

Examining Faculty Materials for Clear Language Use: The I-MAP Report

April 13, 2023, Camosun College

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Background

This report provides both the rationale for undertaking the Instructional Materials Analysis Project (I-MAP) and the evidence of work, along with recommendations for future faculty support based on the results. The Multilingual Student Support (MSS) pilot program at Camosun College (Sept. 2022 to April 2023) was tasked with supporting both multilingual students and the faculty who teach them, across the Schools of Business, Centre for Sports Excellence in Education (CSEE); Trades & Technology (T&T); Health & Human Services (HHS); Arts, and Science. The MSS team is comprised of Cristina Petersen (Arts & Science), Sarah McCagherty (HHS & T&T) and Nick Travers (Business and CSEE). Please note that the terms English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Learners (ELLs) are used interchangeably in the literature and this report when referring to multilingual students.

We each spent significant time discussing issues with students and one recurring area of interest was the ability to understand expectations, instructions and assessments present in faculty assignments or exams. The figure below shows the distribution of topics for MSS coaching appointments in the pilot. About 17% of the requests were related to “understanding assignments.” Additionally, in collaboration with the Lansdowne English Help Centre, assignments which caused confusion were also brought to the attention of MSS team members.



We also had a sub-committee about unclear assignments in the Assessment for Learning, which was also initiated by the Writing Centre.

Many faculty are unfamiliar with the language challenges facing multilingual students. For example, Naylor (1994) reports that there is “a sense of uncertainty among classroom teachers about ESL...students and how to teach them” (p.15). Krugly-Smolka (1995) reports that “...generally, the teachers ... seemed ill-equipped to deal with students experiencing language difficulties in their classrooms. There was even some ambivalence expressed as to whether or not students should be allowed to use other languages” (p. 54). The ability of faculty across diverse disciplines to write clear, concise, and linguistically uncomplicated assignments or exams will be varied due to a wide range of training and backgrounds. Faculty in content areas often lack time to be trained in test development or best practices in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). We are currently still researching this area.

Clearly, additional support is needed for managing the complex task faced by students studying in an additional language (English) at Camosun College; hence the MSS pilot. “Research shows that ESL students may need 5-7 years to acquire the level of English language proficiency required to perform well on academic tasks (Collier, 1987, Cummins, 1981, Wong-Fillmore, 1986)” (as cited in Jaipal, 2002, p. 15). As the MSS team grappled with how to best meet students’ needs, reviewing faculty materials was a logical next step in getting to the root of comprehension and consequently, performance, for multilingual students (and even English speakers in some cases).

It is also important to consider how students with limited English proficiency in credit courses may be penalized on their language skills, despite the target of assessment not being language, but content knowledge. For example, Abedi (2016) states “A task places greater cognitive demands on a student if her or his attention is divided between employing math problem-solving strategies and coping with difficult vocabulary and unfamiliar content” (p. 362). Furthermore, in areas such as nursing, many multilingual students struggle or even fail their courses due to differences in language and communication style (Moore & Waters, 2020).

We can look for specific examples in assignments or tests that contain “grammatical errors, linguistic bias, and cultural favoritism focused on the dominant culture” (Abedi, 2016; Martinkova et al., 2017). Without a deep knowledge of grammar or awareness of whether a sentence is simple or complex linguistically (or even culturally loaded; a much more complex issue that is outside the scope of this report), it may be challenging for content instructors to see *why* a test item or assignment instruction is unnecessarily or potentially problematic.

Extensive experience in linguistic training and language teaching allows the MSS team to analyze materials with in-depth knowledge of clear writing practices. As a team, MSS is positioned to assist CETL and faculty directly in a unique and highly specialized manner: focusing on the clarity of language used in student assessment tools. Thus, the I-MAP was started to track the process of work and the types of feedback provided by the MSS specialists.

Literature Review

This report provides a brief review of some of the more striking studies that provided some of the initial rationale for undertaking the I-MAP. According to Abedi (2016), it is important to understand the “concept of linguistic complexity and to distinguish between language that is necessary to communicate the content and language that is irrelevant to the measurement of the focal construct” (p. 358). By examining faculty materials, MSS aims to help modify items to be less complicated, and more precise, concise, and clear. Abedi (2016) also states “The more we can linguistically modify items to make them easier to understand, the greater the chances of adequately gauging an ELL’s content knowledge” (p. 359). We want to emphasize that linguistically modified items are not a modification of the content or knowledge required to function in the target content course. It is not a “dumbing down” of ideas or information, but rather a restructuring of the syntax, rephrasing of the vocabulary, or elimination of distracting or unnecessary linguistic elements.

Bird and Welford (1995) conducted a study to investigate how well ESL students performed in science on a multiple-choice examination with two sets of 24 questions. The two tests contained different combinations of original and revised questions that were simplified in various ways such as changes in length, words, tense, and syntax. The revised questions were reviewed by science teachers to ensure they were testing the same content as the original questions. The tests were administered to two groups of students: ESL students from Botswana and native English speakers from the UK. The study's findings showed that simplifying the questions led to a significant improvement in the performance of ESL students.

According to a study by Moore and Clark (2016) which involved senior-level nursing students, it was found that linguistically modifying multiple choice (MC) questions resulted in quicker and more accurate responses. Furthermore, these modified questions were considered clearer and easier to understand than standard MC questions. The use of linguistic modification in exam questions ensures that all students have a fair chance to demonstrate their knowledge of nursing content.

In addition, Denham et al. (2018) conducted a comprehensive study that involved 660 undergraduate nursing students in Texas. The study aimed to identify the challenges faced by ESL nursing students and to develop strategies to help faculty address issues that hindered academic success. The preliminary results suggest that faculty should build the self-confidence of junior-level students, communicate with clear and simple language, and avoid culturally biased terms in test questions.

Young et al (2014) conducted research on the linguistic modification of test items in the K-12 content assessments, but their results were varied, with some improved performance by ELLs and non-ELLs, but it was unclear which linguistic modifications were most effective.

Martiniello's (2009) research found that as the complexity of non-mathematical language and sentence structure increases, the difference in difficulty estimates between non-ELLs and ELLs also increases. However, if the math word problems include visual aids that help ELLs understand the meaning of the text, the effect of linguistic complexity on difficulty is reduced. Therefore, adding non-linguistic representations could help minimize the negative impact of higher linguistic complexity in math word problems.

Last, but not least, is Boshier & Bowles' (2008) study, which outlines the process of linguistically modifying items from a pathophysiology exam in collaboration with ESL students and evaluating the modified items for comprehensibility. The results indicate that in most cases, the modification improved the examinees' comprehension of the test items. The study discusses the implications for future test item writing and research.

Subject-based assessments, such as math, that contain unnecessary linguistic complexity can introduce bias when evaluating the mastery of ELLs (Abedi, 2004; Abedi, Leon, & Mirocha, 2003). Experts argue that it is important to differentiate between ELLs' language skills and their understanding of subject matter but acknowledge that this can be challenging since assessments administered in English also evaluate English proficiency (Abedi, 2004; Abedi & Lord, 2001; August & Hakuta, 1997; Echevarria et al, 2006). The MSS team's goal of supporting students and faculty is directly related to the challenges in delivering accessible materials. We aim to support faculty in ensuring that materials focus on content knowledge and that linguistic complexity is managed to level the playing field for multilingual students. The by-product of clear language would also likely increase comprehensibility for all students and reduce clarification questions to the instructor. We see it as a win-win-win situation.

Process (Research Methods)

This report focuses on materials gathered from early November 2022 and until mid-April 2023. The following steps were followed:

1. The MSS team sent emails out to department deans, chairs, and individual instructors offering our services to review materials for linguistic accuracy, clarity, consistency, and concision.
2. Materials were collected via email attachments; each file was saved in the MSS SharePoint folder entitled "Faculty Materials for Review."
3. We created the I-MAP workflow document in MS Excel to track the source, submission date, any required by date, and the return date with MSS comments. (Note: Some instructors required faster turnaround times for exams, whereas others were hoping to receive feedback for future terms, as far away as September 2023.)

Sarah and Cristina were the primary data collectors/reviewers due to Nick teaching Business 130 as well as serving as an MSS team member. By the end of April 13th, 2023, at the time this report was written, 55 files had been reviewed by the MSS team, including collaborations with CETL on a D2L course audit of the online Professional Cook Training courses and ongoing review of CamSTAR materials and the HHS, DHYG and CDA handbooks and clinical manuals. We have included the I-MAP work queue document with all the details in **Appendix 1**.

Next, the review comments were made directly on the documents submitted, primarily MS Word. The Review function was used to add comments along with suggestions for revisions and or a brief explanation if needed. The following section will outline some of the examples and coding used. An MS Excel sheet was used track the following information about each item with feedback:

1. Question type
2. Original question/instruction/prompt
3. Revised question/instruction/prompt
4. Comments on language clarity
5. Coding (type of error)
6. Course/Instructor
7. Question #
8. File name

We have also included a condensed I-MAP Questions Revisions document with all the data in **Appendix 2**. The data are preliminary, and more research is needed and ongoing. However, the sample shows the project's potential for supporting student comprehension. The MSS team felt having a sample of the potential and accompanying explanations was necessary if the MSS program goes forward into future terms. We entered data for six files from Biology, Anthropology, English, Chemistry, and Psychology. A total of 105 items were coded and analyzed in this data set. The remaining 49 files could still be entered to get a more complete picture of the types of errors made across all schools, but we started with Arts & Science. We also acknowledge the term "error" or "revision" does not always implicate the original data sample as being "wrong." There is great variety in language use and most original examples are comprehensible to most users of English; however, we can apply modifications to ensure the analyzed writing samples have fewer potential complications in syntax or semantics. This data set acts as an exemplar of the type of specific work ELD faculty can do and highlights the depth of knowledge we possess as linguists, English language experts, and professional teachers.

Coding

Our coding strategy was based on professional experience and knowledge of error types that EAL students find most challenging. Our list is not as exhaustive as some (e.g., Abedi, 2016), but our goal is to provide a readily useable document for faculty. Some of the coding terms in I-

MAP were simplified, more so that non-linguists (content faculty) can understand the changes or explanations without having to understand complex grammatical terms.

Abedi (2016) provides 14 areas of linguistic features to examine (p. 359). These include:

1. Word frequency/familiarity
2. Word length
3. Sentence length
4. Passive voice constructs
5. Long noun phrases
6. Long question phrases
7. Comparative structures
8. Prepositional phrases
9. Sentence and discourse
Structure:
10. Subordinate clauses
11. Conditional clauses
12. Relative clauses
13. Concrete vs. abstract or impersonal presentations
14. Negation

The following terms were used for our purposes, and we divided them into the following four categories in the table below, and then tabulated the number of instances of each feature (next section.)

Specific language features	Structural (syntax)	Semantic	Non-linguistic
1. Referent use (pronouns)	10. Passive voice	15. Clarity	21. Question scoring
2. Negative	11. Parallelism	16. Redundancy	22. Format
3. Possessive	12. Question phrases	17. Wordiness	23. Sequence of ideas
4. Spelling	13. Transition word	18. Word choice	24. Pedagogy
5. Punctuation	14. Conditional	19. Missing word	
6. Verb tense		20. Repetition	
7. Preposition			
8. Subject-verb agreement			
9. Word form			

If any of the above coding terms are unclear, please refer to Appendix 2 for examples of each. The “non-linguistic” items were not related to vocabulary, grammar, or tone/style, but focused on how a document looked, or were suggestions for design elements that would possibly help students in understanding the task better. All four comments entered for “pedagogy” were for

the English assignment; these were more to do with the process of writing as it related to course evaluation criteria. It is important to note that the English assignment had noticeably different feedback from more itemized test items in the other five samples.

Preliminary Results

Of the above types of errors or areas for feedback, we included those with more than 2 instances. All others only occurred once, so they have been removed from the following table.

Category	Feedback Item	Number of instances	Percentage of total (n=105)
Specific language features	4.spelling	5	5%
	5.punctuation	18	17%
Structural (syntax)	10.passive voice	6	6%
Semantic	15. clarity	17	16%
	16. redundancy	5	5%
	17. wordiness	28	27%
	18. word choice	14	13%
	20. repetition	9	9%
Non-linguistic	21.question scoring	7	7%
	22. format	6	6%
	24.pedagogy	4	4%

From this preliminary research and analysis, the feedback items with the highest frequency of occurrence were: 1) clarity (16%), 2) wordiness (27%), 3) word choice (13%), and 4) punctuation (17%), with three of the highest occurrences falling under the Semantic category. These areas of higher frequency could be a good place to start when advising faculty on language use when creating their materials. The following four tables will provide some examples of the higher frequency suggestions.

1. Clarity

Original	Revised	Comments
An isotope differs from others of that element in the number of _____ it has.	A ? has a different number of _____.	That element? Is 'that' referring to isotope? Referent use might be confusing; same with "others"; 'that' does not have a preceding noun other than 'others,' which is non-specific as well. I am not sure what this question wants to know.
Three babies were recently mixed up in a hospital. After consideration of the data below, which of the following	couple in chart - change to parents? (see original document for visual)	I would consider writing "Parents" in the chart (not shown in this data - used couple) as students will be searching for key words in the

represents the correct baby/parent combinations?		question; couple = 2 which may distract as there are also numbers of each parent group.
From a cross of AaBbCcDd x AaBbCcDd what proportion of the offspring will be AabbCcDD? Show your work.		How to show? Draw a diagram? Check for a more precise verb to ensure students know what to do.
BRAINSTORM!!! Free write on your brand for at least two pages.	adjust for clarity in expectations (Are these pages collected?)	Do you want the free writing submitted with the assignment?

2. Wordiness

Original	Revised	Comments
Where is the brain structure located that is causing Tavlin's symptoms?	Which brain structure is causing Tavlin's symptoms?	Slightly wordy/repetitive with use of "where" and "located." Also, "that" clauses can often be removed for a more direct/concise sentence.
What is the number of prokaryotic domains that life is categorized into?	Life is categorized into how many prokaryotic domains? OR: How many prokaryotic domains exist in life?	This question seems wordy with the 'that' clause and dangling preposition.
Considering how we think people first came to the Americas and the coastal migration theory, which of the above four major impacts to the archaeological record has likely caused the most impact to telling the archaeological story . (Another way of asking this is to say which out of archaeological visibility, age-based loss, natural loss, and cultural loss has been the greatest challenge for archaeologists?)	Out of archaeological visibility, age-based loss, natural loss, and cultural loss, which one has been the greatest challenge for archaeologists? Why? Consider coastal migration theory in your answer.	I would just use the one more direct question – remove all the excess wording as it will distract the reader and slow down the task. There is also redundancy in there (see red). Then the next question could also be reduced in length and syntactic complexity.

3. Word choice

Original	Revised	Comments
Proteins are made up of :	Proteins contain:	made up of – phrasal verbs are more informal and can be confused more easily than one verb. E.g., made out of vs made into, made by, etc.
If two purple-flowered plants from the F1 generation are crossed, how many white flowered-plants would you expect?	What percentage of white-flowered plants would you expect if you crossed two purple-flowered plants from the F1 generation?	how many – indicates a number answer not percentage; also remove passive voice.
Getting Started	Tasks	(heading use) The items listed were beyond just the beginning of the task, so changing the language to “tasks” would be more clear and less narrow.
(answer c) Elements can be broken down into simpler things using chemical methods	Chemical methods can break down elements.	Is there a better word here for things? Also remove passive voice.

4. Punctuation

Original	Revised	Comments
Messenger RNA's leave the nucleus through _____ in the nuclear membrane.	Messenger RNAs leave the nucleus through _____ in the nuclear membrane.	delete 's on RNA's- not possessive (plural). Add period end of sentence.
Lithium exists as two isotopes, lithium-6 with an exact mass of 6.015 g/mol and lithium-7 with an exact mass of 7.016 g/mol. If the average atomic mass of lithium is 6.941 g/mol, calculate the percentage abundance of each lithium isotope. (give your answer to four sig. figs)	Lithium exists as two isotopes: lithium-6 with an exact mass of 6.015 g/mol and lithium-7 with an exact mass of 7.016 g/mol. If the average atomic mass of lithium is 6.941 g/mol, calculate the percentage abundance of each lithium isotope. Give your answer to four sig. figs.	Use a colon to introduce a list; capitalize Give and remove brackets (it's part of a separate instruction).

<p>Cassidy fell and hit her head on the concrete while skateboarding. When she tried to get up she noticed that she couldn't feel her left arm (she had lost all feeling in her left arm). Which cortex of Cassidy's brain was likely injured causing the loss of sensation?</p>	<p>Cassidy fell and hit her head on the concrete while skateboarding. When she tried to get up, she noticed that she had lost all feeling in her left arm. Which cortex of Cassidy's brain was likely injured causing the loss of sensation?</p>	<p>Prefer use of one in brackets only. Remove “couldn’t feel her left arm” and replace it with phrase in brackets (more concise and specific). Also added comma after up for adverb clause (complex sentence).</p>
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Limitations & Research Potential

The coding of items was primarily done by MSS team member Cristina Petersen, and due to time constraints, some of the items were more broadly categorized. We acknowledge that the research is in a rough stage and would like to align the items above with the literature more closely as there are other areas of coding that may not have been included or identified here. Abedi (2016) goes into detail on the various linguistic modifications which could be used and provides samples of each area as well. The MSS team could also look at rating for linguistic complexity using a Likert scale, to align individual rater reliability of the items (see Abedi, 2016 pages 364-367 for examples). By using analytical or holistic rubrics, we could gain diagnostic information on the linguistic barriers present in test items. Ideally, we want to help instructors develop assessment materials that do not contain problematic linguistic items.

In addition, we must recognize that “when tests are linguistically simplified to remove construct-irrelevant variance, test developers and/or users are responsible for documenting evidence of the comparability of the scores from the linguistically simplified test to the original test, when sample sizes permit” (American Educational Research Association et al., 2014, p. 68). We may ask: Is this realistic at a community college? Instructors do not have much time to compare and do research on this. That could be the job of the intervenor (MSS or CETL) – but do we even need to know for every modified question what the comparison would be? Perhaps it is enough to have the implicit understanding that linguistic modification will support all students and assist faculty in delivering the clearest, most concise, and effective materials possible. There is certainly room for further research in this area, but the goal of the I-MAP is to support faculty in developing clear and well-written materials across all content areas.

Discussion

We started this I-MAP project with one person willing to collaborate, and it has grown into having assisted **27** faculty members with materials during this pilot, which will inevitably lead to hundreds of students, so the impact and implications of doing this work could be far-reaching if we are able to measure and compare the differences, as some of the studies mentioned above have done. While the research may not be the goal, we felt the collaborative and

interdisciplinary nature of this work is certainly relevant to Camosun's Strategic Plan. The ideas of Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility are all embedded in doing this good work together, and the MSS team hopes to continue along this path.

We would like to share this preliminary research with CETL and believe there is an opportunity to develop teaching materials (faculty support) on language use that could be added to the Camosun Lib Guides on Assessment: Writing clear assignments with the language areas to "watch out for" indicated and summarized. There is room for training opportunities, such as workshops for interested parties or additional self-access materials that could also be housed on the MSS WordPress website under Faculty Support.

This preliminary research has been a fascinating journey for the MSS team, as we have been able to examine faculty materials across many content areas and now have a better idea of what some of the expectations will be for English Language Development (ELD) students who transition out of the ELD English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program into credit courses and programs. The collaboration and trust involved in participating in this area of support has been greatly appreciated by both the MSS team and the participants, and we have tracked testimonials for this type of work as well. Please see **Appendix 3** for testimonials.

The program has taken an organic approach, with the ever-present mandate of supporting faculty and students, so we hope this report can shed some light on this specific area and light the way for future collaboration. At the heart of what we do in the English Language Development Department is communication, as trained linguists, and educators, we greatly value the diversity of our amazing multilingual students and look forward to future growth in this area as we recover from the pandemic. Lastly, we would like to say thank you to everyone for taking the time to read this report and for the opportunity to take part in this role.

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Appendix 1

I-MAP Work Queue document to April 13, 2023

Cristina Petersen – Arts & Science

To Do	Contact	Program	In	Out	Notes
Done	Contact	Program	In	Out	Notes
Bio 103 Text assignments (10) & Lecture exams (2)	names removed	BIO 103	Nov. 9/22	Dec. 8/22	Reviewed 12 docs total ; Also sent vocabulary log (modified for Bio)
Bio 126: 3 exams 2 labs	for anonymity	Bio 126	Dec. 19/22	Feb. 24/23	Reviewed 5 docs total ; wanted reviewed for September. Fast turnaround - only one final exam document; also sent various files on using mentor texts, showing high-quality examples of student work, verbs list for exams & exam skills PPT from MSS
Anth 104; final exam		Anth104	Dec. 5/22	Dec. 6/22	
Chem 180; three mid-term exams		Chem 180	Nov. 23/22	Nov. 25/22	Fast turnaround, 3 exams reviewed.
ENGL 151 "Branded" Assignment		ENGL 151	Jan 6/23	Jan 9/23	May send more docs - touch base again
ENGL 151 "Extended Definition"		ENGL 151	Nov. 15/22	Dec. 16/22	Sent revised version with rubric to Kristine Kerins (chair) - did not respond? Need to follow up
Psych110 Quiz		Psych 110	Nov. 30	Mar. 1/23	Used ChatGPT to test out finding answers to scenario qs and provided feedback on that.
Engl161 Bodyworks assignment		Engl 161	Nov. 22/22	Mar 1/23	Finally got to this; also made revised version as PDF and new Word doc for cleaning up formatting - not sure of original owner
Anth 104 Module 2 assignment		Anth 104	Feb 14/23	March 2/23	Student had issue with this document in Help Centre; offered to have a look; Katie was very pleased as she admitted it was hard to explain and students often struggle.
Anth 104 Module 4 assignment		Anth 104	March 2/23	March 10/23	Follow up after doing module 2 :-)
Engl 151 direct approach assign/ mid-term grammar		Engl	March 13/23	March 21/23	Reviewed two files , one assignment one grammar test

Appendix 1

ENGL 151 Grammar quiz,
research assignment,
persuasive essay
assignment

ENGL

March 29/23

April 3/23

pending meeting April 4th to discuss attendance issues too (**3 files revised**)

Geography - Exam
review X3

GEO

April 11/23

April 12/23

fast turnaround - referred by Katie Waterhouse :-)
3 exams reviewed

Sarah McCagherty – Heath & Human Services, Trades & Technology

To Do	Contact	Program	In	Out	Notes
CDEV-WPS BX01 D2L		Co-op	1/5/2023		Final Quiz was priority, but look at rest
ELC 220 Assignment		ELC	1/10/2023		
Dental Student Handbook		DENT	1/31/2023		links to online
DHYG 281 course outline		DENT	1/6/2023		
DHYG 371 Course Outline		DENT			
CDA Manual		DENT			10
DH clinical manual		DENT			7
CDA Assignments		CDA	2/22/2023		
IDS 210 Intercultural Engineering		Eng	3/10/2023		assessments and D2L
Done	Contact	Program	In	Out	Notes
D-HYG 225 final exam, supplemental exam, and coding assignment		DHYG	12/4/2022	12/7/2022	

Appendix 1

PRCO HS and 401 D2L N243 Midterm Exam Version A	Culinary	1/4/2023	1/24/2023	reviewed and made suggestions for language for all modules for Professional Cook Training - Highschool program, and E-PPRENTICE level 1
CDEV-WPS BX01 D2L - Final Quiz	Nursing	12/16/2022	1/25/2023	
N360 Final Assignment - Knowledge Assessment	Co-op	1/5/2023	2/7/2023	
N332 Final Exam B	Nursing	12/5/2022	3/6/2023	
	Nursing	12/1/2022	3/6/2023	
PRCO 402 and 403 D2L	Culinary	1/25/2023	3/10/2023	reviewed and made suggestions for language for different modules from HS and level 1 for Professional Cook Training E-PPRENTICE levels 2 and 3
N243 Final Exam	Nursing	3/20/2023	3/28/2023	avoided repeating comments regarding organization and procedural directions that I provided on the midterm, but mentioned they could check there.

Nick Travers – Business, Sport/Exercise

To Do	Contact	Program	In	Out	Notes
CamSTAR Modules		CETL	Jan 18/23		Started with a sample from the home page = M was happy about home page sample - understands it's a big job

Examples of faculty materials with language comments				
Question Type	Original question/instruction/prompt	Revised question/instruction/prompt	Comments on language use/clarity	Coding
short answer	An isotope differs from others of that element in the number of _____ it has.	A ????? has a different number of _____.	That element? Is "that" referring to isotope? Referent use might be confusing; same with "others"; "that" does not have a preceding noun other than "others," which is non-specific as well. I am not sure what this question wants to know.	referent use/ clarity
short answer	A virus is not considered to be alive because it _____.	A virus is considered non-living because it A virus is not alive because it Scientists consider a virus to be non-living because it	OR: Use of negative vs positive structures also requires more logic; can use a negative descriptive word instead to shorten phrase; and remove infinitive. (You could also switch to active voice, which is usually an easier structure but not necessary. Passive is very common in academic writing, so it has a place.)	negative use
short answer	The collective name for all the chemical reactions in an organism is its _____.	An organism's _____ is the collective name for all the chemical reactions occurring at once. OR: All chemical reactions in an organism are called _____. OR: The name for the sum of all chemical reactions is	"Collective name" might be confusing or possessive its – is it: it is (it's) or possessive its (no apostrophe)?	possessive/ redundancy
short answer	The movement of water across a cell membrane is called _____.	Water movement across a cell membrane is called _____. OR _____ is the movement of water across a cell membrane.	I think they are all equally easy in structure. You could remove the 'of' by switching word order to reduce words.	wordiness
short answer (2 marks)	Explain why is water hard to heat compared to other substances?	Why is water harder to heat than other substances?	If you ask why your student will have to answer because... If you ask EXPLAIN and then why it is redundant for a short answer. (than – is comparative already so use of compare in addition is also a bit redundant.)	redundancy
M/C	Proteins are made up of :	Proteins contain:	made up of – phrasal verbs are more informal and can be confused more easily than one verb. E.g., made out of vs made into, made by, etc.	word choice/ clarity
T/F	When a molecule loses electrons it is said to be reduced.	A molecule that loses electrons is called reduced. OR When a molecule loses electrons, it is "reduced."	loses spelling (verb – lose – lost; noun – loss – pl. many losses – rare as plural noun). This has very complicated structure here too because of passive and infinitive.	passive voice/ spelling
fill-in-the-blank (2 points)	Macromolecule: Glycogen , is a _____ and its monomers are called _____.	Macromolecule: Glycogen is a _____ and its monomers are called _____.	Clear. Affirmative statement. Just delete comma.	punctuation
short answer (4 points)	Outline the basic points that explain evolution by natural selection. Is evolution by natural selection a theory or a hypothesis?	Is evolution by natural selection a theory or a hypothesis? Explain evolution by natural selection in four points.	I would recommend giving a specific # of points as "basic" can be loosely interpreted and marking this would also be harder – maybe it's only two points you want, but worth two marks each? Specify # of points and it's much clearer what is expected. (outline and explain are also competing.)	clarity/ vocabulary
fill-in-the-blank (1 point)	At pH 5 the number of _____ ions is _____ times greater than at neutral pH (pH 7).	At ?? pH5, the number of _____ ions is _____ times greater than at neutral pH (pH7).	Why is this 1 point but # 11 is two points? Consistency in point system. Also the second pH has a modifier (neutral) but the first does not. Was this intentional? It's not ideal parallel structure with gap but I am not sure if this is an issue.	question scoring; parallelism
fill-in-the-blank	Correctly write the scientific name for humans.	What is the scientific name for humans? Please spell correctly.	Does spelling count – is this why "correctly" is used? Otherwise you could ask direct question with a note about spelling. Do they get ½ mark if correct word but incorrect spelling?	implied vs specific meaning/ clarity of vocab
fill-in-the-blank	Prokaryotic cells and eukaryotic cells are alike in that they both contain an internal organelle called _____.	Prokaryotic cells and eukaryotic cells are alike because they both contain an internal organelle called _____.	You could remove the "in that" and replace with because and it would still make sense.	wordiness
short answer	What is the chemical formula for glucose. What are the names for the 2 polymers of glucose that plants make?	What is the chemical formula for glucose? (next question) --> What are the names for the 2 polymers of glucose that plants make?	This question seems like it should have three points at least – one for the formula and one each for the 2 polymers? Or this could be two separate questions. Not sure how this gets scored. Question mark missing on original.	question scoring/ punctuation
short answer (1 point)	Atoms form bonds so as to fill their _____.	Atoms form bonds so they can fill their _____.	Two blanks = two words - is it half mark if only one word? 'so as to' is also wordy.	question scoring/ wordiness
short answer (3 points)	List three types of strong chemical bonds and give examples of each.	n/a	Clear question. But consider is each chemical bond worth .5 and each example worth .5?	question scoring
fill-in-the-blanks	Macromolecule-Butter, is a _____ and one of its subunits is called _____.	Macromolecule-Butter is a _____ and one of its subunits is called _____.	Remove comma.	punctuation
short answer (2 points)	Lipids are different than other macromolecules. What are the key differences . Name two types of lipids.	Name two types of lipids and how they are different from other macromolecules.	Two questions. Merge to avoid repetition of "different/differences" and clarify focus.	redundancy
fill-in-the-blank	Messenger RNA's leave the nucleus through _____ in the nuclear membrane	Messenger RNAs leave the nucleus through _____ in the nuclear membrane.	delete 's on RNA's- not possessive (plural). Add period end of sentence.	punctuation
M/C	What is the number of prokaryotic domains that life is categorized into ?	Life is categorized into how many prokaryotic domains? OR: How many prokaryotic domains exist in life?	This question seems wordy with the 'that' clause and dangling preposition.	wordiness/ clarity
M/C (1 point)	Which of the following is not found in a mitochondria:	Which one is not included in mitochondria? Or: What is NOT found in a mitochondria?	Good to bold the not . "which of the following" could be interpreted as more than one answer. Delete it and it reads more concisely.	wordiness
fill-in-the-blanks (2 points)	Macromolecule DNA , is a _____ and its monomers are called _____.	Macromolecule DNA is a _____ and its monomers are called _____.	no comma or underscore	punctuation
fill-in-the-blanks (1 point)	In DNA _____ pairs with _____ and _____ pairs with _____.	The binding of these base pairs forms the structure of DNA. _____ pairs with _____; and _____ pairs with _____.	There are 4 blanks here but it's worth one point? Are they each worth .25? I might use another word to trigger "pair" such as "binding" in the lead part of question to help students connect the broader meaning of "pair with." Not sure if this is correct though.	question scoring/ clarity
T/F	The spendable energy cells use is ATP.	The spendable energy that cells use is ATP.	Add the 'that' back in or it might be hard to distinguish the adjective clause and make sure 'use' is seen as a verb not a noun.	clarity
short answer (4 points)	What is the connection between genes and proteins? Explain using mutation to illustrate . How can protein function be influenced by the environment?	Explain the connection between genes and proteins by using mutation and environmental influence. OR: What is the connection between genes and proteins? Explain through mutation and how protein function is influenced by the environment.	Three questions in a row. Consider merging or shortening. Explain/illustrate/ how influenced - competing verbs as to what is required. They overlap a bit but illustrate could lead students to believe they should draw something out.	wordiness
M/C	Atomic nuclei usually contain: a) none of the above is complete; b) protons and neutrons; c) protons, neutrons and electrons.... Etc	check answer order	not sure about answer 9a – should this go at the bottom? None of the above what is complete? The other answers?	ordering of answers (format?)
fill-in-the-blanks (1 point)	Two characteristics of living things are _____ and _____.	Two characteristics of living things include _____ and _____.	This seems like it could have many possible answers bc "characteristics" is a very broad term. Can you modify it to narrow down the choices? If there are more than two correct answers, you could use "include" instead of "are" because it leaves room for more than only two possible answers. I could say "energy" and reproduction" and maybe be correct? Also, one point but two answers - .5 each?	question scoring/ vocabulary choice (ambiguity vs precision)
fill-in-the-blanks (1 point)	ATP has three parts a _____, a _____ and _____.	ATP has three parts: a _____, a _____ and _____.	use colon before list. Three blanks but only 1 point? .33 each?	question scoring/ punctuation
short answer (3 points)	Where in a cell does the citric acid cycle occur? Does the citric acid cycle require oxygen? What gas does it produce?	n/a	Original was in italics? Formatting consistency.	formatting

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BONUS: 5 short answer	Explain why Frosted flakes and corn flakes have the same number of Calories per gram.	Why do Frosted flakes and corn flakes have the same number of Calories per gram?	Clear. I would just use a direct question.	direct question (long question phrases)
Multi-select (instructions)	In each of the following questions, you will select any answers that apply to the questions. There may be more than one correct answer that applies. Select ALL the correct answers and be sure NOT to select any answers that do not apply. The total for each question is calculated as correct selections minus incorrect selections.	Select the correct answers below. Any incorrect answers (not relevant to the question) will be deducted from the total for each question.	Repetition of "questions" and "answer"	redundancy
multi-select	Which of the following are factors that increase variation in offspring in sexual reproduction? Select all that apply.	Which of the following increase variation in offspring in sexual reproduction? Select all that apply.	Factors that – vague term, wordy that clause, not necessary.	wordiness/imprecise vocab.
matching (10 points)	Match the correct term to the description (transcription/translation).	Match the transcription to the translation. Or Match the descriptions on the left with the transcription on the right.	Unnecessary vague term- replace with more specific item as per original suggestions. Moved from brackets.	wordiness/imprecise vocab.
Multiple choice	Three babies were recently mixed up in a hospital. After consideration of the data below, which of the following represents the correct baby/parent combinations?	couple in chart - change to parents? (see original document)	I would consider writing "Parents" in the chart (not shown in this data - used couple) as students will be searching for key words in the question; couple = 2 which may distract as there are also numbers of each parent group...	clarity/ connection of ideas in question to visual chart
Multiple choice	Colour-blindness is a recessive sex-linked trait. Beyonce is colour-blind is her husband Kanye has normal vision.	Colour-blindness is a recessive sex-linked trait. Beyonce is colour-blind, and her husband Kanye has normal vision.	missing comma and conjunction	punctuation/ transition word missing (con)
Multiple choice	Which of the following is true regarding the discovery of the structure of DNA?	Which is true about the discovery of the structure of DNA?	wordy	wordiness
possible answer in above #6	Franklin discover the it by herself	Franklin discovered it by herself.	verb tense, Missing word/ word order	VT, MW, WO
possible answer in above #6	Watson and Crick discovered it with the help images from Franklin	Watson and Crick discovered it with the help of images from Franklin.	missing word (preposition)	preposition
Multiple choice	If two purple-flowered plants from the F1 generation are crossed, how many white flowered-plants would you expect ?	What percentage of white-flowered plants would you expect?	how many - #s not %	Wrong word (WW)
Multiple choice	Mendel had two purebred pea plants: one had purple flowers and one had white flowers. The purple flower colour is dominant to white. If these two pea plants are crossed to produce the F1 generation, how many purple flowered plants would you expect?	Mendel had two purebred pea plants: one had purple flowers and one had white flowers. The purple flower colour is dominant to white. If these two pea plants are crossed to produce the F1 generation, what percentage of purple flowered plants would you expect?	what % of - WW	WW
Multiple choice	In snapdragons, heterozygotes have pink flowers, whereas homozygotes have either red or white flowers. When plants with red flowers are crossed with plants with pink flowers, what proportion of the offspring will have pink flowers?	In snapdragons, heterozygotes have pink flowers, whereas homozygotes have either red or white flowers. When plants with red flowers are crossed with plants with pink flowers, what percentage of the offspring will have pink flowers?	Same type of question; for parallel structure I would suggest that keeping it consistent will be clearer and more predictive (Ss can think less about the question and more about the answer); proportion is slightly broader than what the answer is asking. Shift in vocabulary may slow ELLs down.	WC
Multiple choice	Which of the following is true regarding codons and amino acids ?	Which of the following is true about codons and amino acids?	Clear; although "regarding" could be replaced with "...true about..." (higher frequency word)	WC
Multiple choice	___ chromosomes are the same size, shape and carry genetic information for the same traits corresponding locations, but are not necessarily identical in sequence.	___ chromosomes are the same size, shape and carry genetic information for the same traits corresponding locations, but are not necessarily identical in sequence.	possessive s missing	poss
Multiple choice	Down's syndrome in humans is due to	Down's syndrome in humans is due to:	suggested to use colon after	punctuation
answer in #16	two X chromosomes and one Y chromosome	two X chromosomes and one Y chromosome	spelling of chromosome	spelling
Draw	Draw a Punnett square (You won't be able to show this to me, but you can explain the phenotypic ratios!). Include a sentence explaining the results.	Draw a Punnett Square on a separate piece of paper (You do not need to submit). Explain the phenotypic ratios and results.	reduction of "explain"	wordiness
Short answer	What would I expect to find visible in all female human nuclei but not in male nuclei?	What would I expect to find visible in all female human nuclei but not in male nuclei?	"visible" spelling	spelling
Draw?	From a cross of AaBbCcDd x AaBbCcDd what proportion of the offspring will be AabbCcDD? Show your work	From a cross of AaBbCcDd x AaBbCcDd, what proportion of the offspring will be AabbCcDD? Show your work	How to show? Draw a diagram? Check for a more precise term?	clarity
question 1 instructions	Question 1. Answer A or B. (10 marks)	Question 1. Answer A or B. You do NOT need to answer both.	to make it extra clear that only ONE is necessary	clarity
Written response q 1A	The archaeological record is never complete and some of significant factors contributing to this are archaeological visibility, age-based loss, natural loss and cultural loss. Explain each of these factors and how they contribute to the gaps in the archaeological record. (4 marks)	Significant factors contribute to gaps in the archeological record. These include archaeological visibility, age-based loss, natural loss and cultural loss. Explain each and how they contribute to the gaps.	this - Contributing to the ongoing collection of records? The use of "this" as a referent to archaeological record is a bit tricky as it encompasses the entire sentence. You could switch the order and reduce the length. (reduction of factors and overlapping concept of "never complete" and "gaps")	redundancy
written response q1A con't	Considering how we think people first came to the Americas and the coastal migration theory, which of the above four major impacts to the archaeological record has likely caused the most impact to telling the archaeological story. (Another way of asking this is to say which out of archaeological visibility, age-based loss, natural loss, and cultural loss has been the greatest challenge for archaeologists?)	Out of archaeological visibility, age-based loss, natural loss, and cultural loss, which one has been the greatest challenge for archaeologists? Why? Consider coastal migration theory in your answer.	I would just use the one more direct question – remove all the excess wording as it will distract the reader and slow down the task. There is a lot of redundancy in there (see red). Then the next question could also be reduced in length and syntactic complexity.	wordiness
written response q1A con't	Considering the specifics of this most impactful element, why has research on determining how people came to the Americas focused along the Northwest Coast (Calvert island, Triquet island, Quadra island as examples) and the Channel Islands. Furthermore, what has been found in these areas and what do they tell us about how people first came to the Americas. (5 marks)	Why has research on migration to the Americas focused along the Northwest Coast (i.e., Calvert Island, Triquet Island, Quadra Island and Channel Islands)? What has been found in these areas and what does it tell us about the first people to the Americas?	Is the above referring to an event? Is it referencing the coastal migration theory? If so, maybe just say it? Anytime we use "this" or pronouns to refer back, we have to be sure there are no other nouns in the way or the antecedent gets a bit lost. (reduce noun clause too to reduce words and structural complexity)	wordiness
Written response Q1B	In addition to radiocarbon dating, dating by association has been a significant factor in understanding how early people lived in the Americas with the clovis (fluted) point being used to date many sites from around 12 000 years ago. What changed in how people were living around this time that resulted in the increase in archaeological sites, what facilitated this change, and how did this change spread so quickly across the continent? (4 marks)	In addition to radio carbon dating, dating by association helps to understand how early people lived in the Americas. The clovis (fluted) point has been used to date many sites from around 12.000 years ago. What change around this time increased archaeological sites? What facilitated this change and how did it spread so quickly across the continent?	Changed from reduced participle to simple past passive, one sentence instead of additional dependent clause at the end of the sentence. Removed that resulted in and changed noun form of increase to verb form, reduction in words)	wordiness
Written response. Q 2A.	The transition to domestication is an interesting cultural change and archaeologists are often looking for evidence of this change. Outline the archaeological evidence for horticulture and pastoralism making sure to explain what an archaeologists would find and why it indicates domestication.	Archaeologists are often looking for evidence of the cultural transition to domestication. Explain the archaeological evidence for horticulture and pastoralism and how it indicates domestication.	Repetition of change. Reduce words. Outline or explain? Competing verbs. What they would find is the evidence no? I think this is redundant possibly unless you are looking for something else?	wordiness

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Written response. Q2B.	The transition to domestication had significant consequences for many societies. Explain the how domestication led to the following consequences .	A.The transition to domestication had significant consequences for many societies; such as: a.Reduced birth interval b.Poor nutrition c.Increased food risk d.Increased disease e.Change in technologies How did domestication lead to each of these? (# marks) (weighting?)	Redundancy/ repetition of key words. Also check weighting.	repetition/wordiness
Written response. Q3A.	You have discovered fossil bones from the right lower limb of a possible Australopithecine . What anatomical traits would you assess to determine if your fossil is an Australopithecine , how would you expect them to look if the specimen was an Australopithecine and how do these traits aid Australopithecine locomotion?	You have discovered fossil bones from the right lower limb of a possible Australopithecine. You need to confirm the species. What anatomical traits would you assess? How would you expect the physical features to affect the locomotion?	Perhaps you could trim this one too as Australopithecine is repeated 4 times as well as fossil/ specimen. Less reading = more thinking about answer. What is them? The physical features? (not sure if I might be missing something here though) Traits? The referent here is far away so this may be harder to understand.	wordiness; pronoun reference
Written response. Q3B.	<i>Homo erectus</i> is thought to be the earliest human ancestor to be found outside of Africa. Explain the anatomical and cultural changes we see with <i>Homo erectus</i> that may have been significant in this movement. In your answer, make sure to discuss how these factors are connected in a feedback loop .	Homo erectus is thought to be the earliest human ancestor to be found outside of Africa. Explain the anatomical and cultural changes we see with Homo erectus that may have been significant in this movement. In your answer, discuss how these factors are connected .	Possible wordiness; Consider: how these factors are causally connected. You could provide an example from general life? ex. Sedentary lifestyle leads to more obesity, more obesity leads to more heart disease, more heart disease leads to shorter life spans...)	wordiness/clarity
Written response. Q4A	Explain the story behind the diversity in skin tone we see around the world today. Begin your explanation with the loss of fur and make sure to explain the adaption for both dark and light skin.	Explain the story behind the diversity in skin tone we see around the world today. Begin your explanation with the loss of fur and explain the adaption for both dark and light skin.	remove unnecessary words	wordiness
Written response. Q4B	Variation in lactose tolerance is also clinal but likely due to an adaptation to local environments . Explain the local environment and adaptive response that explains the global distribution in lactose tolerance.	Variation in lactose tolerance is also clinal but likely due to an adaptation to local environments . How is global distribution in lactose tolerance explained by this?	repetitive - explain 2x - reduce structure for clarity/concision	repetition/wordiness
Written response. Q5A	The tragedy of the commons is an economic model for predicting resource use. Explain the logic of the model and outline an anthropological contribution that has argued against the model .	Describe the logic of the tragedy of the commons as an economic model for predicting resources use and opposing anthropological views to it.	contributions don't argue -change in word to "view" or alternative?; also repetitive use of model. Reduce words.	subject-verb match/ repetition/wordiness
Written response. Q5B	Many sustainability solutions have been found through working with indigenous land stewards to assess traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). What is TEK and using an example from class explain a scenario where it has been used to counter climate change.	What is TEK? Use an example from class to explain a scenario where it has been used to counter climate change.	ing form of verb is odd. Start a new imperative sentence.	grammar - verb form
written response. Q6A	Two key primate traits that aid successful arboreal lifeways are stereoscopic vision and prehensile hands and feet. For each of these traits , explain what is different about the primate anatomy (vs non-primate anatomy) that allows for the trait and what specific advantage the trait gives primates. Then, give one further trait that also confers an advantage in an arboreal environment. (5 marks)	Two key primate traits that aid successful arboreal lifeways are stereoscopic vision and prehensile hands and feet . For each of these, what is different about the primate anatomy (vs non-primate anatomy) that allows specific advantages to primates? What is one additional trait that advantages primates in an arboreal environment?	added missing comma; repetitive, combine and reduce words	punctuation; repetition/wordiness
Written response. Q6B	Research into primate communication has a long history in primatology. Explain the way researchers •how researchers determined monkeys have specific vocalizations with intentional meaning for specific predators, and •how chimpanzees have control over making vocalizations in response to predators.	Research into primate communication has a long history in primatology. Explain the way researchers discovered: •how monkeys have specific vocalizations with intentional meaning for specific predators, and •how chimpanzees have control over making vocalizations in response to predators.	added missing colon; Rephrased and reduced repetition of researchers as it's redundant to lead with it again in bullet;	repetition/wordiness
Written response. Q7	Explain one concept/idea/piece of information from the course that has stuck with you . Explain the concept/idea/piece of information with enough detail that I know you understand the concept and explain why it resonated with	Explain one concept/idea/piece of information from the course that has resonated with you. Describe with specific details to indicate your understanding and why it is important.	Stuck with you/ resonated – same idea	repetition/wordiness

Objective	Three complete paragraphs—1 introductory paragraph + 2 body paragraphs—to give a "resistant" OR "complicit" reading of your brand ; 3-part thesis supported with examples and/or evidence; An analysis of the brand's values, dichotomies, and cultural assumptions .	You are going to write a three-paragraph essay that critically analyzes a brand of your choice. You will examine the brand's values, dichotomies and cultural assumptions. Your analysis should deconstruct the brand's assumptions and marketing appeals.	Your chosen brand. Your brand could cause confusion around ownership. Also "reading" of your brand? What do you mean by reading? Understanding?? Or explanation? I would put the goal of the assignment first then the details around length, etc. Then explain choice (resistant or complicit), then break down sections/ expectations. I would also recommend adding in weighting criteria or if you have a rubric for it, that would also be super helpful.	
Assignment organization	Getting Started	Tasks	The items listed were beyond just the beginning of the task, so changing the language would be more clear.	word choice
Assignment organization	Decide - resistant or complicit? Brainstorm!!!! Free write on your brand for at least two pages. Draft a 3-part thesis tghat conveys your best thought or main idea. Find a specific example of your brand's marketing; research your brand's company. Keep track of the research sources you use.		I would suggest using numbering instead of bullets here to ensure students are aware of how many items they should be completing, in the order they should complete them. Each item can have sub-topics.	format
	Decide - resistant or complicit?	change in layout/ sequence clarity, not language specifically	This is not clear until much further down, so I would move the explanation up.	format/ sequence of ideas
	BRAINSTORM!!! Free write on your brand for at least two pages.	adjust for clarity in expectations (are these pages collected?)	Do you want the free writing submitted with the assignment? Just thinking most students may not do this unless you give them time in class or if it's part of the mark.	assignment clarity
	Draft a 3-part thesis that conveys your best thought or main idea .		I would suggest some prompts (questions for consideration on the brand perhaps?) Ex. What do you already know or assume about this brand? What are your experiences with it? How do other people view this brand? etc. Three-part thesis may need to come after the research phase as they will have a better idea of what they want to write about then.	assignment clarity
	Find a specific example f your brand's marketing; research your brand's company.		I would start with the broader verb first (research) then the more specific action within this research)	sequence of task clarity
Assignment organization		see revised version for all suggested changes made to document.	https://mycamosun.sharepoint.com/sites/MSS/Shared%20Documents/Faculty%20Materials%20for%20Review/ENGL/ENGL%20151%20Branded%20assignment_Possible%20revision_CPetersen.docx	

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Drafting	Draft 3 paragraphs (6-8 sentences per paragraph) to provide a resistant or complicit reading. Your analysis should "deconstruct" the brand's assumptions and marketing appeals.		I would recommend including an outline in the process of drafting, but that is my personal suggestion. It can help students stay on track before they actually start writing paragraphs. Also, Perhaps this is part of the overall objective. I would move this up to the description.	pedagogy
	In the second body paragraph, analyse the brand's stated mission/vision compared to its actual ethical practices.		Assignment has no concluding paragraph or statement required?	pedagogy
Guidelines	Resistant Reading: Use a 3-part thesis statement to clearly articulate what you see as an inherent problem, flaw or contradiction in the brand. How is the brand "unaware" of its own limitations or short-comings? Present a thesis which captures, for you, a critical observation that can be supported. OR Complicit Reading: Use a 3-part thesis statement to clearly articulate the effectiveness of this brand. How does the brand leverage its appeal power? What strategies does it use to expand its reach to the target market? Write a thesis explains how and why this brand impresses. Complete your introductory paragraph with a sentence that states the theme or message you want to convey.	Resistant Reading: Use a 3-part thesis statement to clearly articulate what you see as an inherent problem, flaw or contradiction in the brand. What are the brand's limitations or shortcomings?	I would make this very clear from the start because this affects the organization and research process – the thinking piece or a strategy for the assignment might be better placed earlier in the task as it is critical for how they will examine information while searching for ideas. The revised question (see red) seems to say the same thing but with less words. Instructor to confirm accuracy.)	pedagogy/ sequence of ideas for clarity
Marking Criteria	not available on original document		Suggested to add assessment criteria in the assignment guidelines as one file or add a link to online D2L rubric for example.	pedagogy

MC	(answer c) elements can be broken down into simpler things using chemical methods	Chemical methods can break down elements	Is there a better word here for things ? Also remove passive voice.	word choice/ passive use
MC	(answer d) mixtures can be separated into their components by physical means	you can physically separate mixtures into components	Means – is a bit broad – is there a more precise term here? This answer seems incorrect to me as each noun is very general. (I know pretty much nothing about chemistry but based on the language alone I might guess this answer? Mixtures of what? Components? Do you mean elements? Physical means – like shaking? Stirring? Applying some kind of test?	word choice/ passive use
MC	Based on their position in the periodic table, which ONE of the sets of three elements listed below, might all the elements be expected to share similar chemical properties?	Of the following sets of elements below, which group shares similar chemical properties? Consider their position in the periodic table.	The structure here is confusing to me because if you remove the which clause and put it back with the "might all the elements..." you can't form a sentence and it's not actually a direct question.	question formation; passive use
MC	In the 5th shell of an atom there are ___ orbitals so a maximum of ___ electrons could be accommodated in the 5th shell.	The 5th shell of an atom can accommodate ___ orbitals and a maximum of ___ electrons.	Added comma; but this is confusing due to the repetition of 5th shell. Confirm meaning – suggest removing passive voice and repetition if possible.	passive use; repetition
WR (short answer - table)	Use your periodic table to complete the following table :	Use your periodic table to complete the following missing information:	(Just avoid table and table ; it's a very minor suggestion)	repetition
WR	Lithium exists as two isotopes, lithium-6 with an exact mass of 6.015 g/mol and lithium-7 with an exact mass of 7.016 g/mol. If the average atomic mass of lithium is 6.941 g/mol, calculate the percentage abundance of each lithium isotope. (give your answer to four sig. figs)	Lithium exists as two isotopes: lithium-6 with an exact mass of 6.015 g/mol and lithium-7 with an exact mass of 7.016 g/mol. If the average atomic mass of lithium is 6.941 g/mol, calculate the percentage abundance of each lithium isotope. Give your answer to four sig. figs.	use a colon to introduce a list; capitalize Give and remove brackets (it's part of instruction)	punctuation; capitalization
WR -short answer	A table of common ions and their charges is provided (pages 9 & 10) for this question. Give the correct name for the following compounds	A table of common ions and their charges is provided (pages 9 & 10) for this question. Write the name of the following compounds: OR: What are the names of these compounds?	Added colon (to show list following). Changed question to be more direct with a more precise verb. The use of "correct" seems unnecessary unless you are counting spelling? I think it's implied that all answers need to be correct, so it could be considered redundant in writing. You can always just use a direct question too, which is very easy to process. It's fine as is too. Just a consideration around word count. Less words to read = more time thinking about answer. It's so minor here, but can be a future consideration when creating questions.	punctuation; word choice
WR - short answer	Give the correct formula for the following compounds:	Write the correct formula for the following compounds:	precise word choice better	word choice
WR - short answer	Balance the following equations, and identify the reaction type as one of: synthesis, decomposition, single displacement, combustion, or double displacement.	Balance the following equations and identify the reaction type as one of: synthesis, decomposition, single displacement, combustion, or double displacement.	removed comma	punctuation
WR - short answer	no sentence - formatting issue	see original document	adjusted format for writing answer in	formatting (spacing)
WR - short answer	Calculate the molar mass of Mg ₃ N ₂ and use the molar mass to calculate the amount, in moles, of Mg ₃ N ₂ contained in 27.8 grams.	Possible revisions: 1. Calculate the molar mass of Mg ₃ N ₂ and use this to calculate the amount, in moles, of Mg ₃ N ₂ contained in 27.8 grams. 2. Calculate the molar mass of Mg ₃ N ₂ and use your answer to calculate the amount, in moles, of Mg ₃ N ₂ contained in 27.8 grams. 3. What is the molar mass of Mg ₃ N ₂ ? Use this amount to calculate the moles of Mg ₃ N ₂ contained in 27.8 grams. 4. How many moles of Mg ₃ N ₂ are contained in 27.8 grams? (I am not sure if that the same process though)	Repetition of molar mass	repetition
WR - short answer	if the mole amount of magnesium nitride you calculated in question 10b. above is reacted with 2.25 moles of water H ₂ O, identify the limiting reactant, and calculate the moles of ammonia, NH ₃ (g) that would therefore be produced. (Give your answer to three significant figures.)	What are the moles of ammonia, NH ₃ (g) produced if reacted with 2.25 moles of water (H ₂ O) and magnesium nitride mole amount in question 10b? <i>I am not sure I can fix this sentence as I am unclear as the process involved in the calculation. This might not be the right interpretation.</i> Or provide the question in steps using the verb first for parallel structure: Step 1: Take mole amount in question 10b and react with 2.25 moles of water H ₂ O. Step 2: Identify limiting reactant. Step 3: Calculate moles of ammonia produced (by ?)	If X, then Y. This is a faulty conditional sentence. This question is very hard to understand based on the grammatical structure as it does not have an independent clause due to use of adjective clause (no subject in second clause). (If X, identify Y? If X, that would be produced?). You could break it down into steps or use a more direct question.	sentence structure (2nd conditional)
WR - short answer	If you performed the reaction and yielded 11.1 L of NH ₃ gas, what would be your percent yield?	need more information to correct	What reaction? In question 10d?	unclear - lack of specificity
WR - short answer	missing information	Combustion of 0.253 g of a compound containing only C, H & N created 0.704 g carbon dioxide and 0.144 g water. Determine the empirical formula of the compound.	Removed two commas - original changed unable to track where I removed them.	punctuation

MC	Where is the brain structure located that is causing Tavlin's symptoms?	Which brain structure is causing Tavlin's symptoms?	Slightly wordy/repetitive with use of "where" and "located." "that" clauses can often be removed for a more direct/concise sentence.	wordiness
MC	After an apparent overdoes of drugs and alcohol Robbie ended up in a coma and had a very slow heart rate. Which brain structure was most likely damaged that resulted in her low heart rate?	After an apparent overdose of drugs and alcohol, Robbie ended up in a coma and had a very slow heart rate. Which brain structure was most likely damaged that resulted in her low heart rate?	spelling and punctuation (comma missing after noun phrase)	spelling; punctuation

Examples of faculty materials with language comments

Question Type	Original question/instruction/prompt	Revised question/instruction/prompt	Comments on language use/clarity	Coding
MC	Where is the brain structure located that is causing Devon's symptoms? (be sure to choose the correct hemisphere if applicable)	Where is the brain structure that is causing Devon's uncoordinated movements ?	Perhaps consider replacing "symptoms" with "incoordination" or "uncoordinated movements" or merge questions into part A and B? Reading backwards to confirm information in a previous question can be problematic if taking a test online due to page scrolling or how it's set up. Just a thought to be sure the question can also stand alone – symptoms needs a referent as it's a general noun.	word choice
MC	Cassidy fell and hit her head on the concrete while skateboarding. When she tried to get up she noticed that she couldn't feel her left arm (she had lost all feeling in her left arm) . Which cortex of Cassidy's brain was likely injured causing the loss of sensation?	Cassidy fell and hit her head on the concrete while skateboarding. When she tried to get up, she noticed that she had lost all feeling in her left arm . Which cortex of Cassidy's brain was likely injured causing the loss of sensation?	I think the one in brackets is clearer. I would remove "couldn't feel her left arm" and replace with phrase in brackets (more concise and specific). Also added comma after up.	punctuation; wordiness
WR- short answer	Tyger reported that the migraines they experience are usually preceded by flashing lights. Which lobe of Tyger's brain is most likely being affected by the migraines and causing them to see flashing lights?	Tyger reported that the migraines they experience are usually preceded by flashing lights. Which lobe of Tyger's brain is most likely being affected by the migraines and causing them to see flashing lights?	They/them vs he/she... Were you being gender neutral on purpose? Singular subject Tyger. Same with #25. Grammatically this reads funny for a linguist and think it will for an EAL student too if they learned the traditional singular plural distinction. But from a socio-linguistic perspective, and acceptance of a variety of pronouns, do we break the grammar rules to allow for language shift over time? Interesting conversation here... and it's super cool you used it, although plurality becomes another "it depends" answer and no longer rule-based in the syntax. As a language instructor, I would always say use what the person wants you to. If we choose to use it as educators in our materials, we are then raising awareness of its validity hence creating the change at a more rapid pace perhaps. We also have to adjust expectations of adhering to plurality of gender pronouns in grammar and writing assessment. Food for thought!	*see coments - but grammatically speaking- subject & pronoun agreement in #
MC	Kai is just returning home from school. He calls out to see if anyone is home but no one answers. All of a sudden, he hears a loud noise. His heartrate increases significantly and his breathing becomes shallow. He wonders if a burglar has entered the house and decides to investigate. When he gets upstairs, he discovers his cat has knocked over a flower pot. His body begins to relax and return to a normal resting state. Which division of his nervous system is responsible for both the excited feeling he felt when he first returned home and the relaxed feeling he felt after discovering the flower pot? Question 26 options:	Kai is just returning home from school. He calls out to see if anyone is home but no one answers. All of a sudden, he hears a loud noise. His heartrate increases significantly and his breathing becomes shallow. He wonders if a burglar has entered the house and decides to investigate. When he gets upstairs, he discovers his cat has knocked over a flower pot. His body begins to relax and return to a normal resting state. Which division of his nervous system is responsible for both the excited feeling he felt when he first returned home and the relaxed feeling he felt after discovering the flower pot?	Remove "Question 26 options" as it's obvious in Multiple choice that there are options. You could bold the BOTH...AND as well as the two adjectives for extra clarity that the question wants to encompass both. Because it's a longer question, some additional visual cue could be helpful to target what is expected.	wordiness; format (visual cue bolding)
WR	Come up with your own brain scenario question (2-3 sentences). Describe a scenario that highlights damage to a particular area of the brain or division of the nervous system (please do not use the cerebellum or motor cortex). Include both the question and the correct answer along with a brief explanation.	Come up with your own brain scenario question (2-3 sentences). Describe a scenario that highlights damage to a particular area of the brain or division of the nervous system (please do not use the cerebellum or motor cortex). Include both the question and the correct answer along with a brief explanation.	Bold the negative possibly to ensure the distinction is clear?	format (visual cue bolding)
WR	Question: Michelangelo typically loves colouring. Lately, Michelangelo is having a hard time with fine motor skills and staying within the lines in their colouring book. Which structure in Michelangelo's brain is probably damaged? Answer and Brief Explanation: Michelangelo does not have difficulty initiating movement, so the motor cortex is not likely responsible for his colouring difficulties. The brain structure that is most likely damaged is the cerebellum because the cerebellum is responsible for coordinating the fine motor movements required for colouring within the lines.	Question: Michelangelo typically loves colouring. Lately, Michelangelo is having a hard time with fine motor skills and staying within the lines in his/their colouring book. Which structure in Michelangelo's brain is probably damaged? Answer and Brief Explanation: Michelangelo does not have difficulty initiating movement, so the motor cortex is not likely responsible for his/their colouring difficulties. The brain structure that is most likely damaged is the cerebellum because the cerebellum is responsible for coordinating the fine motor movements required for colouring within the lines.	his? (in answer you use his so just be consistent)	pronoun consistency

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Testimonials (Faculty)

Arts & Science

Good afternoon, On behalf of my department, thank you so much for educating us about MSS! You answered our questions and really inspired us to connect with you in the future. I would like to invite you to my class next semester to discuss MSS. I feel students are motivated to improve AFTER an exam, so that might be ideal. Usually, I get lots of questions from INT students asking 'how' they may improve performance at that time. Thanks again. I will check in with you later on.

Thanks Cristina, this is awesome feedback. I'm really glad we have you as a resource.

Hi Cristina, Wow! The information you compiled in the spreadsheet is incredible. From the perspective of both an instructor and an instructional designer, this document is extremely helpful (and the organization and formatting made my detailed-oriented brain soooo happy!). As someone who is admittedly less familiar with writing mechanics and conventions, I especially appreciated the before and after examples, as well as the variety of language issues captured in the document. The language issues identified in the spreadsheet were top of mind during my afternoon consults. One drawback...I'm anticipating a massive revamp of my own teaching materials. :) If you would like additional samples, I am happy to share content from my psychology courses. Some materials are extensively used across several sections. Let me know. Thank you for sharing your expertise and time. What a valuable endeavour! With gratitude,

Hi Cristina, I would be happy to help you get the information you are looking for. I would love to work with you to support the international students in the Arts and Science programs. Thanks!

Hi Cristina, I am grateful for your examples. Could we meet to discuss the mode of delivery and the self marking idea. Cheers,

Hi Cristina, Thanks so much for all these resources! I look forward to reading them later today. My classes are going well, especially now that they are well under way. What I'm noticing to be a large challenge is note taking and doing work in class, and I see your PowerPoint is on just that struggle! Thanks again and we'll stay in touch. Have a lovely day :)

I have to say I love ALL of the changes and suggestions you made. Wow. What an extreme make-over! Thank you so much!

I cannot thank you enough for combing through these exams and providing such wonderful feedback. I've just had a quick look so far but will do a deeper dive and let you know if I have any questions. I really appreciate the suggestions to make the language as clear as possible for my students.

Thanks so much for taking the time to look over these assignments. I get the confusion about the "presentation" assignment, and I appreciate the advice you've provided. We go over this in class a lot (students don't start this assignment until a month in), and they start the reflections described in the participation document from the beginning. However, I can see that it would be good to spell it out more clearly in writing in the document itself. As for the assignment, I moved away from graded presentations

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in my first-year classes long ago. I find this model of independent work shared with a small group to be very effective in relieving students' anxiety but still providing an opportunity to present and then work together in a group on a case study. In this way, I only grade the student's preparation for the presentation (even though I call the assignment a presentation - I suppose I should change the assignment name itself to help make this more clear...). Thanks again for the feedback. I have more assignments that could use reviewing if you have more time :)...

Oh my goodness. Thank you so much for this! I have SUCH a hard time with this assignment! I think the students enjoy it but it is hard to explain and hard to grade so these are hugely helpful.

Thank you so much for taking the time to go through the assignments and adding such helpful comments! I've made the changes you've suggested. I'm crossing my fingers that the MSS program gets renewed. You are such a help to both students and faculty!

Thank you so much for meeting with me yesterday. I found your suggestions really helpful and enjoyed talking with someone who is part of the language teaching world. If ever ELD or you would like to connect more with our department, we'd love that!

Thanks again for meeting with me yesterday. I really value your support and knowledge. I went into your office feeling discouraged yesterday (so sorry about that!) but left with ideas and inspiration.

Thank you! That was really helpful! (feedback on final exam) Thanks, ____! That was a great tip and I hope more faculty use Cristina's service. My exams are sparkly now!

Business & CSEE

Hello Nick and Heather, I was just facilitating the Teaching and Learning Community of Practice and heard very positive feedback from a business instructor about the valuable work Nick is doing as a MSS in the School of Business. Other instructors and CETL faculty also mentioned faculty burnout and indicated that one of the causes of this is an increase in EAL students who struggle with courses. I outlined the MSS program, so I think there will be continued uptake as the need is definitely there. Take good care,

D2L Post [faculty] Hi there. I am very pleased to share that Camosun's School of Business is now enjoying the support of Nick Travers, who is a Multilingual Support Specialist (MSS) offering academic English and study skills support to our students, in particular, our students for whom English is an additional language. Nick met with our instructor team last week and I was quite impressed with his level of commitment and enthusiasm to support students. He has workshops, and is open to one-on-ones, or you can meet with him as a group. This is a great opportunity to develop a solid foundation toward general studies and exam prep. You can scan the code below or access the webpage at MSS Support Services to learn more and see Nick's schedule. If you are not achieving the grades you are hoping for, and have English as an additional language, this could be one of the greatest opportunities to find a path to achieve your academic goals, so please explore this service - what have you got to lose? Take care.

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Thank you so much for such a wonderful presentation this morning – I've already heard from a couple of people raving about it! After sending out the next session, it looks like you have a nice crowd for that one as well.

Hi, Thank you for sharing your research with us this morning Nick. You are very easily understood and approachable. I see this as being a huge asset for our IE students as they navigate the hallowed halls of Camosun!

I wanted to say a big thank you for attending both of my classes this week. Your presentations have been invaluable to the students. I can see by the number of questions that are engaged in the APA format and are starting to understand the importance of academic integrity. Thanks for being a great support to our students.

I heard wonderful things about Nick Travers' work in the School of Business in his MSS role from folks there during a meeting yesterday. We were discussing international students and the support they need, and faculty were full of praise for him and the work he's been doing.

Trades & Technology; Health and Human Services

Hi Sarah, Im so glad to hear students are reaching out to you and accessing these services. We had a morning Circle where I reintroduced the Writing Centre and MSS, and was pleased to hear that some students had already connected with you...Thank you again for all that you bring to this program and the gifts you carry in your bundle...Please let me know what more I can do, and if you have time I'd love to connect in person on strategies for next term. Miigwetch,

Hi Sarah, It was so nice meeting you also! Thanks for taking the time to meet with the students and send these resources along, I really appreciate it! These links are fantastic, thank you! I will share with the class today.

Hello again Sarah, My section for the Nursing 332 exam were the questions on Burns. Your suggestions were very useful. I appreciate how the changing of one word can provide clarity within the question. Also, knowing when to add a '.' or not.

(regarding help planning for an ELC workshop with community) Hi Sarah. Thanks for your email. The workshop was great! The "east and west" discussions were rich and full of reflections. Thank you for helping us with these resources.

Thanks, Sarah, Feedback from the students was very positive... thank you, again, so much for facilitating [the Intercultural Awareness Training for Students workshop in Mark 420]. It fun and engaging, liked the activities, liked the application and context. Some suggestions: Mix up the groups for each activity – different age and cultural perspectives. (This class is mostly Spanish speaking and didn't have the same variety as some may?); Offer the workshop in a lower level course in the program... i.e. 200 level – allowing for context in future courses. (Good idea if the workshop is to be offered consistently within different programs. For Marketing would consider Mark 220 – Marketing Communications); More time



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Hi Sarah, I do not have questions or concerns, only huge gratitude. Thanks so much. I adopted all (but one) of the suggestions in my dev site. Thanks so much again.

I would like to say a big-huge thank you for asking Kristina to help me improve the Courses I requested from you a few months ago. Along with Patricia and Sarah from MSS, they have helped me completely transform in all aspects the on-line delivery of E-pprentice. I thought I had a good course until these collective minds pushed what I thought was not possible to making it more than I could have only imagined. We continue to identify and brainstorm new ideas. I have come to realize that when we are done we will likely already be 5 years behind even though this process has been moving along at lightspeed. The feedback from new and continuing registrants has been a breath of fresh air as I listen to their compliments on course improvements. Thank you.

Submitted to the HHS Weekly: Shout out to the good work Sarah McCagherty is doing to increase a sense of Belonging for International students at Camosun through Community Conversation Circles. HHS students have shared how much they felt lifted up by these circles!

Hi Sarah, I am so excited to see HS and 401 take on a new look and feel. All updates to language and organization that you recommended are complete. At your convenience is 402, it is the same format as 401 but there is a menu assignment, pretest to reword. Thank you again for adding life to the courses. Best,

Hi Sarah, I wanted to say I'm full of admiration for the multitude of supports you are creating for multilingual students. I happen to be teaching this semester during your Interurban conversation circle time, but I am hopeful that I might be able to participate in a future semester. Maybe other faculty might enjoy helping new students practice their English skills; I will pass the word around. In my current ECET 120 course there will be a class presentation. I will be sure to share your information when I discuss it, so that students who wish to might avail themselves of speaking tips that you can provide. Great work!

Dear Sarah, The conversation continued about culture and multilingualism after you left. It was absolutely wonderful to spend an hour with you. We learned a lot and enjoyed the collaborative dialogues with your guidance. I am certain that the students will share what they learned with you in their other classes and with educators at the preschools where they spend time as practicum students. Thank you. 😊 With gratitude. In good spirits, Ildikó

Dear Sarah, Thanks so much again for spending time with us. Please allow me to thank you on behalf of the students and share my personal takeaway experience. I felt very at ease with you – it felt like we had been co-teaching for years 😊. We definitely had our 'instructor connection'; we had fun. I hope we can continue collaborating for years to come. I have shared the resources and your presentation with students; Posted them on the courses' D2L sites. THANK YOU!!! I am attaching the questions from students from the Tuesday evening ELC course. Thanks again. Let's keep in touch. All the best, In good spirits, Ildikó

Hi Sarah, Thank you, [your suggestion for exam question wording] was very helpful! Kindly,

Hi Sarah, Thank you very much. I appreciate your support and resources. I will have a look through them soon. I will let you know any questions I have moving forward! Have a great long weekend,

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Hello Sarah, Thank you so much for meeting with our team today. We're all very excited about the work you are undertaking. As discussed, I am sharing several documents that should give you a good overview of where the courses, classes, and evaluation criteria fall within the program. We have two cohorts in class this Fall so I've included both term schedules as well as the term critical dates lists. We haven't updated for terms 2 & 3 yet. You are welcome to attend any classes or labs that you wish. Please just email me first and I'll check in with the instructors. Please let me know if you have any questions for me as you move forward with your work. Best regards,