this exam.

Class: I agree, but that's the lowest mark I could give you!

FUNNY RIDDLES

1. How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?

2. How could you rearrange the letters in the words "new door" to make one word?

Note: There is only one correct answer.

3. Even if they are starving, natives living in the Arctic will never eat a penguin's egg. Why not?
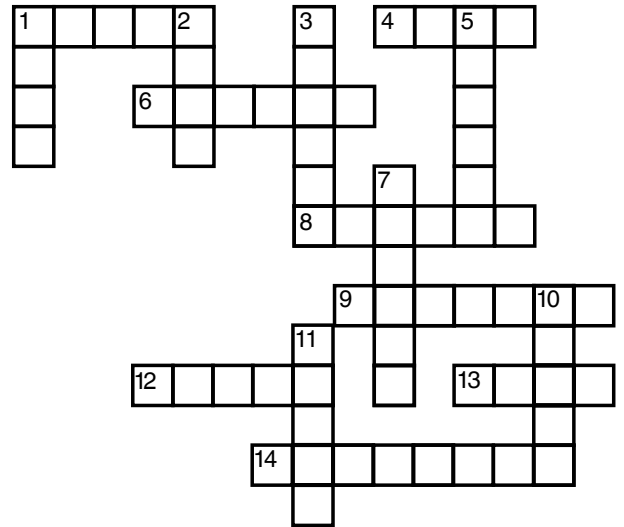
4. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg are white" or "The yolk of the egg is white"?

(Check below for the answers.)

CROSSWORDS:

Plants

How much do you know about plants!? Check it out! ☺

Answers to the **Funny Riddles**:
1. Only once, and then you are subtracting it from 20.
2. "One word"
3. Penguins live in the Antarctic.
4. Neither. The yolk of the egg is yellow.

References:

Quotable Quotes: https://www.google.com & http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/9529-it-may-be-unfair-but-what-happens-in-a-few
Caricature: https://www.google.com
Teaching Tips: https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assesslearning/creatingexams.html
Jokes: http://ofsted.tripod.com/jokes.html
https://www.developingteachers.com/tips/jokes.htm
http://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/reading-jokes-about-exams.php
Funny Riddles: http://www.berro.com/entertainment/riddles.htm
Crossword: www.HaveFunTeaching.com

Creating objective test questions

Creating objective test questions – such as multiple-choice questions – can be difficult, but here are some general rules to remember that complement the strategies in the previous section.

• Write objective test questions so that there is one and only one best answer.
• Word questions clearly and simply, avoiding double negatives, idiomatic language, and absolutes such as "never" or "always."
• Test only a single idea in each item.
• Make sure wrong answers (distractors) are plausible.
• Incorporate common student errors as distractors.
• Make sure the position of the correct answer (e.g., A, B, C, D) varies randomly from item to item.
• Make sure the length of response items is roughly the same for each question.
• Keep the length of response items short.
• Make sure there are no grammatical clues to the correct answer (e.g., the use of "a" or "an" can tip the test-taker off to an answer beginning with a vowel or consonant).
• Format the exam so that response options are indented and in column form.
• In multiple choice questions, use positive phrasing in the stem, avoiding words like "not" and "except." If this is unavoidable, highlight the negative words (e.g., "Which of the following is NOT an example of…?").
• Avoid using "All of the above" and "None of the above" in responses. (In the case of "All of the above," students only need to know that two of the options are correct to answer the question. Conversely, students only need to eliminate one response to eliminate "All of the above" as an answer. Similarly, when "None of the above" is used as the correct answer choice, it tests students' ability to detect incorrect answers, but not whether they know the correct answer.)

JOKES

1. Teacher: Billy, name two pronouns.
   Billy: Who, me?
   Teacher: Well done!

2. Mother: Why did you get such a low mark on that test?
   Joe: Because of absence.
   Mother: You mean you were absent on the day of the test?
   Joe: No, but the kid who sits next to me was.

3. Pupil: Great news, teacher says we have an exam today come rain or shine.
   Classmate: So what's so great about that?
   Pupil: It's snowing outside!

4. Pupil: I don't think I deserved zero on

Write instructions that are clear, explicit, and unambiguous.

Make sure that students know exactly what you want them to do. Be more explicit about your expectations than you may think is necessary. Otherwise, students may make assumptions that run them into trouble. Preferably, you should articulate these expectations to students before they take the exam as well as in the exam instructions. You also might want to explain through your instructions how fully you want students to answer questions.

Write instructions that preview the exam.

Students' test-taking skills may not be very effective, leading them to use their time poorly during an exam. Instructions can prepare students for what they are about to be asked by previewing the format of the exam, including question type and point value (e.g., there will be 10 multiple-choice questions, each worth two points, and two essay questions, each worth 15 points). This helps students use their time more effectively during the exam.

Word questions clearly and simply.

Avoid complex and convoluted sentence constructions, double negatives, and idiomatic language that may be difficult for students, especially international students, to understand. Also, in multiple-choice questions, avoid using absolutes such as "never" or "always," which can lead to confusion.

Enlist a colleague or TA to read through your exam.

Sometimes instructions or questions that seem perfectly clear to you are not as clear as you believe. Thus, it can be a good idea to ask a colleague or TA to read through (or even take) your exam to make sure everything is clear and unambiguous.

Think about how long it will take students to complete the exam.

When students are under time pressure, they may make mistakes that have nothing to do with the extent of their learning. Thus, unless your goal is to assess how students perform under time pressure, it is important to design exams that can be reasonably completed in the time allotted. One way to determine how long an exam will take students to complete is to take it yourself and allow students triple the time it took you – or reduce the length or difficulty of the exam.

Think ahead to how you will score students' work.

When assigning point values, it is useful to think ahead to how you will score students' answers. Will you give partial credit if a student gets some elements of an answer right? If so, you might want to break the desired answer into components and decide how many points you would give a student for correctly answering each. Thinking this through in advance can make it considerably easier to assign partial credit when you do the actual grading.

"Assessment should be based on how much that ground can raise."
—Tom Hansen

NO COMMENT!
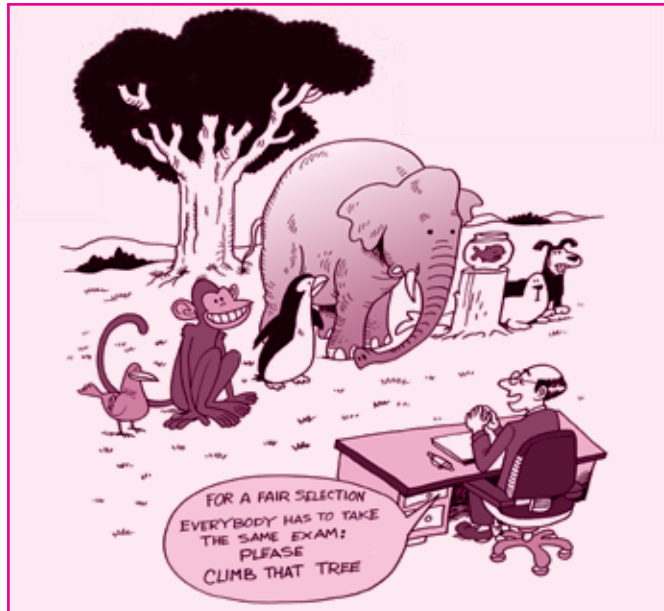
Share your ideas with us: azimi.hz@gmail.com   ☺

TEACHING TIPS

Creating Fair Exams

How can you design fair, yet challenging, exams that can accurately gauge student learning? Here are some general guidelines:

Choose appropriate item types for your objectives.

Should you assign essay questions on your exams? Problem sets? Multiple-choice questions? It depends on your learning objectives. For example, if you want students to articulate or justify an economic argument, then multiple-choice questions are a poor choice because they do not require students to articulate anything. However, multiple-choice questions (if well-constructed) might effectively assess students' ability to recognize a logical economic argument or to distinguish it from an illogical one.

Highlight how the exam aligns with course objectives.

Identify which course objectives the exam addresses (e.g., "This exam assesses your ability to use sociological terminology appropriately, and to apply the principles we have learned in the course to date"). This helps students see how the components of the course align, reassures them about their ability to perform well (assuming they have done the required work), and activates relevant experiences and knowledge from earlier stages of the course.

Fair Assessment

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PREFACE

We can all remember a test we took years ago calling it a "bad" test; "bad" in the sense that it was not "fair". How? We tend to describe it differently: to some, the test might have been too difficult, to others it might have been assessing the wrong trait, and yet to some others, it might have been asking questions for which they were not ready. In the literature of language teaching, we use the terms "ethical assessment/testing" and/or "fair assessment/testing" to refer to the type of practice that observes ethics in assessment/testing. In this new issue of English through Fun, we would like to focus your attention on the means and methods we, as teachers, can follow so as to administer tests that are ethical/fair.

Write to us about "your" personalized means and methods! We will let others know. (azimi.hz@gmail.com) ☺

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"It may be unfair, but what happens in a few days, sometimes even a single day, can change the course of a whole lifetime..."
  — Khaled Hosseini, The Kite Runner

"What's more important than any particular formative assessment technique is a commitment to involving students in the process."
  —Libby Woodfin

"Assessment is the engine which drives student learning."
  —John Cowan

"The important question is not how assessment is defined but whether assessment information is used."
  —Palomba and Banta