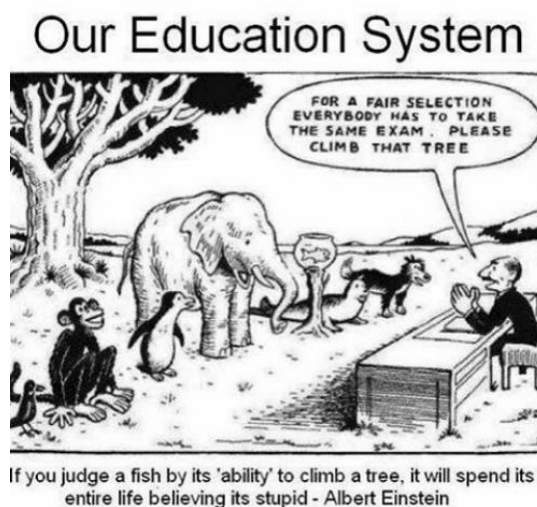


Unfair Criteria Sheets in Schools

The interpretation of a few key terms should not be the basis for human education. Current criteria sheets (Appendix 1.) demand subjective interpretation of descriptors, core curriculum elements and cognitive verbs.

Something needs to change, urgently!

Schools will be better off shifting to an explicit, itemised assessment criteria sheet (Appendix 2.) Current criteria sheets only allow for students with quality interpretation/inferencing skills that align with the subjectivity of their teacher/faculty head to achieve high standards.



While I acknowledge that a more explicit criteria sheet is tending toward spoon-feeding students, it will create the even 'playing field' educators have desired for decades, and encourage more students to deeply engage in assessment - Identifying *specific requirements* will add clarity for extension students and support for the strugglers.

No reform? Argument 1:

"I appreciate that it's unfair that grades are determined by a student's ability to interpret criteria in the same manner as their educators, but is that actually the case? The teacher is the conduit between ACARA/QCAA curriculum and students. How they choose to be that conduit is guided by the APST and school-determined priorities. Therefore, the interpretation of criteria is rightfully the responsibility of the educator and their interpretation must be explicitly taught."

Educators spend much of their lessons instructing students by modelling explicit instruction, scaffolding and providing templates (audibly and visually). Educators spend much of their meeting time in collaboration/moderation/calibration/informal

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discussion/PD to remain on the same page. This is because the wording on the criteria sheet is easily misunderstood and requires thorough explanation, often dividing the opinions of quality educators.

I reiterate the argument that it is unfair to rely on the interpretation skills of teachers and students when addressing criteria – the current system masquerades as subjective and individualised - but teachers are expected to deliver a mostly quantitative curriculum that fulfils a corporate agenda and feeds an *economically driven* industry (It's heavily data-based). This situation creates an inequitable education system.

There must be a shift to providing a formula for holistic success. Criteria sheets must include explicit requirements, or the education system is guilty of withholding vital information and limiting student potential.

Simply shifting to an explicit criteria will keep **everyone** accountable - from the student to the government. This will enhance the opportunity for creativity and cognitive growth because the over-intense pressure of the interpretive grading system will be reduced, and teachers and students can explore their genius under more profound pressures (self-determined and teacher guided).

Furthermore, there will always remain gaps in interpretation of the requirements when it comes to content, structure, choice of mode and mediums. These options fulfil the discerning requirements of the criteria. The elements that must be unambiguous for students and teachers are the fundamental inclusions in assessment. This information is imperative to equality and for priming students for life-long success.

No reform. Argument 2:

“For the ‘Knowledge Application’ criteria, we defined key terms (perspectives, representations) and cognitions (analyse, evaluate). When students evaluate, they know that there needs to be a criteria on which they base their judgement/s.

An example of teaching how to evaluate and identify the criteria is: whether the representations/perspectives in a text are accurate, and if the text has a positive or negative impact on the target audience, and the community at large.

This descriptive allows students to develop and apply knowledge, fulfilling the criteria.”

While I agree with this statement, these terms must be taught explicitly in the early years (repeatedly and consistently) because at the heart of education philosophy is: humans are programmed by language and observational experiences; especially

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words. The cognitive verbs mentioned in Argument 2 should remain included in the criteria sheet but the specific, refined requirements must accompany them (These are more important).

We must think of the big picture - students need to graduate school and have impressive skills (critical and creative) to be competitive in the workforce. Schools have the potential to offer a scope of pragmatic skills that many students do not experience because they do not understand the expectations outlined on criteria sheets. As it stands, the quality of interpretation skills significant impact on the future of individuals – this is inequitable.

True explicit education strategies provide a straight line to successful outcomes. A straight line is far more efficient than a blurred line, which is the current interpretive criteria sheet.

Comprehensive programs already exist that can resolve these issues but many people will fight to protect the system they know.

Something needs to change ... some people make the current system sound so lovely, altruistic and benevolent, when in fact the current system is a monster.

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Task: Create a VLOG and discuss how a current trend influencers a community.

Appendix 1: EXAMPLE - Current Criteria Sheet

	STANDARD A	STANDARD B	STANDARD C
Knowledge Application	Discerning analysis and evaluation of perspectives and representations present within a particular trend	Effective analysis and evaluation of perspectives and representations present within a particular trend	Appropriate analysis and evaluation of perspectives and representations present within a particular trend
	Identification and thorough explanation of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin and shape representations of identities, places, events and/or concepts within the trend	Identification and relevant explanation of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin and shape representations of identities, places, events and/or concepts within the trend	Identification of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin and shape representations of identities, places, events and/or concepts within the trend

Appendix 2: Proposed Criteria Sheet

	STANDARD A	STANDARD B	STANDARD C
Knowledge and Application	<p>Analysis and evaluation of perspectives: (Discerning)</p> <p>Identification of a range (3 or more) of perspectives in the texts that reflect the values, attitudes and beliefs that define the trend, but also those that may oppose, reject or reinforce the perspectives within the trend.</p> <p>Inclusions of deeper knowledge regarding the origin of the trend and a projection of the cultural impact on specific people and places.</p>	<p>Analysis and evaluation of perspectives: (Effective)</p> <p>Trend explicitly identified. Texts explicitly identified. Analysis includes effective evaluation (informative, humorous, persuade) on the impact of the trend in society and how each text influences beliefs, attitudes and values from at least two different perspectives.</p> <p>Express thorough understanding of how a trend can shape specific people and places.</p>	<p>Analysis and evaluation of perspectives: (Appropriate)</p> <p>Identification of perspectives in the texts that reflect the values, attitudes and beliefs that define the trend.</p> <p>Expression of general understanding about how and why trends occur, and what impact they have on people and places associated with the trend.</p>