



Which aspects of your education do you think will be most useful to you in adult life?

By Rebecca Yap



Having spent at least ten years in the education system, I believe it has borne much fruit. Specifically, understanding my strengths and weaknesses, overcoming emotional challenges, and embracing failure have proven to be useful and essential in adult life. Undoubtedly, education goes beyond the books and classrooms, manifesting itself through various eventful experiences in my younger days.

Understanding my strengths and weaknesses would enable me to become a more ¹conscientious and self-aware adult. In understanding these unique strengths and weaknesses, I would be able to assess my ²aptitude and capabilities when encountering tasks and challenges set before me. In Secondary Two, I had to decide which subject combination to pursue in upper secondary. Being influenced by my peers, I chose the pure sciences course and neglected the nagging voice in my head to opt for the humanities. What initially was a minor culture shock spiralled into an endless cycle of

failing tests and struggling with my academic workload. On hindsight, if I had mustered the courage and self-awareness to capitalise on my strengths, it may have ³alleviated the unnecessary stress I had experienced from the academic rigour. In the long run, understanding myself better would allow me to make informed decisions that are best suited to my personality, rather than subscribing to herd mentality. Therefore, understanding these strengths and weaknesses will be useful in my adult life.

Secondly, overcoming emotional challenges during my education would enable me to have a more open-minded outlook in adult life. Emotional challenges were part and parcel of school days, yet each experience brought about its unique lessons. One vivid example was back in primary school during the annual selection for school prefects. What felt like the perfect opportunity to land a place in this prestigious community of students became a major disappointment as I was not nominated for the po-

2022 Prefects Ceremony



sition. To ⁴exacerbate the issue, my peers openly rejoiced at the idea of donning the ⁵coveted necktie that our senior prefects wore with pride, despite knowing that I had been rejected by the panel. Being only 11 years old, I felt the heartache immensely, as though there was no way to move on from those feelings. Nonetheless, it taught me the value of accepting that I may not always get what I want. It did not necessarily mean that I was unworthy; rather, it demonstrated the virtue of patience and maturity in doing the best in playing the hand I was dealt.

Finally, embracing failure is ⁶paramount, as this ability extends well into my adult life. Inevitably, failure is a major part of life's journey. It could mean failing

a major test or even failing to meet expectations that I had personally set my hopes upon. What added salt to the wound was when I knew I had given it my best shot, yet it did not come to fruition. Only through many tribulations and little victories along the way did I realise that understanding failure's enduring presence can prevent me from shying away from it and avoiding it at all costs. It is better to handle failure, assess the situation and look forward to the future. As the saying goes, 'It is better to have tried and failed than to never have tried at all.' Life is about taking risks, and I believe that having the courage to take every ⁷curveball it throws adds some zest and flavour to an otherwise boring experience.



METACOGNITIVE
checkPOINT

Do I have any questions
at this point?



In conclusion, these three aspects of my education have certainly braced me for the harsh, but ⁸edifying journey that awaits in adult life. Not only have they moulded me to become the person I am, but I have also come to be grateful for the all-encompassing experience during my school days.

Word Bank:

- 1 **conscientious:**
putting a lot of effort into your work
- 2 **aptitude:**
a natural ability or skill
- 3 **alleviated:**
to make something bad such as pain and problems less severe
- 4 **exacerbate:**
to make something that is already bad even worse
- 5 **coveted:**
strongly desired by many
- 6 **paramount:**
more important than anything else
- 7 **curveball:**
something such as a question or event that is surprising or unexpected, and therefore difficult to deal with
- 8 **edifying:**
improving your mind by teaching you about something



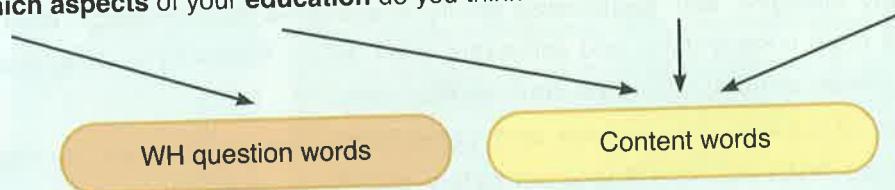
METACOGNITIVE POINT:
REFLECTION

“What is my opinion about the writer’s three aspects of education?”



Part 1: Question Analysis

Qn: Which **aspects** of your **education** do you think will be **most useful** to you in **adult life**?



After identifying the key words in the question, you should note that there are two parts in the question that you will need to address: aspects of your education and why each aspect is most useful to your adult life. Let us learn from the writer how she addresses the key words in the introduction.

Introduction:

Having spent at least ten years in the **education system**, I believe it has borne much fruit. Specifically, **understanding my strengths and weaknesses, overcoming emotional challenges, and embracing failure have proven to be useful and essential in adult life**. Undoubtedly, education goes beyond the books and classrooms, manifesting itself through various eventful experiences in my younger days.

The writer reflects about the education system and lists three aspects of her education that she finds most useful in her adult life.

Having identified the key words and addressed them in the introduction, your writing task will be much easier now.

Part 2: Structuring and Organising a Reflective Essay

One way to structure this reflective essay is:

Paragraph 1: Introduction

Paragraph 2: Aspect 1 + Elaboration + Example

Paragraph 2: Aspect 2 + Elaboration + Example

Paragraph 3: Aspect 3 + Elaboration + Example

Paragraph 4: Conclusion



Now, let us look at the following two paragraphs from the essay to understand how the writer organises the content:

Paragraph 2:

Understanding my strengths and weaknesses would enable me to become a more conscientious and self-aware adult. In understanding these unique strengths and weaknesses, I would be able to assess my aptitude and capabilities when encountering tasks and challenges set before me. In Secondary Two, we had to decide which subject combinations to pursue in upper secondary. Being influenced by my peers, I chose the pure sciences course and neglected the nagging voice in my head to opt for the humanities. What initially was a minor culture shock spiralled into an endless cycle of failing tests and struggling with my academic workload. On hindsight, if I had mustered the courage and self-awareness to capitalise on my strengths, it may have alleviated the unnecessary stress I had experienced from the academic rigour. In the long run, understanding myself better would allow me to make informed decisions that are best suited to my character, rather than subscribing to herd mentality. Therefore, understanding these strengths and weaknesses will be useful in my adult life.

→ **Topic sentence:** state clearly which aspect you are addressing.

→ **Elaboration:** You should elaborate what this aspect is and why it is useful to an adult.

→ **Example:** Give an example to show how you learnt this through your education.

→ **Explanation:** This is important to explain why this aspect is useful to your adult life.

Paragraph 3:

Secondly, overcoming emotional challenges during my education would enable me to have a more open-minded outlook in adult life. Emotional challenges were part and parcel of school days, yet each experience brought about its unique lessons. One vivid example was back in primary school during the annual selection for school prefects. What felt like the perfect opportunity to land a place in this prestigious community of people became a major disappointment as I was not nominated for the position. To exacerbate the issue, my peers rejoiced at the idea of donning the coveted necktie that our senior prefects wore with pride despite knowing that I had been rejected by the panel. Being only 11 years old, I felt the heartache immensely, as though there was no way to move on from those feelings. Nonetheless, it taught me the value of accepting that I may not always get what I want. It did not necessarily mean that I was unworthy, rather it demonstrated the virtue of patience and maturity in doing the best in playing the hand I was dealt.

→ **Topic sentence:** Note that the topic sentence does not only mention the aspect but also addresses the second part of the question which is the impact on an adult.

→ **Elaboration:** You should give more information about this aspect.

→ **Example:** Do give examples that cover different areas as your education should be a holistic one; one that covers the academic areas, activities, service to the school and so on.

→ **Explanation:** Explain why this aspect is useful.