge especially when the research is not going according to plan. In cases where conversation is impossible to record by field notes, Hopkins (2008) suggest that other tools such as tapes and question analysis be used as fall back strategy.

3.4.2.4 Audio-taping

As a fall back an audio tape was used to record a lesson on Teacher Oral Feedback after learners had written a first draft. I did not audio-tape any learners. This was intended to help me to reflect on the strategy I used. The audio-tape enabled me to investigate and analyse the quality of my feedback objectively, and thus increase the validity of the study.

Gary and Malins (2004) posit that audio-typing is the tool that enables one to capture reflection – in –action and spontaneous spoken thoughts at the move at any time. The tool also provides heuristic and accurate information to be reviewed and analysed (Hopkins 2008). However, like any other tool it has its own drawbacks. It took me hours to transcribe and review the audio-recorded information (see Appendix D2-audio transcript).

The table on the following page gives an outlines of data sources used to address my research problem and quantity of the documents.

Table 1: Summary of collected data for my study comments

Type: Documentary evidence	**Quantity**
Learners' essays. *See appendix H*	3 essay drafts written by 20 learners in grades 11A
Teacher written feedback and a mark in 3rd final draft. *See Appendix F* Learners written feedback	Each essay draft has my written comments
Diary notes/ reflective notes	For all the lessons taught in grades 11A and 11B Description of procedure that happened in class.
Evaluations forms –*see Appendix see Appendix G*	0ne evaluation sheet for each learner in grade 11A filled in by learner.
Type: Empirical evidence	**Quantity**
Transcript of self-audio tape *see Appendix D1*	1 transcript of the teacher feedback discussion in class 11A

3.5 Data Analysis

Analysis in action research is viewed by Winter (1989) as an approach that provokes the researcher to reflect and plan a new action that proceeds through the teacher identifying the contradictory aspects that may be hindering her from attaining her intended outcomes in teaching, as well as those that may be in harmony with the practice. In order to allow reflection and re-planning of new action to prevail, the data collected needs to be qualitative and interpretative. This approach is appropriate for my research since Wilson (2009:126) points out that the approach relies on a "creative engagement by the researcher in the production, application and interpretation of ideas". Through that engagement the researcher develops a better understanding of the phenomena. I used the qualitative and interpretative approach to analyse my data because my research is about formative assessment strategies that I experimented with to provide my learners with constructive feedback as well as to improve my practice.

During the process of analysis I realised that I had large amounts of data collected and to deal with that I used coding. Dana and Yendol-Hoppey (2009:118) define coding as a process of analysing large volumes of data generated in the form of transcripts, field notes, documents, etc. Coding breaks the voluminous data collected into manageable segments or categories and thereby names each category. The data collected included learners' essays, teacher comments, diary notes, data from the evaluation forms and oral feedback transcript as is indicated in table 1.

3.5.1Analysis of learners' essays

Seven categories were used to analyse the learners' essays: outstanding, meritorious, substantial, adequate, moderate, moderate elementary and not achieved as provided in the reflective assessment rubric. Each category was sub divided into 2 sections that is A- Minimal improvement and B- Significant improvement. These categories were then used to classify the quality of work produced and quality of improvement (see Appendix E). I also used tables to display the quality of work produced by each learner in the 3 essays. Learners were then grouped according to the quality of work and improvement made. Essay data showed that some learners demonstrated a minimal improvement and others a significant improvement.

3.5.2 Analysis of written comments

I firstly displayed the comments I made on each learner's essays in a table form (see appendix F). I then used Brookhart scheme to analyse the nature of my written feedback comments. This permitted me, the researcher, to analyse and reflect on my feedback. Through learners drafts, I was able to reflect on my comments whether they lead learners to improve their work i.e. were my comments constructive enough to highlight areas that needed attention and did they provide ways of improving? Furthermore, it allowed me to understand the overall impact of my feedback on the quality of the work produced by learners my findings.

3.5.3 Diary notes

I used diary notes to keep progress check on my study and to give a description of what conspired during the teaching process.

3.5.4 Analysis of data from evaluation sheets

Data collected from the evaluation forms was analysed according to the themes in the forms (see appendix H). A table was used to display the responses per theme. This was done to assess the success of the study from the learners' perspective.

3.5.5 Analysis of oral feedback (transcript)

The data from the data from audio recordings was transcribed verbatim. Brookhart (2008)'s scheme was then used to analyse transcribed data and my oral Power Point presentation. This also enabled me to evaluate the nature of my oral feedback and its effect on the quality of improvement.

Furthermore the triangulation approach was used to cross reference the quality of my learners' work, my comments and verify whether there was improvement in quality of the learners' essays. My supervisor and critical colleague read and analysed some of my learners' essays and my comments.

3.6 Ethics

Since action research is conducted in a real world context and involves collection of data from participants, it is therefore essential that the researcher adheres to ethical principles.
Winter cited in O'Brien (1998), states that action research must adhere to a number of principles. These include: consultation of relevant persons, obtaining permission to carry out the study and permission to use the participants' documents and the promise to protect and maintain confidentiality.

Written permission to conduct research at the school in the SA East Rand area was obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education (see Appendix H). Permission was also obtained from the principal of the school to allow learners to engage in the research. Parents were given the consent forms to give or decline their children participation in this study. Learners were also given the consent forms to sign. This implies that all the participants were informed, consulted and

advised about the purpose of the study. They were not compelled to participate in the research. Pseudonyms and codes were used to protect the identity and dignity of the participants. Documentary data collected from learners will be safely kept to maintain confidentiality until they are destroyed after 3-5 years.

3.7 A description of how I enacted the teaching processes.

This section presents the strategies that I used to provide constructive feedback to improve my practice and learners' learning. I applied the processes involved in action research which form a repeated cycle that includes planning, acting as per the plan, observing, reflecting, revising the plan and acting as per the revised plan as discussed in 3.3.1. This process was also guided by the aim of my study - Explore, implement and evaluate the formative assessment strategies of providing constructive feedback in my EFAL classroom as well as examine the nature/ type of feedback given to learners. In addition the questions below also guided the process.

1. What went well? What didn't?
2. What could be improved if the same lesson were to be used again? The action research procedure I enacted to improve learners' quality of work and my profession. Wilson states:

> *… When a classroom teacher undertakes action research , he/ she tries a new approach , studies what happens, shares findings with others, reads what other experts say and then in light of their research findings , reformulates the problem and repeats the process again*, (Wilson 2009: 190).

Below is the description of the enactment of the assessment intervention process.

3.7.1 Cycle 1

Before planning the intervention for my action, I refined my problem to manageable research questions for my study so that the focus was narrowed down. That enabled me to structure my formative assessment strategies which I was going to use to help learners to improve the quality of their work as well as quality of their learning (see chapter 1). The formative strategies would also enable me to improve teaching professionalism. This was followed by the creation of a rubric for reflective essay (ref appendix C). Since my aim was to help learners to produce quality

work, I needed a rubric that was more descriptive and related to the type of essay that they were writing. The rubrics that are CAPS-oriented are too general and evaluative. They seem not to give a description of a learner's work. In addition, I crafted lesson plans and activities that the learners had to engage in during the writing process (see Appendix D).

A DESCRIPTION OF THE ENACTED TEACHING PROCESS

Initially I had planned to have a 2 cycle plan as illustrated in appendix B but that changed as a result of the quality of work produced by my learners in both classes. I ended up having 8 lessons per grade instead of six. Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 were identical in both classes. Lesson 5 and 7 were different since in grade 11A I gave them oral feedback on their written essays while 11B received peer feedback. Furthermore, learners in both classes had to write a third draft. My aim was that through the teaching process, learners would not only improve their writing skills, develop assessment skills but also develop their self –regulative skills. Below is a description of what happened during my teaching process.

On the 8th of September 2014, I offered my lesson 1 (characteristics of a good essay) to grade 11A and 11B. In order for learners to write quality work they have to know the qualities of a good essay. I explained the criteria in relation to the characteristics of a good essay and this was followed by an activity (see appendix D lesson 1). Learners in both classes had to describe the task given in relation to the rubric. I then used samples of good essays to demonstrate the presentation of content, structure and language usage. We identified elements that made the essays good- introduction catchy and related to topic, one idea discussed in each paragraph and a conclusion that ties ideas that have been discussed. This was done to enable learners to know what is expected of them and also work towards the set target- producing quality work.

On the 9th of September 2014, I presented my lesson 2 –Planning a reflective essay in both classes. I introduced the lesson by telling learners that lessons cannot only be learnt through being taught but through experience. I then related my own experience. In pairs learners related their own experiences; thereafter we discussed the structure of a reflective essay, drew a mind map and also looked at how the topic could be introduced. Samples of introductions were read and discussed in class. We compared 3 different introductions to the same essay to analyse which

one was the most effective and why. Further, learners were given an opportunity to draw their own mind map and to write an introduction for an essay entitled '***The most important lesson my parents taught me***'. Thereafter they had to write their first draft. Grade 11B learners were more excited and great participants.

On the 10th of September 2014, in lesson 3, both classes had to write an essay entitled '***The most important lesson my parents taught me'*** (see lesson plan 3 appendix D***).*** Few learners read their introductions and we commented on the introductions read. I re-emphasised the key ideas they need to consider as they write their reflective essays- a remarkable lesson, story and value of lesson. I moved around checking, noted that some learners were still busy working on their mind maps and by the end of period, they had not completed writing their essays.

I collected the essays on the 11th of September 2014, however, most learners in Grade 11B had not written the essay. When I asked them they said they were busy preparing for examinations and they had another task to do. I encountered a challenge to have all grade 11B learners write the essay as they were no longer taught by me. Nonetheless, I tried to make them realise the need to write the essay- improve their writing skills and besides marks could be used for school Based Assessment. After collection of essays, I trained learners how to assess essays as it was the core lesson of the day (lesson 4). I then engaged learners in the process of analysing and giving feedback. I explained the concept 'feedback' to them and gave reasons why it is essential to give feedback. We also discussed how feedback should be given and what must not be done (ref to feedback notes). We discussed the 'do's' and 'dont's' when assessing each other's work (see link...\comments). Later we analysed an essay as a class using the three sets of criteria. I then asked them to work in groups of fours and assess an essay entitled, '*Valuable lessons learned in life'* using the same criteria. Learners were requested to identify the major strengths and weaknesses of the essay using given rubric. Secondly, the learners were to suggest how the essay could be improved. In addition, I asked them to use the criteria to state the differences between the first essay and the essay entitled, *'Valuable life lesson that you have learned' (see appendix* D*).*

3.7.2 Cycle 2

Planning the intended oral teacher feedback presentation

Soon after I had marked their work, this is how I planned my intervention

- Identification of areas that needed to be feedback on – mind map, content, organisation and structure of the essay.
- Selection of 4 learners essay to use as samples to highlight the core aspects of essay that needed to be improved.
- Discussion of the feedback content and how their work could be improved with my supervisor
- Preparation of feedback power point presentation
- Oral feedback

Grade 11 A – Enacted Oral teacher feedback lesson 5A (see Lesson transcript Appendix D1. and feedback content D2)

Having prepared a plan on how I would feedback my learners to enable them to generate improvement in quality of work, I then presented a power point lesson on key aspects that they needed to act on.

1. Mind map – I advised my learners that the ideas stated in the mind map should be related to the ideas in the essay. I also informed them that their mind maps needed to have the key lesson, story/ experience and value of the lesson learnt.

2. Content – made them aware that they were to describe only one remarkable lesson. Most learners had written more than one lesson. Another issue that came out from the lesson on feedback was that learners failed to relate lesson learnt to experience. I then gave an example of an introduction on slide 2 (see appendix D). Thereafter, I showed learners how they can relate an introduction of their essay to their own experience. I used questions to help build up a story that shows the value of the constructor's words. (From slide 2: construction worker's words.) After that, I read samples from learners' first introductory paragraphs. I then posed questions so that learners could also identify areas that needed improvement .Throughout the discussion areas that

needed to be improved in selected areas were presented to learners and suggestions and action points given as in appendix D2 (power point presentation). In addition, questions posed were used to help learners to develop their story.

3. Organisation- I stated that their essays were well organised. I was able to identify the introduction, body and conclusion of the essays. However, some essays had mixed ideas and some did not have conclusion. In this section I did not offer suggestions or recommendations on how to conclude an essay or what they should do done to limit / avoid mixing ideas.

4. Language and vocabulary usage -Thereafter, I presented common errors found within essays (line slide 10.) The incorrectly written words such as escalate, gain, bad were identified as some of the incorrectly spelt words. I also advised learners to edit work or use computers to write work so that they can spell check words easily. Besides that, I also pointed out that some learners used tenses incorrectly. However, I told them that I did not focus much in language and vocabulary but that doesn't mean they ignore language errors .Learners were also advised not avoid using contractions since they were engaged in formal writing.

Lastly, I requested learners to read and make use of written and oral comments to rework their essays. I also told them to recheck work for spelling and any grammatical errors. On the 18th of September 2014 they wrote the second draft during lesson 6.

Reflection on oral teacher feedback

At the end of the lesson learners were aware that they were to deal with one remarkable lesson, tell a story in relation to the lesson learnt. However I recognised that I did not use samples of learners whose work was good and I did not show them how to improve the quality of work or what aspects of their essay needed to be improved and how.

Grade 11 B – The Enacted Peer assessment strategy (lesson 5B)

With grade 11 B, 10 learners had to assess each other's work in threes using the rubric, notes on how to feedback and assessment sheet to fill in their comments while the rest of the learners were busy with the first essay. Since it was their first time to engage in this form of activity and it was novel to them, it took them about 2hrs to feedback on each other's work. This was a

cumbersome activity to do. In groups of three and one group had four learners were given the opportunity to read and discuss the essay using given criteria and the dos and don'ts to apply when giving feedback. They were requested to comment on the content, organisation and language usage. On the 18 0f September 2014 during lesson 6 learners had to write second draft using the feedback comments given to them.

Reflection on peer assessment strategy

The learners' comments did not specify what needed to be improved. And again it was a challenge for them to identify grammatical mistakes. One learner commented that it was difficult to spot what needed to be changed in Lucky's essay.

3.7.3 Cycle 3

Planning the assessment intervention for my action research

On the 25 September 2015 I meet with my supervisor who also assessed the quality of my learners' improvement and my comments. She also ascertained that there was insufficient improvement (draft 2 content is similar to draft 1 content in most of the learners' work) and some of my comments were not explicit. I then decided on the following:

GRADE 11A

- Craft lesson plan on teacher feedback-lesson 7A
- Give another feedback
- Use Sherman article to show learner improvement
- Learners write 3rd draft- lesson 8
- Assess and give mark

Grade 11B

- Craft lesson plan on giving peer feedback- lesson 7B
- Construct evaluative form that will encourage learners to feedback
- Read Sherman article- examples of comments and improvement seen in learners' work
- Learners 3rd essay to be assessed twice

- Write final draft- lesson 8.

Enactment of the intervention plan

I developed another lesson plan (lesson 7) in which I used Sherman's drafts to show my learners the kind of improvement I expected as was advised by my supervisor. I even offered individual oral feedback to learners that had produced the same work. In grade 11B, I had to construct a new assessment sheet and further read them comments made by Sherman's learners and changes that happened. After discussions, the 10 learners had to feedback each other's work. This time an essay received only one feedback.

Thereafter learners had to write their third draft (lesson 8). However, there was a crisis with Grade 11B. Two learners decided to withdraw and one learner submitted two essays. Seeing that analysis of the peer feedback data would not yield reliable and valid results and give a true reflection of the process in 11B class, I decided to drop the line of enquiry (peer assessment). I then focused on the Teacher feedback. Besides, investigating peer assessment would have made my study too extensive.

I marked and gave comments to the 3rd final essay drafts of grade 11A. A critical colleague of mine also read Nolanga, Sipho and Phumzi essays. I then met again with my supervisor; we looked at learners' essays - Penelope, Nolanga, Precious and Gladness. She also read my comments and gave her feedback on them. Description of the quality of my learners' work and my comments will be dealt with in the next chapter.

In conclusion, the teaching process took almost two weeks and was quite an experience to me and my learners. I learnt that crafting lessons, engaging learners in discussions and giving descriptive feedback helps learners to produce quality work. Furthermore, learners need more constant practice so as to be able to engage in peer assessment. To maintain their enthusiasm, lessons need to be crafted in a more fascinating way and I still have to develop that skill.

3.8 Limitations of the study

Limitations are an inevitable part of research studies. In this action research study, the time in which the data were collected brought about limitations to the study. The time frames given in the completion of the research report limited the research from getting more learners or another

class to engage in peer assessment process. I feel that limited me from giving my feedback group more time to work thoroughly on their final drafts. In addition, there was no normal teaching and learning taking place since it was towards the end of year examinations. This made it difficult to engage with all the learners in the study especially with the peer-assessment group.

In addition, the peer feedback assessment strategy had its own limitations as the majority of peer assessment group did not want to participate. Only seven out of ten learners that gave their consent to participate submitted three essays. This prevented me from pursuing the analysis of the third draft as I had initially planned.

Monitoring closely and analysis of this practice demands space and time which in reality are not always existent. It was therefore a challenge to maintain rigour in data collection within a limited space of time. Another issue associated with qualitative action research pertains to research bias and validity. Since action research involves individuals who are interested parties in the research, validity of research process has been critiqued. McGinty (2006) posit that there are inevitable researcher biases in data collection and analysis. The selective use of data to explain particular findings may misrepresent the actual data and mislead the reader. While Herr and Anderson (2005) state that bias and subjectivity are natural and acceptable in action research as long as they are critically examined rather than ignored

I experienced bias and subjectivity when I had to critique/ reflect on my comments and why some learners did not improved their essay 2. To overcome this limitation, my supervisor and a colleague analysed a sample of data collected. My supervisor and colleague's openness helped me to critically examine my comments and learners' work. This also enabled me to reflect whether or not my comments were as descriptive as I had thought they were and the extent to which the quality of the learners' work had improved. Transparent analysis process and trail of evidence also assisted to reduce potential bias.

The small sample size limits the validity of results to some extent. Small sample size and brief implementation period limited me from identifying other challenges or strengths especially from learners that were not part of this study. The specific findings may be only applicable to my

school. Thus findings cannot be transferred to other schools since schools have different context. Given the small size sample of the study, limited time and uniqueness of schools, interpretation of these findings as policy recommendations is cautioned. However, my ideas or conclusions can be tried out by other interested parties in their practices to see if they work for them.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided details of the research design and methods used for data collection and analysis of the findings. It also presented the reasons for the selection and use of the methods used. These methods included gathering of documentary evidence documentary, notes and recording of one feedback lesson. It further gave a description of the teaching processes.The next chapter presents the presentation of the data that I collected during my teaching process.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION

4. 1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected from learners' essays illustrating the nature of the improvement in learners' essay writing skills. It also presents a description of my comments, followed by a description of the relationship between teacher comments and learners' quality of improvement. This will enable me to see whether my comments generated that improvement, and if not, identify the challenges. Lastly, the chapter presents data from the evaluation sheets done by learners. This will help to determine the benefits that learners derived from the formative assessment process, i.e. whether it lead to the construction of knowledge and understanding, improved assessment and writing skills.

4.2. Description of the Quality of the Work Produced by 20 Participants

This section firstly presents a description of the overall findings on the quality of work produced by 20 learners. Secondly, it presents a description of the quality of written comments made by the teacher and the relationship between teacher's comments with learner's quality of improvement.

In order to generate the description, I classified learners' first essays according to the seven levels of categories used in my reflective rubric (appendix C). The criteria in the rubric enabled me to show where learners were in relation to the objectives and what they needed to do to get there. These categories are as follows: not achieved, elementary, moderate, adequate, substantial, meritorious and outstanding. These categories are further subdivided into subsections namely: minimum improvement and significant improvement. The criteria used to categorise these section is based on the quality of improvement with regard to content, organisation and language.

The minimum subsection describes essays that showed minimal changes and that did not result in a progression to next level. This means that essay 2 and essay 3 had similar structure or content as essay 1. Minimal changes were seen in sentence structure but there were no additional

ideas added or developed. In general essay 3 remained in the same level as essay 1 since there were no major changes in content to move it to next level.

The significant improvement subsection entails major changes seen in key aspect of the essay. This implies that essay 2 and 3 content was different form essay 1. Additional ideas were included and ideas were presented in a more interesting and clear way, such that it moved to the next level of achievement.

4.2.1. Description of Categories used to Describe the Quality of Improvement in Learners' Essays

Category 1: Not achieved: This category describes essays that are off-topic; that is, essay presents a list of lessons and does not describe an experience from which a particular lesson was learnt, each sentence or idea stands on its own and is not related to the next sentence or idea. In addition, the mind map does not point to key experience. Within this category I subdivided the essays into those that show minimum improvement in terms of presentation of ideas, flow of essay but still have not related a story or addressed the topic fully despite being given oral and written feedback. It further implies that essays 2 and 3 had similar content as essay 1. Minimum changes could be seen in structure or language but it was still out of topic. The 'Not achieved with significant improvement' category describes essay that progress to the next level as a result of significant improvement in content and presentation of ideas. Essay three was different from essay 1, as it addressed the topic and attempted to relate a story. There were signs of emerging knowledge of what was expected.

Category 2: Elementary: These essays are categorised as elementary based on my marking the first essay using the rubric in appendix A**.** The elementary category describes essays that indicate signs of emerging knowledge of topic but have not presented sufficient information on the topic. For instance, the essays are partial on topic. The essays describe one lesson and further attempts to tell a story. However, the story told either lacks further development (incomplete) or is not clear at all. Mind map points key experience in some cases. Once more this category is subdivided into two:

Elementary - with minimal improvement but still remains in same level

Elementary – with significant improvement that progresses it to another level.

Category 3: Moderate: The essay in this category tells a story of an experience in relation to what the student learned from parents. However, the story does not have enough descriptive details of experience and does not state consequences or reflect on the lesson. In addition, the essays comprise of sentences or ideas that are connected. The ideas discussed are interesting thou still need to be developed further. And in some cases there is still repetition of ideas.

The mind map shows key experience and few specific details related but do not list personal response to it. The essay shows basic knowledge of the topic. Under this category there are essays that have shown minimal and significant improvement.

Category 4: Adequate: This comprises of essays that describe the experience adequately but some ideas are not yet developed or explained as is also shown in the mind map. The mind map list general points on key experience. There is a clear description of the story in relation to lesson learnt. The introduction, story and conclusion are related. The sentences and ideas follow on each other. The essays show adequate knowledge of the topic, as they attempt to be descriptive in nature.

The simple sentences used have minor errors that do not impede understanding of the story. Likewise, this category comprise of two subsections: adequate with minimal improvement and adequate significant improvement.

Category 5: Substantial: The essays that are classified under this category show evidence of relevant and sound knowledge and understanding of the topic. This is evidently seen in the mind map that points out expectations and few personal responses. The lesson in essay is clearly described and is drawn directly from experience. Ideas are logical sequenced and developed. Story is told in more interesting way as it describes personal response though there is no reflection of experience given. Likewise it is subdivided into 2 sections: substantial with minimal improvement and substantial with significant improvement.

Category 6: Meritorious: The essays under this category reveal a thorough knowledge and understanding of topic as is illustrated by mind map that shows some details on expectations,

key experience and personal response even thou there are no reflections included and does not present the process of learning.

The essays' experience is described in more vivid, imaginative and creative way. The essay uses descriptive words to relate the experience. There is also creation of fear, tension and relief. Furthermore, essay includes a range of interesting ideas that are clearly, logical organised and related. Essay also reflects on experience. The essay comprises of a variety of sentences. Descriptive words and minimal idiomatic expressions used to describe the experience.

Category 7: Outstanding: This category describes essays that demonstrate exceptional comprehension of topic as is illustrated by the mind map and essay. The mind map points out expectations on the experience, shows key experiences, personal response, reflection and lesson of which contributes to its excitement. The essays not only describe experience in a more vivid imaginative and creative way but reflect and describe the value of lesson. A process of learning is seen through the essay. Ideas are built on each other in a way that develops an exciting story.

Furthermore, variety types of sentences are used to relate experience. These include compound, complex as well as simple sentences. Idiomatic expressions and quotes are used to cement ideas brought forth. It is further categories into 2 sections- outstanding with minimal improvement and outstanding with significant improvement.

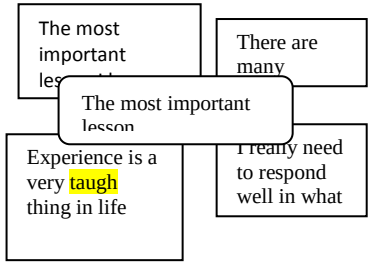
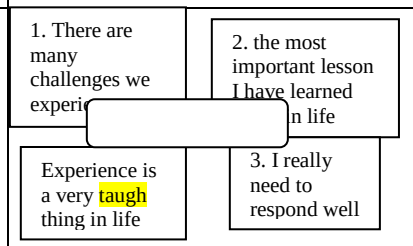
4.2.1.1 Description of Learners Quality of Improvement

For the purpose of my presentation and analysis of data, I created 20 tables of description of the quality of work produced by each learner and also made tables for comments given to each learner in 11A. However, due to limited number of words requested by the faculty, I included 10 tables in the appendix and few tables have been included in this section.

The table below gives a description of the quality of work produced by Penelope throughout her three essays drafts and the comments I made.

Category 1A: Not achieved, with minimal improvement

Table 2 : The quality of work produced by Penelope in the three essays

criteria	Description of learner's essay 1	Teacher's exact comments on essay 1	Description of learner's essay 2	Teacher's exact comments on essay 2	Description of learner's essay 3	Teacher's exact comment on essay 3
Mind map **as it is in learner's essay**		1.specify the lesson 2. story based on lesson 3. general attitude towards parents 4. value of the lesson	No mind map			1.Not discussed in essay 2.lesson; to be responsible & listen to my parents 3. Story1. irresponsible 2. Caught drunk 3. expelled 4. value of being responsible
content	Essay gives a list of lesson taught by parents i.e. "...teaching me how to be me". "Listening is a skill" Essay does not describe an experience from which a lesson was learnt. Dwells more on what parents said. No story told Ideas not repeated No conclusion is given	1. Describe One most important lesson taught by your parents. 2.Relate that lesson to your own experience	Essay still give a list of lessons taught as in essay 1 Essay still does not describe an experience similar to 1st draft – content has not changed. No story told Ideas not repeated No conclusion	1. In the 1st paragraph state the lesson and what you think about it. 2.Tell a story of how you learnt that lesson 3.In conclusion show the value of the lesson	Essay still does not clearly state a lesson taught though in Para 5 she states that her parents taught her to stop partying. Essay still does not describe an experience. What it does instead is: mentions that parents taught her to stop partying but did not listen. However does not say much about an experience that made her realise that wasn't good. The content in the first three paragraphs is similar to essay 1 and 2.paragraph 5 brings a new	1. No story mentioned in relation to parents' teaching. 2. Describe the story in detail- what is it that happened when you went parting? What went wrong when you went parting? Why do you see it important to listen to you parents and act responsible

			given.		idea that state what her parents said about partying Conclusion given that informs us that she is grateful to God that she listened to parents ...	
organisation	Ideas are not presented clearly and lack development. Each Para gives a new lesson which is not connected to previous paragraph.		Ideas better presented but still lack developed Each paragraph gives a new lesson which is not connected to previous paragraph.		Ideas better presented though still need development E.g. 'my notorious ways could have ..... that I would have rebelled to my parents Repetition of ideas i.e. I didn't listen..... and I really did not listen	
language	Sentences are poorly constructed and sometimes it's difficult to understand the meaning of the sentence and flow of essay, Paragraph2 Incomplete ideas. Words incorrectly spelt, verb agreement error, punctuation error, incorrect prepositions, use incorrect tense and random use of full stop on incomplete ideas e.g. My peers led me to rebel to my parents	Select appropriate words and expressions On essay- corrected some words that were incorrectly spelt and some sentences e.g. spellings notorious, escalate. My parents always yelled at me when I did some	Slight improvement in sentence construction e.g. Paragraph 2 No change in way ideas are introduced. Rectified spelling errors		Even though the essay has grammatical errors, there have been notable changes in sentence construction. Sentences can be understood as there is improvement in choice of words. Full stops used in complete ideas and correct prepositions used in sentences. ...	Check spellings or have someone check your work.

Category 1A: Not achieved, with minimal improvement

Out of the 20 learners who had written 3 essays, 2 learners' first essays were classified as not achieved with minimal improvement. To determine the quality of improvement I compared the 3drafts written by the learners. The learners' first draft essays have more than one lesson. For instance from the table above, Penelope's 1st draft had more than one lessons. These include the following lessons: teaching me how to be me, communication and listening is a skill. Sipho's essay (refer to appendix D1) has 3 lessons presented – respect old people; don't listen to your friends and to have responsibilities. They could not connect the lessons they presented together. Furthermore, the two essays failed to describe an experience from which a lesson was learnt. Thirdly, both learners reveal critical language problems. Sentences were poorly constructed that sometimes it made it difficult to understand the line of thought. Penelope in paragraph two writes:

> *Being able to talk to other people is so important resulting to me not talking to my parents when I had problems rather than diminishing they asocaillated to the pant where it was out of control to believe the people that could help me are my parents.*

The two learners' sets of essays were classified as achieved with minimal improvement for the reason that their second and third essays were as the same as the first draft. For instance, Penelope's third essay introduction is still similar to essay 1 and essay 2. The introduction does not specify clearly a lesson learnt. She states that the most important lesson her parents taught her was they build her to be a better person, this clearly isn't a lesson. In addition, third and fourth paragraphs of her three essays are similar in content. However new ideas were included in paragraph 5 and 6 of essay 3. She then states that her parents taught her to stop parting. She further tells us that her parents constantly talked about partying but does not explicitly explain or relate a lesson to that act of behaviour. More so, the ideas added are not clearly developed, do not show the value of listening to parents, do not relate a clear story and show any process of learning. This indicates that there was no improvement on the content even though comments given in essay 1 and two informed them to relate the story to their experience.

Although the essays show no improvement in the content, there is some minimal improvement in sentence construction (.i.e. word order, punctuation). The ideas presented could be better understood, although there were still grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors here and there.

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement

Table 3: The quality of work produced by Bokang in the three essays

Criteria	Description of Essay 1	comments	Essay 2	Comments	essay3	Comments
Mind map	Mind map presents a list of different lessons only: My parents taught me to be humbly, Work on my behaviour &Happy and accepted. Mind map does not have key ideas of story or value of lesson.		The mind map still presents a list of lessons only. However has added a new lesson: Love my talent Does not have key aspect of the story.		Mind map present different key ideas - Lesson of life The role of my parents My appreciation Lesson learnt My gratitude. No story.	Lesson of life: Honest Story- 1.came home late 2. Beaten 3. Conclusion: My gratitude
Content	Essay describes numerous invaluable lesson taught by parents e.g. they taught me invaluable lessons about work relationship and life. Second Para deals with admitting of mistakes 3rd Para appreciation 4th Para deals with assisting neighbours 5th – be a good friend 6th – only God can turn a mess into a message Essay does not tell a story in relation to main	Describe Only One valuable lesson and relate to your experience	Essay 2 shows no improvement. Essay still deal with a numerous lesson taught by parents e.g. Each par address a different lesson, one Para has lesson appreciation, another about taking care of my talent etc.	In text comments: 1st but I... 2nd Para: what things? 3rd Para how do you take good care of your talent? 4th Para: describe your talent and how you were taught to develop it and be someone. **Overall comments** 1.Essay still deals with more than one lesson	Essay improved Introduction well written, grapping attention and relevant to topic and task. 2nd & 3rd &5th Para about appreciation of parents for teaching valuable lessons 4th Para gives a very brief discussion of experience though Lacks details. Why did they beat you because you told the truth?	1. Good introduction, however need to relate a story on honest. What did you do to show that you were not honest? What were the results of your behaviour? Describe the value of being honest.

	lesson taught.			2. Essay need to describe an experience from which a lesson was learnt.		
Organisation	No introduction Each Para brings a new lesson 1. Each Para needs further development. 2. ideas discussed in each paragraph are not linked to show relationship No conclusion		No Introduction- Paragraphs deal with different lessons and essay fails to relate each lesson to the main one, or show connectedness. Conclusion- grateful to have parents. Still does not tell a story.		Introduction grabs attention- generalises and does not simply specify lesson nor story A clear organisational pattern. Conclusion also catchy	
Language	sentences have errors- conjunction error, subject- verb errors- omission of verbs e.g. whenever every way I've lived ... incomplete sentences	Improve your sentence construction	Minimal grammatical errors e.g. when they were taught me.	In text comment: spelling corrected & punctuation.	Essay well written. Sentences well-constructed. Improvement in subject verb agreement. punctuation	

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement

This category describes six learners whose initial essays were off-topic, but which showed significant improvement in content over drafts 2 and 3.

For all of these learners, their first drafts gave a description of numerous lessons taught by their parents. For instance, Mandla in his mind map had several lessons learnt e.g. respect, stay positive, be a hard worker, be responsible and these he used as the key ideas in his essay. Joy's essay dealt with the following lessons: hard work, honesty and self-love. In addition, there is no connection in lessons dealt with in each paragraph. Mandla, Henmel, Bokang, Tzepo and Joy failed to construct introductory sentences that linked the ideas together. The lessons presented by learners were not related to each other. In addition, the essays did not describe an experience in relation to any mentioned lesson. In addition, some paragraphs dealt with more than two ideas. Andie's third paragraph dealt with more than one idea. The essay dealt with dreaming big as well as always showing mercy and kindness towards people. These ideas were not elaborated further as is depicted in Andie's first draft essay (appendix H).

Furthermore, lessons presented in each paragraph were not connected to the next paragraph. That is, they introduced a new lesson without relating it to ideas previously discussed. However, Andie's essay tried to use a connector word "another" to link the first two paragraphs together, though this was only done in the first two paragraphs. The example below shows the connector used by Andie.

"*Another value that they tell me is to respect".*

In addition, sentences were not well constructed and were full of grammatical errors. For instance, the sentences had syntax, tense, punctuation errors as well as ambiguity. In the sentence below, the learner used two nouns as a subject of the sentence (subject verb object). The essay comprised of long incorrectly linked sentences that impeded the line of thought. For instance, the example below is ambiguous as it is not clear whether mom had two jobs while she was growing up or while the child was growing up.

> *Appreciate. teacher my mom worked a number of jobs while growing up including being a teacher from her I learned to appreciate the time.*

In para5- isn't good to know why our parent aim good things for us. And that we tend to make them loose hope for us.

In the second draft, all of the six learners dealt with one most important lesson their parents taught them, i.e. they fulfilled the main task of the essay. For instance, Andie's, Henmel's, and Tzepo's lessons were based on respect. Although the three essays dealt with the importance of respect, they did not tell a story or describe an experience related to the lesson learnt. Joy and Mandla attempted to relate a story in relation to the lesson presented. However, their stories lacked clarity and development and ideas were still mixed up. In paragraph 4, Mandla's essay did not explain clearly what truth he wanted to know from his mother, then suddenly someone helped him to know who he was and then he apologised to his mother for being disrespectful. In addition, he did not describe what he did to show that he acted hard or disrespectful to her. In addition, there was no clear relation between lesson learnt and story.

However, there is slight improvement seen in their second essay drafts. The essays dealt with one lesson and attempted to relate a story. In addition, there was a slight improvement seen in punctuation of sentences. For example in Bokang's essay, full stops inserted after a complete line of thought. Paragraphs no longer started with sub-headings as in essay 1. In addition, there was additional information presented in paragraph 7 and 8. The information added deals with talent even though not much was said about it. The conclusion gave praise to mum and that had nothing to do with the lesson on talent.

The third draft of the six learners showed a significant improvement with regard to content, structure and sentence construction. For example, Bokang, Tzepo and Henmel's introductions showed much improvement views link: F:\Bokang , Tzepo and Henmel inroductions.docx). Their introductions gave a clear outline of the essay in a catchy way. Bokang's essays improved from not having a story to having a short paragraph describing his experience. However, instead of having two or three paragraphs relating the lesson to story, the essay talked a lot about what parents have done for him; it was more of parental praise. There was a significant improvement in sentence construction. Sentences constructed have limited syntax error, spelling as well as punctuation errors. The essay had correctly used conjunctions to join two or more ideas together. There was also great improvement seen in choice of words used. This contributed to a better understanding and flow of essay contrary to the first and second essays.

One day I came home late and knew that I was in trouble. I could not lie because my parents taught me to be honest always. I told them the truth that I had visited one of my friends and forget the time as we were busy practicing Maths. My mother gave me a beating of a lifetime.

The three learners that wrote about respect (i.e. Andie, Mandla and Henmel) related a story in which they were disrespectful in their third essay. They also gave some reasons for their kind of behaviour; however, there was inadequate details given on what led them to become more respectful and development of story. In addition, there was repetition of some ideas throughout the essay. In Henmel's third essay, the issue of disrespecting women was repeated several times.

There was also a notable improvement in organisation of paragraphs within their essays. The essays comprise of introductions, stories and conclusions. Joy's essay showed great improvement in content and organisation. The essay gave a clear picture of how her sister lived far beyond her means and the consequences of that lifestyle. This essay moved from not achieved to moderate. The essay narrated an experience in relation to what the student learned from parent, but still lacked some details and did not reflect on personal experience.

Even though Tzepo's third essay showed a significant improvement, there were still some ideas that were incorrectly sequenced. The events in the story were not in a chronological order. Paragraph 2, described what happened, paragraph 3 stated what he learnt from it and then the first lines in the in fourth paragraph went back to describe what happened that same night. This information could have been included in paragraph 2 as it dealt with the same ideas. Nonetheless, Tzepo's third essay was far much better than the first essay in terms of content. Overall, the responses given by the teacher led the learners to improve their writing skills. Through given instructions learners were able to select one most important lesson.

Category 2A: Elementary, with minimal improvement

Out of the twenty essays analysed, only two essays fall under this category. These two essays belong to Lungelo and Mpumi. Their essays were partial on topic. They attempted to relate an experience to a lesson learned from parents. However, the stories were not explicitly articulated and lacked development. Both essays did not give detailed information of what happened and how they came to value the lesson taught by her parents, ref to (Appendix E a table showing category 2A Lungelo's). Secondly, the essays had lots of repeated ideas. For instance, the following phrases were repeated: one of the most important lesson that I have learnt and the term challenges. In addition, the ideas presented in the essay were muddled up and lacked further development. This was evidently seen in Paragraph 3 of Lungelo's essay 1.

Both learners' essays had sentences that were not correctly constructed, and spelling, punctuation errors. The sentences were incorrectly joined and long and at times, it became hard to follow the line of thought. There were subject verb agreement and tense mistakes found in Mpumi's essay as is seen in the example below.

> *I have done those things course I got wrong friends and its not also about that its also about the stage I got into I was thinking I was old enough that I can do anything and no one would tell me and I was wrong I thought I was clever but no I wasn't*

The second essays of both learners had similar content and wording as in essay 1.There were no new ideas introduced. For example Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Mpumi contained ideas that were expressed in a similar way as in essay 1. The only difference was in the last paragraph, which was the conclusion. The conclusion was better than in essay 1. It related to the introduction, there was no repetition of ideas or introduction of new lesson as in essay 1.

In both essays, there were still language errors found such as incorrect usage of prepositions, diction and punctuation. There was repetition of words. Furthermore, sentences used were long and incorrectly combined as illustrated below.

> I was scared that I will lose my friends and *that I would fail my first challenge. this was self fulfilling arcle that I kept me from achieving my goals that I have planned in*

my business life I was so paralysed by facing challeng to choose between them or school work.

Essay three of the two learners was still similar to essays 1 and 2. The essays still presented same ideas. Lungelo and Mpumi's draft 3 had similar content to 2 and 1. The learners' set of three essays had not told a detailed clear story related to the lesson even though the response given requested them to "describe the experience in full, what were the challenges?"

Furthermore, the essays still had some grammatical errors. There were punctuation errors, tense and spelling errors in the essay. For example, she put full stops before the end of an idea and the sentences constructed were incorrectly connected and long.

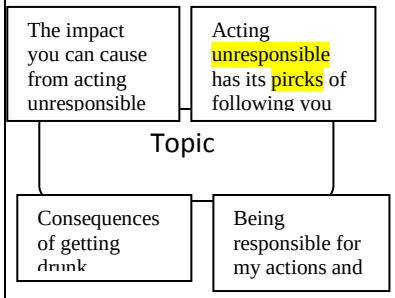
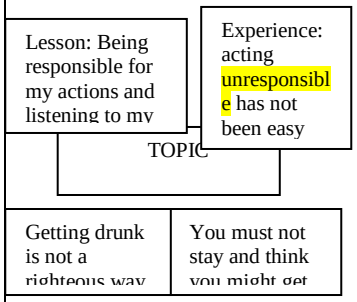
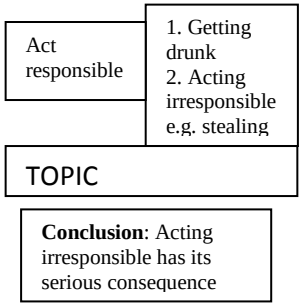
I was afraid to lose my friends and that I would fail my first challenge to take action. This was self fulfilling arcle that I kept me from achieving my goals that I have planned in my business life I was so paralysed by the challenge that I did nothing because I already losed my friend.

However, the only change seen in essay 3 was in the presentation of some ideas. For instance, they re-arranged ideas as requested and there was improvement in the way they expressed themselves and that made it easier to follow their line of thought. Again, the examples given also showed minimal changes in sentence structure.

Even though there was improvement in the presentation of ideas, one notable thing is that throughout the three draft essays the content presented did not show much change. They failed to describe events that lead them to realise the importance of the lesson taught or to develop key ideas in their experience. Thus the essays remained in the same category-elementary level.

Category 2B –elementary, with significant improvement

Table 4: The quality of work produced by Bogie in the three essays

criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	Essay3	Comment
Mind Map		Mind map needs to be used to write your story		1. Arrange your ideas according to the layout I gave you. i.e. 1. lesson 2. story 3.conclusion 2. write key words only		Mind map much clearer
content	Essay lesson: my parents always taught me that in life there are obsicles we must overcome to reach a setain goal. Good introduction which is followed by attempting to state what happened thou not clearly presented .i.e. Essay attempts to tell a story in which they were suspected of robbery after getting drunk. However, does not give details of what happened or give details of obstacles that clouded their judgement. It further talks about abuse of rights that can be followed	1. Obstacle-explains and gives examples of those obstacles that one need to overcome. 2.exprience need to be described in relation to what student learnt from parents	Essay lesson not clearly related to story. 1. Essay tells a story. Gives details of when the event happened and what happened, although he does not clearly show how the obstacle he faced over clouded his judgement. 2. Story also lacks details of how they ended up stealing dogs. 3. Does not give information on how he had to overcome	1. Lesson on the essay should be about acting responsible. 2. Give detailed information on how your friends influenced you to steal the dogs. How did you do it? 3. What happened when you were caught? 3. leave out the first	Essay lesson related to topic and story told. Story well stated but still fails to develop the story .however mentions what happened later, no explanation on how they were caught. Gives details of what happened after being caught thou bit of contradictions i.e. We did not get caught ...not charged because we were	1. You still have to tell us more about how you stole the dogs and what made you to be suspects. What went wrong?

	by serious consequences and this idea is not developed.		obstacles to reach goals. At the end he does not show how he attained the goals-responsible	sentence in Para 3	under the age of 18 years	
organisation	Introduction not clearly related to story &conclusion 1. Some ideas are mixed up e.g. Para 3 and not well linked. 2. Para 4 is not logical ordered , developed and contradictory i.e. ... the dogs we stole for money yet previously he said they were suspected for stealing dogs	Ideas are sometimes not logical and clearly presented .	1. Introduction still not clearly related to story &conclusion 2..Para 4 still has mixed ideas and not well linked to Para 3 3. Para 1, 2 and 3 well organised. It talks of having money and things they spent buying later about being suspected and never being caught. Ideas to bring about learnt lesson are not clearly developed.	1.ideas are mixed	1.Introduction quite interesting and related to story and conclusion 2. Para 4 has mixed ideas. Talks about why they stole dogs and then about what happened as they were suspected no details later about punishment from parents.	Para 4 deals with two event that need to be discussed separately. You need to tell us what happened at the police office if ever you went there .Another par about how your parents came to know about your deeds,
language	Sentences used have errors and are not well expressed e.g. we were not only suspected for robbery we were also suspected for stealing... .... We have done to this people-noun adjective agreement.		Sentences used still have errors and are not well expressed.e.g. .... always taught me that in life there are obstacles we must overcome to reach a certain goal in life and that goals is being responsible and this has been a life-time lesson for me.		Sentences still have Language errors though that does not impede flow of essay.	1.Improve your sentence construction Use correct conjunctions

Category 2B: Elementary, with significant improvement

In this category, only one learner (i.e. Bogie) showed improvement in content. In the first draft, the learner attempted to describe a story in relation to obstacles that one has to overcome to achieve certain goals. However, the essay failed to give a clear description of the story. The content of the essay was not clearly presented as is revealed in the table above. It lacked detailed information concerning the obstacles that clouded his judgement, how or what led him and his friends to be suspected of robbery. It was not clear what he did in order to overcome the obstacles so as to achieve the unmentioned goals and what then happened after being suspected.

Furthermore, the introduction and conclusion were not well related. Seemingly, the conclusion brought in other lesson. The essay failed to tie up the story in such a way that it connected to the ideas introduced in the first paragraph. In addition, some ideas were not coherently sequenced and that affected the flow of the story at some point as is seen in these paragraphs extracted from Bogie's first draft essay appendix H:

> *Para 3.* *We were not only suspected for robbery we were also suspected for stealing dogs and selling or exchanging them. At first we were warned about the dangers but we did not learn the lesson taught to us by our parents.*
>
> *Para 4.* *We were happy because we always had money to spend and did not worry wether we will be caught and brought to justice for all we have done to this people and the dogs we stole for money*.

Furthermore, there were frequent mistakes, which however did not impede the understanding of the story. The most common errors that I noticed were incorrect usage of tenses, prepositions and punctuation marks. The example below shows typical errors found in Bogie's essay.

> *in life we face various obsticles that might cloud your judgement . mistakes in life help you to see the path you must follow. this has happened to me in the past where I and friends were suspected for robbery after getting drunk.*

However, the second draft showed improvement. The essay described the experience much clearer. Soon after the introductory paragraph, the essay gave details of when that incident happened. The experience is better introduced even though there were grammatical errors found.

About a year ago I faced an obstacle that had clouded my judgement which resulted to being suspected for robbery and stealing of dogs after getting drunk because of acting unresponsible.

The essay also pointed out that their parents had once warned them of their devious acts but they never listened. The use of question and response grabs attention too.

...and danger, but did we listen? No, we didn't believe that we....

However, the essay failed to give detailed information about where the incident happened, what really happened, what made them to be suspected and what made him realise that it was important to act responsibly and to listen to parents' advice. In addition, paragraphs 4 and 5 were similar in content to essay 1.

There was a significant notable change in the third draft. For example, the introduction was far much better than in the first and second drafts. It was much clearer and related to the story and conclusion e.g.

My parents always taught me that you have to learn to be responsible for your actionsand not to let pressure cloud your judgement. But sometimes we as teenagers we don't listen and end up in difficult situation.

In addition, Bogie's essay narrated an experience in relation to what the student learned from parent, but still lacked some details. His essay did not give information about how him and his friends became suspects and did not relate his personal feelings after the incident and punishment received.

The ideas presented were more comprehensible than in the first draft. Even though in paragraph 4 ideas were mixed up, overall, events were sequenced according to order of occurrence. There was also improvement seen in sentence construction. The essay had few spelling, punctuation and tense mistakes.

The essay showed a progression from level 2 (elementary level) to level 3 (moderate) since the second essay now revealed a basic knowledge of the topic contrary to the first draft. The essay content was much different from essay one. Secondly, the essay told of an experience in relation to what they learnt.

Category 3A: Moderate, with minimal improvement

Table 5 : The quality of work produced by Lisa in the three essays

Criteria	Essay 1	Comments	Essay2	Comments	essay3	Comments
Mind map	No mind map	Draw a mind map	o mind map		Mind map present ideas that do not correlate with essay. It has different lesson i.e. I should not rush into things like dating at a young age. On experience mentions being beaten up for dating at young age and response – list emotions felt	Mind map not related to essay Lesson : I should not rush into things like dating at a younger age - not the lesson in essay
Content	Essay related to topic – deals with one lesson & tries to tell a story Talks about being grateful and not taking people that she has for granted. Essay briefly starts the story well but does not give details on what happened to her and her aunty.	Comments written within the essay. 1.2nd Para- then what did they decide to do?	Essay related to topic & tries to tell a story Same content as the 1st draft. No development of story still.	1. The 2nd Para should be your introduction. 2.then tell a story of what happened that made you realise that it is important to be grateful 3. conclusion need to be related to experience e.g. even though I cannot turn the clock back I have learnt to value and be grateful of people I have in my life.	Essay still related to topic & tries to tell a story. 2. Story described still undeveloped. Just mentioned that she was taken care of by aunty while still a little girl as parents couldn't afford a babysitter and how her aunty was nothing much. Ideas in Para 2 not well presented as in essay 1 and 2.	1.could have been more interesting if more information was added Further develop the story to relate the incident that made you realise the value of being grateful. What did you do to your aunty that made you to be grateful?

Organisation	Essay seems to have two introductions Ideas built on each other thou some part of Para 2 could be used as introduction. lacks development of story Conclusion not related to lesson and story: conclusion:	Conclusion need to sum up the story and lesson learnt	Essay still seems to have 2 introductions Lacks development of story still. Conclusion similar to essay 1.	Essay has introduction that gives outline of what to expect and a good conclusion. But the story lacks details.	1. Introduction changed as per feedback; good but repeats some ideas in Para 2 No improvement made on the development of the story. Structure of essay changed esp. Para 2. Ideas are mingled up contrary to essay 1 Conclusion improved.(teacher had given suggestions)conclusion:	1. Essay has good introduction and conclusion.
Language	Grammatical and spelling errors found thou do not impede flow of the essay.		Grammatical and spelling minimal.		Grammar errors still- she was the one that is greatful person in the world	

Category 3A: Moderate, with minimal improvement

Category 3 comprises of essays that reveal a basic knowledge of the topic. That is, the essays tell of an experience in relation to what the learner learned from parents, ideas are connected but lack detailed information or a closure that will relate it to lesson learnt. Furthermore, essay 2 and 3 showed minimal content or structural improvement. Lisa and Thando's essays fall under this category.

Lisa's first essay had two introductions. The first introduction gave a general outline about how the world is cruel and rough such that we tend to forget about what our parents have taught us. However, the first introduction was not related to the essay content because the content of the essay talked about why her aunt came to take care of her. The second introduction that was the first part of second paragraph gave a good outline of the lessons taught. It also pointed out the most important lesson taught, that is being grateful and appreciative. This idea was expounded in the essay.

Furthermore, the two learners' essays lacked detailed information on the experience. They did not give a detailed story of what happened. They also did not mention what led them to realise the value of lesson learnt. In Lisa's case she did not show the value of being grateful and appreciative of her aunt. She only gave a brief explanation of why she was taken care of by her aunt and described her aunt's character and finally concluded the essay.

The reader could easily follow the line of thought since sentences and ideas were coherently connected. However, there were punctuation errors, spelling and sentence construction errors, which did not impede the flow of the essay. For instance, sentences were too long. The learner used many conjunctions words to join ideas that could have been introduced in new sentences.

The content and structure of the second essay was still similar to the first structure. The essays still lacked detailed description of the story. There was no information reflecting on experience and lesson learnt. In addition, ideas in the second paragraph were mingled up. The only difference notable were changes made in language, spellings and nothing else.

However, there were minimal changes seen in both learners' essay 3. For instance, there was an improvement in the introduction and conclusion. The introduction related to the essay and grabbed attention of the reader. Furthermore, the conclusion correlated with the introduction.

Slight improvement was also seen in their sentence construction. For instance, in Thando's essay, the sentence construction changed from being more direct to reported speech.

Their third essay drafts were still similar in content with essays 1 and 2. The drafts still lacked detailed description of the story and value learnt from experience. Even though Thando tried to add new ideas, these were not relevant to the story. For example, Thando's essay talked about her mom asking her where she was going, taking a bath, seeing the arrival of her friends and then going to them. However, the only new relevant content given was a paragraph describing what they did at the party.

In short, the two learners' final drafts were still limited in description. Their stories lacked development of key issues and a description of led to value the lessons taught. The improvement made does not shift the essays to the next code.

Category 3B: Moderate, with significant improvement

No essays identified fall under this category since no essays showed significant improvement (i.e. those that moved from moderate to adequate).

Category 4A: Adequate, with minimal improvement

I classified Nathan and Gugulethu's essays under this category. The learners' adequate interpretation of topic as well as a sound description of the experience showed relevant knowledge of the topic. The story details are connected to the lesson learnt. However, the second and final drafts did not show a significant improvement. The content and structure remained almost the same as is shown in appendix E. (table showing quality of work produced by Gugulethu.

Gugulethu's mind map gave general points on key lesson and experience. The key ideas correlated with the essay content. In addition, the essay gave a clear picture of why he befriended Sputla, how his behaviour changed to be wicked, how he was suspended and her mom's words that caused him to change back to his true identity. He further gave a description of how he felt about being someone else. The essay had relevant information needed for the story but more information on how Sputla influenced his character and other drastic measures taken by his parents when he was suspended could have strengthened the essay.

The essay's ideas were logically sequenced and the line of thought could be followed. However, in paragraph 3 ideas were mixed up. It talked about how his character changed, the cell incident and how her mother reacted.

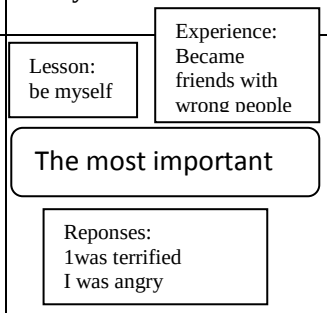
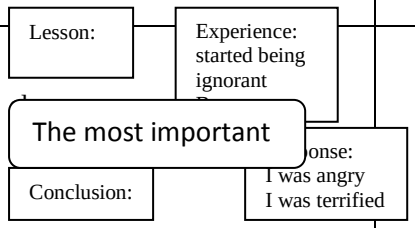
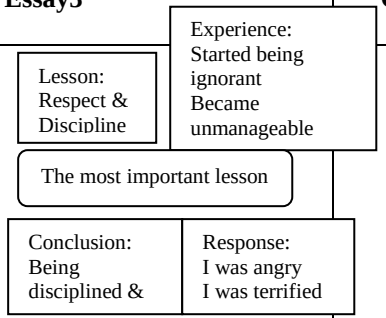
In addition, the essay used simple and ordinary sentences and had minimal grammatical errors. However, there were minimal changes seen in the second draft .i.e. language and spelling errors corrected by teacher. The content and structure were almost similar to essay 1. In the third essay, there was a change in structure and few additional details added in paragraph 4 and in the conclusion.

Category 4B: Adequate, with significant improvement.

The table below gives a description of essays that have been classified as adequate with significant improvement. Detailed discussions are below the table.

Category 4 B: Adequate with significant improvement

Table 6 : The quality of work produced by Thandekile in the three essays

criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	Essay3	Comments
Mind map		1. Why is it important to be yourself?				
content	Introduction does not clearly outline the lesson. Tells of an experience in which she went with friends to a park and she smoked and drunk and they also had to arrive home late Story does not reflect much rebellious behaviour. Not much is said about what happened at park. Lesson on being *myself* does not clearly come out.	1.it could have been more interesting to describe the pressure you were in and how it led you to be rebellious 2. What made you recognise that it is important to be yourself? 3. Story not really related to lesson learnt. From the story, what happened, what lesson did you learn?	1. The first three paragraphs have similar content to first draft for instance, introductory sentences and ideas discussed .i.e. went out with friends , Got smoked & drunk Came home late Locked outside for a long duration of time-form of punishment. More details added in Para 4 2. Story does not clearly relate to lesson learnt as the lesson at the end of the essay is also not clear e.g. "she told me not to follow people or listen to negative things ....I should	Rewrite the conclusion so that it clearly relates the experience.	Para 4 and 5has been greatly improved. She creates a tension of fear, anger and panic in her i.e. I was terrified that something was going to happen..... this angered me even more. Story relates to lesson and conclusion.	1. Work on your introduction so that it either comments on what happened or on the lesson and how you came to learn that lesson the hard way. 2.some ideas what she was thinking could have been added to Para 4

			respect myself and others...”			
organisation	Key ideas that make up the story are not developed so illustrate an individual whose not being herself Some ideas are not related esp. in paragraph 2.talks of taking another puff and then about what her parents thought she was.		Key ideas that make up story still not developed as the lesson is based on being herself. Essays sometimes presents two or more ideas within a paragraph e.g. in Para 3		Same ideas Some ideas still not related e.g. Para 3 More details added Para 4& 5.	Ideas in paragraph 3 need to be further developed. What else happened? 2. Start a new paragraph after you have discussed the park events.
language	Uses simple / ordinary sentences to describe the story. Sentences used makes the essay flow and be easily followed Has minimal language errors		Sentences constructed in more exciting way, create tension, fear, anger.		Sentences used still create different feelings, fear & anger.	1.use descriptive words to describe the story

Category 4B: Adequate with significant improvement

This category comprises of Nolanga, Thandekile and Gift's essays. Their first drafts gave an adequate description of experience in relation to lesson. Ideas and sentences followed each other even though some ideas were not fully developed or explained. In addition to that, there was significant improvement seen more particularly on their third drafts. The introductions of the three learners were catchy as each introduction caused the reader to ask questions and hence want to read further to get answers. Nolanga wrote:

> *I always considered myself right and thought that the world revolved around me. I never wanted to listen to other people's opinion. I thought I knew it all, but it all crumbled right in front of my eyes.*

In addition, the first draft described what happened and led her to rethink about her wicked behaviour. She elaborated on her acts and used some good descriptive words to describe her feelings *e.g.*

> *I started to panic... I hated school more than*.

The second draft's introduction was still similar to first draft. However, the second paragraph was different from the second paragraph in essay 1. It gave a description of what she used to do and affirmed that her parent never gave up on her regardless of her unruly behaviour. The ideas in paragraph three were mixed up and some needed to be developed further. She related what happened to her mum because of her behaviour and her reluctance to visit her. In the same paragraph, she described how she felt. She also included information about how her mom used to feel about her behaviour and at the same time commented on her attitude towards school. The conclusion did not relate well to lesson and story.

Even though sentences showed satisfactory knowledge of language and punctuation skills, there were however frequent mistakes that did not impede the understanding of the story. There were still some punctuation, spelling and tense errors in the essay. These errors did not affect the articulation of ideas. Some words such as wasted and other were misspelt. Furthermore, there were frequent tenses errors.

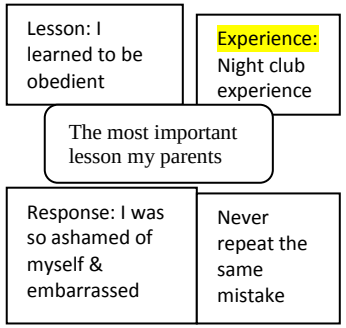
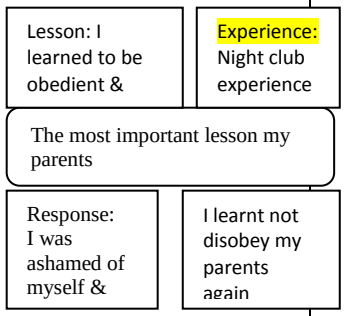
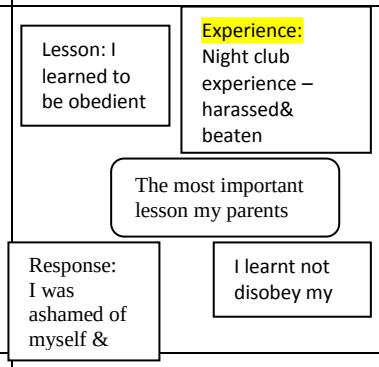
> She prayed the more I do wrong
>
> ..Thinking I knew it all, I didn't even wanted

However, the third draft showed a significant improvement even though the introduction was still similar to the first and second essays. There was better sequencing of events in the essay. The essay described what she expected in the morning. Then how she discovered that her mom was hospitalised and then followed by her rethinking of how she used to behave. The essay also gave detailed and vivid information about how she used to behave and disrespect her mum. This was well connected to the lesson and conclusion. The essay's conclusion was far much better than the first and second drafts. The essay revealed a relevant and sound knowledge and understanding of the topic.

The three learners' essays showed a significant improvement in the manner in which they put across their ideas to describe their experience. The style of writing was different from the first essay and the content was different. The essays included new ideas that were not included in essay 1. The essay further drew from the lesson and experience to wrap it up.

Category 5A: Substantial with minimal improvement

Table 7: The quality of work produced by Gladness in the three essays

Criteria	Description of learner's Essay 1	Teacher's exact Comments	Description of learner's Essay2	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's essay	Teacher's exact comments
Mind map		1. What the value of obedience?				
Content	Key ideas in mind map are used in essay.9 correlate with ideas in the essay. Essay tells a story of about going to bash without parents' approval, what happened at the party and parents' reactions in a nutty shell Conclusion related to introduction and story.	1.Essay tells a story in relation to what learnt 2. Need to work on including sentence that link the paragraph together.	Key ideas in mind map are used in essay. Still tells a story No change – content as is in the 1st draft. Conclusion still related to essay and similar to easy 1.	1.How did you learn that lesson?(comment in essay) 2. Story quite interesting, need to state what other action was taken to cement the story. Conclusion could also be improved to make it more powerful and interesting. Talk about the value of obedience or	Key ideas in mind map are used in essay. Added more information in Para 4 about how her parents felt and what her dad said. Also stated that she was grounded for 3 months and cell phone taken for 6 months. 'It was had to leave without my cell phone..." An improved conclusion.	Quite a good improvement.

				consequences.		
Organisation	The essay clearly present an introduction that outlines what could be expected and has detailed information. Ideas in the essay are logical and well developed. Story told in order of events.		Essay still uses same ideas to outline what could be expected in the essay. Ideas are still logically organised.	Para 4- comment He further..... Para 5 – what happens if you are disobedient?	Essay introduction still similar to essay 1& 2 Ideas are still clearly presented.	
Language	Sentences are well constructed with minimal spelling errors.	Spelling errors and word choice corrected in the essay.	Sentences are still well constructed with minimal language errors – Spelling e.g. experience. Tense error -... was made at me and told me ... if I don't want to		Minimal tense error. Then the following night when my... went to sleep as well as my cousins	In text comment Then the following night when my parents and cousins had gone to sleep

Category 5A: Substantial with minimal improvement

In category 5A, Gladness's essay is the only one that falls under this category. Her first essay revealed a relevant and sound knowledge and understanding of the topic. Key ideas were drawn from the mind map, which showed some details of expectations, key experience and personal responses. Furthermore, the learner draws the lesson clearly from the experience and that experience is vividly and logical described in a more interesting manner.

In addition, one could easily follow the flow of the story since the ideas were relevant and logically organised. The learner used connectors to link paragraphs together and that linked the ideas coherently. However, few ideas still needed to be developed. For example, more details were needed in paragraph 4.

The essay had a combination of different types of sentences used to describe the experience. These included simple, complex to compound sentences. In addition, the sentences and ideas were generally connected and logically developed to make the story have a continuous flow.

However the second draft's structure and content were similar to essay 1. The introductory sentence and ideas in each paragraph were similar to essay 1. The only notable changes made are on spellings and a single idea added to second paragraph.

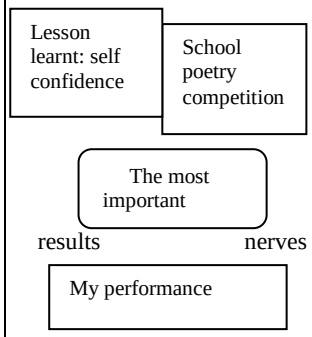
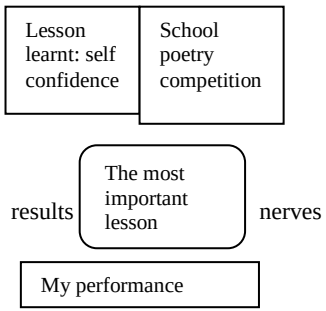
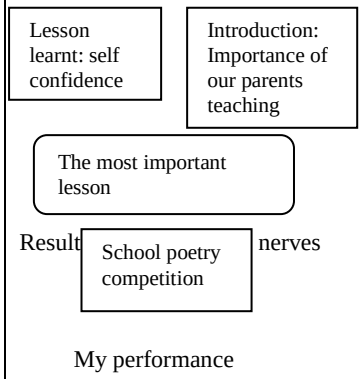
The third essay's structure was still similar to essays 1 and 2. However, more information was added to paragraph 4. Essay gave more details on learner's feeling and the kind of punishment received. There was also improvement seen in on the conclusion. Despite that, the kind of improvement was not significant enough to move the essay to the next level.

Category 5B: Substantial with significant improvement.

This category does not have any essays that have shown significant improvement. No essay in the code 5 had improved sentence construction, choice of words and punctuation such that it displayed an excellent use of language conventions or creates suspense, pressure and tension.

Category 6A: Meritorious – with minimal improvement

Table 8 : The quality of work produced by Precious in the three essays.

criteria	Description of learner's Essay 1	Teacher's comments	Description of learner's Essay2	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's Essay3	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's Essay 4
Mind map				Rework mind map : ideas making the story should be grouped together			
content	Essay comprises of key ideas drawn from the mind map. Essay has more interesting ideas drawn from the experience and lesson learnt. Explicitly describes the event about reciting a poem to whole school, rising tensions about the whole event, feelings, encouraged got from parents all told in an exciting way. Shows thorough knowledge and understanding of topic	1. Add something to complete the idea. Work on the introductio n. 2. The quote from Dalai could also be moved to Para 3. And be linked with	Essay comprises of key ideas drawn from the mind map. Essay still has more interesting ideas however ideas in second paragraph that explained the pressure felt was never included only elaborated the pressure in second essay Para 2. 3.3rd Para is no longer as powerful as in 1st Para which had used questions to create the state of mind she was in.	1. Quite interesting story. 2. You can still make improvements in your introduction. I feel the first introduction in your 1st draft was more powerful than this one! What do you think?	Essay comprises of key ideas drawn from the mind map. Essay still has interesting ideas but not as 1st essay. However second Para 2 develops the idea brought in the 1st essay Para 2.	1. Use the introduction in the 1st essay. 2. Try to bring together the ideas in the second Para in the 1st essay with those in third essay. 3. Return the questions that made your essay to be	Essay comprises of key ideas drawn from the mind map. Essay improved as ideas from 1st and 3rd essay were used to develop it further and make it more interesting as it has some reflections that are impressively described.

		what your mom said to boost your confidence.				more powerful.	
organisation	Ideas are coherently sequences and well developed. Gives vivid details of the event. Essay well concluded		Introduction not as eye catchy as in 1st draft. Too specific and does not create that suspense as before Ideas are still well organised. Conclusion also not as catchy as in 1ST essay. It's now simple and ordinary.		1. Introduction better than the 2nd draft though not as powerful as the 1st draft's. Ideas still logical and well developed.		Ideas are logical well developed.
language	Has good command of language. Uses descriptive words and even quotes authors to grab the reader's attention Can create suspension and tension. Para 1 and 2.		Language used simple and ordinary contra to essay Language used quite different from 1st essay. Question no longer used to create that atmosphere of anxiety. Sentences more ordinary.		Language used better than in 2nd draft. E.g. Para 4 express it differently: then I was called up stage. Seeing a lot of people frightened me contrary to 2nd essay: when I was called up to the stage, I remember seeing a lot of people.	Use the language style in essay 1.	A combination of sentences used to develop story. Idiomatic expression used and quotes from one author and well quoted.

Category 6A: Meritorious with minimal improvement

Precious' essay is the only one that identifies with this category. The first draft displayed thorough knowledge and understanding of the topic. The key ideas in the mind map correlated with the content in the essay.

In addition, both the story of the experience and the lesson drawn from it were clearly told with appropriate and interesting details. The introduction created suspension, which inspired one to continue reading the story.

> *07 August 2006 - The day that would go to define the rest of my life. I was chosen to recite a poem about child abuse to the whole school and to some important visitors.*

There was creation of pressure and tension revealed in essay one although not explained. The essay used questions to create the fear she felt. She further gave a vivid description of how her parents' intervention enabled her to become more courageous.

The conclusion was also inspiring as a quote related to lesson was used to sum up the story.

> *the great Dalai Lama once said "with the realisation of one's own potential and self – confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world" in that way success is inevitable when you believe in yourself.*

The second essay was different from first essay. The introduction was not as catchy as in essay 1. It did not create that suspense, as it was too simple and general. The presentation of ideas was no longer as exciting as before. The tension and pressure created in essay 1 were omitted in paragraph 2. However, the learner explained it without mentioning it. Furthermore, she left out questions that created a feeling of fear in paragraph 3. The conclusion was simple and too general.

The third essay was still not as catchy as essay 1. The ideas were no longer connected in a more exciting way as in essay 1. However, the essay described the pressure experienced and the need to motivate abused children. The conclusion was not as capturing as the one in essay1. It was weaker than in essay 2 as it was too simplified and general.

However, learners were then requested to write forth draft in which she returned all the ideas that made the first essay more exciting and added some information from essay 3 that seemed to build on ideas such as in paragraph 2 of essay 2. The essay showed much improvement though the learner could still add details on what she could learn about pressure to excel.

Conclusion: From the description given above, 10 learners showed minimal improvement while the remaining 10 improved significantly as is shown by the summary of findings. The question that may arise is: did the nature of feedback given by me result in learner improvement? In addition, is there an improvement in quality of feedback that teacher gives and how does that correspond with learners' quality of work produced in the third essay?

Table 9: Number of learners against quality of improvement

Criteria categories	**Minimal improvement (A)**	**Significant improvement(B)**
Category 1	2 learners :Penelope & Sipho	6 learners :Mandla, Joy, Bokang, Henmel, Tzepo, Andie
Category 2	2:Lungelo & Mpumi	1:Bogie
Category 3	2: Lisa & Thando	0
Category 4	2: Nathan & Gugulethu	3: Nolanga, Thandekile, Gift
Category 5	1: Gladness	0
Category 6	1: Precious	0
Category 7	0	0

4.3 Description of my Comments Made in Learners' Essays

As stated earlier in chapter 1, the problem is before embarking on this study, I rarely gave descriptive feedback that would help learners to improve their essay writing skills. What I used to do was to request learners to ask their peers to edit their first draft without the criteria to work on or having trained them on how to peer edit each other's work. Then I would assess their final draft using a summative rubric and award them grades. I infrequently set time to feedback on written work to enable them to bridge the gap between the current and desired work. As a result, when I embarked on this study I found it a challenge to give constructive feedback and use formative strategies that would enable learners to improve their quality of work and develop their personal skills.

The next section presents the description of feedback that I gave to learners' written essays on their first, second and final drafts. The description given will try to identify and describe comments that I gave each learner in three sets of essays, which I evaluated against set rubric. This will enable me to see whether the comments given enabled learners to bridge the gap between current and desired standards. To enable that to happen, Brookhart (2008) argues that when giving feedback one should take into cognisance the nature of feedback, time, the amount of feedback given, the audience and mode of feedback. Below and in appendix D2 I described the nature of feedback I gave to learners according to the factors that Brookhart (2008) discussed in her article. These are focus, comparison, function and valence.

Teacher's comments for three essays per learner and description of comments

Table 10: Comments made on Penelope's three essays

Essay 1 teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map Comments were written in mind map 1.specify the lesson 2. story based on lesson 3. general attitude towards parents 4. value of the lesson content 1. Describe One most important lesson taught by your parents. 2.relate that lesson to your own experience Organisation Language Select appropriate words and expressions	Focus 1. Repeated the instruction on how the task should be structured in the mind map. I.e. specify the lesson. Comments 2 and 3 are unclear and require more grammar .it's not clear whether a description of learner's work or suggestion is. 2. Comments on the content of the essay also repeated the instructions on how the essay should have been addressed. **Comparison** 1. Comments related to the content criteria. 2.No comments given on organisation criteria 3. Comments related to language criteria. Give instruction for learner to use appropriate words e.g. In text correction of spelling errors done. i.e. notorious , escalate Function- describes what needs to be done Valence- focus on the positive	Mind map Content 1. In the 1st paragraph state the lesson and what you think about it. 2.tell a story of how you learnt that lesson 3.in conclusion show the value of the lesson Organization Language	**Focus** Comments are content focused. Give instructions on what to do to improve the story. **Comparison** Comments are related to content criteria on how to improve the story. **Function** Comments describe what needs to be done to improve the content of the story. Valence- focuses on the positive.	Mind Map 1.Not discussed in essay 2.lesson; to be responsible & listen to my parents 3. Story1. irresponsible 2. Caught drunk 3. expelled 4. value of being responsible Content 1. No story mentioned in relation to parents' teaching. 2. Describe the story in detail- what is it that happened when you went parting? What went wrong when you went parting? Why do you see it important to listen to you parents and act responsible Organisation Language Check spellings or have someone check your work.	**Focus-** 1. Comments not clear. I should have written fully sentences i.e. key ideas need to correlate with ideas discussed in the essay. 2. Comments given esp. 2, 3 and 4 offer suggestions on how the mind map should be structured in correlation with the story. Content: Comments are content focused as they relate to the essay not individual. s Direct and indirect correction errors on grammar. **Comparison** Comments are related to content criteria and language criteria. **Function** Specifies what needs to be done to improve the content of the story and flow of essay. **Valence- positive**

Table 11: Comments made on Thandekile's three essays

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1. Why is it important to be yourself? content 1.it could have been more interesting to describe the pressure you were in and how it led you to be rebellious 2. What made you recognise that it is important to be yourself? 3. Story not really related to lesson learnt. From the story, what happened, what lesson did you learn? Organisation language	Focus Comments focus on the task. Uses questions to help learner to add more relevant information to build the story. Comparison Comments made are related to content criteria Function Describes what is observed. valence	Mind map Content Rewrite the conclusion so that it clearly relates the experience. Organization Language	Focus Instructional comment given to improve work. Comparison Comment is content criteria related. Function Instructs learner on what to do as a result of what has been observed. Valence Comment positive.	Mind Map Content 1. Work on your introduction so that it either comments on what happened or on the lesson and how you came to learn that lesson the hard way. Organisation Ideas in paragraph 3 need to be further developed. What else happened? 2. Start a new paragraph after you have discussed the park events. Language1.use descriptive words to describe the story	Focus Comments instruct learner on what to do to improve the essay. Comparison Comments relate to all set of criteria. Function Comments given are based on what has been observed. Valence Comments still positive.

I repeated instructions for the essays whose mind map had more than one lesson and not related an experience to lesson. For instance, I instructed the learners to select one lesson, relate a story and mention the value of the lesson. However, the comments on the mind map are condensed and unclear. It is not clear whether I was describing the learners' work, instructing or making suggestions as is revealed in the Penelope, Andie and Lungelo's essays. This is what I wrote in Penelope's work

1. Specify the lesson
2. Story based on lesson
3 general attitudes towards parents
4. Value of the lesson

To make my comments more clearer I should have written that in the next lesson specify the lesson and tell a story that made you learn that lesson or see the importance of that lesson.

My comments on the content of the essay also repeated the instructions on what to do to address the essay requirements. For instance, for most of the learners whose essays discussed more than one lesson, I stated that they need to describe one lesson taught by their parents and relate a story as is seen in the table above and appendix F. I used questions to help learners to give additional information on the key aspects of the story. These are some question comments extracted from Mpumi's essay.

What happened and how did you deal with those challenges?
How did that affect your relation with people around you?
What made you then realise the importance of overcoming those challenges?
2. What's the value of overcoming and learning from challenges?

In addition, I wrote comments that were process-focused. That is, comments focused on how to approach a reflective essay. I instructed learners to describe only one lesson, reflect on personal experience and use first person to describe their experience.

I used direct and indirect correction error strategy to correct or point out grammatical errors that I could notice in some learners' work. For indirect correction error I used correction symbols (e.g. sp. for spelling, ww for wrong word, gr for grammatical error) to indicate that a

word is has been omitted) to immediately indicate the type of error made. For example I used indirect correction strategy in Sipho, Penelope, Nathi, Bokang, Bogie and Andie. In Penelope's work I wrote "sp" above the incorrectly spelt word "naughtorious, assocailleted"

I offered suggestions in cases were additional information was required. In Gugulethu's first draft I wrote:

> *1. It could have been more interesting if you described how Sputla influenced your behaviour and what made people adore him more or regard him as a 'cool guy'*

However, some comments given were not descriptive and specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. Some suggestions were not specific enough on what the learners were supposed to do. This was commonly found in those essays that were of good quality e.g. comments given to Precious:

> Add something to complete the idea. Work on the introduction

I assessed the learners' essays against a formative rubric that had three sets of criteria. These sets of criteria are mainly content, organisation, language, and vocabulary. The comments given are related to content, organisation and language criteria. My comments dealt with how and what to include when writing an essay of that nature that is , key aspects of the content, how ideas were presented and language and vocabulary used in the essay. There were in text comments written in the essays. I used codes to point out language errors made. For instance, sp for spelling, ww – wrong word used gr for grammatical mistake and rep for repetition.

I also gave comments that where positive. My comments pointed out areas that needed to be improved and I offered suggestions on things that the learner could to do to bridge the gap. My comments gave description of the strength of the learner's work which matches the criteria as is reflected in the table showing comment made on Thandekile.

Description of comments made in learners' essay 2

My comments this time did not only repeat instruction on the layout of the mind map but I also included the sample of how they should layout their mind map in correlation to the key ideas in their essay. For example, instead of giving a list of what needs to be done, I provided Joy, Tzepo, and Sipho a layout of the structure of the mind map (see appendix F which shows comments I made in Joy's essays).

I re-emphasised what the learners were supposed to do because seven learners did not relate a story. In Penelope, Mpumi, Lisa, Andie, Bokang, Sipho's second essays I instructed them once more to tell a story in relation to lesson learnt.

I still used questions as a strategy of helping learners to clarify and give additional information as is shown in comments made on Joy's work. I also described what the learners were supposed to do to bridge the gap between the current and desired outcome in relation to the formative rubric as is reflected in table above and the comments made on Henmel's essay below.

> *Try to relate lesson to one event/ experience that you had that made you realise it is important to respect people. (Tell a story about what you once did that showed you had no respect for women. What happened that changed your attitude towards them.*

For the twenty learners, I wrote comments related to language errors within the essays, where language errors were identified (See Bogie's essay 2 in Appendix H). Like in essay 1, I used correctional symbols to point out language errors. In Penelope, Sipho, Bogie, etc. In Sipho and Lungelo's work I still used indirect correction strategy to point out spelling. Whereas in Bogie, Lisa, Bokang, Henmel, and Gugulethu at times I used direct correction strategy, that is, I wrote what the learner should have written.

Comments related only to content criteria were written at the end of their essays. These comments were found in twelve learners' essays (for Sipho, Andie, Mandla, Tzepo, Thando and Thandekile. While 5 learners received both content and organisation comments at the end of their essays. Only one learner's comments were related to content and language. The remaining two received comments related to content, organisation and language at the end of their essays.

General the comments in essay 2 were related to the task, that is, described what needed to be improved and also offered suggestions.

Table 12: Comments made on Tzepo's three essay

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map You need to mention only One remarkable lesson 2. relate lesson to the experience you had content 1. Select only One lesson that you value mostly. 2. Tell a story that made you learn the importance of that lesson. 3. what has that lesson taught you 4. please try to use own ideas Organisation Language	Focus Repeats instructions on what they were supposed to do. Comparison Comments relate to content criteria only. Function Re emphasis the key aspects of the essay. Valence- positive comments are given are task related.	Mind map Lesson : obedience Story 1. 2 conclusion Content 1.lesson based on obedience 2. What did you do to show that you were disobedient? 3. What were the consequences of that act? 4. How then did you realise that it is important to obey your parents? Organization Language	Focus Comment s given suggest the layout of mind Uses question to provide information to develop the story. Comparison Comments are still Related to content criteria only. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the story. Valence-positive comments are given to help learn to develop the story.	Mind Map Written on mind map point 2`: What did you do? Content 1.Introduction is now better than the 1st one 2. Tells us more about why you changed your behaviour. What caused that change? Mention all the changes and how these affected people around you and your school work. Organisation 1.You need to arrange your ideas in order of events Language	Focus Comments are task focused as they require learner to give more details on the experience. Also process focused .informs learner what to do to improve. Comparison Comments made relate to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the essay. Valence- comments are positive.

Table 13: Comments made on Nolanga's three essays

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1.what is the lesson 2. what was the experience content 1.each paragraph need to be connected to the next to show continuous flow 2.para 3 would have changed the sentence to a reported speech 3 describe in detail what you did that caused much pain and led you mom to be hospitalised. organisation Language Language errors identified in essay.	Focus Comments require learner to state key aspects and give additional information Comparison Comments relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what is observed and what needs to be done. Valence Comments given are positive as they relate to task and describe what needs to be done.	Mind map Replace the term Ignorant with disrespectful Content 1.Need to start telling the story in relation to the lesson in Para 1 and Describe all the bad things you did which may have caused a great pain to your mom 2. Last Para need to also focus on lesson learnt e.g. this then made me realise that being disrespectful... Organization Language	Focus Instructional comments given to guide learner on what to do. Comments also offer suggestions. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria. Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Comments given are still positive as they relate to task.	Mind Map Content 1. You received a call from home, how come you had to walk back home? You need to state that you quickly rushed to hospital to see her and then the doctor ... Organisation 1. More details needed in Para 3.Then what happened after all that reflecting / thinking about what you used to do? Did you think of going to her and apologising and making a promise of change in your behaviour or you just seat and waited? 2. Was that a final blow as you did not have a chance to apologies? Language 2. You have to proof read your work.	Focus Comments given offer suggestions, uses questions to help learner to develop ideas and are also instructional. Comparison Comments are related to the three sets of criteria. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the essay. Valence Comments given are still positive as they relate to task.

Description of comments made in learners' essay 3

I still gave instructional comments so that learners may improve the content and language. For instance for Tzepo's essay 3 I wrote:

> *You need to arrange your ideas in order of events*

My comments in essay 3 still described what the learners needed to do to improve their essays. I requested learners to describe the value of the lesson learnt. Questions were also used to help them to build and explain the story clearly.

> *Tells us more about why you changed your behaviour. What caused that change? Mention all the changes and how these affected people around you and your school work.*

My comments also acknowledge improvement seen. In Tzepo's third essay I wrote,
"1.Introduction is now better than the 1st one"

In correcting grammar errors, this time I used both direct and indirect correction strategies. For instance, in Sipho and Nathi's work I corrected words that were misspelt. At times, I will just use correction symbols to point out the error made.

The comments that I wrote in learners' essays were related to the content, organisation and language criteria. At the end of learners' essays, I wrote overall comments in relation to what needed to be improved. Only five (Lungelo, Bogie, Thandekile, Nolanga & Nathi) learners received three sets of criteria that described content, organisation and language used in their essays. Comments related to content criteria were only for four learners (Mandla, Bokang, Mpumi& Lisa) while seven learners (Sipho, Andie, Thando, Joy, Henmel & Gift) received comments on content and organisation. For the other four, (Penelope, Andie, Thando, & Precious) the comments given were related to content and language. One learner, namely Gugulethu, had comments made on organisation and language while Gladness' comments were on language only. There were in text comments made. I pointed once more on language errors and even offered suggestions in some learners' work as is depicted in Mpumi's work (see appendix F).

Having discussed with my supervisor, it became clear that some of my learners may have had difficulties in understanding some of my comments and that some comments made were helpful to learners to understand what they were expected to do. In some cases, I did not use full sentences and thus it was not clear whether my comments were describing what they had done or offering suggestions. Furthermore, my comments given to those that had presented good work were not helping them to improve. However, there were comments that were acknowledged as constructive. These comments motivated learners to act on them so as to improve quality of their work.

4.4 Relationship of my Comments with Learners' Quality of Work Produced

> *If only using "descriptive" versus "evaluative" feedback were simply a matter of word smithing! Then we could all learn how to write descriptive feedback just as we learned to write descriptive paragraphs in elementary school. Unfortunately, part of the issue is how the student understands the comment. Students filter what they hear through their own past experiences, good and bad*, (Brookhart 2008:31).

As stated earlier, giving feedback that can be used to enhance a learner's quality of learning is never an easy task to master. It's an ongoing process that one has to keep working on till until there is a change in learners' learning. In addition, it also requires one to engage learners in the process so that they are able to understand and make use of comments given or even go beyond what has been given.

As I reflect back on the comments I made on the essays, I realise the following:

1. Where comments were not given, some learners did not attempt to make any changes in their work. This can be seen in Gugulethu and Thandi's mind maps which remained unchanged as there were no comments given. Nathan's essays had no mind map at all.

2. The quality of improvement was minimal where comments did not specify or give details on what had to be done. This either lead to learners producing work as is or if its good piece of work they ended up simplifying it. For instance in Precious essay 1 where it was written 'work on introduction'. Instead of Precious improving the quality of her introduction she ended up writing

a simple and too general introduction which was contrary to the catchy introduction that she had written in essay 1. Furthermore where praise comments were not given, learners either omitted good ideas or changed their style of writing. Again this is evidently seen in Precious work.

3. Some learners tried to tell stories as per given comments but struggled to develop or narrate detailed stories. For instance, Mpumi still failed to give a detailed story about challenges that she failed. This was also evidently seen in Lungelo's essay; in her second essay she managed to present one lesson taught but struggled to tell a detailed clear story

4. Where I used language or terms that are above the learner's level and comments were not clear, the learners did not apply the given comments. For instance in Sipho's essay I wrote:

> The essay needs to tell a story in relation to what your parents taught you. Use 1st person when narrating your story or as you are reflecting on your experience.

Sipho's second essay still did not tell a story but talked much about alcohol and how friends are a bad influence. In addition he still used second person. Learner might not have understood the instructions as a result of terms such as relate, Fist person being used. However, when I wrote the comment below, he paid attention to the first comment.

> Talk about how it's important not to abuse drugs. Show how the experience you had led you to change and respect your body State the value of the lesson. Why is it important not to be involved in drugs?

Sipho's third essay then talked more about abuse of drugs but did not explicitly explain how the experience he had led him to change or value the lesson. Again no story was told. May be it was because I did not emphasis the point that they were supposed to tell stories and he probably did not understand the term 'experience" for earlier on in his first essay he had written:

> *Experience you must not listin to your friends.....response in life you must be responsible.*

5. However, where comments were simple, clear and language used was at par with language level of learner, learners were then able to make sense of comments given and use these to improve quality of work. This also led to a significant improvement. For instance where I

requested learners to select one lesson and tell a story, learners were able then to rework their essay based on the comment made. For instance Andie, Mandla, Tzepo and Henmel were able to relate a story in relation to a lesson learnt. Below is an example of a comment that enabled Mandla to rework his essay:

> *Out of the lessons you talked about, chose one that you think is the most important lesson. Tell a story about how you came to realise the value of that lesson. What happened?*

6. Furthermore when changes are made on the essay, learners take note of these changes Learners implemented changes where I corrected a word or inserted a phrase, or even gave an example of what to include. For example, Lisa's introduction and conclusion improved as a result of examples that I had included in the essay.

> *E.g. conclusion need to be related experience e.g. even though I cannot turn the clock back I have learnt to value and be grateful of people I have in my life.*

In addition, some learners were able to rearrange their paragraphs according to instructions given. Even though Lisa's story was still not clearly told, or developed, she arranged ideas as instructed in the essay.

In conclusion where comments are not specific, clear, language used is beyond the level of learner and learners have language problems, the quality of change tends to be minimal. Learners will make use of comments if they understand them.

4.5: Findings obtained from the evaluation forms

At the end of the teaching process I gave learners evaluation sheets to enable me to get their view about the teaching process. The questions found in the evaluation form were based on the teaching process that involved 8 lessons done in class on writing a reflective essay. Twenty learners who had accepted to be involved in the study were given evaluation sheets. The meanings of the levels were explained to the learners. The table below presents the overall findings. The levels used represent the following:

Table 14 : Overall findings from evaluation forms

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Very low	Low	Moderate	Satisfactory	outstanding

Categories	Level 1	L2	L3	L4	L5
1.Objectives					
Uses diff methods to provide feedback	0	1	11	8	0
Improve teaching and learning	0	2	10	6	2
Develop one's assessment skills	0	0	2	13	5
2.Assessment strategies					
Criteria explained clearly to learners in relation to topic	0	2	8	6	4
Provided more relevant feedback	0	0	5	12	3
Involved learners in critical reflection of their work	0	0	10	4	6
Encouraged learner involvement and responsibility			7	5	7
Encouraged learner participation and working together	0	1	5	10	4
3.Constructive feedback given (descriptive)					
Comments made are of quality & describe areas that need improvement	0	0	9	9	1
Shows or explains how errors can be corrected	0		4	11	5
Comments given lead to improvement of work	0	1	7	8	4
Comments made are not clear	0	12	2	3	3
Comments could not be used as writing was not clear	0	3	6	5	4
4. Constructive feedback (valence)					
Identifies errors and good points	0		5	7	8
Comments are motivating	0	2	4	7	7
Points and praise ideas presented	0	1	5	9	5
5. Relevancy					
Pointed out & suggested what needed to be improved	0		4	10	3
Could use comments to improve work	0		2	12	2
Focused on student performance	0		4	13	3
Suitable to the purpose of the essay & criteria for use	0		3	15	2

The first part of the evaluation form was to assess whether or not the objective of the teaching process was achieved. Eleven learners rated the first objective: using different methods to provide feedback to English First Additional learners so as to enhance deep learning as level 3, while 8 learners rated it as level 4 and one as level 5.

During the teaching process, learners were exposed to different formative assessment strategies with the intention of helping learners to write better reflective essays: explaining the criteria, modelling how to structure reflective essays, involving them in peer assessment and giving them two opportunities to rework their essays. The majority of the learners saw the assessment strategies as helping them to improve their essay writing skills as is depicted in the table above. The majority of learners (10) considered the strategies used as moderately involving learners in critical reflection of their work (level 3). Six rated it as level 4 which is satisfactory. Most learners considered the use of strategies as encouraging learner participation to a great extent (level 4).

Categories 3, 4 and 5 assess the nature of comments written on learners' essays (written feedback). Category 3 evaluates whether or not the comments given were descriptive enough to enable learners to improve the quality of their work. From the table above 10 learners felt that the comments made were of adequate quality and described areas that needed improvement (level 3) while 9 learners felt that the comments were of great quality. Seven learners felt that comments given adequately lead to improvement of work; while eight rated them as level 4 which meant that comments contributed to the improvement of work.

Twelve learners felt that comments given were clear (they rated them as level 2) and only three learners felt that comments were not clear (they rated them as level 5). This implies that some comments were vague and condensed as was pointed out in the teacher's description of comments. This concurs with what I discovered having discussed with my supervisor that some of my learners might have had difficulties in understanding what I meant.

Eight learners as depicted on the table above considered feedback given as remarkable (level 5) identifying errors and good points, while seven regarded it as greatly (level 4) and 5 as adequately identifying errors. Out of twenty, 11 learners circled level 4 which indicates that

constructive feedback was given which explained how errors could be improved. Five learners encircled level 5 while four learners encircled level 3.

The majority of learners felt that comments given identified areas of weaknesses, pointed out and praised good ideas presented as well as motivated them to take action. This is shown by the majority of learners who rated the feedback to be level 4 or level 5. Similarly, the oral feedback presentation in which I said "Most of you had good ideas and you presented more than one lesson, but the question is: did you respond to the question?" My comments were positive (i.e. there was positive valence). This illustrates that I attempted to comment on both the strengths and weaknesses of their essays. However, I feel that much effort was put on identifying the weaknesses and working towards improving the quality of writing. Two learners encircled level 2, meaning that they felt that my feedback was not motivating. One learner felt that comments did not point and praise his/her effort, causing the learner to make changes where it was not necessary.

The evaluative sheet also covered the relevancy of the comments given. Thirteen learners encircled level 4. Three learners encircled level 5 while four learners encircled level 3. This implies that the comments I made were related to the task and were not personal.

The majority of learners indicated that comments given were satisfactorily (level 4) relevant. The comments focused on the task rather than the individuals concerned. In addition, comments were in relation to quality of work measured against the given criteria.

Sixteen learners indicated that the assessment process greatly enhanced their writing skills and evaluative skills. However, through evaluating the learners' essays I noted that 10 showed significant improvement and the other 10 learners had improved slightly (minimally). In addition, during the teaching process, learners had difficulties in assessing each other's work, as this was completely novel to them. In addition, the process needed more time and training.

The learner evaluation forms revealed that the teacher adequately provided feedback that resulted in learners improving their writing skills.

4.6 SUMMARY OF INSIGHT GAINED

The presentation and description of data that this chapter provides reveal that in order to generate improvement in learners' writing skills, the criteria has to be explained explicitly to learners and comments made need to be descriptive enough for one to close the gap between current and desired standard. The quality improvement corresponds with quality of comments made by the teacher. Where I clearly stated what the learners were supposed to do, there was significant improvement. Where direct correction strategy was used, learners corrected the errors. For instance, spelling errors that I had corrected in the learners' essays were also correctly written in their next draft.

On the contrary, where comments made where not clear and did not specify what exactly needed to be done there was minimal improvement. This is evidently seen in Precious, Gladness and Gugulethu's essay 2. In addition, Precious's style of writing changed from being descriptive to general as result of my comments that were not specific and did not identify areas that needed to be improved. Furthermore, if good ideas are not acknowledge learners tend to discard those ideas as was the case in Precious's second draft.

However, in some cases, learners' quality of improvement was hindered by learners' having challenges in expressing themselves as English is their second Additional Language. For instance, Lisa, Mpumi, Lungelo, Penelope and Sipho still failed to tell stories even though I talked to them as individuals. For instance, Lisa acknowledged that she could not explain what made her realise the importance of being grateful.

In addition, giving comments to enable learners to act on them for improvement of the quality of work is never an easy task. It is a process that needs to be practiced and mastering with time which boils down to the statement made by Brookhart (2008:31) which states that

> *If only using "descriptive" versus "evaluative" feedback were simply a matter of wordsmithing!*

The chapter that follows discusses the analyses of the data presented and described above.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data presented in Chapter 4. According to Daley (2004) data analysis involves reducing voluminous amounts of information into manageable form without losing the embedded meaning. This process involves making sense of the data collected. In this study the strategies I used to provide constructive feedback are analysed against the literature and conceptual framework that were presented in chapter 2. The formative strategies that I used are analysed first, as these address the first research question in chapter 1. This is followed by the analysis of the nature of comments I gave, as that addresses the last two research questions. Lastly, the conclusion is drawn from the interpretation of the findings. As this was an action research project, I needed to reflect critically on things I did in the classroom in order to figure out whether or not what I did yielded the desired outcome and to modify my practice accordingly.

Before I embarked on this project I rarely used formative assessment strategies or descriptive feedback comments to enable learners to improve the quality of their work. Ovando (1994), Reed (2006) and Brookhart (2008) argue that the key strategy to enhance learning is to use strategies that will provide learners with constructive feedback. This project taught me that the skill cannot be mastered within a single day and needs constant practice.

5.2 Teacher Assessment Strategy: Grade 11A

Teacher assessment strategy plays a crucial role in improving quality of learning and one's professionalism. To help me to learn how best to enable learners to improve their performance and to facilitate the development of learners' self-assessment skills, I used the assessment strategies that were postulated by Black and Wiliam (1998b) and Brookhart (2008). These strategies included changing the classroom culture so that assessment becomes integral part teaching and learning. It also involved designing lesson plan, explaining assessment criteria,

training on peer assessment, modelling strong and weak work, giving teacher feedback and giving learners opportunities to rework their essays thrice. As explained in my discussion of the teaching process (chapter 4) and evaluative sheet in chapter 5, I trained my learners on how to use given criteria and notes to evaluative essays. More importantly, Saddler's argument states that teachers have to train and help learners to acquire the same evaluative skills as them so that learners may be able to compare actual performance with a standard, and take action to improve their work.

Before I embarked on this study, the situation in my EFAL classes was that learners, when given essays to write, were not exposed to what was expected of them, or given detailed lesson on how to plan, write and assess their own writing. What used to happen is that they were given a topic; I would briefly explained it and let them write and ask their friends to edit spelling errors and then hand in a final draft which was summatively assessed (see appendix C1 rubric). But for this research project, the teaching pattern changed. To ensure that I used formative assessment effectively to enhance learning, I made sure that I crafted 8 lesson plans that focused on particular targets which are: writing quality work as can be seen in appendix D and using given comments to bridge the gap. According to Black and Wiliam (1998b) designing a lesson that focuses on one learning target or aspect of quality at a time enables learners to master a specific goal. Furthermore each lesson plans had learner activities. These activities involved group discussion on qualities of a good essay, writing a reflective essay introduction, writing a reflective essay. Furthermore, they were given an activity to help assess a given essay as a group so as to develop peer assessment skills. I engaged in that to help my learners to acquire skills of writing quality work and assessing given piece of work Black (2003) posits that the learning environment has to be channelled in making sure that learners are actively engaged in given tasks.

So, I began by teaching learners the qualities of a good essay and thereby explaining the criteria used to assess essays and the purpose of using given rubric. Learners were able to identify the qualities of a good essay, but this was the first time they used it to check whether the first draft they wrote presented the expected qualities. This approach of using criteria was novel to them; they then failed to use it to check their own work. This could be because I did not emphasis the use of criteria to check their work. Thus 10 out of 20 learners wrote essays which described more

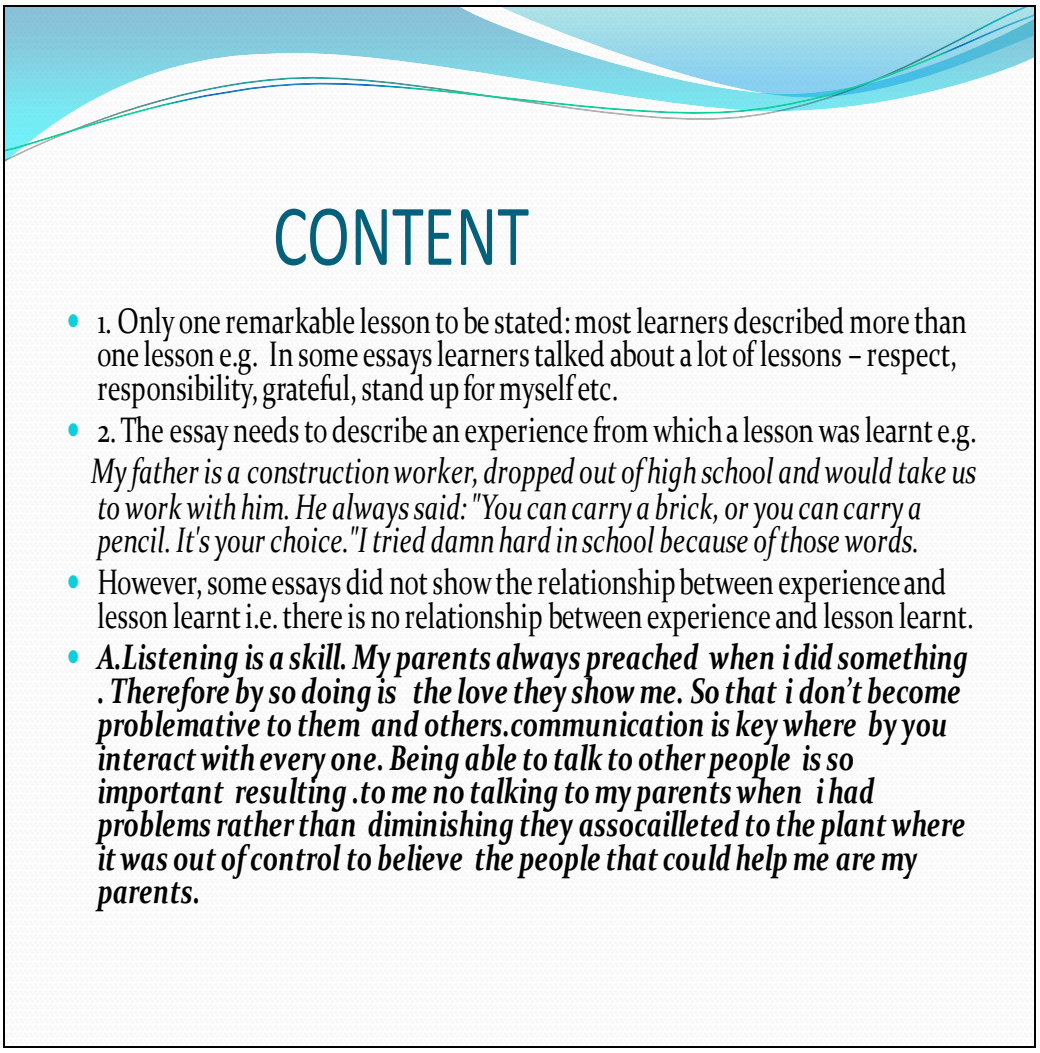
than one lesson and had no story. On reflection, before they wrote the first draft, I feel I should have at least given them an opportunity to work on how to improve the introduction and also commented on what needs to be done to make the essay more interesting. Again before submission, I should have requested them to revisit the rubric and check if they had addressed the essential key elements. I did not pay enough attention to what I had learned from the literature, namely, that constructive feedback involves being explicit about the assessment criteria.

Lesson four objectives were partially fulfilled. Three out of five groups in 11A were able to use the criteria accurately to describe the 2 essays given to them. They identified the key weakness, comment on the content, organisation and language in activities 1 and 2, For example they stated that activity 1 essay described valuable lessons learned and that the *paragraphs were faulty or the structure is not* well done, multiple ideas in one paragraph . They also stated that the ideas discussed were well developed. Group 1 in grade 11A pointed out that the essay had a range of different ideas with minimal repetition. These comments given by the learners were specific and indicate that they were able to use the given rubric to describe the essays. However, two groups in 11A could not identify major flaws in each essay nor even give an accurate description of the content of the two essays. For instance in the essay entitled valuable *life lesson that you learned*, group 5 of 11A wrote; *some sentences are related but the main idea has changed to another idea*. Even though most groups were able to use the criteria to describe the essay, most of them failed to offer suggestions or recommendations on how to improve the essays. According to Brookhart (2008) comments given need not only be specific, descriptive but suggestions and recommendations opt to be given to help learners to act on given comment. I feel that a single lesson on analysing and giving feedback was not adequate enough to enable learners to have the potential to assess given task and also develop their peer and self-regulative skills. Since this was novel to them, an additional lesson on how to offer suggestions and recommendations could have also helped learners to enhance their peer assessment skills. Earl (2013) states that development of independent and responsible learners who embrace assessment as a part of learning process is challenge. Learners may find it a challenge to engage in peer assessment and will require teachers to motivate them. To me it goes further than that: it needs to be constantly practiced. In addition, it suggests that I as a teacher need to ensure that I have acquired mastery

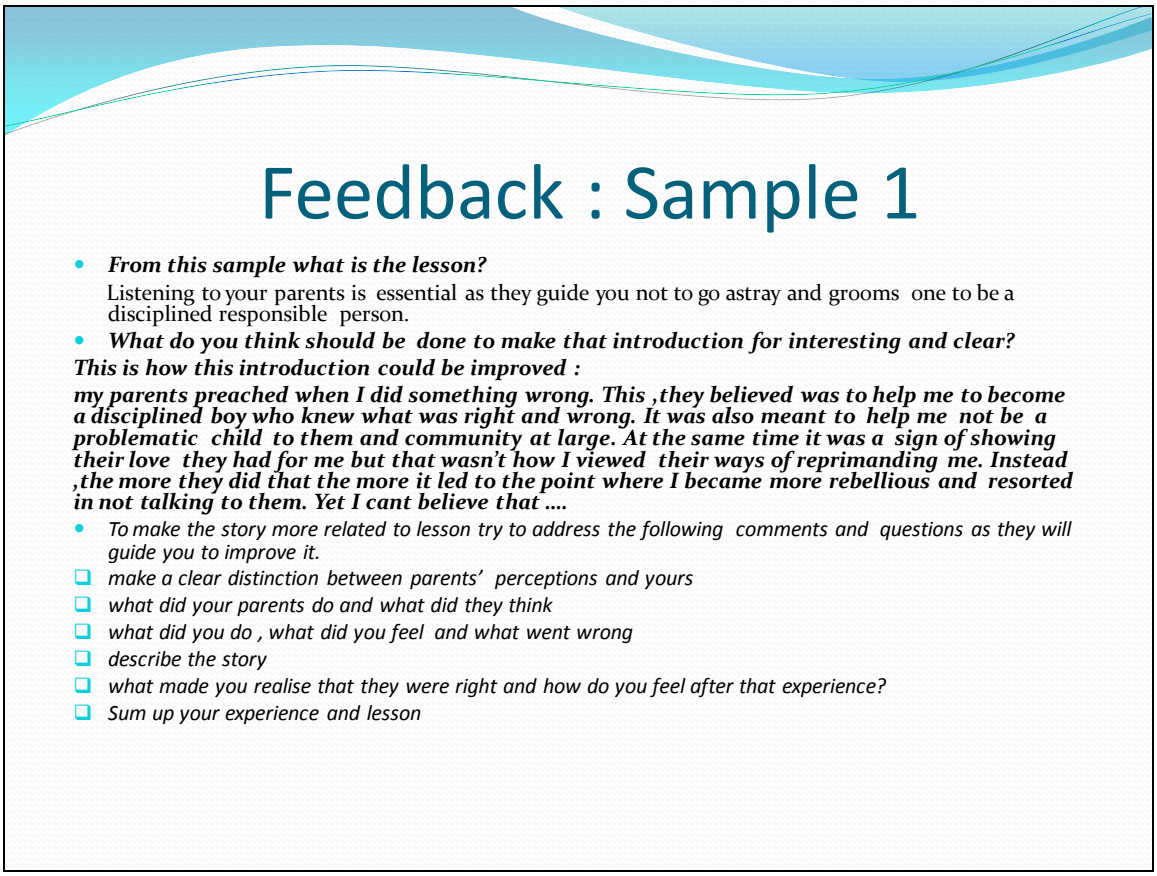
over the alternative, student-centred assessment strategies and use these strategies for the holistic development of students rather than focusing on their ability of rote memorization.

Furthermore on lesson 5A I gave learners an oral feedback based on the overall quality of work produced by learners. The oral feedback was given three days after learners had written their first draft. This was done in line with what the proponents of constructive feedback propose. They suggest that feedback has to be given to learners while they are still mindful of the topic and there is still time for them to act on it, (Brookhart, 2008; Hattie, 1998). When giving oral feedback, I used selected learners' essays samples (ref appendix C2) to highlight areas that needed to be improved and to discuss what they needed to do to improve the quality of work. These essay samples were from learners whose essays were categorised as either not achieved, elementary or moderate. This was of great benefit to those whose samples were selected and those who had produced then same quality of work as the selected samples. However, some learners who have written good quality of work did not improving significantly e.g. Precious. This was because I did not select / use their quality essays to feedback or discuss how they could have improved their work to move to the next level. Black and Wiliam (1998B) posit that carefully chosen examples of learners' work can create and refine students' understanding of the learning goals by helping them to answer the question 'what defines quality work? So I feel I should have at least given them an opportunity to work on how to improve the introduction and also commented on what needs to be done to make the essay more interesting. To enable that to happen I need to give oral feedback in weak, average and good quality work.

In addition, the feedback that I gave to learners focused on the four qualities of effective content described by Brookhart (2008), that is, it was task and process focused, descriptive as well as compared the learners' essays to the learning target. The slides below give an example of oral comments given to learners giving a description of the learner's work in relation to learning target bulletin 1.



Based on what Hattie (1989), Juwah et al. (2004) and Brookhart (2008) proposed, I modelled what and how students could have built on the introduction, bulletin 2- lesson learnt from what the father used to say. I also requested them to state ideas that could have been included to state what exactly I did at school to obtain good results and what I ended up doing after graduating. We then read and commented on the introduction in bulletin 4 and that was further discussed in the slide below.



The above comments are related to the task and also offer suggestions on how the introduction could have been improved. I used questions to assist the learners to help them built up the story and the key ideas that could have been included. My comments helped learners, especially those whose ideas I used as examples to improve. I even modelled a good essay. However, I feel I should have made copies of the slides and given them to learners so that they could also refer to them when writing their second draft.

In future, when giving oral feedback I feel my feedback should also cater for those that have produced good work. I need to identify what they need to do to improve their work and let them engage in improving their work. In addition, I need to also focus on the mind map and emphasise that their mind maps should correlate with the essay.

With an action research second cycle in mind and Robyn R. Jackson's (2009) statement that says: "that it is one thing to collect feedback about students' progress, but if you simply collect this feedback and never use it to adjust your instruction, then you are collecting it in vain", I then used the selected feedback to adjust my teaching. During a discussion with my supervisor, we

noted that some learners' second essays, for example Lisa, Penelope, Gladness and Thandekile, had not shown much improvement in content and most learners whose essays have been classified as not achieved had not told a story. I then decided to have a 7th lesson. The focal point of the lesson was to once more give feedback to learners on what I expected as a result of the quality of work produced. I highlighted common errors, pointed out the nature of mistakes and also showed students how to make improvements. Since most learners had not related a story, so I had to put much emphasis on telling a story and how to create one. I used Sherman article to show the kind of improvement I needed, for Juwah et al. (2004) state that teachers need to model how to structure a good essay as this helps learners to use feedback to improve quality of work. Again learners were given an opportunity to write a third draft (lesson 8) which is in line with Wiggins' (1998) proposal, which states that excellence is attained through a cycle of giving learners access to criteria and expected standards for the task, giving feedback on their first attempt and letting them use the feedback to revise and resubmit work: ***model-practice-perform-feedback-perform***" (Wiggins, 1998).

5.2.1 Nature of Feedback I gave to Grade 11A

For the three drafts written by my learners in Grade 11A, I wrote comments which were meant to help learners to close the gap between the current and targeted learning. I then met with my supervisor to assess my comments and learners' work. For validity sake and to avoid bias, action research states that if the research is carried out by an individual who is the interested participant in the study, it requires the main participant to seek the views of objective people or critical friends as to the meaning of the data collected (Elliott, 1991). This will enable the data analysed to be more valid and reliable.

During the analysis of my comments, my critical friends and supervisor acknowledged that some of my comments were constructive and enabled some learners to improve. These comments emphasised what needs to be done for learners to improve the quality of their work and were also positive comments (valence). These comments were mostly given to those that had written more than one lesson and had not told a story in relation to lesson taught.

Below are the comments I wrote in Andie's first draft.

Mind map

1. Choose one lesson

2. Tell a story how you learnt that lesson

Content

1. Select only one lesson

2. You can mention 4 lessons but select one as the most important lesson

In response to Sipho‘s work I wrote;

1. The essay needs to tell a story in relation to what your parents taught you.
2. Use 1st person when narrating your story or as you are reflecting on your experience
3. To make your work more interesting, check your grammar.

The above comments were task focused as the comments repeated instructions on the structure of the mind map and also instructed the learner on what to do to improve the essay. In addition, they were descriptive and specified what needs to be done in relation to the targeted outcome.

Yet we also found that some comments were not clear or not specific enough to enable learners to act on them. For instance, the 3rd comment – *to make your work more interesting, check your grammar* does not specify what the learner has to do exactly. What aspect of grammar need to be checked? The term ‘check’ isn’t explicit and descriptive enough to help the learner to address the specific grammatical errors. For a second language learner, it’s a challenge to correct grammatical errors, more so if you are not aware of the type of error. My supervisor also stated that some comments were condensed; it was not clear whether I was describing what the learner had done or offering suggestions. This can be seen in Penelope’s first essay, comments 1-4:

1. Specify the lesson

2. Story based on lesson

3. General attitude towards parents

4. Value of the lesson

In Penelope's essay for comment 1, I could have formulated comments in such a way that they were clear instruction. For instance I could have written:

1. You need to state the lesson learnt
2. Tell a story in relation to the lesson learnt
3. Describe your general attitude towards your parents' belief and teaching.
4. Describe the value of the lesson.

In addition, comments given to learners who had produced a good piece of work were also not helping them to progress to the next level. My comments did not specify what exactly the learner had to do to improve their writing. In Precious's work I wrote:

1. Add something to complete the idea. Work on the introduction.

This type of comment is not descriptive at all. The learner might ponder on what exactly needs to be improved. In attempting to use this comment to improve their work, a learner like Precious might end up omitting ideas that makes the story more interesting or even change the style of writing such that it loses its excitement. Such comments tend to confirm what Sadler (1989) stated, that the kind of comments we give often falls short of what is actually necessary to close the gap between the current and desired performance and this is the challenge that teachers are often faced with. In order to improve on my comments I could have said:

You could have introduced the topic by creating a feeling of excitement anticipation, nervousness as you wait for the results. This will cause the reader to be compelled to read your story further.

Another option was to suggest that: Re -arrange your paragraphs so that paragraph 3 becomes your introduction. This would have made your introduction more interesting and unpredictable as it creates suspense.

Critically looking at these comments I gave learners who had written a good essay, I feel that the comments did not enable those learners to bridge the gap and thus they contributed to most of the learners' second essays not improving significantly. For instance, the content of Gladness', Precious' and Gift's second essays is similar to essay one. Gladness even wrote that:

In my first draft you gave comments and told me to fix some of my paragraphs and I did that , so I do not understand what is expected of me. You should have stated the mistakes I did in my first draft but instead you corrected them so I don't get it.

In addition, a colleague of mine, when we analysed why there was minimal change in Sipho's work, wrote

- Language level might be high for the learner – based on the learner's work e.g. the words reflect in the comment written.
- Your hand writing is not legible enough for the child to read the comments.

In viewing the definition in chapter one and Ramaprasad's definition of feedback that says "Feedback is information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way" (p4), this implies that information given must be used to alter the gap. In other words, if the student cannot use this information to alter the gap, then there is no real feedback. With regard to the definition and explanation above, I then think that some of the comments that I gave were not proper feedback.

This then led me to reflect especially on those comments that were not clear and specific enough to alter the gap. The comments made by my supervisor, learners and my critical colleague, also caused me to work on improving the nature of my comments. My supervisor emphasised the need for the comments to be more descriptive and specific so as to enable learners to bridge the gap. My comments in learners 'second essay were much better than the first essay, although they still needed to be improved. I tried to use descriptive words and specify what the learner has to do to improve work. For instance in Sipho's second essay I wrote:

> Talk about how it is important not to abuse drugs. However, the second comment was not clear. I had written:
>
> Show how drugs led you to change and respect your body.
>
> Even my colleague commented that the comment was not clear as she asked: How can drugs be perceived as having a positive element, yet they are detrimental? Comment is vague and does not give sense of direction.

Since I was a novice at giving feedback, I found it a challenge to give constructive comments, more so to those who presented good essays. As Brookhart (2008:31) says

> *If only using "descriptive" versus "evaluative" feedback were simply a matter of wordsmithing! We could all learn how to write descriptive feedback just as we learned to write descriptive paragraphs in elementary school. Unfortunately, part of the issue is how the student understands the comment. Students filter what they hear through their own past experiences, good and bad.*

However, writing descriptive comments that will trigger learners to take action is a skill that needs to be mastered and takes constant practice. Reviewing my comments has enabled me not only to evaluate the quality of improvement in my learners' work but also led me to adjust my teaching and introduce a new strategy (appendix D, lesson 7).

5.2.2 Quality of Improvement in Relation to Feedback Given

In some cases where my comments were clear and specify, there was a significant improvement. 6 out of 20 learners (Tzepo, Mandla, Joy, Bokang, Henmel and Andie) had written more than one lesson and had not told a story in the first or second drafts, but after receiving oral and written feedback, their third essays improved significantly. Furthermore, one learner (Bogie) whose first essay had been categorised as elementary also showed significant improvement in his second and final draft. There was a significant improvement in the essay content (see appendix H, Bogie's essays). The story was clearly described and his introduction and conclusion were more interesting as stated in chapter 5. Significant improvement was seen again in Nolanga, Thandekile and Gift's essays who also progressed from adequate to substantial level.

Improvement was also seen in cases where a direct correction strategy was used. Even though Penelope had still not told a story, there was enough improvement in word order and how ideas were presented to progress to the next level.

What is worth noting is that where an error has not been corrected, learners did not put effort to correct it on their own. In cases where learners had major language problems, the use of indirect error correction seemed not to be effective. For instance, Sipho's essays still had spelling and grammatical errors even when I used indirect error correction strategy (i.e. using symbols or

suggestions without providing corrections) to give him the clue of error made (see example below.)

E.g. still wrote stilling instead of stealing; and up instead of end up I did not pay much attention to spelling error correction. Corpus (2011) suggested that first one has to focus more on content and organisation and then later pay greater attention to language errors. Since I did not place much emphasis on error correction in essay 1, learners only corrected what was pointed out. After assessing my work with my supervisor, I also noted that I only focused on errors that I could notice, which was argued by Scott that most teachers correct what they notice.

In cases where comments were not clear and specific, learners either wrote the same content as it was or changed it for the worse, as with Precious' second essay. For instance, I did not specify what exactly needed to be improved to make her introduction catchy. So in her re-write, she made it more general, which was not an improvement.

However, there are comments which placed emphasis on what needs to be altered to bridge the gap, but learners could not do so. I had written to Lisa, Mpumi, Lungelo, Penelope and Sipho that they need to tell a story. But still their final essays failed to describe a story, even though I had attended to them individually. The learners' failure to describe a story might have been a result of different factors. Maybe they were unable to invent a story in relation to the lesson learned or maybe they struggled to express themselves due to language errors, so they only focussed on correcting those (see table showing my comments for Sipho).

From the above discussion, I would say the quality of improvement was congruent with quality of comments. For instance, where comments were clear and specific, the quality of improvement was significant, contrary to where it wasn't. This then aligns with the argument presented by the proponents of constructive feedback (Hattie, 1998; Sadler, 1998; Brookhart, 2008), who state that feedback is the fundamental aspect that alters the gap, especially if the content of the feedback given enables learners to act on it.

5.3 Conclusion

Engaging learners in lessons on how to structure an essay, empowering the learners with evaluative skills and giving learners formative constructive comments help to enhance the performance of learners. Writing comments that are descriptive enough to motivate learners to

bridge the gap is a challenge, especially in an environment where summative rubrics and grading are used to assess learners' essays / written tasks. Yet it is a skill that I need to master to enhance deep learning. One way to improve is to learn from day to day experience by becoming a reflective teacher and constantly practising giving constructive feedback that is descriptive enough to help learners to significantly improve their performance.

CHAPTER SIX: FINAL REFLECTIONS

> *Researchers can expect that their work will contribute to their sense of being-in-the-world, to their praxis, and to the larger conversation regarding the topic under study, as well as the process of inquiry*, (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 70).

While my initial plan was to explore, implement and evaluate two formative strategy that can provide constructive feedback to improve quality of work and quality of learning, my experience of the action research was like " designing the plan while flying it" (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p69). This chapter reflects on the research intention, the living contradictions and the benefits of the research. These are then followed by recommendations and conclusion.

6.1 What were my research intentions and were they achieved?

Firstly, I had aimed at conducting two different formative assessment strategies for improving the quality of learners' written essays and to use these different strategies in separate parallel Grade 11 English as First Additional Language classrooms. However, grade 11B class was allocated to another teacher during before I completed data collection. There were challenges with class 11B from day 3. Most learners were not willing to write the essay and I only managed to get 10 participants of which two withdrew on the last session of the study. One learner decided to submit only two instead of three essays. Due to a drop in the number of participants, I focused in grade 11A which was under my full control as the designated EFAL teacher. All the participants in my 11A class willingly submitted three drafts of essays.

As a self-study project, the second aim was to improve my teaching practice through use of the two formative strategies and also reflecting on the comments I gave to learners.

In addressing the achievement of my intentions, the following research questions were relevant to the study:

1. How did the formative assessment strategies enable learners to improve their learning?
2. What was the nature of the feedback given by the teacher?

3. . How did learners make use of the feedback they received so as to bridge the gap between their current and desired performance?

With regard to the first question, peer assessment was unsuccessful as mentioned in chapter 6. However, the teacher assessment strategy was a success, since out of the 20 learners that participated, 10 learners' third essay drafts showed significant improvement. The content and organisation of their essays had improved. The evidence from the learners' evaluative sheet and assessment done by a critically friend and supervisor also confirms the findings.

Where I gave clear and descriptive comments, learners managed to act on them to bridge the gap between the current and desired performance. On the contrary, where my comments were vague, condensed and not descriptive, it was a challenge for learners to implement changes in their work. At times it resulted in them changing or even omitting ideas that made their work to be more exciting. This implies that the quality of improvement in learners' work was congruent to comments given.

My second research aim was fruitful, for through the process I gained more insight on the usage of formative strategies and how to give constructive feedback that will motivate learners to improve quality of work since the process was also novel to me. Through my discussion with my supervisor, I also learnt that as I assess my learners' work, I should see what the learners present, not only what is missing from what I want or expect. Over and above I learnt that giving feedback that is descriptive, task focused and positive as well as dialogic enables learners to generate improved quality work. However, it is a skill that teachers need to practise and apply constantly. I developed professionally.

6.2 Any 'Living Contradictions'?

There were living contradictions between my previous strategies of teaching and assessing essay tasks compared to what I was exposed to during my research journey. As stated previously, my key focus was to generate desired quality and improve quality of learning through using formative strategies that provide constructive feedback. This included crafting of lesson plans plus activities, designing of formative rubric and giving feedback that was going to encourage learners to take action in generating the desired quality of work. However, it was a challenge to

even construct a formative rubric and later to write comments that could enable learners to act on the feedback. At some point I felt that I could not really make head or tail of what my supervisor expected of me as I worked on the rubric. I had to spend more time trying to construct descriptors that were descriptive. I only realised the value of the descriptive criteria when I had to use it to assess my learners' work and at some point I had to rework some criteria to meet my target.

Another contradiction is I expected to conduct teacher and peer strategies but was forced by circumstances to let go of the peer process. This peer process did not go according to what I had planned to do. For example, when I conducted my peer assessment with grade 11B, I had planned how I would engage my learners (appendix lesson plans 5B, 7B). Instead of motivating learners to gain more interest in the process, they lost it. This is because it was the first time the grade 11B learners were exposed to this approach and that contradicted with the teaching and learning approach they are accustomed to. My motivation was thwarted particularly when I thought I had it all on track and suddenly two learners withdrew and one learner decided to submit two drafts instead of three.

Another contradiction is that I had aimed and believed that I had given learners feedback that they could use to improve their quality of work, but the kind of feedback that I gave to those that had produced good essays, did the opposite- it led to learners such as Precious producing work with minimal improvement. I failed to give learners like Precious feedback that will lead them to progress to the next category. Exposing these living contradictions helped me to work on improving the nature of my comments and to improve ways of conducting peer assessment strategy.

6.3 What needs to be improved?

Having looked at my living contradictions, there are various things that I need to do to enhance learners' quality of work produced, quality of learning and improve my professionalism. For researchers such as Laidlaw (1994) and Herr and Anderson (2005) claim that exposing of living contradictions enables educators to improve their practice by living out their values more fully. These are areas that need to be improved:

- I need to improve the way I conduct peer assessment strategy.
- Give learners more opportunity to engage in peer assessment.
- Use samples from learners whose essays are of good quality when providing oral feedback.
- Work on improving the skill of providing constructive and dialogical feedback to enable those that have written good essays to progress to the next level.

6.4 What do I think were the benefits of my research?

> "Research through action research does not produce understanding that has universal truth; it is about me in the here and now understanding what I can do to ensure my values and intentions are realised in my teaching situation. If my deliberations produce an understanding which helps me, then I can offer it to others to try," (Waters-Adams, 2006)

I have taken this quotation as a starting point to look at the benefits from the suggested Perspective – me: what have I gained from the research?

During the research journey I have gained more knowledge on how to assess learners and to give constructive feedback that will motivate learners to be keen to improve their quality of work and quality of learning. In addition, I have learnt that the use of formative assessment strategies like descriptive criteria, task focused feedback and giving learners opportunity to rework their tasks can result in the production of quality work as well as improving learning. This skill, however, needs to be mastered by the teacher.

6.5 Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the idea that learners' quality of work corresponds with the quality of comments given cannot be generalised, since the research was conducted in a single township secondary school in South Africa. If the research could be extended to more schools, the findings would yield more results on the quality of teaching and learning. The authorities

could offer professional development on the implementation of formative strategies, construction of formative assessment rubrics and on how to give constructive feedback on written tasks in the form of workshops. Through these workshops teachers would gain insight on how to provide constructive feedback as well as how to use formative assessment to develop learners' metacognitive skills.

6.6 Conclusions

The findings of this study reveal that in order to improve quality of learning, teachers need to change the context of the classroom through formative assessment strategies that become an integral part of teaching and learning. Teachers have to craft lessons that allow learners to actively reflect on their work using the language of criteria and learning objectives.

The comments that teachers give, be they oral or written, affect the quality of work produced by learners and hence comments given should motivate learners to engage in action to bridge the gap between the actual and desired performance. Furthermore, feedback given should allow learners to interact with the agent and the comments so that there is an improvement in the quality of learning and thus leading to learners that can think about their own learning.

In addition, peer assessment is another strategy that enables learners to understand, internalise the characteristics of quality work and the criteria of what constitutes a good performance in that subject. Through peer assessment, high quality learning, skills development, personal development and affective dispositions may be attained. However, this can be attainable only if learners are effectively trained and constantly given opportunity to assess each other‘s work using formative rubrics. I intend to work on improving the way I engage learners in peer assessment, as McNiff and Whitehead (2010) state that the researcher lives in the direction of her values and whether there is a form of professional development or not.

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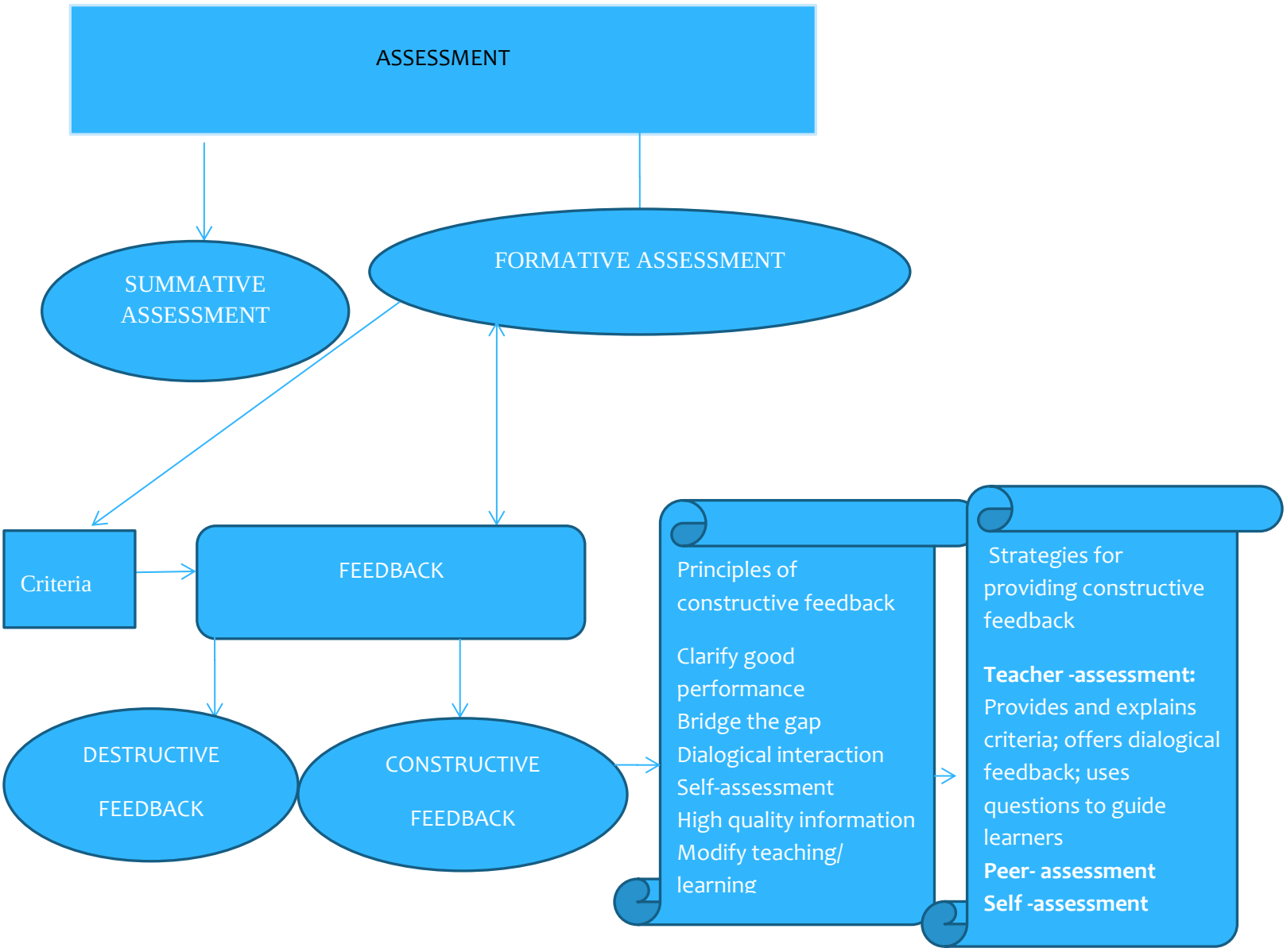
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LITERATURE REVIEW CHART FLOW



APPENDIX B: THE ASSESSMENT INTERVENTION PLAN OF MY ACTION

Class 11A: strategy of teacher feedback This involved 8 steps:	Class 11B: strategy of peer feedback Which follows the same general process, but with some crucial differences. The eight steps will be:
CYCLE 1 • Generation of lesson plan and activities • The co-generation of assessment criteria ideas and introduction of topic. • Discussion of the essay topic - key ideas and introduction of topic. • Learners write the first draft of their essays	**CYCLE 1** • Generation of lesson plans and activities • The co-generation and discussion of assessment criteria (refer to appendix B) key ideas and introduction of topic. • Discussion of the essay topic- key ideas and introduction of topic. • Learners write the first draft of their essays
CYCLE 2 • Teacher marks grade 11A essays and gives written and oral feedback on typical errors and how to overcome them • Learners write the second draft of their essay • Written feedback and a mark from the teacher on each learner's essay in relation to the criteria on a given assessment sheet • Oral feedback from the teacher to the whole class • Learners fill in a questionnaire (see appendix E)	**CYCLE 2** • In Learners give written feedback on the essays of 3 peers, in relation to the criteria on the same given assessment sheet which the teacher used in the other class • Groups of threes, learners give each other oral feedback on the essays. • Learners write the second draft of their essay • Teacher marks the essays and a grade is given • Learners fill in a questionnaire.

APPENDIX C: RUBRIC FOR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF A REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Designed by Nesisa Mkhwanazi

	Code7 Outstanding 80-100%	Code 6 Meritorious 70-79%	Code 5 Substantial 60-69%	Code 4 Adequate 50-59%	Code 3 Moderate 40-49%	Code 2 Elementary 30-39%	Code 1 Not achieved 0-29%
Content: **32marks**	**26-32E** In addition, the essay contains reflection. E.g. it differentiates between parents and own views; it describes the value of the lesson; it presents the process of learning... Ideas build on each other logically to develop an interesting, clear story and reflection A range of detailed , interesting and clear ideas drawn from experience Mind map points out expectations on the experience ,shows key experiences, personal response , reflection and lesson of which contributes to its excitement	**22-25S** Both the story of the experience and the lesson drawn from it are told with appropriate and interesting details and with clarity of focus. Sentences and ideas are clearly connected and logically developed. A range of interesting and clear ideas. Mind map shows some detail on expectations, key experience and personal response but no reflection is included. Ideas on and good structuring of the story.	**19-22A** In addition, the lesson is clearly described and is drawn directly from the experience. Sentences and ideas are generally connected and related, yet there are still one or two ideas not developed. A numerous range of ideas. Mind map points out expectations, key experience a few list of personal response to key experience and no reflection on experience	**16-19A** The experience is well-described and contains enough ideas to tell an interesting story. Sentences and ideas follow on from each other but are not yet fully developed and explained. A range of different ideas with minimal repetition. Mind map list general points on key experience.	**13-15C** Essay tells of an experience in relation to what student learned from parent, but still lacks some details. Mostly sentences are connected / follow on from each other. Ideas are stated but not yet developed Two or three interesting ideas thou there are repeated Mind map shows key experience and few specific details related but do not list personal response to it.	**10-12K** Essay is partial on topic; it tells of an experience with parents or a lesson learned from parents. Story not clear or lacks development. Some sentences are related. Mentions at least one relevant idea. Has only one idea that is mostly repeated throughout the essay. Key experience included in the mind map	**0-9** Essay does not describe an experience from which a lesson was learnt. Off topic. Has more than one lesson described No story told Each sentence or idea stands on its own and is not related to the next sentence or idea. Does little more than repeat the question. No Mind map and if there is, it does not point key experience.

Organization / structure **10 marks**	**9-10** Story has ideas that are logical and extremely clearly ordered and consistently generalized all over the essay to make it more real and interesting Introduction creatively/ imaginatively written to grab reader's attention. Relevant to topic and mentions points that are then dealt with in the essay. Logical and coherent sequencing of paragraphs that contain a topic sentence which is further developed to bring about continuity and an interesting flow of the story. Frequently uses connector words to link sentences and paragraphs so that it becomes more interesting to read.	**7-8** Story has ideas that are logical organised, related and well developed in generalised manner. Introduction grabs reader's attention and is well related to topic. Not only are paragraphs well organised but each paragraph contains a topic sentence which is used to introduce the main idea. Uses connector words to join ideas so that it becomes easier to grabs the flow of the story.	**6** Story has numerous ideas that are mainly related but some incomplete sequencing Introduction captures attention. Relevant. Each paragraph is clearly organised with introduction, body and conclusion one or two connectors used to link paragraphs together	**5** Story has quite a number of related ideas but lack further development and has several incomplete sequencing/ ordering. Topic clearly introduced though not capturing reader's attention. Each paragraph is Loosely organised but main ideas stand out. Seldom usage of connectors.	**4** Most ideas picked up are not connected and lack logical sequencing and development Attempts to connect to topic, though not clearly introduced. Paragraphs poorly/ faulty organised but ideas can be understood. No conclusion/ is abrupt or unclear. No link words used to link paragraphs e.g. firstly, suddenly etc.	**3-2** Ideas not logical and clearly presented and developed. Sometimes off topic. Introduction- not clear or relevant connection to topic. Paragraphs faulty organized No introduction or conclusion Not well linked / developed makes it a bit difficult to understand.	**0-1** Story lacks logical sequencing and development of ideas. Ideas are sometimes mixed up. At times / work is not clear / difficulty to follow line of thought. Story has no introduction. / If is there it does not clearly related to what is discussed in the essay. Essay difficulty to follow as it has no structure and is not presented in paragraphs Sentences and paragraphs are disjointed such that it makes it difficult to understand.

Language usage and vocabulary **8 marks**	8 **Sentence complex** Uses rich and complex sentences used to express the experience and lesson learnt. **Choice of words** Descriptive words and idioms to describe the experience and to generalise the lesson learnt from experience which make the essay more interesting and exciting to read. Meaning clear. **Grammatical errors** Sentences are mostly grammatical correct. Minimal language mistake on construction of complex sentences however that does not affect the flow of the story Punctuation marks correctly used.	7 Wide range of sentences used i.e. simple, complex and compound are used to explain experience and lesson learnt Descriptive words and minimal idiomatic expressions used to describe the express the experience. Minimal Errors of word agreement do to impede flow of the story. Fewer spelling, grammar and punctuation errors.	6 Simple / ordinary sentences used to describe experience. Descriptive words used however there are occasionally errors in choice of words. Errors are of a generally minor nature. Subject-verb agreement Few spelling, grammar and punctuation errors that do not affect line of flow of the story.	5 Simple sentence used with minor errors which do not impede understanding of the story. Limited use of descriptive words and some words are incorrectly used. Correct word order agreement between subject and verb Sentences show satisfactory knowledge of language and punctuation skills, However frequent mistakes do not impede the understanding of the story.	4 Simple sentence used with more frequent errors Incorrect usage of words impedes and distorts meaning. Frequent errors in subject –verb agreement and noun- adjective agreement, tenses, gender Language, spelling and punctuation more frequently faulty and in some cases it becomes difficult to flow line of thought/ meaning.	2-3 Sentences poorly constructed such that it obscures flow. Very frequent errors in choice of words and usage of words. Incorrect words used which impedes flow of story. Errors in word agreement and tense sometimes impede the flow of the story Mostly dominated by language, spelling and punctuation mistakes/ errors which make it difficult to understand line of thought or meaning.	0-1 Sentences constructed very poorly which makes it difficult to understand the flow of the essay/ meaning at times Words used are inaccurate / unrelated to the story; such that it makes it too difficult to understand the meaning. A lot of errors in word agreement, noun adjective agreement, tenses, pronouns and incorrect word order that impedes understanding of the story. Whole essay dominated by language, spelling and punctuation mistakes that make it more challenging to understand the experience.

APPENDIX C1: DBE PRESCRIBED RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING ESSAYS IN GRADE 11

Rubric 1 for assessing an essay – First Additional Language (50 marks)

	Code 7 Outstanding 80–100%	Code 6 Meritorious 70–79%	Code 5 Substantial 60–69%	Code 4 Adequate 50–59%	Code 3 Moderate 40–49%	Code 2 Elementary 30–39%	Code 1 Not achieved 0–29%
Content and planning 32 marks	26–32 Content shows impressive insight into topic. Ideas thought-provoking, mature. Planning and/ or drafting has produced a virtually flawless, presentable essay.	22½–25½ Content shows thorough interpretation of topic. Ideas imaginative, interesting. Planning and/ or drafting has produced a well-crafted and presentable essay.	19½–22 Content shows a sound interpretation of the topic. Ideas interesting, convincing. Planning and/ or drafting has produced a presentable and very good essay.	16–19 Content an adequate interpretation of topic. Ideas ordinary, lacking depth. Planning and/ or drafting has produced a satisfactorily presented essay.	13–15½ Content ordinary. Gaps in coherence. Ideas mostly relevant. Repetitive. Planning and/ or drafting has produced a moderately presentable and coherent essay.	10–12½ Content not always clear, lacks coherence. Few ideas, often repetitive. Inadequate evidence of planning/drafting. Essay not well presented.	0–9½ Content irrelevant. No coherence. Ideas repetitive. Non-existent planning/drafting. Poorly presented essay.
Language, style and editing 12 marks	10–12 Critical awareness of impact of language. Language, punctuation effectively used. Uses figurative language. Choice of words highly appropriate. Style, tone, register highly suited to topic. Virtually error-free following proofreading, editing.	8½–9½ Critical awareness of impact of language. Language, punctuation correct; able to include figurative language correctly. Choice of words varied and correctly used. Style, tone, register appropriately suited to topic. Largely error-free following proofreading, editing.	7½–8 Critical awareness of language evident. Language and punctuation mostly correct. Choice of words suited to text. Style, tone, register suited to topic in most of the essay. By and large error-free following proofreading, editing.	6–7 Some awareness of impact of language. Language simplistic, punctuation adequate. Choice of words adequate. Style, tone, register generally consistent with topic requirements. Still contains errors following proofreading editing.	5–5½ Limited critical language awareness. Language ordinary and punctuation often inaccurately used. Choice of words basic. Style, tone register lacking in coherence. Contains several errors following proofreading, editing.	4–4½ Language and punctuation flawed. Choice of words limited. Style, tone, register inappropriate. Error-ridden despite proofreading, editing.	0–3½ Language and punctuation seriously flawed. Choice of words inappropriate. Style, tone, register flawed in all aspects. Error-ridden and confused following proofreading, editing.
Structure 6 marks	5–6 Coherent development of topic. Vivid detail. Sentences, paragraphs coherently constructed. Length in accordance with requirements of topic.	4½ Logical development of details. Coherent. Sentences, paragraphs logical, varied. Length correct.	4 Several relevant details developed. Sentences, paragraphs well constructed. Length almost correct.	3–3½ Some points, necessary details developed. Sentences, paragraphing might be faulty in places but essay still makes sense. Length correct.	2½ Some necessary points evident. Sentences, paragraphs faulty but ideas can be understood. Length – too long/ short.	2 Sometimes off topic. General line of thought difficult to follow. Sentences, paragraphs constructed at an elementary level. Length – too long/ short.	0–1½ Off topic. Sentences, paragraphs muddled, inconsistent. Length – far too long/short.

APPPENDIX D: LESSON PLANS

Grade 11: LESSON Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment

Lesson 1, for both Grade 11 A and 11B

Lesson Topic: Characteristics of good essay & introduction of criteria

<table>
<tr><td>Lesson: presenting criteria for a reflective essay</td><td>Date

Time: 1 hr</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Outcomes: learners should be able to:

1. understand and use given criteria to identify the good qualities of a reflective essay

2. recognise the differences between essays that are well written compared to ones that are not</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson content: reflective essay

A List of characteristics of a good essay with reference to reflective essay.

Exemplars of what different essays / paragraphs / sentences look like when they meet these criteria

Analysis of a reflective essay on page 146 of textbook using a given criteria</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Introduction: You have written different kind of essays but have you ever thought about what makes that essay to be regarded as good? Well ,today we will study the criteria for a good reflective essay and

Tomorrow we will reflect on lessons learnt from our parents. However before we engage with the topic we have to discuss the characteristics of a good essay.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher activity

Ask learners to discuss what they think are the qualities of good essay in groups of four.

Writes the characteristics given by learners on the board, ordering them according to the categories in the criteria.

Hands out the criteria and exemplar essays. Goes through the criteria with learners, elaborating and giving examples of what is expected in essay writing using the exemplar essays.

Asks learners to evaluate the exemplar essays using the criteria.

Directs learners to the textbook p146 and discusses the 4 elements of a good paragraph</td><td>Learner activity

Learners discuss and write down their responses.

Learners as a class present group responses.

Listen to teachers and respond to any questions asked. Evaluate the exemplar essays using the criteria given.

Identify 4 elements of a good paragraph of an essay in an exemplar essay

Analyse the essay on page 146 i.e. look for transition in paragraphs. Main ideas,</td></tr>
</table>

	sentences and connectors. Identify main idea and supporting
Closure: highlights essential points to note when writing a Reflective Essay .i.e. 1.content- related to topic and type of essay, detailed &related ideas 2.Organisation/structure 3. Language usage- descriptive Use past tense to describe experience	
Learner activity:	
Lesson evaluation/ reflection on the lesson done by teacher: learners were able to identify qualities of a good essay though these were not grouped orderly. Struggled to look for connectors.	

Characteristics of a good essay notes

1. Achieve the purpose of the task
2. Content-
    - show sound knowledge and understanding of the topic
    - detailed information of the topic
    - ideas be related and relevant to topic

This can be achieved through brain storming and creation of Mind Map

3. organisation
    - well organised into paragraphs- introduction
      Story – clearly structured with **one** main idea par paragraph
      Conclusion
    - a good paragraph must contain 4 elements

Each paragraph should contain a **Transition** sentence leading in from a previous paragraph this acts as hand –off from one idea to the next each paragraph must have a topic sentence to introduce what will be discussed.

A topic sentence that tells reader what will be discussed and this should be further development of the main idea presented

A wrap up sentence of the idea discussed
Use connectors to link paragraphs e.g. later one afternoon, a client advised that she would..... pg.

4. easy to understand meaning or comprehend

    1. Well-structured sentences
    2. minimal grammatical , punctuation and spelling mistake

3. select correct words to express self
4. Use a variety of sentences e.g.

4.1 Simple sentence- sentence that deals with one idea

4.2 Compound sentence: two or more finite verbs 2 or more simple sentences joined by a co-coordinating conjunction e.g. I Waited and waited, but there was no sign of Nozipho.

4.3 Complex sentences- contains one main clause and 1 or 2 subordinate clauses which provide additional .e.g. while slipping the under the office, I heard the phone ring in the office.

The Most Important Lesson I Have Learned In My Life from *smilingcat.hubpages.com › Explore › Religion and Philosophy* Oct 22, 2009 - One of *the most important lessons* that *I have learned* in *life* is to "*face your fears*".

Lesson: Face Your Fear

One of the most important lessons that I have learned in life is to "face your fears". Fears can hold us back from experiencing everything that life has to offer. When we give into fear we limit ourselves. We can do this; go that far, but no more.

My fear was a fear of failure. I was so afraid that I would fail that I failed to take action. This was a self-defeating cycle that kept me from achieving goals that I had in my business and personal life. I was so paralyzed by fear, that I did nothing. I would get excited to do something, and get ready to do it and then the fear would take over and I would quit.

How did I overcome this fear? Phil Keogan, host of the popular TV show, "The Amazing Race", states in his book, "No Opportunity Wasted" that "to attack this fear you must first ask yourself a simple question - How do I define success and failure?"

When we define or goals in absolute terms, all-or-nothing, winner-takes-all, it can be overwhelming. I had a fear of failure in launching an online business. My goal was to make R10,000 a month - that is an unrealistic goal for someone just starting out.

I redefined success as being able to generate R300 a month. This was an attainable goal. Once I hit this goal, I aimed higher. The great thing was, I was no longer afraid to try. By defining success in realistic terms, I was able to take that first step. The saying is true - the first step is the hardest!

By facing my fear of failure through redefining success, I was able to grow in my personal life. This growth has enabled me to overcome my fear of spiders and I am working on my fear of heights. Will

I go sky-diving this summer? No, I am defining success over fear of heights as climbing my ladder and cleaning my gutters. I can do it! Then perhaps I will work up to sky diving!

Lesson: Treat Other People As You Want To Be Treated from *smilingcat.hubpages.com › Explore › Religion and Philosophy*
Oct 22, 2009 - One of *the most important lessons* that *I have learned* in *life* is to "*face your fears*".

The second most important life lesson that I learned is - Treat people like you want to be treated. This is the "Golden Rule". It is a Biblical principle to "Love your neighbour as yourself".

I wish I could say that I have always followed this principle, but I haven't. I was a "me" person - What's in it for me? What can you do for me? I didn't mean to be, I just was.

I'm not sure when I changed, but I know that I did. I no longer get impatient with people. I help where I can. I smile at people. I like people so much more now and you know what? They seem to like me more too.

This principle applies in business too. I enjoy reading the works on Ken Evoy. He stresses a principle that comes from the movie "Pay It Forward" (Great movie starring Kevin Spacey and Helen Hunt). Basically, it is that if someone has helped you out, return the favour and help someone else out. Do to others as you would want them to do to you.

When I was starting my online business career, money was tight. I couldn't afford some of the books and products that I needed to get my career started. Ken did something tremendous. He gave his knowledge away free! I was able to download his best-selling ebook, "Make Your Site Sell" for free! This one act of kindness on his part helped to launch my online career. I would like to "pay it forward" to you.

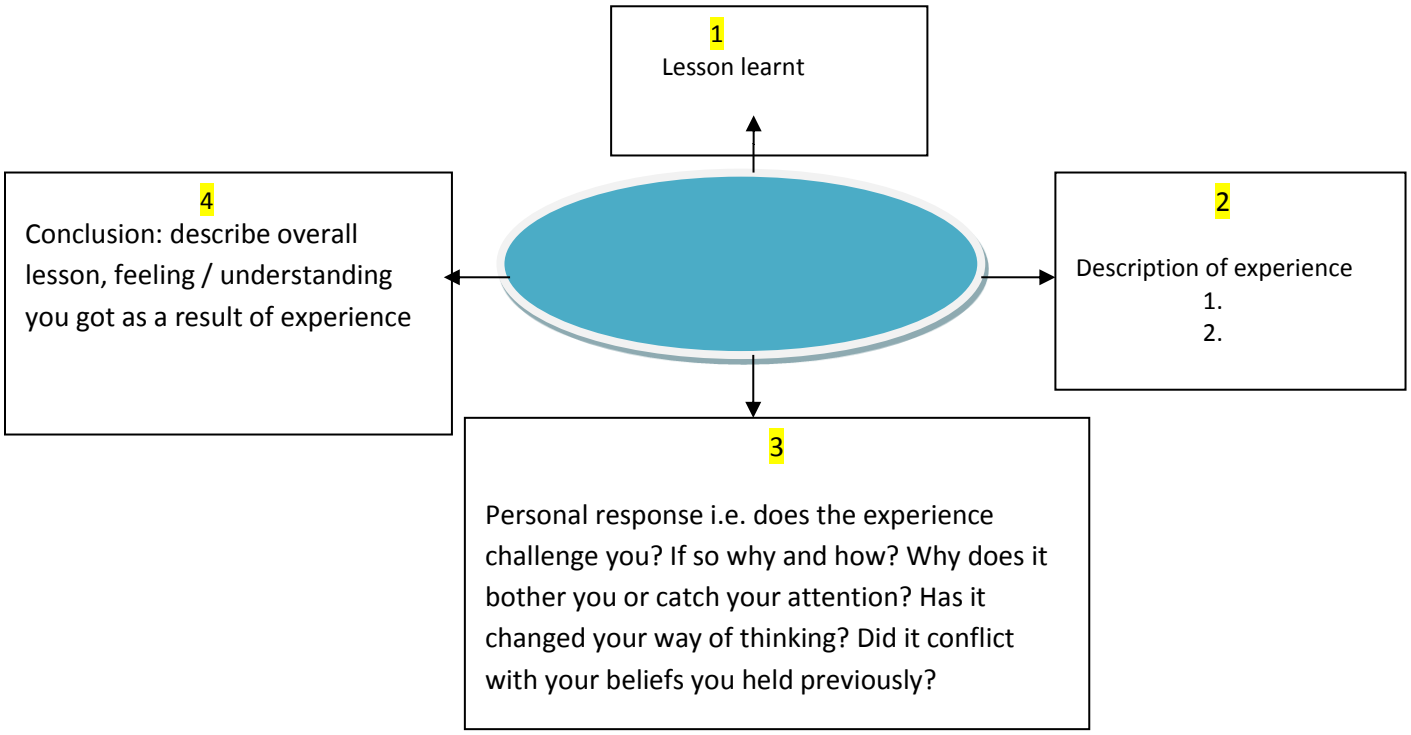
Treating other people like you want to be treated will change your whole outlook on life. You will enjoy it more and have less stress. It is a lesson worth learning at any age.

Grade 11: LESSON Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment
Lesson 2, for both grade 11A and 11B
LESSON 2: TOPIC: Planning a reflective essay

Lesson: writing and presenting reflective essay	Date Time: 1 hr
Outcomes: learners should be able to: 1 use criteria to brain storm and plan the essay 2. write an introduction that reflects on the lesson learnt	
Lesson content: reflective essay List of main points on the essay (mind map) Exemplars of good introduction	
Introduction: On the previous day we looked at the aspects of writing a good essay. To continue, today we going to plan the content of ***The most important lesson my parents taught me*** (reflective essay). You will note that in general in life we not only learn through being taught or parental guidance, we also learn lessons from experience. This experience can come from school, church or our own parents.	
Teacher activity	**learner activity**
Teacher describes own experience	
Then asks learners to discuss their own experience in groups of **fours.**	Learners then retell own experience in groups of four.
Ask learners to brain storm the main events and lesson learnt that they may include in the essay.	
From the discussion learners are asked to state what will make the story interesting.	As a class Learners state what will make the story more interesting i.e. descriptive
Teacher discusses the structure of the essay using mind map on pg. 146 and own. Explains that she had to give them that structure as it was more detailed and abstract contrary to mind map on p146	
Teacher asks learners to draw individual mind map of the topic.	Each learners draw a mind map that has details related to the topic
Discuss how a reflective essay can be introduced- can start with lesson learnt as in the exemplars given or keep reader in suspense.	
Ask each learner to write a short introduction for the topic	Each learner writes an introductory of the essay.

Write introductory paragraph.	
Closure: Make sure that it's interesting and related to topic. highlights essential points to note when writing a Reflective Essay : 1.reflect on own experience 2. use first person	
Learner activity: Writes a brief introduction	
Lesson evaluation/ reflection	

Mind Map: the most important lesson my parents taught me



2. **Exemplars of introduction**

A. One of the life lessons I learned is to always be thankful for the people around me and not take them for granted. Unfortunately, many people, including myself, tend to not appreciate what we have until we lose them entirely. Then later, there might come moments in our lives when you miss someone so much that you just want to pick them out from your dream and hug them for real. Only then, it'll be too late to go back. I did not experience these until my grandmother passed away.

B.

One of the most important lessons that I have learned in life is to "face your fears". Fears can hold us back from experiencing everything that life has to offer. When we give into fear we limit ourselves. We can do this; go that far, but no more (From *www.positivelypresent.com/2014/10/facing-**fear**.html* Oct 20, 2014 -).

C. All through life, we experience various occasions when decision-making become necessary. A number of them present themselves in difficult forms and at crucial points. Most of the verdict we take will eventually figure and describe our track of lives. These are what we refer to as lessons of life. Choices never present themselves in an easy way. In some instance we are always forced to pay a price to achieve something. This implies that we are trading for an outcome we are seeking.

Note: most introductions listed above give the outline of the essay, state the lesson learnt and prepares the read of what to expect in the essay.

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment
Lesson: 3 for both Grades 11A and B

Lesson Topic: Writing a reflective essay 1st draft

Lesson: writing reflective essay on the ***most lessons my parents taught me.***	Date
Outcomes: learners write a first draft of reflective essay in relation to discussion based on characteristic of a good essay.	
Lesson content: : writing a reflective essay using brainstormed ideas	
Introduction: Teacher introduces learners by recapping on what was done on the previous lesson. Emphasis is placed on the quality of a good story i.e. Catchy introduction, structure and expressions used to make it more interesting.	
Teacher activity Teacher asks the class to write the first draft and goes around checking progress and assisting learners.	**learner activity** Write first draft.
Closure: for today we wrote the essay but before submission I would like you to go over your work and check any errors and editing own work for improvement	
Learner activity: Edit own work	
Lesson evaluation/ reflection	

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment
Lesson 4, Grade 11A and B

Lesson Topic: analyzing essays and giving Feedback

<table>
<tr><td>Lesson : analysing and giving feedback</td><td>Date:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Outcomes : Learners are able to assess each other's work

Rewrite a final draft</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson content: peer feedback- peer assess content

Organization/structure

Spelling, punctuation.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Introduction: teacher introduces the lesson by requesting learners to identify characteristics of good essay. Points out what to look at as they analyse and each other feedback.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher activity

Discuss how and what they should do and not do when giving feedback using the criteria (ref notes)

Teacher presents an essay and then feedback the work together.

Later ask learners to work in groups of four to give feedback on the exemplar essay. i.e. what are the strength and weaknesses of the two essays

Identify the problem with essay one and with teacher's help remedy the first paragraph

Also request learners in groups to identify the problem with essay 2 and correct it.

Discussion group feedback and points out key aspects to look at when giving feedback to help one to improve essay writing.</td><td>learner activity

Learners engage in giving comments on the essay with help of teacher. Pay attention to the does and don'ts as presented by the teacher.

They then give feedback on a second essay par group and decide how each essay can be improved i.e.

Learners are to feedback on the strength and weakness of the essay using descriptive comments :

1. Content of the essay
2. Structure of the essay
3. Language and vocabulary used.</td></tr>
</table>

Closure: it is essential that when you feedback on each other's work you use criteria given as it enables you to assess the quality of your work and what needs to be improved. Also try by all means to be descriptive as this helps one know what they have done correctly and areas that need to be reworked. Thirdly give suggestions or ask questions that will guide one to improve their work.
Learner activity: give feedback that enables one to use the comments to improve work.
Lesson evaluation/ reflection:

Notes on feedback

Define feedback: oral or written comments given to you learners to help you improve your learning.
Comments can be given by us teachers or your peers

When you give comments one has to note the following

Dos: 1. Comments need to be descriptive not evaluative. Use lot of nouns and descriptive adjectives. E.g. the lesson is clearly described and is drawn directly from experience/ your details strongly support the ideas of the story. (This indicates the strength).

1. Comments need to point out what needs to be improved in a positive way i.e. Each paragraph should have one main idea which goes in the topic sentence.
2. Comments should be clear, use words that learners will understand.
3. Encourage one to take action i.e. Use of descriptive or imagery words would make this more interesting.
4. Ask questions that will guide / help learners to rework their essay e.g. what lesson did you learn from this experience.
5. Comments made should be focused on the task not learner. E.g. the story has two or more interesting ideas and this could have been more interesting if you developed them or added more ideas.
6. Comments made should be verified: did the learner understand feedback. What is the follow up plan?

Don'ts : 1. don't be judgemental i.e. this is bad work or your work is too difficult to follow
2. Do not give comments based on a learner i.e. You idiot
3. Don't use a lot of pronouns
4. Don't copy-edit or correct every error.
5. Don't be critical e.g. How can you do that?

Examples of good content feedback	Bad example of content feedback
Each paragraph contains interesting points that are clearly and logical connected.	This work is difficult to follow

N/B good feedback looks at four aspects

A. Focus – task
B. Compares to criteria
C. Function – descriptive
D. Valence – positive

Activity 1: assess work with help of teacher
Use a given rubric/criteria

Activity: 2 learners give comments on the essay 2
Comment on content, organisation and language using the criteria
2. Make suggestions for the major weakness.

Valuable life lesson that you have learned
(https://www.google.co.za/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=BDGSVfrtA42p8wfSnYH4Dg#q=valuable+life+lessons+that+you+have+learned

I had not once learned valuable lessons in life. One of the life lessons that I learned is to be thankful and appreciate for those that around me. Maybe it is true that we do not appreciate what we had until we lost them and there are moments in life that when you miss someone so much that you just want to pick them out from your dream and hug them for real. I did not experience these until my grandmother passed away.

My grandmother was the one that watches me grow up and takes care of me when I was a little girl because my parents had to work and were away from home. She loved me so much that she would do anything for me but I did not realize this until she passed away. Since she was the only adult at home she had to do all the household chores and takes care of me at the same time. Every day after school, she would wait for me at the doorway and asks me what I wanted to eat for lunch and she would cook the food for me immediately. Every times when I go out to play with my friends she would asks me where I was going and when I'm going to be home, so that she knows when to prepare the dinner for me. As I grow older, I started to hate the way that she waits for me every day at the doorway and asks me where I was going. I told her that I am older now and that she doesn't have to treat me like a little girl anymore. However, she continued to act the same way as usual. One day when I came home from school and saw her standing there waiting for me, which I did not expected, I was very angry and had a big argument with her. I yelled at her and told her that I am older now and that I do not need her anymore. She did not say anything to me and I ran out the house. I came home very late that night and walk up to my room quietly. I was surprised to find a bow of rice and two plates of dishes on the table in my room. I did not eat the food and dump the whole thing into the trash can. The next morning I woke up early and went to school without saying anything to her.

Two months later my parents decided to immigrate to America. My mother told me that my grandmother said that she did not wanted to go with us to America because she felt that she is too old and would just be an encumbrance for the family. I was depressed that I had to leave the place where I grew up but at the same time I was glad that my grandmother is not leaving with us. In the airport on the day that I was leaving, she told

me to take care of myself when I get there and it is the first time that I saw her cried. I wanted to cry too when I saw the tears rolling down from her face, but I turn my head away and did not even say good bye to her. After arrived in America, I was occupied with learning English and did not call home to her even though I heard from my parents that she became really sick after we left. I remember that it was on a cold December day when I heard the news from my parents that my grandmother had passed away. After hearing the news, I cannot help it and the tears continue to roll down from my face. In my heart, I felt that something that is always there is suddenly gone and I cannot stop crying.

Four years had passed since my grandmother passed away. Every time when I look at her pictures, the tears just begin to roll down from my face. I felt very regret for never apologize to her for the argument that we had and all the strong words that I had said to her. I felt very regret for never thank her for all the things that she had done for me. If, I had another chance, I would tell her that "I love you grandma."

ACTIVITY 2 GROUP WORK

Valuable Lessons Learned in Life

Valuable Lessons Learned in Life

Looking back on my life I see that I have made many mistakes. All due to my lack of patience and never listening to what my elders told me. If I had only listened to their words of wisdom and took into consideration what was told, I would have saved myself a lot of trouble.
However I took my own path and did things my way, not following the guidance of my elders.
I still remember what my grandparents told me like it was just yesterday. He told me “Only fools rush in, What goes around comes around, and education is most important.”
The first valuable lesson I learned was when cheating on the final test caused me a lot of trouble. It started at ninth grade when high school was a totally new thing. I began to have many new friends and they could drive. Going out was much more fun than staying home and studying. My grandfather warned me to stay more focused in school. I told him not to worry because I could always figure my way out. He also told me to work my way through anything that I wanted and “Only fools rush in”, but whatever he said seemed to go from one ear through the other. I started to come to school late every day. If I did come on time, I would slept in class. I missed a lot of homework and class activities. So, I was already behind the class before I even knew about it. I did not know what to do when the final was about to come. I was stuck in a bad situation, so I decide to take the short cut and cheat on the exam. Too bad, I got caught and went through a lot of bad experiences with the teachers and school principal. I only get what “Only fools rush in” means as I was sitting in the principal’s office. It was a tough experience.
It seemed like the lessons get tougher as I grow older. This is the time when my grandparents talked about “what goes around, comes around”. I started dating a lot around this age According to guys in high school, it is cool to have many girlfriends. ..

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment

Lesson plan 5A, Grade 11A

Lesson Topic: Teacher feedback

<table>
<tr><td>Lesson: Teacher feedback on learners written essays</td><td>Date</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Outcomes :learners should be able to: to use teacher feedback to rework the task</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson content: errors made and how they can be corrected</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Introduction: Teacher introduces learners by commenting on the overall performance of learners' work</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher activity

Using a data project present a sample of common errors made by learners.

Discuss the common mistakes and nature of mistakes made by learners' e.g. Topic was not addressed. More than two lessons discussed without telling a story.

Some ideas not well connected and developed.

Illustrates how ideas can be linked and developed further.

Organization- further explains how ideas can be logical sequences.

Language: asks learners to correct spellings and language errors.

Request learners to correct errors in their work.</td><td>learner activity

Learners with teachers help correct errors identified.

Learners then correct own work pending on the nature of error. Ask for assistance where possible.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Closure: emphasize the importance of using given feedback to improve their work and performance.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Learner assessment: use feedback to improve own work.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson evaluation/ reflection. reflection on learners second draft and evaluative sheet</td></tr>
</table>

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment

Lesson 5B, Grade 11B

Lesson Topic: Peer Feedback

<table>
<tr><td>Lesson : peer feedback</td><td>Date:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Outcomes : Learners are able to assess each other's work</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson content: peer feedback- peer assess content

Organization/structure

Spelling, punctuation</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Introduction: teacher introduces the lesson by recapping on what they did the previous lesson and informs them that they have to give feedback on each other's work.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher activity

Ask them once more to state the dos and don'ts when giving feedback using the criteria.

Later ask learners to work in groups of four to give feedback on their written essays.

Each learner has to give written feedback on 2 / 3 essays using the criteria and referring to notes on how to give feedback.

Recheck learners work against feedback given</td><td>learner activity

Learners engage in giving comments on each other's work

In fours they feedback each other's work using the same criteria given.

A learner has to give written feedback for at least 2 to 3 learners in their group

Comment on the individual work using an assessment sheet

N/B Learners have at least two chances of giving and receiving feedback.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Closure: learners to rework their work the following day. Ask learners to evaluate whether the strategy used was of great benefit.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Learner activity: give feedback that enables the other person to bridge the gap between the actual work and desired outcome. Give written and oral comments.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson evaluation/ reflection:</td></tr>
</table>

Essay Assessment Sheet designed by Nesisa Mkhwanazi

Essay written by ……..

Essay read by …….

1. **Content relevant to topic**
   Related to topic and essay

   Ideas built on each other

   Has a range of details

   Mind map point expectations

2. **Organisation**
   Ideas well linked and logical
   One idea per paragraph
   Ideas well developed

3. **Language and vocabulary**
   Essay well written i.e. few grammatical mistakes
   Used connectors

   Spelling mistakes

4. Ideas that need improvement----------

   ----
5. Indication of things that are worth praise----------

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment
Lesson plan 6, Grade 11A and B
Lesson Topic: re writing ESSAY 2ND DRAFT

Lesson : writing final draft	Date
Outcomes :learners should be able to: use written and oral comment to rework their ta	
Lesson content: Engages with written comments to improve their essays.	
Teacher activity **Ask learners to re-do their work paying attention to written comments.**	**learner activity** learners rework their task paying attention to written comments Learners comment whether the strategy used enabled them to bridge the gap.
Closure: teacher after lesson collects the second draft and remarks it.	
Learner activity :rewrite the essay learners fill in an evaluative form	
Lesson evaluation/ reflection	

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment

Lesson plan 7A, Grade 11A

Lesson Topic: Teacher feedback

Lesson: Teacher feedback on learners 2ND written essays	Date
Outcomes :learners should be able to: to use teacher feedback to rework the FINAL task	
Lesson content: errors made and how they can be corrected	
Introduction: Teacher introduces learners by commenting on the overall performance of learners' work. Learners whose essays were used as samples showed much improvement. Some did not use given comments to improve work.	
Teacher activity Discuss the common mistakes and nature of mistakes made by learners' e.g. still discussing more than one lesson Do not relate experience to the lesson learnt and lack of Detailed details given. Essays have the same content as essay 1. Ask learners to write done the comments /challenges that made it impossible to rework their essays based on given comments. Discuss some of the comments. Refers to Sherman article: reads 1st and teacher comments and final version. Shows how Lindi improved his work. Points out that it's essential for learners to use given comments to improve work. Request learners to use given comments to improve their work.	**learner activity** Learners with teachers help correct errors identified. Learners write done comments / possible reasons that could have led them not to be able to use given comments to improve own work. Learners then write Final draft paying attention to comments made
Closure: emphasize the importance of using given feedback to improve their work and performance.	
Learner assessment: use feedback to improve own work.	
Lesson evaluation/ reflection. reflection on learners second draft and evaluative sheet	

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment
Lesson 7B, Grade 11B

Lesson Topic: giving peer feedback

<table>
<tr><td>Lesson : Peer feedback</td><td>Date:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Outcomes : Learners are able to assess each other's work

Rewrite a final draft</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson content: peer feedback- peer assess content</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Introduction: teacher introduces the lesson by stating that most learners had done a good job on feed backing each other's work however learners could not use the feedback given as it did to specify what exactly needed to be improved and also suggestion had to be offered to guide one. Comments given were too general and more to criteria than identifying what they found interesting and that which needed to be improved much more loosely without referring to criteria.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher activity

Teacher uses Sherman examples to illustrate examples of given feedback by grade 3 learners.

Gives the examples to learners to see the process and how to improve.

Ask ONE learner to read Lindi's essay and please take note of the changes.

Then also refers to comments given by learners on Lindi's work- highlights that they pointed things that were interesting and those that needed to be changed.

Later ask one learner to read the final version and identify changes that have been made.

Later ask learners to work in pairs to then give feedback on the second draft.

Each learner this time receives only one feedback

Ask learners to write final draft.

Recheck learners work against feedback given.</td><td>learner activity

Learners lesson and take not of what is being said.

engage in giving comments on each other's work

One learner reads the final version to the class.

As a class, they also comment on the changes made.

In pairs they feedback each other's work using paying more attention to content. i.e. give comments on what they find interesting

Where they would need more details

Learners rewrite final draft 3.</td></tr>
</table>

Closure: learners to rework their work the following day.
Learner activity: give feedback that enables the other person to bridge the gap between the actual work and desired outcome. Give written and oral comments.
Lesson evaluation/ reflection:

Essay Assessment Sheet 2

Essay written by----------

Essay read by ----------

Content

1. What is more interesting about the essay?

2. What needs to be improved / ideas for improvement

3. Where would you want more details

4. General comments

Lesson plan 8, Grade 11A and B

Lesson Topic: re -writing 3rd essay

<table>
<tr><td>Lesson : writing final draft</td><td>Date</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Outcomes :learners should be able to: use written and oral comment to rework their task</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson content: Engages with written comments to improve their essays.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Introduction: Teacher introduces learners by recapping on the common errors made.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Teacher activity

Ask learners to re-do their work paying attention to written comments.</td><td>learner activity

learners rework their task paying attention to written comments

Learners comment whether the strategy used enabled them to bridge the gap</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Closure: teacher after lesson collects the second draft and remarks it.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Learner activity :rewrite the essay

learners fill in an evaluative form</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson evaluation/ reflection</td></tr>
</table>

APPENDIX D1: TRANSCRIPT OF LESSON BASED ON TEACHER FEEDBACK

Grade 11: Lesson Plans for improving Essay Writing through Formative Assessment

Lesson plan 5B, Grade 11D

Lesson Topic: Teacher feedback

Topic: of Reflective essay: The most important lesson my parents taught me- Teacher Feedback

1. T: As I said to you regarding my study on how to improve our essay writing skills
   We stated with lesson 1: we looking at the qualities of a good essay the lesson where we then looked at how we should plan our Reflective essay and then your lesson 3 was based on Essay writing. Today's lesson is based on giving you feedback on the essays you wrote. And then the most crucial thing is to identify the strength and weaknesses of your essay so that you could actually improve the way you write your essays.

2. T: So I identified that most of your work was well done. However there are one or two things that need to be improved on. .So for today's lesson we look at feedback on reflective essay and the topic was: the *most important lesson my parents taught me*. I had presented … (voice not clear) I selected few samples from your work and those few pupils that I have selected from please do not feel offended. The main thing is I wanted to point out all those areas that needed to be improved and how you could actually do it so that you then bring upon an essay which is of good quality and for your own benefit. So don't feel offended I have already forgotten ….but the whole essence is to how to improve your essay
3. T: so you note again we looked at …, in order for one to write a good quality essay, you have to know the characteristics of a good essay.
4. T: By the way what are those characteristics?
5. L:
6. T: what are the characteristics?
7. L:
8. T: Yes
9. L.
10. T: vocabulary, vocabulary and language usage and the last one
11. L:
12. T: Content. So that's how I presented my work. So the most crucial thing that I looked at was the **Content** (stressed word content) of you essay, followed by organisation and then lastly... language & vocabulary usage. But you will note again I paid less attention to the manner in which you. Used language... I did correct and give you feedback on that but the whole essence of this activity relied more on content and organisation.
13. T: So if you can recall again, we said that before you can write an essay the most crucial thing is to make a mind amp and within a mind map check whether you have addressed

the topic & type of essay you writing about. And your ideas that you are supposed to put should be related to the essay.

14. T: so on content (content stressed) this is what I discovered.
Most learners -most of you had good ideas and you presented more than one lesson, but the question is: did you respond to the question? Did the essay request you to list a variety of lessons or you were supposed to concentrate on One Essential lesson that you were taught by your parents?

13. T: so that's where we really made a faulty or we did not pay attention to the type of essay. And note on my point one it's written: Only one Remarkable lesson to be stated. If check whether you have addressed only one lesson, the Most lesson that you can recall, that you will never ever forget. I did not want you to mention more than that. You could have used that as an introduction. Then emphasis that out of all those lessons that you have been taught there is only one remarkable lesson that you will never ever forget, you never ever forgot because it changed your attitude, it developed your character, it changed you to a better person, is that clear?

14. T: So those are the things that some learners mentioned: Respect, aaah Responsibility, grateful, stand up for myself…. And when I looked at that it was not relating to the question.

15: T: Although few, if you had that potential could have used that to bring about one important lesson. So those ideas can be integrated to come out with one lesson.

16. T: Any question?

17. T: No comments Okay. We move on.

18. T: so besides that another thing you were supposed to do... the essay need to be related to experience in which a lesson was learnt. For instance I have given you an example there ref (reads power point presentation slide two on appendix C2)

19. T: What do you think of that introduction? Already there is a lesson. Is that clear? And if you don't want to carry a brick and what are you supposed to do?

20. L:

21. T: You go to school and work hard. And then using that as an introduction, hey you can develop the story further by describing an experience that you had. What did you do at school so that you achieved better results?

22. T: That is you develop that idea. I tried to work hard at school because of those words, so you narrate all the details that you did at school. Already there is a link – your introduction your body. That's what I expected from you.

23. T: and then secondly, however, some learners did not show the relationship between experience and lesson that's there no relationship between experience and lesson learnt e.g. there is one sample I got from one of my learners, but I do not know who it is. I have forgotten. So that's how they wrote or presented their work. (**Continue to read from slide two**)

24. T: can you identify the things that need …… bearing in mind the emphasis we are looking at the relationship between lesson and experience

25. T: okay from that presentation what is the lesson?

26. L:

27. T: eehh?

30. T: eehh listening

31. T: Yaa that's correct...listening. That's the lesson that person learnt. That's its crucial to listen to your parents so that you become a disciplined person. Is that clear? But, was it any easy lesson? Did he really understand it? To h, how did he feel about it?

32. L:

33. T: How do you feel when your parents tell you don't do that? How do you feel? Let's hear from you

34. L:

35. T.: You Stha

36. L:

37. T: Over protective, (repeats learner's response) what else?

38. L:

39. T: They want to control you (repeats learners') what else?

40. L:

41. T.: They are boring you (again repeats learner's response) what else, too demanding and because of that attitude you have, how would you behave?

42. L:

43. T: eehh

44. T: eeeh how would you react?

45. L:

46. T: negatively (repeats learner's response) explain can you explain further.

47. T: what do you mean negatively, yes…?

48. L.

49. T: you … back, what else

50. L.

51. T.: ignorant? Is that right?

52. L:

53. T: no no

54. T: .whenever you do something, they reprimand you but you don't pay attention. So you say you had a tendency of acting negatively. So I wanted you to explain the term negatively.

55. T: you start being rebellious, you become rebellious. What else?

56. L:

57. T: You talk to them ….. This is what this person was trying to put across.

58. T: that's whatever they say becomes like preaching. Is that clear, you don't take it as a guidance or if they are guiding you. You took or viewed as preaching. And that preaching becomes annoying. Is that clear?

59. T: But then you will note this person had good ideas but failed / had challenge (Not Clear) bring ideas across "Angithi" already we the … lesson they wanted to present was "listening" is that clear?

60.T: But now the problem they had they never understood the whole reason why their parents acted that way and that made them to be rebellious and even not talk to their parents, although that…

61. T: So what you going to do, we have identified the lesson, is that clear. Listening is essential so that you become disciplined person or….. The question is now, how then do we improve of that essay, what else you can identify besides the ideas are not linking,

62. L:

63. T: …..Correct what else?

64. T: what else is wrong with that presentation?

65. L:

66. T: What?

67. T: Full stop. There are fully stop where there are not supposed to be- punctuation error. That person has to rectify, make sure you present complete ides, do not put full stop unnecessary what else?

68. L:

69. T: What else?

70. L:

71. T: some words are underlined a with red … (gives a hint)

72. L:

73. T: Spelling, but the second issue is that the spelling error makes it difficult to understand ...Angithi. Therefore its essential that you cross check your spellings. If you look at that sentence (points at it on the slide and rereads the sentence in slide 2)

74. L:

75. T: QUIET QUIET (Regulative instruction given) (continues to read from slide 2) what does the word diminishing mean?

76. L:

77. T: yaa instead of your problem decreasing, what happens, they increase. So he could have used a simple word. Is that clear? And the word that they wanted to use was 'escalate' so it's difficult sometimes. Is that clear? So use simple sentence.

78. T: So this is how it could have been improve. On my comments I said, this is how you could improve your essay (refers to slide 2 and reads it) oh no….

79. T: What's wrong there?

80. T: So that's how you could have improved that introduction. (Reads further sample 1 slide 3)

81. T: what do you think about the introduction?

82. T: it makes sense aaah, although you can still make it better than that again. Is that clear?

83. T: so whoever wrote on that, this is how you could have presented your ideas is that clear? (Points at the slide with improved introduction)

84. T: at the same time I have presented that: another thing that has to take into cognizance is- now after presenting that as introduction, tell a story. And your story should be linked to the lesson. Is that clear?

85. T: And these are the questions. So I expect you to write down so at least you guided by these ideas. Whenever you talking about listening as a lesson: these are the questions that you could pause so that you bring something that is coherent and logically sequenced.

86. T'; so you have to make a clear distinction between parent perception and yours. What are your parents' views and yours? And what are yours? What's the purpose of it and 'wena' why did you have that attitude?

87. T: then secondly, what did you parents do and what did they think, what did you do and how you did feel, what went wrong.

88. T: Now you telling the story. What made you realize they were right? And how do you feel after that experience?

89. T: And then *kaconclusion yakho* you then sum up your experience and lesson. You now bring the two together. Is that clear? Through that whole experience I learnt that in order for one to be disciplined they have to listen to their parents. Is that clear? Or else you wrote something better than that.

90. T: and then I got another sample again. Heeey. Learner X can you read that for us?

91. L:

92. T: okay comment on the introduction.

93. L:

94. T: Okay besides errors ****

95. L:

96. T; not quite neee?

97. T: What else have you discovered?

98. L:

99. T: Look at your 1st and 2nd paragraph. Can you give us a comment on that?

100. L:

101. T: 1st and 2nd paragraphs, what's wrong or what's right?

102. L:

103. T: What about it?

104. L:

105. T: What do you think?

106. L:

107. T: okay let's read it (reads the sample 2 slide 4)

108. L:

109. T: YES

110. T.: Thank you, which one?

111. L:

112. T: NO we have two paragraphs …

113. L:

114. T: you getting close

115. L:

116. T: Yes that's the point. We got two introductions. Is that clear/ both of them are quite good eeeh there are quite good. So may be the second paragraph could be restructured in such a manner that it tells us a story. So how can we do that?

117. L:

118. T: it sounds like there are two introductions. How can we improve the 2nd paragraph so that…

119. T; option 1: that is how we can do it e.g. (reads from the sample 2). Whoever has written that, I expect you to take note of that when you are now improving your work. This is how you should have done it. Is that clear?

120. T: or another thing, you could have started by the obstacles. Specify. Describe that obstacle that clouded your judgment and mention all the events in coherent way and when…

121. T: Another question is; in the second paragraph it wasn't clear you were suspected and next you talk about being accused of robbery same paragraph. There is bit of contradiction. There need to be clarity. Is that clear?

122. T: so when you say you are suspected that means? What does that mean?

123. L:

124. T: The word suspected... what does it mean?

125. T: Yaa what does it mean?

126. T: Yes Y

127. L:

128. T: You not sure whether that's true or not (repeats response from learner)

129. T: Exactly, you not sure of, you think they might. Is there something that led to that suspicion? Meaning that, you have to explain how you were suspected... Do not say that at the end you were charged of this robbery, there are two different things. Angithi. Those are two different things so you specify when you were suspected and what happened, when you are charged of robbery, you choose either one; don't talk of the two things. Is that clear?

130 .T: on your conclusion: show that it's important that one overcomes an obstacle they meet in life. Is that clear?

131. T: Ooops, it's supposed to be 'how" there (points on the slide) are we together?

132. T: There is another sample here. Sample C.

133. T: All of you have tried to bring good introduction but there are one or two things that you didn't do well, and need to rectify.

134. T: (Reads sample c) good introduction neee but then, (continues reading) … I underlined the word "ordinary "you need to find a better word.

135. T: my comments were: in your introduction you could have mentioned a number of challenges that we face daily and how they can lead one to go astray (comments on slide 5 samples 3). Is that clear?

136. T: Then secondly, list different lessons that you learnt and then only pay attention to one .for example my lesson could have been about listening but its optional. What I wanted you to do is build up on listening; tell us how you learnt that lesson.

137. T: this has to come at the end (points to sample 3 on the slide 4, the respect ….)

138. T: what I liked is this last part. If you are more of respect, your introduction is clear. Use it as your conclusion. Then it will be best concluded. Is that clear? But you cannot talk of listening and respect at same time unless you can relate the two together.

139. T :(not clears)

140. T: then sample four. Sample four again (reads to class from slide 5 sample 4) and the question is… I did not understand what (not clear)

141. T: No don't laugh (cont reading sample 4)

142. T: What's the lesson there (points to sample 4) it's about "listening" Angithi and showing the value of *listening*. And in order for one not to go astray, you need to be disciplined, have good morals/ virtue; you have to listen to your parents. Is that clear? You could have quoted a biblical expression eehh to strengthen your argument (point). Is that clear?

143. T: and then the comments I have: (reads from slide 6 sample 4)

144. T: (reads second point from sample 4) the second paragraph has 3 lessons yet in the first you talked about listening to parents. I suggest that you stick to listening as is introduced in your 1st paragraph.

145. T: and then another point you have to take into cognizance is (reads once more from sample 4)

146. T: after giving a lesson (Reads) you tell a story which you relate to the lesson that you learnt. Are we together?

147. T; and then, that's another sample again. Another introduction. (Reads out sample 5 slide 6 to class)

148. T: check the second paragraph (reads from slide)

149. T: what do you think of those paragraphs? (There is silence)

150. T: what do you think about them, Yes T?

151. L:

152. T: Yaa, another introduction. That's I commented (reads comments from slide) how are the two related .and how did you jump to that idea?

153. T: then they move on (reads the sample further)

154. T: they again bring another idea instead of now telling a story.

155. L:

156. T: Instead explain why it's important to respect. However writing about respect is a challenge. You have to think carefully. How can you recognize respect? E.g. through being modeled. Reflect more qualities of respect e.g. respect all that deserve your respect or use a biblical saying. Angithi

157. T: Thou shall respect your parents so that? So that?

158. L:

159. T: yes so that you live longer.

160. T: Give a story where your parents modeled respect / tell us how they modeled it. Angithi.

161. T: So it's difficult to come out with your own example that is related to respect but parents can model respect in different ways. So tell us how and then from their word, then the way they are doing things, that's where you were taught practically the importance of respect. Is that clear?

162. Another thing that I noticed is that all your essays had good ideas but they were not fully developed. Is that clear? They were just standing on their own and not related

163. T: (reads another sample 6 slide 7)…… not sure here (reads) this is part of the story neee.

164. T: so the problem with that is –you were talking of lot of things: talking about responsibility, eeeh having good …. Having vision …. Never mind the mistakes.

165. T: never mind these are minor things that you can correct. So if you have access to laptop ekhaya, amamistakes, grammatical mistakes, spelling mistakes you can write you essay in the laptop. it will it will bring you something like that (points at the red line) yes, then you go to spelling and grammar , then click on that , it does automatically correct it. So that's a minor thing is that clear?

166. T; number 4 (slide 7). In some cases, the mind map did not show key lesson or tell experience. It was all lot of lessons without a story. Remember, it says that you mention a lesson, then second part –you tell a story: experience 1, Experience 2. And thirdly, your responses- how you felt. Is that clear? What made you feel that way? Is that clear? And what made your parents act that way. What was their intention? And then at a later stage you understood them because of what you experienced. Then you changed and learnt a lesson from there. Is that clear?

167. Point 5 we had limited ideas but lot of repetition this is what I got (reads from slide 7)

168. T: so that is enough on content, we look at orgainsation and structure (slide 8) with that I was quite please. Your work was well organized. I could tell that's an introduction, story, and conclusion. However, in some cases the introduction does not relate to story and very few essays had no conclusion and those are the things that I discovered in your work.

169. T: So the most crucial problem was that of content, which the most crucial thing is when it comes to essay writing

170. T: then vocabulary (slide 9) What I did is, I tried to rectify. Language, spelling mistakes) reads words that have been corrected from the slide.

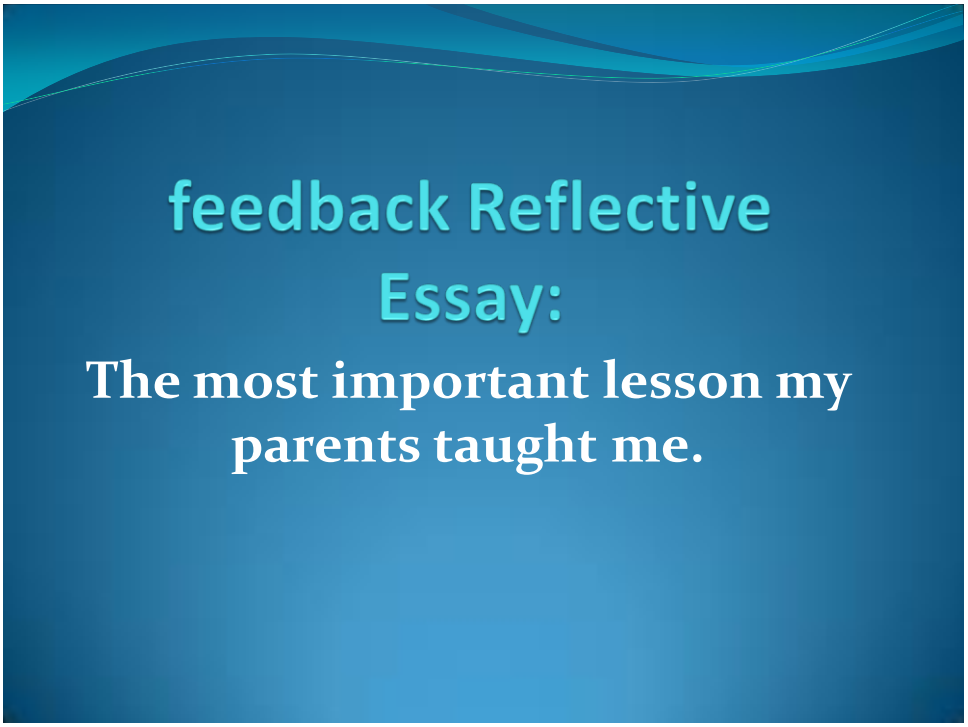
171. Besides that, we had (reads from slide 10) incorrect tense used, sometimes incorrect diction was used. e.g., ooh well! I cannot recall it. We will go back to that.

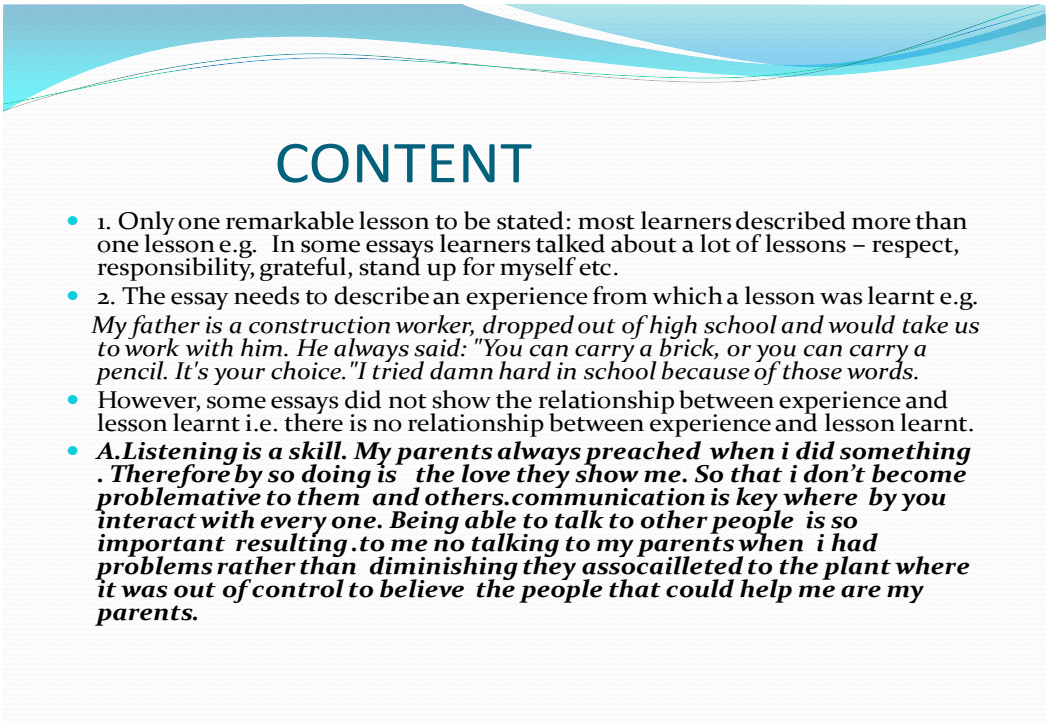
172. T: and then 4 conclusion) we now recommend that you use formal language. This is different from writing an informal letter. Use formal language.

173. T: and then conclusion. You have to read my comments both oral and written comments. I recommend you use what I had said plus written comments to re-do you work. Note again I did not focus on grammar I over looked them because it's upon you to check grammar, spelling, diction and everything. That's the end of lesson...ref to last slide

APPENDIX D2: FEEDBACK PRESENTATION TO GRADE 11 A LEARNERS

by Nesisa Mkhwanazi





Feedback : Sample 1

- ***From this sample what is the lesson?***
  Listening to your parents is essential as they guide you not to go astray and grooms one to be a disciplined responsible person.
- ***What do you think should be done to make that introduction for interesting and clear?***

This is how this introduction could be improved :

my parents preached when I did something wrong. This they believed was to help me to become a disciplined boy who knew what was right and wrong not a problematic child to them and community at large.at the same time it was a sign of showing their love they had for me but that wasn't how I viewed their ways of reprimanding me. Instead ,the more they did that the more it led to the point where I became more rebellious and resorted in not talking to them.Yet I cant believe that ….

- *To make the story more related to lesson try to address the following comments and questions as they will guide you to improve it.*

- *make a clear distinction between parents' perceptions and yours*
- *what did your parents do and what did they think*
- *what did you do , what did you feel and what went wrong*
- *describe the story*
- *what made you realise that they were right and how do you feel after that experience?*
- *Sum up your experience and lesson*

Sample 2

B. My parents always taught me that in life there are obsticles we must overcome to reach a sotain goal in life and this has been a life –time lesson for me

In life we face various obsticles that cloud your judgement . mistakes in life help you to see the path you must follow . this has happened to me in the past where i and friends were suspected for robbery after getting drunk.

- *Comments: if you read the story , it sounds like there are Two introductions. How can we improve the second paragraph so that it builds from the introduction?*
- *Option: two years ago I had an obstacle that clouded my judgement and I ended up in the wrong side of the law with my so called friends. My friends and I had decided to go…..*
- *Describe that obstacle that clouded your judgement. Mention all the events in a coherent way. Where you suspected or accused of robbery?. Did you do that. Why ? what happened there after and how did you learn the lesson?*
- *On your conclusion show who its important that one overcomes the obstacle they meet in life.*

Sample 3

- ***C. in life we come across so many challenges that sometimes we remember our parents words and lessons that they have taught us. Did i listen to my parents words or i didn't ?***

  respect is what my parents taught me and i didn't refuse on that and have recognised that without their lesson i was nothing but a empty Vassel . the respect that they taught me it made me a ordinary person

Comment on what to do to improve your work

- in your introduction you could mention a number of challenges that we face daily and how they can lead one to go astray .

  but then out of those mentioned select One that was a great challenge to you i.e respect
- tell us how you learnt that lesson
- this has to come at the end as your conclusion.

Sample 4

- ***D. being a good child is extremely difficult because as a child you don't want to listen your parents and sometimes me against back to our Parents . are there any children who against back o parents will become good? What do you mean " You against back about parents"***

  I have seen that is one of the reason to cause the children to become bad. Therefore i try as much as to listen to my parents when they try to teach me something. And the most important lesson i learned from my parents is hard- working , Respect each and every person you meet along the way and honest. The most important lesson my parents tought me is to be grateful and appreciate what ever i get and if i learn to respect each and every person i come along through life than i will go a long way and even though is hard....
- ***Comments on what to do to improve this work:***
- *what makes you to not want to listen to you parents? And why do you go against them even though they try to instil good morals so that you end up being a man of good virtues?*
- *The second paragraph has three lessons yet in the first you were talking about listening to parents. I suggest you stick to listening as is introduced in your 1st paragraph*
- *Try to avoid giving a list of lessons.*
- *Tell a story on the lesson related to listening.*

cont

In life you must respect your mother and your father and every one who is an adult so that you can leave long.

- ***Respect it is are key for life because if you respect older people they will respect you back and your life will be easy because everyone will love you and have fun. If you don't respect you will be are bad person because you think that you are better person but you are not.***
- ***Comment:***

- *How are the two related and how did you jump to that idea?*
- *Experience you must not listen to you friends because they don't plan future they just want to have fun for that time*

- ***Comments:***

- *Can either join the two paragraphs together or explain why respect is the most important lesson .however writing about respect is more challenging. You have to think careful about how you define respect, how can you recognise respect- through being lived or modelled at home, reflect on the qualities of respect. E.g respect those that deserve your respect or biblical saying . thou shall respect your parents so that.....*
- *How can we make this content stronger?*
- *Find a story to relate respect to.*

cont

3. ideas need to be fully developed - stand on their own and is not related to the next sentence.

- ***E.g. response in life you most be responsebilitie you must learn something and gern something you must be are hard work and have goals that you want to achieve and have are vision and you must know something you will farfa before you success.***
- ***Comment : sentences need to be connected to each other. Give a further explanation of the idea brought forth.***

4. in some cases the mind map does not clearly show the key lesson or state the experience

5 . limited ideas , some ideas repeated

2.Organisation & structure

- *most of the essays attempted to present ideas in paragraphs and that is fantastic.*
- *Most essays have an introduction that outlines what should be expected*
- *However , in some cases the introduction did not relate to the story*
- *Need to have transition sentence to link to the next paragraph*
- *Very few essays had no conclusion however there is a need to improve conclusion.*

3. Language usage and vocabulary

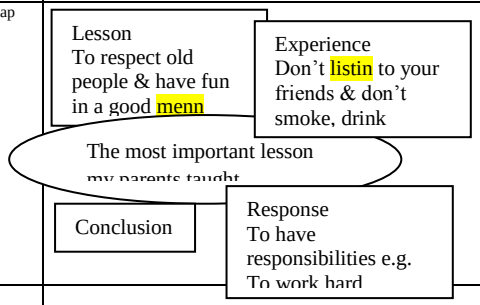
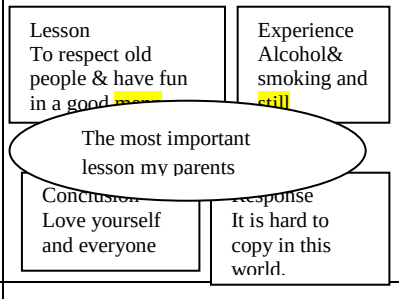
- *3.1 Frequent spelling errors e.g.*
- *Listen,*
- *Escalated,*
- *Notorious- naughtorious,*
- *Bad people,*
- *Conserved,*
- *Gain*
- *3.2 In correct tense used*
- *Sometimes incorrect diction was used e.g.*
- *Scorching ordeals,*
- *3.3 Contractions frequently used e.g. i've, i'm ,*
- *Need to use appropriate register. For matric exam that is too casual , you need to be formal .*

conclusion

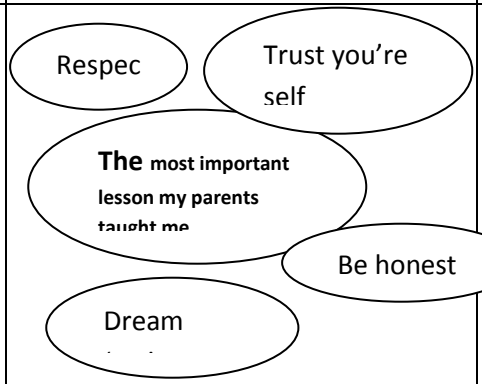
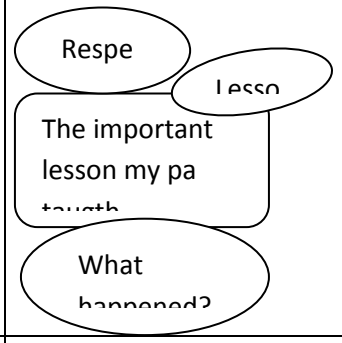
- now what I need you to do is to read the comments written and then rework your essay. You will note I paid much attention on the key elements of the criteria : content the story and structure but you also recheck your grammar and spellings and anything that might have been over looked.

APPENDIX E: TABLE SHOWING QUALITY OF IMPROVEMENT FOR LEARNERS

. Category 1A: Not achieved, with minimal improvement (Sipho)

criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	essay	Comments
Mind Map				Lesson : respect- not to abuse drugs Story: abused drugs- cause to school work Health- hospitalised Attitude towards parents advice on drug abuse Conclusion: value of that lesson	**Mind Map** Lesson: don't use drugs : drugs can destroy your life Story : abused drugs : never listen to my parents : hospitalised because of drug abuse : lazy in school work Conclusion: drugs always damage your future	**Mind map show improvement**
	Essay about respect in terms of taking parents' advice and applying it in life though this is not clearly addressed / developed. 1. Essay does not describe any experience. It is more of advice i.e. have to respect, not listen to friends and as they can destroy one's future. 1st Para- ... must respect your mother & your father and everyone.....to leave long 2nd friends are bad people in life ....teach you to smoke 2. Deals with more than one lesson e.g. respect, must not listen to friends.	1. Essay need to tell a story in relation to what your parents taught you.	1. Essay still on respect but no story more on advice about alcohol abuse and how friends are a bad influence .e.g. Alcohol is not good for health	1.Talk about how it's important not to abuse drugs 2. Show that led you to change and respect your body. 3. State value of lesson. why is it important not to be involved in drugs	Essay better introduced and organised I st person used in the introduction Para more relevant. Second Para related more to drugs and effects. 2nd person used Ideas mixed up e.g. drugs make you to be lazy in school work because you won't respect ..... stil parents things, cell phone just to plyes our friends No story	Essay has good ideas but these are not used to relate to own experience. You have given us a description of what drugs can do but you need to tell a story about own experience.
organisation	Ideas are not coherently discussed- especially in 2nd and 3rd paragraph. . Ideas not well related. Told of not listening to friends later of one being responsible in life.	In text comments: ideas are mixed up	Work has the three main components of essay. Ideas in 2nd and 3rd Para are mixed up		Better organised – introduction, body and conclusion .Ideas are better sequenced.	Repetition of ideas par 2 and 3. Ideas are mingled up.
language	Essays uses 2nd person. A lot of errors in agreement of subject-verb and spelling mistakes. Terms such as response and experience not clearly understood. E.g. writes experience you must...Response in life you must be responsibilities...	2.Use 1st person when narrating your story use as you are reflecting your story on your experience 3. To make your work more interesting check your grammar.	2. Learner still uses 2nd and 3rd person. e.g. In this world it is hard evern our parents knows and they teacher us every day because they want us to leave are good life but us children we don't see that.		Essay introduction uses 1st person and later throughout essay learn does not talk about him, uses 2nd person. Essay has spelling errors e.g. steal, plyes, deffein. Incorrect prepositions used e.g. " we need help to our parents	

CATEGORY 1B: not achieved, with significant improvement (Andie)

	1st Essay	Comments	2ND Essay2	comments	3rd Essay
Mind map		1.Choice one lesson 2. tell a story how you rnt that lesson	No mind map	Draw a mind map	
Content	No introduction Dealt with 4 different lesson One story was told in relation to lesson No description of value of lesson No conclusion	Select only one lesson 1.you can mention 4 lessons but select one as the most important lesson 2.story need to be related to experience Value of lesson	Essay deals with one lesson Details of why it's important to respect thou repeated several times No story told	1.Essay has dealt with one lesson 2. Now you have to relate that to own experience. Tell a story that made you realise the value of respect. Discuss what made you not have respect and what made you change	Introduction related to topic and detailed and interesting. Essay has a story in relation to lesson taught. shows how change of behave resulted in him being forgiven and given food to eat(kindness)
Organisation	Para 2, 3 and 4 discussed more than one lesson. Ideas are mixed up .e.g. paragraph 3 ** scan a paragraph	Each paragraph needs to deal with one idea only.	Ideas better sequenced thou repeated. E.g 1st introduction, 2nd deals with reasons for one to respect 3rd what he tells his friends and 4th what he does i.e. I always respect people. However idea is not developed further. No conclusion.		At least the essay is well structured i.e. introduction, story and conclusion.
Language and voc vocabulary	Minor language errors i.e. spellings , express e.g. feel an internal peace				Minimal language errors e.g. tenses and prepositions incorrectly used.

Category 1B: not achieved, with significant improvement

The quality of work produced by Bokang in three essays

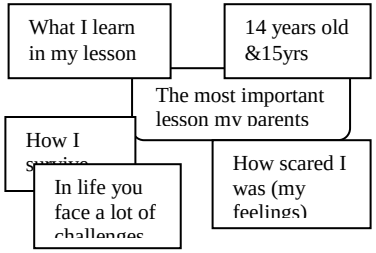
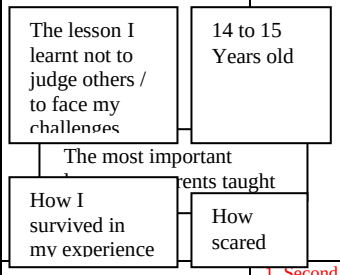
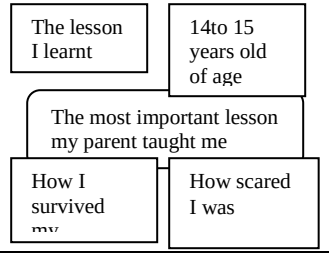
Criteria	Essay1	comments	Essay 2	Comments	essay	Comments
Mind map	My parents taught me to be humbly Work on my behaviour Happy and accepted		Lesson: Love my talent Work on my self Happy and accepted		Lesson of life The role of my parents My appreciation Lesson learnt My gratitude	Lesson of life: Honest Story- 1.came home late 2. Beaten 3. Conclusion: My gratitude
Content	Essay describes numerous invaluable lesson taught by parents e.g. they taught me invaluable lessons about work relationship and life. Second Para deals with admitting of mistakes 3rd Para appreciation 4th Para deals with assisting neighbours 5th – be a good friend 6th – only God can turn a mess into a message Essay does not tell a story in relation to main lesson taught. No conclusion	Describe Only One valuable lesson and relate to your experience	Essay 2 shows no improvement. Essay still deal with a numerous lesson taught by parents e.g. Each par address a different lesson, one Para has lesson appreciation, another about taking care of my talent etc.	In text comments: 1st but I... 2nd Para: what things? 3rd Para how do you take good care of your talent? 4th Para: describe your talent and how you were taught to develop it and be someone. **Overall comments** 1.Essay still deals with more than one lesson 2. Essay need to describe an experience from which a lesson was learnt.	Essay improved Introduction well written, grapping attention and relevant to topic and task. 2nd & 3rd &5th Para about appreciation of parents for teaching valuable lessons 4th Para gives a very brief discussion of experience though Lacks details. Why did they beat because he told the truth, he was honest?	1. Good introduction, however need to relate a story on honest. What did you do to show that you were not honest? What were the results of your behaviour? Describe the value of being honest.
Organisation	1. Each Para needs further development. 2. ideas discussed in each paragraph are not linked to show relationship		Paragraphs deal with different lessons and essay fails to relate each lesson to the main one, or show connectedness.		A clear organisational pattern.	
Language		Improve your sentence construction	Minimal grammatical errors e.g. when they were taught me.	In text comment: spelling corrected & punctuation.	Essay well written. Sentences well constructed	

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement -Happiness/ joy

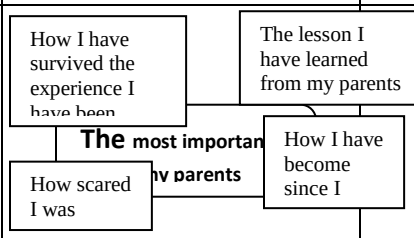
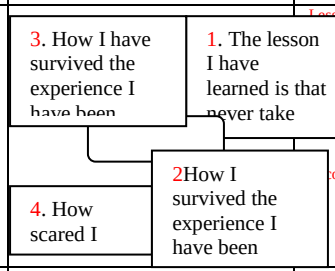
Criteria	Description of learner's Essay 1	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's Essay2	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's essay	Teacher's exact Comments
Mind map	The mind map presents a list of lesson .e.g. hard work, honesty and my own happiness, self love. No key ideas about experience or value of lesson.	1.Work on Mind Map 2. list key points on story 3. list values of lesson	The mind map is different from 1st draft. It has one important lesson and key ideas about the story thou not grouped together.	Lesson- Story-1. Loan shark 2.smile fade 3. conclusion	Mind map list key lesson and different ideas about the story e.g. 1.Lesson to be learnt 2.And understanding a wage earner 3.Life change –affording all the needs Acceptance 4.Outing, partings and beginning of loan sharks 5.Life style change 6.Lesson: appreciate the little that you get	Start with: learn to be content and live within your means. Story- Group key ideas that tell a story together. Conclusion. i.e. Lesson: Story: 1.wage earner 2.life change 3.acceptance
Content	Essay deals with more than one lesson i.e. Never walk in one's shadow, positive confidence, and greatest love of all is loving yourself, hard work; a happy life is a life with peace. First Para has more than one lesson which is not connected to bring about the outline of essay. 3rd Para also deals with mixed ideas that are not developed. No story is told in relation to lesson taught.	Select only One lesson that you find most important. 2. Tell us how came to realise that as the most valuable lesson. What happened? Describe what happened that caused you to value that lesson. 3. What is the value of lesson? What have you learnt from your story?	Essay now deals with one lesson learnt. Attempts to relate a story though the story does not vividly show that lesson as it describes more of a person who ended up living a way beyond their means	1.Introduction needs to be related to lesson 2. Tell us more about this wage earner. How are you related? 3. Your ideas need to be fully developed. 4. Lesson learnt does not clearly come out. What lesson have you learnt from the story?	Essays deals with one lesson Essay describes clearly a story in relation to lesson. shows a great improvement Story told about how sister got into debt because of living beyond her means.	Good improvement Need to improve conclusion so that it shows the value of being content e.g. do not live beyond your means as this will cause...
organisation	Ideas are mixed up. 1st and 3rd paragraph have more than 2 ideas. Conclusion does not relate well with the entire essay.	Ideas are mixed up in Para 1 and 3.deal with one idea per Para Conclusion does not tie up with story related	Some ideas especial Para 3 are mixed up.	Ideas need to be presented in a logical way.	Some ideas still mixed up. Some ideas logical sequenced and developed Conclusion still similar to 2nd essay, but does not emphasis key points in the story.	
Language	Very minimal language mistake e.g. spelling Incorrect usage of words- A positive confidence		Still minimal grammatical errors present .e.g. I did not know where did they get all that money. Tense error		Still minimal grammatical errors present	

Category 2A: elementary with minimal improvement

The Quality of work produced by Lungelo in the three essays

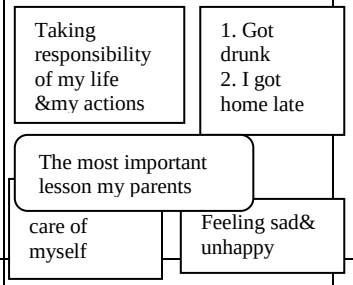
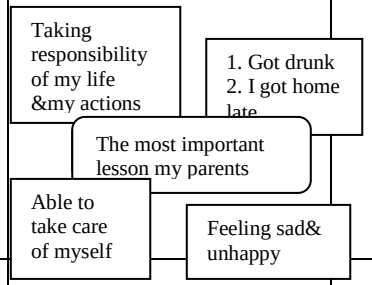
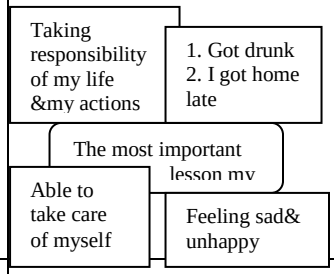
criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	Essay3	Comments
		The lesson learnt:				mention the lesson Story 1. Started dating 2. how scared I was 3..how I survived
content	Essay seemingly has two introductions. Describes 2 lessons taught by parents e.g. experience challenges and treating other people as you want to be treated. However does not show how these are connected. Essay starts when she experienced some difficulties but fails to give details of the difficulties experienced and how she learnt to deal with those issues. Never mentions an event where she was scared and what happened there after. No story told.	1.discuss one important lesson 2. Describe the experience fully, what were the challenges. Why is it importance to face challenges?	The essay still has two introductions though 1st introduction is better than in the 1st draft. Essay attempts to relate a story to a lesson taught, but does not develop / give details of what happened.	1. Second paragraph to be part of your introduction. 2. explain what happened in Para 3	**Content is the same, no improvement**. The essay still has two introductions. However, tries to tell a story about adolescent stage and challenge faced. The story is still similar to 2nd draft or paragraphs have been re-arranged. Last Para still the same as 1st, 2nd and 3rd draft.	1.Essay could be more interesting if you mentioned challenges usually faced pick on one that you faced 2. Specify the challenges you faced and how you dealt with it through telling a story.
organisation	Repetition of introductory sentences in Para 1 and 2 Ideas lack logical sequencing and development. e.g. says it was 14 to 15 years while she faced some difficulties and mom one morning told her that treat other people as I want. Talks of same ideas throughout challenges which is not clearly explained.	1. Avoid repetition of ideas. 2. ideas are not well connected	Ideas are mingled up , no logical sequencing of events	Arrange ideas orderly i.e. tell a story according to order of events.	Slight improvement on sequencing of ideas thou they are still not yet developed to give a detailed story. Still repetition of ideas.	1. Avoid mixing ideas in Para 3. 2. Essay needs a conclusion in which you relate your experience to lesson learnt and reflect on it.
language	Incorrect connecting words used e.g. I was 14 by that time while I was facing.... Spelling, grammatical and tense errors are commonly found though do not impede flow of essay, e.g. this grow has anabled me to overcome... My parents taught me that if I want to success in...		Same language errors repeated		Incorrect usage of tense and poor expressions e.g. I face in my life getting into bad friends that are smoking and dating old man but am so glad that I did control myself on that challenge. So by that time I lost my friends	Edit your work.

Category 2A: elementary with minimal improvement (MPUMI)

Criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	Essay3	Comments
Mind Map					No mind map	Need to have included a mind map
Content	Essay presented a lesson taught i.e. life can be so challenging and started things that she experienced in life such as smoking, fighting but failed to develop the story further. Conclusion says something different- stay positive never take things for granted life is too short. Enjoy it while you still can.	1. In the second Para describe a story in which you were faced with difficulties. What happened and how did you deal with those challenges? How did that affect your relation with people around you? What made you then realise the importance of overcoming those challenges? 2. What's the value of overcoming and learning from challenges?	Essay presents the most lessons taught as to be always faithful and respect elders and to also know how challenging and hard life can be outside. Essay dealt more on things experienced in life. Mentions trouble she got in but not further developed. Story not fully developed does not say much on that event that led her change or view life as full of challenges.	1.You essay has not told a story of challenges you faced still 2. What happened that made you realise that life if full of trials and tribulations? How did you overcome them?	Introduction similar to 1st draft. 2. Tries to mention what friends made her do, but she does not say much. Whether they were caught or even narrate an event that made her realise the lesson. No detailed story given about challenges faced.	1.your lesson needs to be related to the story/ experience 2. Tell a story that shows that life is challenging. What really happened? When you did all those bad things with friends, where you caught? what where the consequences of your behaviour What then made you change?
Organisation	There is repetition of ideas i.e. life is tough / challenging without further development.	Repetition of ideas. Some ideas are not fully developed esp. in Para 2. What happened?	Ideas not presented clearly. Lack details.		Ideas not clearly presented, still need more details. Repetition of ideas evident.	
Language	Sentences are too long and sentences are not well constructed. Minimal spelling mistakes and punctuation.				Still have some grammatical errors e.g. I have sow that friends can make you…	

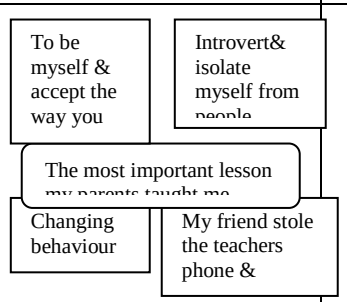
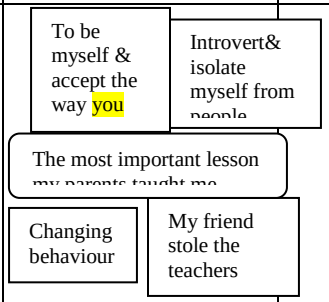
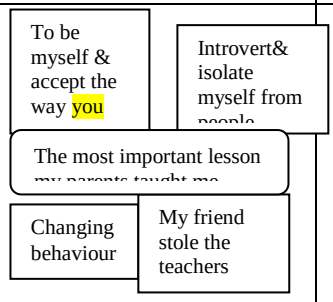
Category 3A: Moderate with minimal improvement

The quality of work produced by Thando in the three essays

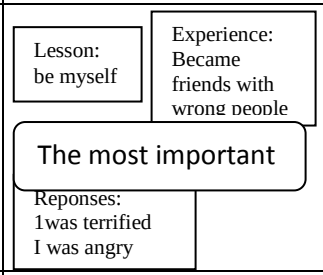
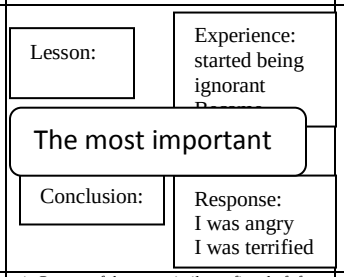
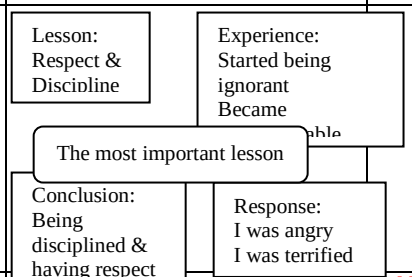
criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	Essay3	Comments
Mind map						
content	Ideas from mind map used to in the essay. Essay introduction outlines the lesson. Essay tells of a story in which a learner acted irresponsible and how the parents reacted when she arrived home late and drunk	What made you realise it was important to be responsible?	1. Introduction similar to the first draft. Essay content different from the 1st draft. Has less irrelevant ideas also gives information on action taken to show an element of responsibility. 2.however there are still ideas that need to be developed	1.add details that make the story more interesting 2. What else did you do? 3. Add something that will spicy the story.	Story added details that were not related to lesson e.g. mentions what she did before going to party .i.e. bathing, Also used lot of reported speech to bring about a dialogue she had with mom. Less details about the party. Content is similar to 1st draft only differ in the way ideas are presented.	1. What else happened at the party?
organisation	Ideas are logical sequenced and story developed.		Ideas are logical sequenced though not fully developed.		Essay well organised but need for information on the key aspects of the story.	
language	Story uses lot of direct speech. Need to improve the way she brings across ideas such that it becomes more interesting. Minimal spelling errors.	E.g. many times we do not want to learn that lesson 2. Use direct speech e.g. My mother asked me where I was...	1. Essay more narrative. 2. Minimal language errors e.g. ....set down with me telling me how they feel with what I did. B. repetition. My parents- rule of using pronouns to avoid repetition not applied.		Second Para of essay not well presented too much of reported speech. E.g. my mother asked me where... I told her that... then she asked ... then I told her She said okay..... I said okay Learn to use appropriate diction	Improve your expression esp. Para 2.

Category 4A: adequate with minimal improvement

Gugulethu adequate with minimal improvement

criteria	Description of learner's Essay 1	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's Essay2	Teacher's exact comments	Description of learner's Essay3	Teacher's exact Comments
Mind map						
content	Essay used ideas drawn from the mind map. Tells a story in relation to lesson and why he wanted to be some else .Mentions that he had to befriend Sputla as he had qualities that he long for. Gives details of what happened as a result of that.	1.It could have been more interesting if you described how Sputla influenced your behaviour and what made people adore him more or regard him as a 'cool guy' 2. improve the experience and make it more sincere and talk about the conversation you had and how you opened up to you mum	Essay still uses ideas drawn from mind map. Tells a story in relation to lesson-Content similar to 1st draft e.g. 1st Para, 2nd and 3rd paragraph. In both essays in Para 2 "growing up I wished that I could be someone popular, loved by people but I was the opposed of what I wanted to be."	1. Find better convincing reasons that made you to be like him.	Essay still uses ideas drawn from mind map. Tells a story in relation to lesson-The essay has not changed as the content is still the same. The topic sentences used in each paragraph is similar to 1st and 2nd draft. **However, there are few detail**s that have been added to improve the flow of essay. E.g. talks about Sputla qualities that made him befriend him, further explains how his behave changed so as to be t popular and how he felt about it.	
organisation	Some ideas are well sequenced as he starts by commenting on the lesson , then stating reasons for wanting to be some else ,giving details of why then he had to be himself.	1.	Ideas are well sequenced in order of events. However Para 1 is not well ordered nor connected e.g. Paragraph 4 talks about changing from good to bad and then also talks about getting caught, suspended and mum angry who later said something that changed his behaviour.	// a new paragraph to separate ideas.	Ideas are still well sequenced though Paragraphs3 need to be well sequenced- Essay has numerous ideas that are mainly related but there are some that not related esp. Para 3. And there is repetition of ideas. Conclusion- 2	Ideas in paragraph 3 are mixed up. The last part of Para 3 is supposed to be linked with the first part of Para 3 where to talk about his personality. Do not repeat ideas dealt with rather develop or build on them.
language	Language simple and ordinary. Punctuation, few language errors	1. Please check your tenses and grammar. Sentences not well constructed i.e. the reason I was regarded as uncool was because	Language still ordinary and simple. Still punctuation and few grammatical errors	Highlighted areas that need to be changed esp. spellings, punctuation	L Still punctuation and few grammatical errors language still ordinary and simple	1. Sentences need to be joined together to avoid repetition. 2. Improve you expressions.

Category 4B: adequate with significant improvement (THANDEKILE)

criteria	Essay 1	comments	Essay2	comments	Essay3	Comments
Mind map		1. Why is it important to be yourself?				
content	Introduction does not clearly outline the lesson. Tells of an experience in which she went with friends to a park and she smoked and drunk and they also had to arrive home late Story does not reflect much rebellious behaviour. Not much is said about what happened at park.	1.it could have been more interesting to describe the pressure you were in and how it led you to be rebellious 2. What made you recognise that it is important to be yourself? 3. Story not really related to lesson learnt. From the story, what happened, what lesson did you learn?	1. Content of the story similar to first draft for instance, introductory sentences and ideas discussed. For instance: went out with friends Got smoked & drunk Came home late Locked outside for a long duration of time-form of punishment. 2. Story does not clearly relate to lesson learnt as the lesson at the end of the essay is also not clear e.g. "she told me not to follow people or listen to negative things ....I should respect myself and others..."	Rewrite the conclusion so that it clearly relates the experience.	Essay still does not clearly describe the lesson taught. It's about what happened after she decided to go with friends after school and she arrived home late and drunk. Lesson and experience not well related even though the lesson is taught is respect and discipline.	1. Work on your introduction so that it either comments on what happened or on the lesson and how you came to learn that lesson the hard way.
organisation	Key ideas that make up the story are not developed so illustrate an individual whose not being herself Some ideas are not related esp. in paragraph 2.talks of taking another puff and then about what her parents thought she was.		Essays sometimes presents two or more ideas within a paragraph e.g. in Para 2		Ideas organised the same way as in the 1st and 2nd draft.	Ideas in paragraph 3 need to be further developed. What else happened? 2. Start a new paragraph after you have discussed the park events.
language	Uses simple / ordinary sentences to describe the experience. Sentences used makes the essay flow and be easily followed Has minimal language errors					1.use descriptive words to describe the story

Category 4B: adequate, with significant improvement (Nolanga)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1.what is the lesson 2. what was the experience content 1.each paragraph need to be connected to the next to show continuous flow 2.para 3 would have changed the sentence to a reported speech 3 describe in detail what you did that caused much pain and led you mom to be hospitalised. Organisation Language Language errors identified in essay.	Focus Comments require learner to state key aspects and give additional information Comparison Comments relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what is observed and what needs to be done. Valence Comments given are positive as they relate to task.	Mind map Replace the term Ignorant with disrespectful Content 1.Need to start telling the story in relation to the lesson in Para 1 and Describe all the bad things you did which may have caused a great pain to your mom 2. Last Para need to also focus on lesson learnt e.g. this then made me realise that being disrespectful... Organization Language	Focus Instructional comments given to guide learner on what to do. Comments also offer suggestions. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria. Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Comments given are still positive as they relate to task.	Mind Map Content 1. You received a call from home, how come you had to walk back home? You need to state that you quickly rushed to hospital to see her and then the doctor ... *could have told the learner to use ideas in 2nd essay sentence 2 in her second Para in Final draft Organisation 1. More details needed in Para 3.Then what happened after all that reflecting / thinking about what you used to do? Did you think of going to her and apologising and making a promise of change in your behaviour or you just seat and waited? 2. Was t that a final blow as you did not have a chance to apologise? Language 2. You have to proof read your work.	Focus Comments given offer suggestions, uses questions to help learner to develop ideas and are also instructional. Comparison Comments are related to the three sets of criteria. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the essay. Valence Comments given are still positive as they relate to task.

Category 4B: adequate, with significant improvement (GIFT)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content In text comments 1.write in full 2. Miss what? 3. It will be more interesting to state time. Organisation Language Language errors highlighted in the essay i.e. spellings, tenses	Focus Comments not process focused Comparison Comments related to Language criteria. Function Comments given did not describe or specify how and what needed to be improved. Valence Comments positive.	Mind map Content . Then what happened there after? 2. Essay needs a closure related to most listening to parents. Supposed to have been related to bad decision taken Organization Language	Focus Comments require learner to give more information. Comparison Comments still not descriptive or specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. Function Valence Comments positive	Mind Map Content 1. How did you come to realise the value of making wise decision and listening to parents. 2. Describe the value of making right decisions. Organisation The idea in Para3, where there is a beginning of this sentence: when I arrived at home.... needs to be a new paragraph. language	Focus Still require learner to give additional information on value of lesson Comparison Comments relate to content and organisation criteria Function Describes what is observed. Valence Comments positive

Category 5A: substantial with minimal improvement

The quality of wok produced by Gladness in three essays

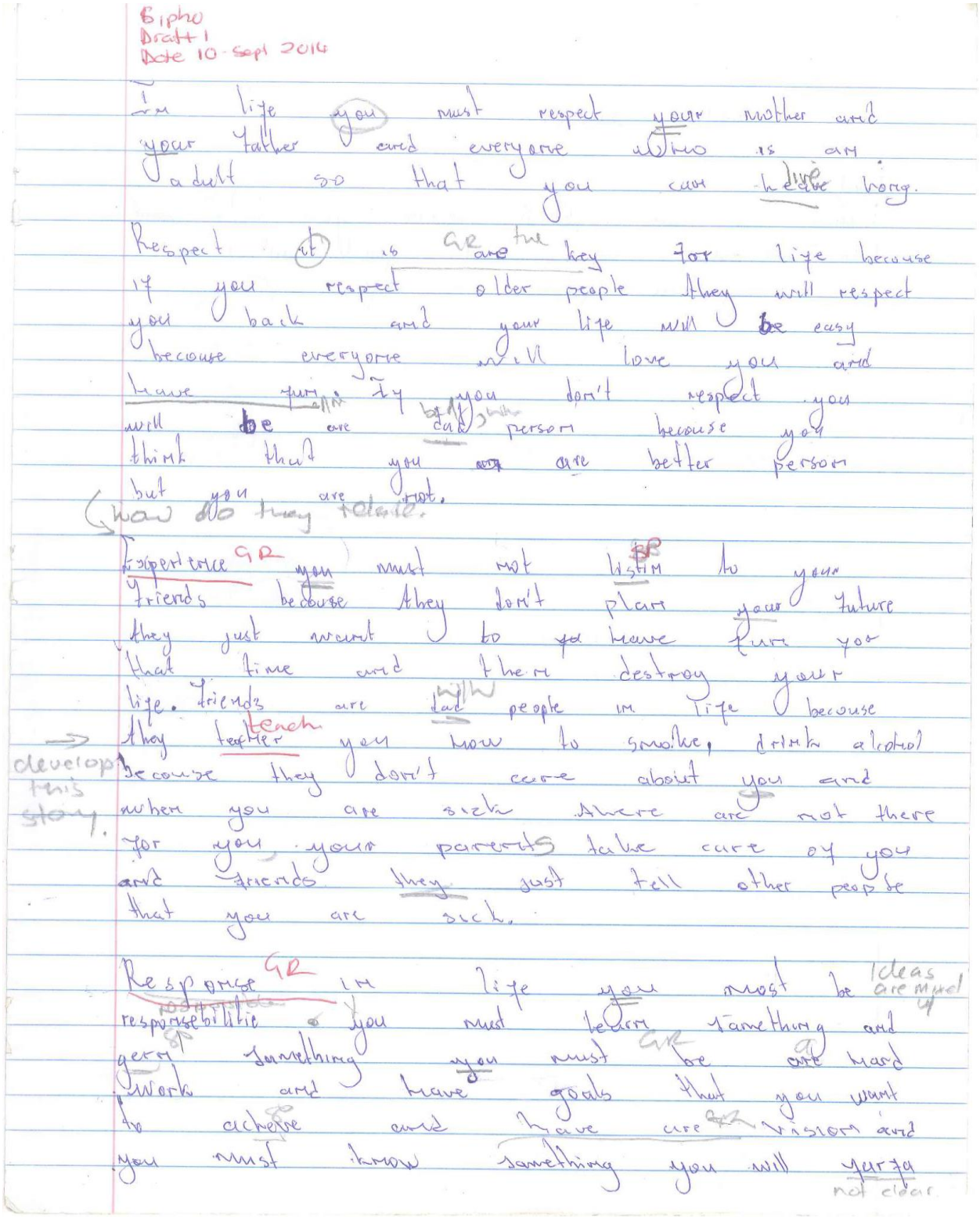
Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1. What is the value of obedience? content 1.Essay tells a story in relation to what is learnt 2. Need to work on including sentence that link the paragraph together. Organisation language Spelling errors and word choice corrected in the essay.	Focus Comments task focused but do not offer suggestions how paragraphs can be linked or how the essay can be improved. Comparison Comments related to content and organisation criteria Function Comments do not specify what needs to be done to improve work. Not really helping learner. valence	Mind map Content 1.How did you learn that lesson?(comment in essay) 2. Story quite interesting, need to state what other action was taken to cement the story. Conclusion could also be improved to make it more powerful and interesting. Talk about the value of obedience or consequences. Organization Para 4- comment He further..... Para 5 – what happens if you are disobedient? Language	Focus Focus on what needs to be improved. Comparison Comments are related to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Comments are positive.	Mind Map Content Organisation Language In text comment Then the following night when my parents and cousins had gone to sleep	Focus Correctional comment made. Comparison Comment related to language criteria Function Comments do not give details of what is observed. Valence Positive comment.

Category 6A: meritorious with minimal improvement Precious

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1. Add something to complete the idea. Work on the introduction. 2. The quote from Dalai could also be moved to Para 3. And be linked with what your mom said to boost your confidence. Organisation language	Focus Suggestion comments given. Comparison Comments are content criteria Function Comments not descriptive or specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. Do not specify what needs to be added or acknowledge good work. valence	Mind map Rework mind map : ideas making the story should be grouped together Content 1. Quite interesting story. 2. You can still make improvements in your introduction. I feel the first introduction in your 1st draft was more powerful than this one! What do you think? Organization Language	Focus Instructive comments given on how to improve the mind map. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Positive comments.	Mind Map Content 1. Use the introduction in the 1st essay. 2. Try to bring together the ideas in the second Para in the 1st essay with those in third essay. 3. Return the questions that made your essay to be more powerful. Organisation Language Use the language style in essay 1	Focus Comparison Function Valence

Comments given were not descriptive or specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. This resulted in learner making changes where it was unnecessary and presentation of work ended up being to general not as catchy as the first draft

APPENDIX H: SAMPLES OF GRADE 11 A ESSAYS



Bipho
Draft 1
Date 10 - Sept 2014

In life you must respect your mother and your father and everyone who is an adult so that you can ~~heave~~ live long.

Respect it is GR are the key for life because if you respect older people they will respect you back and your life will be easy because everyone will love you and have fun. If you don't respect you will be are ~~dad~~ person because you think that you ~~are~~ are better person but you are not.

how do they relate.

Experience GR you must not listen to your friends because they don't plan your future they just want to ~~ya~~ have fun for that time and then destroy your life. friends are ~~dad~~ people in life because they teach you how to smoke, drink alcohol because they don't care about you and when you are sick there are not there for you, your parents take care of you and friends they just tell other people that you are sick.

develop this story.

Response GR in life you must be responsibilities you must learn something and gern something you must be ~~are~~ hard work and have goals that you want to achieve and have are vision and you must know something you will ~~yarza~~ not clear

Ideas are mixed

Sipho
Draft 2
Date: 18. September 2014

In life you take control of your life ~~by~~ but your parents will help you to leave are happy life and respect is the key of all things in life because when you respect you get it back and learn to take care of your life. choose your friend, have goals that you want to achieve in life. (e.g have your business ~~of~~ or work so that you can take care of yourself and help people who are in need.)

Alcohol ~~it~~ is not good for our health because people who drink ~~they~~ can't leave longer because ~~Alcohol~~ it needs money and you and up stilling people's things just for alcohol and and up being alone for no ~~reason~~ reason and end up in jail for wrong things you are doing.

In this World it is hard even our parents know that and they teach us everday because they want us to leave are good life but ~~us children~~ we don't see that. We want to have fun with our friends drink and smoke and still our parents things e.g money, cell phone just to plyes our friends and our self but at the end of the day we need help to our parents.

Love yourself and everone around you because you don't know what will happed in the

Draft 3
Final essay

In life you must listen so that you can be successful because when you listen you will have respect and Respect is the key of all the things in life and drugs can destroy your life because I didn't listen to my parents and at that time they were helping me but I didn't listen and my life is so different because I don't listen.

Drugs can make you to have fun and enjoy life but they are bad for our health and future because you can end up Stilling things so that you can have money for drugs and you can not focus in school. you will need drugs and up not going to class.

Drugs make you to be lazy in school because you want respect. We want to have fun with our friends drink and smoke and Stil steal our parents things e.g money, cell phone just to please our friends and our selves but at the end of the day we need help to our parents and at that time you are in hospital for your wrongs things that you have done

Drugs can damage your future you will end up being an animal or are criminals. To stop drugs you must have respect yourself and your parents and have good friends.

Penelope
Date 10- sept
Draft 1

Category 1A with minimal improvement

Introduction

The most important lesson my parents taught me was to learn to listen so that I become was were they build me to be a better person. or my my incompetence has lead me to not listen

My parents obviously did something really right when it came to teaching me how to be me rather than immitating other people. But my naughtorious ways could have held me to captivity There need to be a sentence continuing this idea.

leave out

Listening is a skills, My parents always preached when I did something wrong, sentences need to be connected therefore, by so doing, is the love they show me. So that I dont become problemative to them and others.

Communication is key where by you interact with everyone being able to talk to other people is so important. resulting to me not talking to my parents when I had problems rather than diminishing they assocailleted to the point where it was out of Control to believe the people that could help me are my parents.

My parents have always been really keep on telling me that they aint perfect, that they made mistakes that they don't want me to experience, but my peers lead me to rebel to my parents. therefore it would have left me to be mischievous and have a bad attitude, Essay need conclusion.

(1) Describe One important lesson taught by your parents

(2) Relate that lesson to your own experience.

Select appropriate words and expressions

2nd draft

Penelope
Draft 2.
Date 18 September 2014

The most important lesson my parents taught me was that they build me to be a better person or my incomprtance has lead me to not listen.

My parents obviously did something really right when it came to teaching me how to be me rather than imitating other people. But my notorious ways could have held me to captivity in a way that i would have rebelled to my parents.

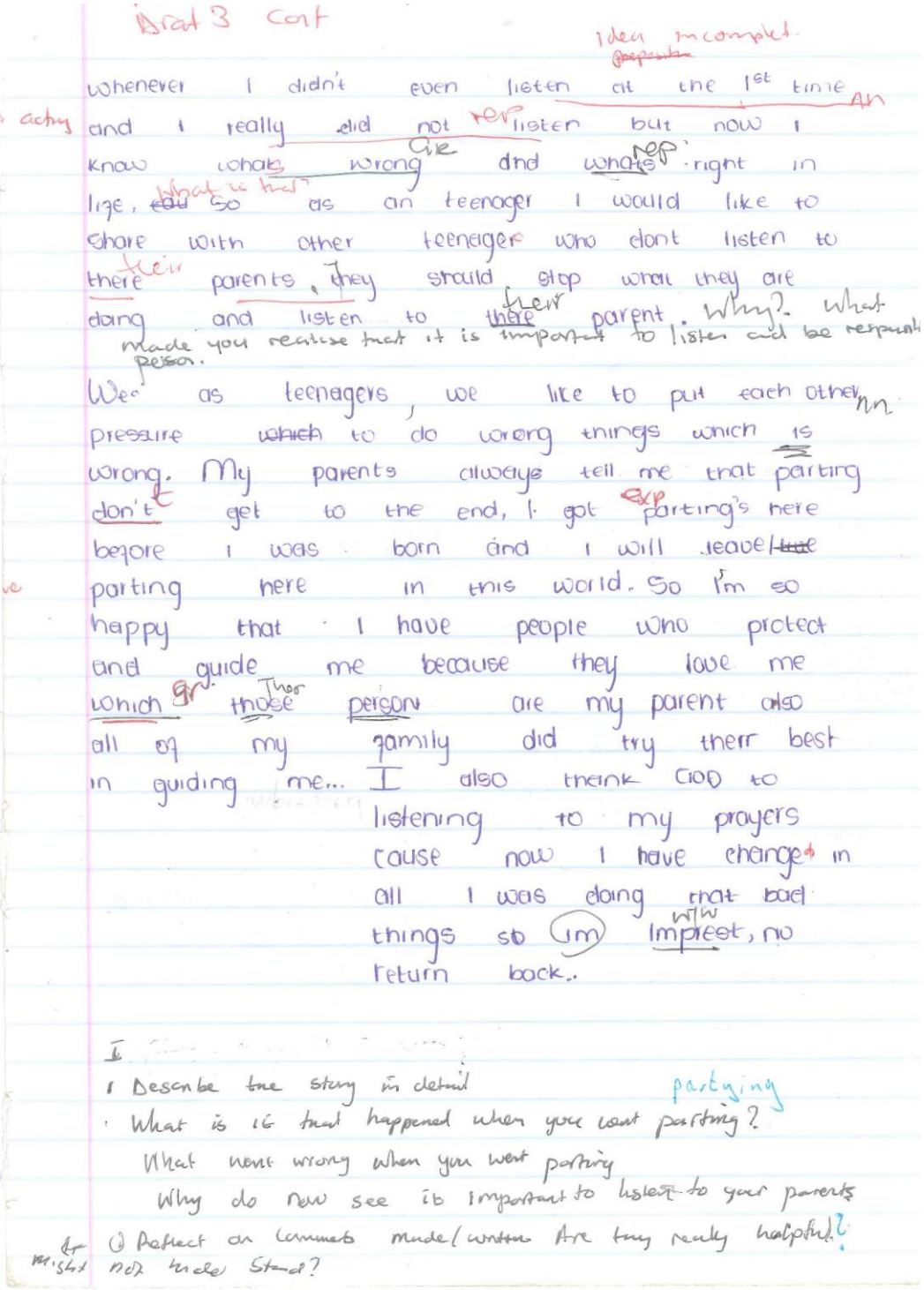
"Listening is a skill", My parents always yelled at me when I did something wrong by so doing its the love they show me so that I dont become a problematic child to my parents and the community Communication is key where by you interact with everyone being to talk to other people is so important resulting to me not talking to my parent when i had problems rather decreasing my problems continued to escalate to the point where it was out of control to believe the people that could help me are my parent.

My parents have always been Guiding me and telling me that they aint perfect, that they made mistakes that they don't want me to experience what they expired but my peers lead me to rebel against my parent

(1) In the 1st paragraph state the lesson and what you think about it.
(2) Tell a story of how you learnt that lesson.
(3) In conclusion show the value of the lesson.

Penelope Final Essay

Date: 30 September 2014



Draft 3 Cont

Idea incomplete

Whenever I didn't even listen at the 1st time and I really did not listen but now I know whats wrong and whats right in life, so as an teenager I would like to share with other teenager who dont listen to there parents, they should stop what they are doing and listen to there parent. Why? What made you realise that it is important to listen and be respectful person.

We as teenagers, we like to put each other in pressure which to do wrong things which is wrong. My parents always tell me that parting don't get to the end, I got parting's here before I was born and I will leave parting here in this world. So I'm so happy that I have people who protect and guide me because they love me which those person are my parent also all of my family did try their best in guiding me... I also thank God to listening to my prayers cause now I have change in all I was doing that bad things so im impress, no return back..

1 Describe the story in detail
2 What is it that happened when you went partying?
What went wrong when you went partying
Why do now see it important to listen to your parents
3 Reflect on comments made/written Are they really helpful?

Hndie
Draft 1
Date 18September

My parents always tell me to speak the truth, because it is the first step that will take me to success. They always tell me to be honest with everyone and in everything I do.

Another value that they tell me is to respect my elders and to love those who are younger. By respecting the elders, I will feel an internal peace. We should obey our parents because they are older and have a lot more experience. My parents told me to stick to my own values and what makes me happy - not to be swayed by peer pressure

I should always dream "big" and aspire to do my best. I shouldn't let obstacles stand in the way of my goals. I should always show mercy and kindness towards other people and treat them in a way that I want to be treated. I have seen that one of the reasons to cause the children to become bad. Therefore I try as much as to listen to my parents when they try to teach me something and the most important lesson I learned from my parents is hard working.

The most important lesson my parents taught me is to be grateful and appreciate what ever I get and to respect each and every person I come across.

Andie
Draft 2
Date 18 - Sept 2014

Respect is something that you learn from home and if you want to be respected you must also respect.

If you dont respect you wont be able to know many people because they will know that you are stubborn. Respect is not something that you have to choose who to respect because every person that you come across must be respected and they will respect you too. Elderly people are the most people that need to be respected even people who are younger that you must also be respect. If you dont respect you wont go anywhere with your life.

I always tell my friends to respect their parents because respect starts from home. If you dont respect your people who are closer to you, they wont like you because you dont respect them.

Respect must go with you everywhere go - if you respect you dont only respect people who you know you must respect everybody who you see and who know

~~I always tell~~

I always respect people even if they dont respect me because my parent

Andie Draft 3
Date 30 September 2014

I believe we as children should always respect our parents. Showing parental respect in our everyday lives provides us with the ability to treat every persons we meet with kindness and adoration.

It was last year in the easter when my Mother told me to go to Church and I told her that I am not going to Church because I was tired. And then I went to my room and closed the door and locked it. She came to me very angry because she did not like the way I had talked to her and i did not want to open my door. On that day i locked my self until late and came Out when it was time for dinner. I was very hungry and didnt have money to buy my self something to eat. I had to go back to her and tell her how sorry I am and I regreated what I did and she forgave me and gave me food to eat.

I was very happy that my mother had forgiven me. So the lesson that I learned to my mother is that you must always respect people even if they didnt do anything to hurt them.

1. What exactly did you do and how did you talk to
2. Did she just accept your apology without

Bogie
Draft I
Date 10-Sep 2014

Cuteson 2 B with Significant Improvement

THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON MY PARENT TAUGHT

*My parents always taught me that in life there are obsicles we must overcome to reach a sotain goal in life and this has been a life-time lesson for me.

In life we face various obsticles that might cloud your judgement. mistakes in life help you to see the path you must follow. This has happened to me in the past where I and my friends were suspected for robbery after getting drunk.

We were not only suspected for robbery we were also suspected for stealing dogs and selling or exchanging them. At first we were warned about the dangers but we did not learn the lesson taught to us by our parents.

We were happy because we always had money to spend and did not worry wether we will be caught and brought to justice for all we have done to this people and the dogs we stole for money.

I have experienced that abusing your rights can be followed by serious consequences that can impact you and people close to you badly, and unruly behaviour has its reputation to follow you.

Bosie
Draft 2
Date: 18 sept

THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON MY PARENTS TAUGHT ME.

My Parents always taught me that in life there are obstacles that we must overcome to reach a certain goals in life and that goals are being responsible, and this has been a life-time lesson for me.

About a year ago I faced an obstacle that had clouded my judgement, which resulted in being suspected of robbery and stealing of dogs after getting drunk with my friends because of acting irresponsible.

At first we were warned several times by our parents and our neighbours about what they had told us telling us that is going to result in serious consequences and dangers, but did we listen? No, we didn't believe that we would be caught, but we had to experience it the hard way.

We were happy because we always had money to spend and although we spent it on unnecessary things like booze and instruments to steal the dogs, after being suspected we didn't get caught as there was no evidence pointing at us (Me and my friends), we were not charged but punished by them and returned the dogs anonymously to the rightful owners.

I have experienced that abusing your rights can be followed by serious consequences that can impact negatively on you and the people close to you. and this has been a very unruly obstacle I have overcomed.

Bosie
Final Draft
Date 30 Sept 2014

THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON MY PARENTS TAUGHT ME

My parents always taught me that you have to learn to be responsible for your actions and not to let peer-pressure cloud your judgement. But sometimes we as teenagers don't listen and end up in difficult situations.

About a year ago, I acted irresponsible by getting drunk and stealing dogs all because I let my friends pressurised me to accompany them, and we were suspected of robbery.

At first we were warned about stealing dogs by our parents and neighbours, that this was going to result in serious consequences and dangers, but did we listen? No, we didn't believe that we would be caught, but we had to experience it the hard way.
What happened? How were you caught?
We stole the dogs for money, but we were spending it on unnecessary things like booze and equipment we used to steal dogs. After being suspected we didn't get caught as there was no evidence pointing at us and we were not charged because we were all young and under the age of 18 years, but we were punished by our parents and they carried this punishment by beating us and cutting our allowance, so we had to buy the dogs back and return them

Draft 1
Gladness
Date 10 Sept 2014

Essay: The most important lesson my parents taught me.

I was full of myself, I thought I knew everything and never thought that the decisions I took will catch up with me along the way. My parents showed me the right path but I chose the opposite, and at a later stage I was taught a lesson.

* paragraph need to have a transition sentence.

Late one afternoon, I received a text message from my friend, telling me about a bash that was going to take place the following day at night. I really wanted to go and had no plan because but I knew that my parents will deny as they are overprotective when it comes to parties and night clubs. Then I decided that I will sneak out

The following day my parents went to sleep as well as my brother, I sneaked out of the window and went to the bash with my friends. And As we were dancing some drunkard old man came to us and he was busy touching me and it was very akward. I asked him to stop but he was so stubborn I pushed him and he threw a bottle to my face, I fainted and the following day I woke up in the hospital. And my Parents were right beside me.

I was so ashamed of myself I couldn't look them in the eye and all I did was to cry and my mom was so angry and asked me that why do I always disobey their rules. I was crying and crying and couldn't answer her. I had a big scar in my face and stitches. My dad told me that if I don't want to obey his rules, I'm free to go.

~~Draft~~ Gladness
Draft 2
Date 18 September 2014

ESSAY: The most important lesson My Parents taught me

LESSON: TO BE OBEDIENT and LISTEN TO My Parents.

I was full of myself, I thought I knew everything and never thought that the decisions I took will catch up with me along the way. My parents showed me the right path but I chose the opposite, and at a later stage I was taught a lesson. how did you learn that lesson

Late one afternoon, I received a text message from my friend, telling me about a bash that was going to take place the following night. I really wanted to go but I knew that my parents will not allow me as they are overprotective. Then I decided that I will sneak out.

The following night when my parents went to sleep as well as my brother, I sneaked out of the window and went to the bash with my friends. As we were dancing, some drunkard old man came to us and he was busy harassing me and I was in an awkward position. I asked him to stop but he was so stubborn, I pushed him and he threw a bottle to my face. I fainted and ~~I pushed him~~ I was taken to the hospital a close by When I and my parents were right next to me, (called by my friends).

I was ashamed of myself, I couldn't look them in the eye and all I did was to cry and My mom was so angry that she couldn't even speak to me and She was crying, asking herself that what went wrong, She felt betrayed by me. I was so angry at myself

Gladness
Draft/Final essay
Date 30 - September 2014

Essay: The most important lesson my parents taught me

Lesson: Obedience is the most powerful weapon

I was full of myself, I thought I knew everything and never thought that the decisions I had taken will catch up with me along the way. My parents showed me the right path but I chose the opposite and at a later stage I was taught a lesson I will never forget.

Late one afternoon, I received a text message from my friend, informing me about a bash that was going to take place the following night. I really wanted to go but I knew that my parents will not allow me to go as they are overprotective. Then I decided that I will sneak out.

Then the following night when my parents and cousins had gone to sleep as well as my cousins, I sneaked out of the window and went to the bash with my friends. As we were dancing, some drunkard old guy came to us and he was busy harassing me and I was in an akward position. I asked him to stop but he was so stubborn, I pushed him and he threw a bottle at to my face. I fainted and I was taken to a close by hospital. When I woke up I saw my parents right next to me who have been called by my friend.

I was ashamed of myself, I could not look them in the eye and all I did was to cry. My mom was angry in such a way that she could not speak to me

Gladness
Final Cont.

and She also cried, asking herself that what went wrong. She felt betrayed by me. And that made me to be angry at myself, especially when I saw tears rolling on her face. As for my dad he was furious in such a way that he told me to pack my backs and leave. If I feel ~~so~~ I am a grown woman. He said that if I decided to stay at his house I had to serve some punishment. and I live by his rules I was grounded for 3 months and my cellphone was taken away from me for 6 months. It was hard to leave without my cellphone, I had to stay at home and help my mom with house duties.

Since that day, I regretted everything. Though I have forgived myself and continued with my life. Through all I have been through, I have learned that obedience is the most important weapon that one can practice.

Quite a good improvement!

Precious
Date 10 Sept 2015
Draft I

The most important lesson my parents taught me.

07 August 2006 - The day that would go on to define the rest of my life, I was chosen to recite a poem about child abuse to the whole school and to some important visitors. add something to complete the idea Work on introduction.

Although I was too young to understand what the poem was about and what it meant to some people in the hall, the pressure I felt to excel was enough to give me a sense of importance the poem held. My class teacher had been preparing me and my parents had been helping too. Now it was all up to me to deliver to my utmost best.

Minutes before I going on to the podium, I began feeling very anxious and nervous. All sorts of fears were running through my head. Was I going to freeze and forget all that I rehearsed? Will the learners laugh at me? What if I suddenly lose my voice? My mother held my hand and told me to believe in myself and that it was all up to me to touch someone else's life through the poem. She also told me that I was talented and that those people shouldn't intimidate me. Then my father walked towards me and assured me that I was going to do great.

When I was called up to the stage, I remember seeing many people. That frightened me. My heart started racing. I turned to my parents and I

precious

saw them smiling. That comforted me as I remembered everything they said back stage. Then I begin presenting. When I was done, everyone was clapping hands for me. I even recieved a standing ovation from the teachers and visitors. I was so relieved that I was able to give an outstanding performance.

I recall feeling very excited to hear the results. At least I knew that I did well. I came out first in my grade and third in the overall performance category (which included all grades). The principal then gave me a special recognition as he closed the competition. He said "A girl in grade three has proved that dynamites do indeed come in small packages." I was the only girl from the third grade who participated.

That day I learnt the most valuable lesson in my life which is self-confidence, my parents taught me. Confidence is the most important weapon one has to have to overcome all the challenges that life throws at him/her.

The great Dalai Lama once said "With realisation of one's own potential and self-confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world." In that way success is inevitable when you believe in yourself.

APPENDIX F: TEACHER'S COMMENTS FOR THREE ESSAYS PER LEARNER AND DESCRIPTION OF COMMENTS

Category 1A: Not achieved, with minimal improvement (Penelope)

Essay 1 teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map Comments were written in mind map 1.specify the lesson 2. story based on lesson 3. general attitude towards parents 4. value of the lesson content 1. Describe One most important lesson taught by your parents. 2.relate that lesson to your own experience Organisation Language Select appropriate words and expressions	Focus 1. Repeated the instruction on how the task should be structured in the mind map. i.e. specify the lesson. Comments 2 and 3 are unclear and require more grammar .it's not clear whether a description of learner's work or suggestion is. 2. Comments on the content of the essay also repeated the instructions on how the essay should have been addressed. **Comparison** 1. Comments related to the content criteria. 2.No comments given on organisation criteria 3. Comments related to language criteria. Give instruction for learner to use appropriate words e.g. In text correction of spelling errors done. i.e. notorious , escalate Function valence	Mind map Content 1. In the 1st paragraph state the lesson and what you think about it. 2.tell a story of how you learnt that lesson 3.in conclusion show the value of the lesson Organization Language	**Focus** Comments are content focused. Give instructions on what to do to improve the story. **Comparison** Comments are related to content criteria on how to improve the story. **Function** Comments describe what needs to be done to improve the content of the story. Valence- focuses on the positive.	Mind Map 1.Not discussed in essay 2.lesson; to be responsible & listen to my parents 3. Story1. irresponsible 2. Caught drunk 3. expelled 4. value of being responsible Content 1. No story mentioned in relation to parents' teaching. 2. Describe the story in detail- what is it that happened when you went parting? What went wrong when you went parting? Why do you see it important to listen to you parents and act responsible Organisation Language Check spellings or have someone check your work.	**Focus-** 1. Comments sentences .i.e. discussed in t 2. Comments on how the m correlation wi Content: Comments ar essay not indi **Comparison** Comments ar criteria. **Function** Specifies wha content of the **Valence** **positive**

Category 1A: Not achieved, with minimal improvement (Sipho)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1. Essay need to tell a story in relation to what your parents taught you. Organisation In text comments: ideas are mixed up Language 2.Use 1st person when narrating your story or as you are reflecting your experience 3. To make your work more interesting check your grammar.	Focus Comments focus on how to write story better. Instruct learner to tell a story and to develop It is process focused as it focuses on how to approach a reflective essay. Use 1st person, reflect own experience. Comparison Comments made are related to content, organisation and language criteria Function Comments made describe what is seen. That is points out that essay has no story, has mixed ideas and grammatical errors. Identify grammatical, corrects some spelling errors in essay .Need to specify and correct grammatical errors e.g. do not use a noun and pronoun at the same time or avoid using singular and plural helping verbs at the same time. Indicate type of error. Noun and verb agreement. **Valence - positive and encouraging comments made.**	Mind map Lesson : respect- not to abuse drugs Story: abused drugs- cause to school work Health- hospitalised Attitude towards parents advice on drug abuse Conclusion: value of that lesson Content 1.Talk about how it's important not to abuse drugs 2. Show that led you to change and respect your body. 3. State value of lesson. why is it important not to be involved in drugs Organization Language	Focus Gives suggestion on how the mind map should be structured in correlation to the essay. It is also process focused- as it focuses on how to approach the task Comparison Comments made are related to content. In text comments are more on language criteria and organisation. Spelling errors are corrected and points out repeated ideas on the essay. Does not specify grammatical errors made in general i.e. subject and verb agreement. e.g. even our parents know. I just cancelled the letter's' without explaining the rule further. Function Describes what is observable in the essay. Valence: comments still positive	Mind Map **Mind map show improvement** Content 1. Lesson could have been - respect yourself and do not do drugs as these can destroy one's life. 2. Essay has good ideas but these are not used to relate to own experience. You have given us a description of what drugs can do but you need to tell a story about you / yourself and how drugs destroyed your life. Tell us exactly what happened, what did you do? what did your parents say 3. What was the value of the lesson or experience you had? E.g. from that day after being hospitalised and diagnosed as having mismanaged drugs I then realised that taking drugs it's a health hazard to my being. I being to value and respect my body. It is therefore essential to love, respect one's self and not to abuse drugs Organisation Repetition of ideas par 2 and 3. Ideas are mingled up. language	Focus Comments focus on the strength and weakness of the essay Are also process focused. You need to tell a story about own experience. Uses questions to help learner tell a story. Offers suggestions. Comparison Comments are content, organisation and language focused. Points out repeated ideas. Still corrects incorrectly spelt words, propositions Function Describes and gives examples of what need to be done to improve the content of the story. Valence: comments praise improvement seen

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement (Andie)

	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1. choose one lesson 2. tell a story how you learnt that lesson 3. value of lesson content Select only one lesson 1.you can mention 4 lessons but select one as the most important lesson 2.story related to experience 3.Value of the lesson Organisation Each paragraph needs to deal with one idea only. language	Focus Comments repeat instructions on structure of the mind map. Point 3 is not clear, could have specified what has to be done. e.g. list the value of lesson Instructs learner on what to do. Point 2 and 3 not clear. Does not show whether its instruction or description of what the learner has done. Comparison Comments made relate to content and organisation criteria. Language comments were written as in text comments. Function Some comments not descriptive enough. Need to use full sentences to specify what needs to be done. valence	Mind map Content 1.Essay has dealt with one lesson 2. Now you have to relate that to own experience. Tell a story that made you realise the value of respect. Discuss what made you not to have respect and what made you change Organization Language	Focus Comment focus on what the learner has done and what he has to do to improve his work. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria. Also comments on language Function Comments describe what needs to be done to improve work. Valence Comments given are positive	Mind Map Mention key ideas of the story e.g. 1.refused to go to church 2. locked my self 3.apologised Content 1. What exactly did you do and how did you talk to her? 2. Did she just accept your apology without warning or advising you about your behaviour? Organisation Language You need to use past tense to describe your story.	Focus Comments given make suggestions on how to structure the mind map. Comments are process focused i.e. Questions are also used to help learn to improve work. Instructions given on what tense to use when writing about a past experience. Comparison Comments are related to content and language criteria. Function Comments offer suggestions and describe what needs to be done to improve work. Valence comments are still positive

Category 1B: Not achieved with significant improvement (Mandla)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1. Mind map has a list of lessons. State/ Select only one lesson 2. story :1 :2 :3 Conclusion: value of lesson content 1.out of the lessons you talked about chose one that you think is the Most Important lesson 2. Tell a story about how you came to realise the value of that lesson. What happened 3. In conclusion-you need to describe the value of lesson. Organisation language	Focus Comments offer suggestions on how mind map should be structured. Also process focused- informs learner on what to do to improve essay. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria. Emphasis the key elements of the essay. Function valence	Mind map Content 1.. how is you relation between mom and grand pa related to your story Overall comments 1. use 2nd Para as introduction 2. What challenges have you been through and how did they affect your behaviour? 3. How did your grandfather and mother's relationship affect you? What story did she have to tell you? How did that make you to be rebellious/ disrespectful 4. what then made you realise the value of respect Organization Language	Focus Comments given focus on helping learner to provide more information Instruct learner on what to do to improve work. Comparison Comments are still related to content criteria. Function Comments given are descriptive and use questions to help learner to improve quality of work. Valence	Mind Map 1.Lesson: Respect 2.Story: needed to know about what happened between grand & mom Mom never responded Got angry disrespected her 3. value of respect Content . How did their relationship affect you? What made you to be so curious; did that have something to do with you? 2. Why did you insult her? Organisation language	Focus Focuses on how structure a mind map and uses question to help learner to give more details on the story. Comparison Comments are content criteria related. Function Comments still describes what is observed. Valence – positive comments are given on how to improve the essay.

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement (Bokang)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content Describe Only One valuable lesson and relate to your experience Organisation Language Improve your sentence construction	Focus Re emphasis what the learner was supposed to do and instruct them on what to do to produce a well written essay. Comparison Comments relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what the learner needs to do to improve essay. valence	Mind map Content In text comments: 1st but I... 2nd Para: what things? 3rd Para how do you take good care of your talent? 4th Para: describe your talent and how you were taught to develop it and be someone. **Overall comments** 1.Essay still deals with more than one lesson 2. Essay need to describe an experience from which a lesson was learnt. Organization Language In text comment: spelling corrected & punctuation.	Focus Focuses on the task. Uses questions to assist learner to give more information. Focuses on process as it instruct learner on what to do e.g. 4th describe your talent Comparison Comments made relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what a learner has to do and correct spelling, punctuation and other language errors. Valence	Mind Map Content 1. Good introduction, however need to relate a story on honest. 2. What did you do to show that you were not honest? 3. What were the results of your behaviour? 4.Describe the value of being honest Organisation language	Focus Comments are process focused. Give information on what to do to improve their essay. Comparison Comments relate to content criteria only. Function Uses questions to help learner to improve their work Valence. Positive comments given. Praise good work and points weakens that need to be improved.

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement (Henmel)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1.You started pretty well, but spoilt it when you discussed more than one lesson taught in Para 3,4&5 2. Third Para needs to deal with how you learnt the value of respecting women. What was your attitude? Did you share the same value with your parents? Is it what you believed, if not how did you react? 3. Why is it important now to respect women? Organisation In text comment: Ideas are mixed up. language	Focus Comments are task focused as they point out strength and weakens as well as use questions to help learner to give more Comparison Comments given are related to content and organisation criteria. Function Comments describe what needs to be done to improve the task. Identify areas that need to be addressed. Valence-comments positively describe what needs to be improved and are task focused.	Mind map Content Try to relate lesson to one event/ experience that you had that made you realise it is important to respect people. (Tell a story about what you once did that showed you had no respect for women. What happened that changed your attitude towards them. Organization In text comments: Repeated ideas highlighted. Language	Focus Comments instruct learner on what to do to improve essay. Reemphasis what the learner was supposed to do- tell a story further uses question to guide them what to include in their story. Comparison Comments given are content criteria related. Function Comments describe what is observable. Valence comments still positive	Mind Map Content 1. You should have added more details to your story. Tell us what happened as a result of you being disrespectful. Also tell us the reason that made you to become more respectful later. Organisation Avoid repeating the same ideas. language	Focus Feedback given is about the task. It request learner to give more details on the story. Comments are also process focused as they use question to guide learner on how to improve their story. Comparison Comments are related to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what is seen by instructing and guiding the learner on what to do to improve their work. Valence- positive

Category 1B: Not achieved, with significant improvement (Tzepo)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map You need to mention only One remarkable lesson 2. relate lesson to the experience you had content 1. Select only One lesson that you value mostly. 2. Tell a story that made you learn the importance of that lesson. 3. what has that lesson taught you 4. please try to use own ideas Organisation language	Focus Repeats instructions on what they were supposed to do. Comparison Comments relate to content criteria only. Function Re emphasis the key aspects of the essay. Valence- positive comments given that are task related.	Mind map Lesson : obedience Story 1. 2 conclusion Content 1.lesson based on obedience 2. What did you do to show that you were disobedient? 3. What were the consequences of that act? 4. How then did you realise that it is important to obey your parents? Organization Language	Focus Comment s given suggest the layout of mind Uses question to provide information to develop the story. Comparison Comments are still Related to content criteria only. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the story. Valence-positive comments are given to help learn to develop the story.	Mind Map Written on mind map point 2`: What did you do? Content 1.Introduction is now better than the 1st one 2. Tells us more about why you changed your behaviour. What caused that change? Mention all the changes and how these affected people around you and your school work. Organisation 1.You need to arrange your ideas in order of events Language	Focus Comments are task focused as they require learner to give more details on the experience. Also process focused .informs learner what to do to improve. Comparison Comments made relate to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the essay. Valence- comments are positive.

Category 1B: Not achieved with significant improvement (Joy)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1.Work on Mind Map 2. list key points on story 3. list values of lesson content Select only One lesson that you find most important. 2. Tell us how you came to realise that as the most valuable lesson. What happened? Describe what happened that caused you to value that lesson. 3. What is the value of lesson? What have you learnt from your story? Organisation In text comment Ideas are mixed deal with one idea per paragraph. language	Focus Comments given repeat what they were supposed to do. Uses questions as guide lines for additional information needed to build the story. Comparison Comments made are related to content and organisation criteria. Function Describe what is seen in essay and what needs to be done. valence	Mind map Lesson- Story-1. Loan shark 2.smile fade 3. conclusion Content 1.Introduction needs to be related to lesson 2. Tell us more about this wage earner. How are you related? 3. Your ideas need to be fully developed. 4. Lesson learnt does not clearly come out. What lesson have you learnt from the story? Organization Ideas need to be presented in a logical way. Language	Focus Suggest how the mind map should be structured and what information is needed. Comparison Comments made relate to both content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what is seen and what needs to be done. Valence- comments made are not judgemental or personal	Mind Map Start with: learn to be content and live within your means. Story- Group key ideas that tell a story together. Story: 1.wage earner 2.life change 3.acceptance conclusion Content Good improvement Need to improve conclusion so that it shows the value of being content e.g. do not live beyond your means as this will cause... Organisation language	Focus Comments still offer suggestions taken from the essay and placed in mind map. Comparison Comments elate to content criteria. Function Describes what is seen and needs to be improved. Valence; acknowledges improvement

Category 2A: Elementary, with minimal improvement (Mpumi)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1. In the second Para describe a story in which you were faced with difficulties. What happened and how did you deal with those challenges? How did that affect your relation with people around you? What made you then realise the importance of overcoming those challenges? 2. What's the value of overcoming and learning from challenges? Organisation Repetition of ideas. Some ideas are not fully developed esp. in Para 2. What happened? language	Focus Comments are task and process focused. Comments focus on what needs to be included and how they should approach the task. Comparison Comments relate to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what is observable. Valence Comments describe what needs to be done in a positive way.	Mind map Lesson learnt is not related to essay introduction 2. What have you been through? 3. conclusion Content 1.You essay has not told a story of challenges you faced still 2. What happened that made you realise that life if full of trials and tribulations? How did you overcome them? Organization Language	Focus Focuses on the mind map and essay. Identifies that there is no correlation between lessons on mind map with that on essay. Emphasis what they were supposed to do i.e. tell a story. Comparison Comments made are content criteria related. Function Describes what is seen and needs to be done to improve the essay Valence Comments still describe what is seen in a positive way.	Mind Map Need to have included a mind map Content 1.your lesson needs to be related to the story/ experience 2. Tell a story that shows that life is challenging. What really happened? When you did all those bad things with friends, where you caught? what where the consequences of your behaviour What then made you change? Organisation language	Focus Comments given are instructional. Relate to what needs to be done and information that needs to be included. Comparison Comments are still content criteria related. Function Describes what is observable and uses questions to help to build the story. Valence Comments made still describe positively what is seen.

Category 2A: Elementary, with minimal improvement (Lungelo)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map The lesson learnt: content 1.discuss one important lesson 2. Describe the experience fully, what were the challenges. Why is it importance to face challenges? Organisation 1. Avoid repetition of ideas. 2. ideas are not well connected Language	Focus Comments task focused .The Comment on mind map is not clear as a descriptive word was not used to tell learner what to do. Comments reemphasis what they were supposed to do. Also instruct them what not to do. Comparison Comments given are related to content and organisation criteria. They describe what is expected of them as seen in the rubric. Function Describes what needs to be done as observed. Valence- Comments positively describe what needs to be done.	Mind map Content 1. Second paragraph to be part of your introduction. 2. explain what happened in Para Organization Arrange ideas orderly i.e. tell a story according to order of events. Language	Focus Comments made are process focused as they offer suggestion on what needs to be done to improve the task. Comparison Comments given are related to content and organisation criteria. They describe aspects related to the criteria. Function Describe what needs to be done. Valence comments still positively describe what needs to be done.	Mind Map mention the lesson Story 1. Started dating 2. how scared I was 3..how I survived Content 1.Essay could be more interesting if you mentioned challenges usually faced pick on one that you faced 2. Specify the challenges you faced and how you dealt with it through telling a story Organisation 1. Avoid mixing ideas in Para 3. 2. Essay needs a conclusion in which you relate your experience to lesson learnt and reflect on it. Language Edit your work.	Focus Comments focus on the task and process. Suggest what should be added to the story. Comparison Comments relate to all three set of criteria. Function Describes and specifies what needs to be done. Valence Comments still describe

Category 2B: Elementary, with significant improvement (Bogie)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map Mind map needs to be used to write your story content . Obstacle- explain and give examples of those obstacles that one need to overcome. 2.exprience need to be described in relation to what student learnt from parents Organisation Ideas are sometimes not logical and clearly presented language	Focus Comments given instruct learner on what to do. Also points out weakness of the essay. Comparison Comments given are related to content and organisation criteria. Function Describe what is observed thou not specific. e.g. ideas are sometimes not logical and clearly. Valence Comments made positive.	Mind map 1. Arrange your ideas according to the layout I gave you. i.e. 1. lesson 2. story 3. conclusion 2. write key words only Content 1. Lesson on the essay should be about acting responsible. 2. Give detailed information on how your friends influenced you to steal the dogs. How did you do it? 3. What happened when you were caught? 3. leave out the first sentence in Para 3 Organization 1.ideas are mixed Language	Focus Comments suggest how the mind map should be structured in correction to essay uses questions to help learner to give details. Comparison Comments are still related to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes and uses questions to help improve the essay. Valence Comments still positive	Mind Map Mind map much clearer Content You still have to tell us more about how you stole the dogs and what made you to be suspects. What went wrong? Organisation Para 4 deals with two events that need to be discussed separately. You need to tell us what happened at the police office if ever you went there .Another par about how your parents came to know about your deeds, Language Improve your sentence construction Use correct conjunctions	Focus Comments are task and process focused. Comments tell the learner what needs to be done to improve the essay. Comparison Comments given relate to the three set of criteria. Function Describes what is seen and what needs to be done to improve. Valence Comments till positive

Category 3A: Moderate, with minimal improvement (Lisa)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content Comments written within the essay. 1.2nd Para- then what did they decide to do? Conclusion need to sum up the story and lesson learnt Organisation Language	Focus Comments focus on the task. Use question to get more details on the essay. Comparison Comments related to content. Criteria only. Function Comments not descriptive or detailed enough to enable learner to improve essay. Valence Comments are positive.	Mind map Content 1. The 2nd Para should be your introduction. 2. Then tell a story of what happened that made you realise that it is important to be grateful. 3. conclusion need to be related to experience e.g. even though I cannot turn the clock back I have learnt to value and be grateful of people I have in my life. Organization Essay has introduction that gives outline of what to expect and a good conclusion. But the story lacks details. Language	Focus Comments made are task and process focused as they inform learner of what to do to improve the essay. Comparison Comments made are related to content and organisation criteria Function Comments describe what is seen and offer suggestions on how to improve work. Much better than the first comments. Valence Comments still positive	Mind Map Mind map not related to essay why? Lesson : I should not rush into things like dating at a younger age - not the lesson in essay Content 1. Essay has good introduction and conclusion. 2. could have been more interesting if more information was added Further develop the story to relate the incident that made you realise the value of being grateful. What did you do to your aunty that made you to be grateful? Organisation Language	Focus Comments given are task and process focused. Require learner to make sure there is correlation between mind map and essay. add more details and Comparison Comments given are related content criteria Function Describes what is observable and informs learner what to do to develop the story. Valence Comments still positive

Category 3A: Moderate, with minimal improvement (Thando)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content In text comment.: many times we do not want to learn that lesson What made you realise it was important to be responsible? Organisation Language Use direct speech e.g. My mother asked me where I was...	Focus Comments focused on the task offers suggestions and uses questions to help learner to give details. Also instruct learner on what to do. Comparison Comments given relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what is seen and offers suggestions. valence	Mind map Content 1.add details that make the story more interesting 2. What else did you do? 3. Add something that will spicy the story. Organization Language	Focus Comments require learner to add details. Comparison Comments related to content criteria. Function Comments do not specify what needs to be added to make the story interesting. Valence Comments still positive	Mind Map Content 1. What else happened at the party? Organisation Language Improve your expression esp. Para 2.	Focus Uses questions to help learner to state more details. Comparison Comments relate to content and language criteria Function Describes briefly what is seen in essay Valence Comments still positive.

Category 4A: Adequate, with minimal improvement (NATHAN)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1. A transition sentence needs to connect your 1st Para to the next one. 2..seemingly the conclusion brings a new lesson Organisation . To make the story more interesting you need to create ideas that are logical connected and there need to be a continuous flow in your story. Language Check spellings and tenses and punctuation Essay needs to be written in the past form Improve your expressions.	Focus Comments given are task and process focused. Comparison Comments relate to all the three set of criteria found in the rubric. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the essay. Valence Comments given are positive.	Mind map Content 1. Did this (Para 2) contribute to you losing focus in your work? 2. Why did you do that? 3. How did your parents react? 4. How did you feel? 5. Try to wrap it up. Comment on the importance of that lesson Organization Language Highlighted spelling and tense errors.	Focus Comments are task focused. Uses question to help learn to give more information. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria Function Valence	Mind Map Content Content similar to 2 1. What made you change your behaviour and have less interest in your school work? 2. Give details of your performance in 2nd and final term. What did you do about it? What did your parents say? Organisation Language Please edit your work, check spellings and use correct tenses	Focus Gives instructional comments and uses questions to elicit more information. Comparison Comments are related to content and language criteria Function Describes what is observable. Valence

Category 4A: Adequate, with minimal improvement (Gugulethu)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1.It could have been more interesting if you described how Sputla influenced your behaviour and what made people adore him more or regard him as a 'cool guy' 2. improve the experience and make it more sincere and talk about the conversation you had and how you opened up to you mum Organisation Language 1. Please check your tenses and grammar. Sentences not well constructed i.e. the reason I was regarded as uncool was because	Focus Comments are task focused. They require learner to give more details. Comparison Comments relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what is observable and needs to be improved. Valence Comments positively inform learner what needs to be done.	Mind map Content 1. Find better convincing reasons that made you to be like him. Organization // a new paragraph to separate ideas Language Highlighted areas that need to be changed esp. spellings, punctuation	Focus Comments require learner to add more information. Comparison Comments relate to all three set of criteria. Function Describes what is, observed. point out spelling, punctuation errors, beginning of new paragraphs Valence Comments positively inform learner of areas that require attention.	Mind Map Content Organisation Ideas in paragraph 3 are mixed up. The last part of Para 3 is supposed to be linked with the first part of Para 3 where to talk about his personality. Do not repeat ideas dealt with rather develop build on them. Language 1. Sentences need to be joined together to avoid repetition. 2. Improve you expressions.	Focus Comments are task and process focused. State what needs to be done to improve the essay. Comparison Comments relate to orgainsation and language content. Function Describes what is observed in the essay and what needs to be done. Thou does not offer example. Valence Comments positively describe what is observed.

Category 4B: Adequate, with significant improvement (Thandekile)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1. Why is it important to be yourself? content 1.it could have been more interesting to describe the pressure you were in and how it led you to be rebellious 2. What made you recognise that it is important to be yourself? 3. Story not really related to lesson learnt. From the story, what happened, what lesson did you learn? Organisation language	Focus Comments focus on the task. Uses questions to help learner to add more relevant information to build the story. Comparison Comments made are related to content criteria Function Describes what is observed. valence	Mind map Content Rewrite the conclusion so that it clearly relates the experience. Organization Language	Focus Instructional comment given to improve work. Comparison Comment is content criteria related. Function Instructs learner on what to do as a result of what has been observed. Valence Comment positive.	Mind Map Content 1. Work on your introduction so that it either comments on what happened or on the lesson and how you came to learn that lesson the hard way. Organisation Ideas in paragraph 3 need to be further developed. What else happened? 2. Start a new paragraph after you have discussed the park events. Language 1.use descriptive words to describe the story	Focus Comments instruct learner on what to do to improve the essay. Comparison Comments relate to all set of criteria. Function Comments given are based on what has been observed. Valence Comments still positive.

Category 4B: Adequate, with significant improvement (Nolanga)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1.what is the lesson 2. what was the experience content 1.each paragraph need to be connected to the next to show continuous flow 2.para 3 would have changed the sentence to a reported speech 3 describe in detail what you did that caused much pain and led you mom to be hospitalised. Organisation Language Language errors identified in essay.	Focus Comments require learner to state key aspects and give additional information Comparison Comments relate to content and language criteria. Function Describes what is observed and what needs to be done. Valence Comments given are positive as they relate to task.	Mind map Replace the term Ignorant with disrespectful Content 1.Need to start telling the story in relation to the lesson in Para 1 and Describe all the bad things you did which may have caused a great pain to your mom 2. Last Para need to also focus on lesson learnt e.g. this then made me realise that being disrespectful... Organization Language	Focus Instructional comments given to guide learner on what to do. Comments also offer suggestions. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria. Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Comments given are still positive as they relate to task.	Mind Map Content 1. You received a call from home, how come you had to walk back home? You need to state that you quickly rushed to hospital to see her and then the doctor ... *could have told the learner to use ideas in 2nd essay sentence 2 in her second Para in Final draft Organisation 1. More details needed in Para 3.Then what happened after all that reflecting / thinking about what you used to do? Did you think of going to her and apologising and making a promise of change in your behaviour or you just seat and waited? 2. Was t that a final blow as you did not have a chance to apologise? Language 2. You have to proof read your work.	Focus Comments given offer suggestions, uses questions to help learner to develop ideas and are also instructional. Comparison Comments are related to the three sets of criteria. Function Describes what needs to be done to improve the essay. Valence Comments given are still positive as they relate to task.

Category 4B: Adequate, with significant improvement (Gift)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content In text comments 1.write in full 2. Miss what? 3. It will be more interesting to state time. Organisation Language Language errors highlighted in the essay i.e. spellings, tenses	Focus Comments not process focused Comparison Comments related to Language criteria. Function Comments given did not describe or specify how and what needed to be improved. Valence Comments positive.	Mind map Content . Then what happened there after? 2. Essay needs a closure related to most listening to parents. Supposed to have been related to bad decision taken Organization Language	Focus Comments require learner to give more information. Comparison Comments still not descriptive or specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. Function Valence Comments positive	Mind Map Content 1. How did you come to realise the value of making wise decision and listening to parents. 2. Describe the value of making right decisions. Organisation The idea in Para3, where there is a beginning of this sentence: when I arrived at home.... needs to be a new paragraph. language	Focus Still require learner to give additional information on value of lesson Comparison Comments relate to content and organisation criteria Function Describes what is observed. Valence Comments positive

Category 5A: Substantial, with minimal improvement Gladness

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map 1. What is the value of obedience? content 1.Essay tells a story in relation to what is learnt 2. Need to work on including sentence that link the paragraph together. Organisation language Spelling errors and word choice corrected in the essay.	Focus Comments task focused but do not offer suggestions how paragraphs can be linked or how the essay can be improved. Comparison Comments related to content and organisation criteria Function Comments do not specify what needs to be done to improve work. Not really helping learner. valence	Mind map Content 1.How did you learn that lesson?(comment in essay) 2. Story quite interesting, need to state what other action was taken to cement the story. Conclusion could also be improved to make it more powerful and interesting. Talk about the value of obedience or consequences. Organization Para 4- comment He further..... Para 5 – what happens if you are disobedient? Language	Focus Focus on what needs to be improved. Comparison Comments are related to content and organisation criteria. Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Comments are positive.	Mind Map Content Organisation Language In text comment Then the following night when my parents and cousins had gone to sleep	Focus Correctional comment made. Comparison Comment related to language criteria Function Comments do not give details of what is observed. Valence Positive comment.

Category 6A: Meritorious, with minimal improvement (Precious)

Essay 1 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 2 Teacher's comments	Description of comments	Essay 3 Teacher's comments	Description
Mind Map content 1. Add something to complete the idea. Work on the introduction. 2. The quote from Dalai could also be moved to Para 3. And be linked with what your mom said to boost your confidence. Organisation language	Focus Suggestion comments given. Comparison Comments are content criteria Function Comments not descriptive or specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. Do not specify what needs to be added or acknowledge good work. valence	Mind map Rework mind map : ideas making the story should be grouped together Content 1. Quite interesting story. 2. You can still make improvements in your introduction. I feel the first introduction in your 1st draft was more powerful than this one! What do you think? Organization Language	Focus Instructive comments given on how to improve the mind map. Comparison Comments are related to content criteria Function Describes what needs to be improved. Valence Positive comments.	Mind Map Content 1. Use the introduction in the 1st essay. 2. Try to bring together the ideas in the second Para in the 1st essay with those in third essay. 3. Return the questions that made your essay to be more powerful. Organisation Language Use the language style in essay 1	Focus Comparison Function Valence

The comments I gave to Precious' 1st draft were not descriptive or specific enough to help learner to improve quality of work. This resulted in learner making changes where it was unnecessary and presentation of work ended up being to general not as catchy as the first draft

APPENDIX G: EVALUATIVE SHEET

This evaluative sheet was completed by learners after completion of my teaching process.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Very low	Low	Moderate	satisfactory	outstanding

	Level 1	L2	L3	L4	L5
1.Objectives					
Uses diff methods to provide feedback	0	1	11	8	0
Improve teaching and learning	0	2	10	6	2
Develop one's assessment skills	0	0	2	13	5
2.Assessment strategies					
Criteria explained clearly to learners in relation to topic	0	2	8	6	4
Provided more relevant feedback	0	0	5	12	3
Involved learners in critical reflection of their work	0	0	10	4	6
Encouraged learner involvement and responsibility			7	5	7
Encouraged learner participation and working together	0	1	5	10	4
3.Cconstructive feedback is descriptive in nature					
Comments made are of quality & describe areas that need improvement	0	0	9	9	1
Shows or explains how errors can be corrected	0		4	11	5
Comments given lead to improvement of work	0	1	7	8	4
Comments made are not clear	0	12	2	3	3
Comments could not be used as writing was not clear	0	3	6	5	4
4. Constructive feedback valence					
Identifies errors and good points	0		5	7	8
Comments are motivating	0	2	4	7	7
Points and praise ideas presented	0	1	5	9	5
5. Relevancy					
Pointed out & suggested what needed to be improved	0		4	10	3
Could use comments to improve work	0		2	12	2
Focused on student performance	0		4	13	3
Suitable to the purpose of the essay & criteria for use	0		3	15	2

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF APPROVAL TO CONDUCT MY RESEARCH

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2015 / 201

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**22 July 2014**
Validity of Research Approval:	**22 July 2014 to 3 October 2014**
Name of Researcher:	**Mkhwanazi N.**
Address of Researcher:	**43 Maldives**
	Nossob Street
	Winchester Hills
	2091
Telephone Number:	**011 680 5710; 073 231 5963**
Email address:	**nessynesisa@gmail.com**
Research Topic:	**An exploration of formative assessment strategies that can provide constructive feedback on essays written in English as a First Additional language**
Number and type of schools:	**ONE Secondary Schools**
District/s/HO	**Ekurhuleni South**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Makhado 2014/07/23

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
4. *A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*
5. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
6. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.*
8. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
9. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
10. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*
11. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
12. *On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.*
13. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
14. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

.....

Dr David Makhado
Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 2014/07/23

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
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P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
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