Subjective Assessment

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E-mail!
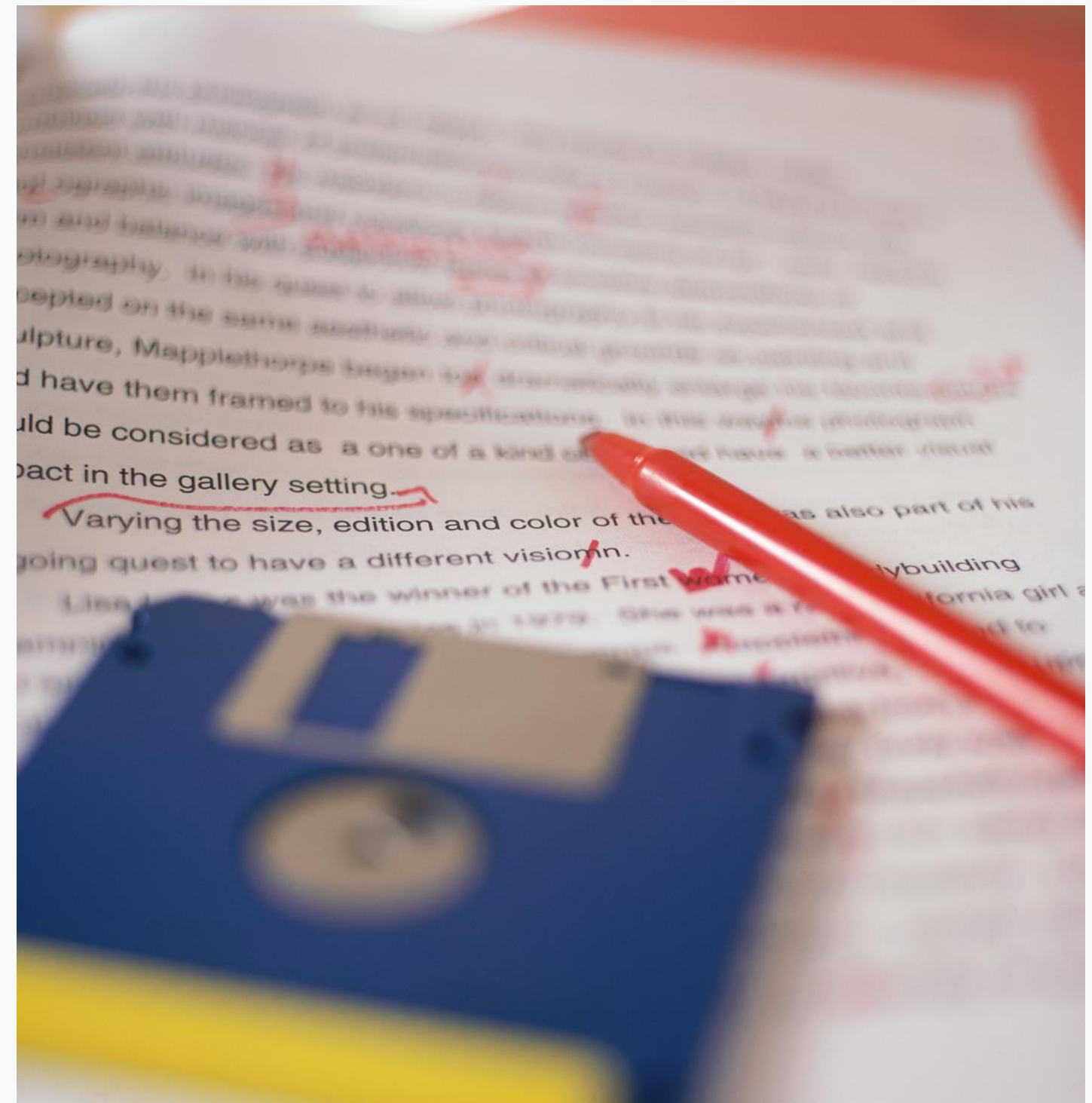
Overview of subjective assessment (SA)

Principles of generating SA questions

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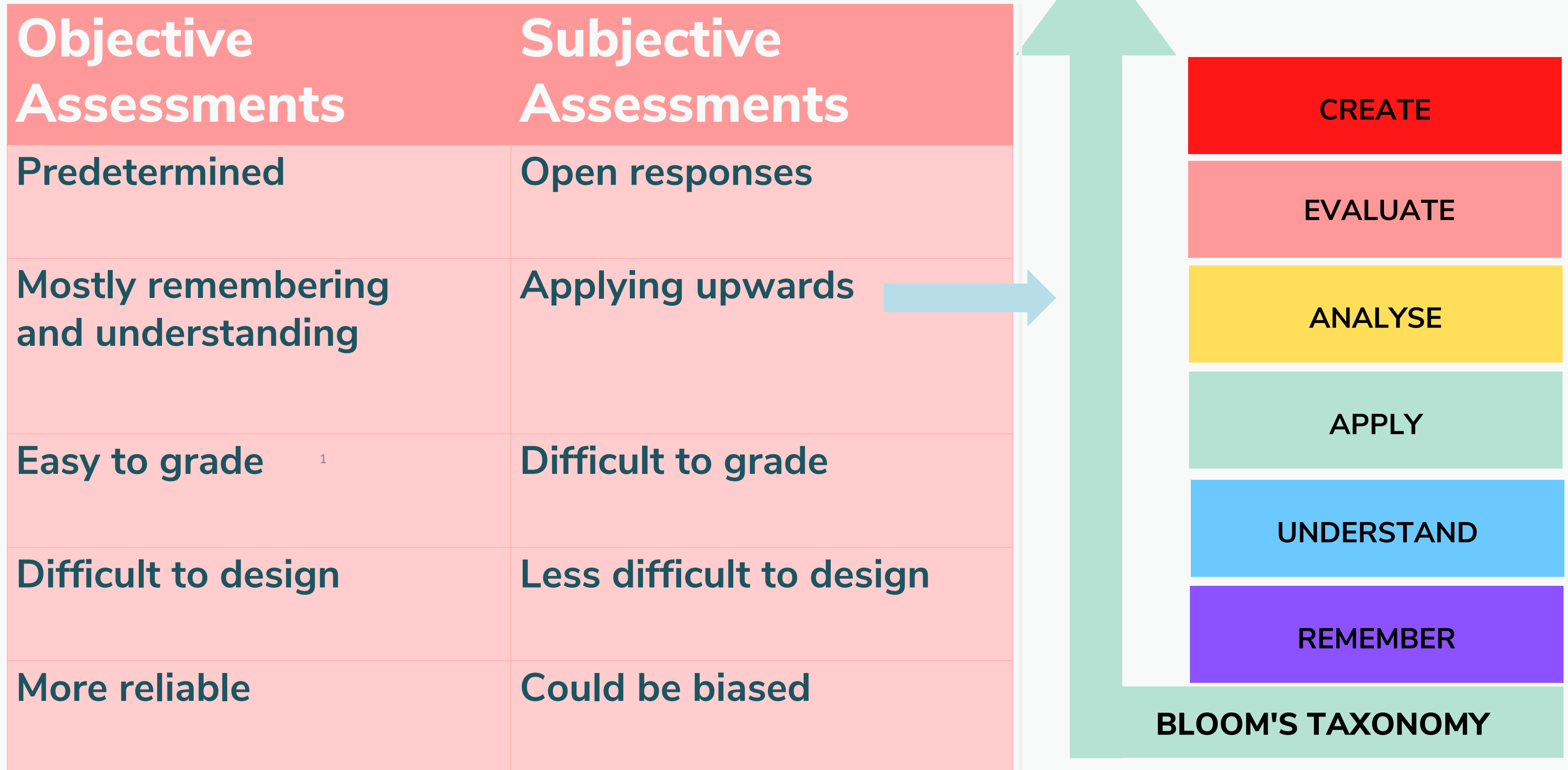# **Overview of subjective assessment (SA)**

Subjective Assessment

- Assess *students'* performance by using questioning which ask students to give a response (mostly in written form) and the response may have more than one correct answer.

- Grading based on or influenced by the personal judgement of *the instructor* (but with an effective grading guideline)

Subjective Assessment

- Allow students to express original ideas/answers
- Usually require written responses with explanation, application, synthesis, and demonstration of ideas.
- Students are presented with writing questions/prompts
- Use open-ended questions to elicit ideas from students
- More conceptually challenging and expressive
- Range from short answers to extended essays

The Comparison

Objective Assessments	Subjective Assessments
Predetermined	Open responses
Mostly remembering and understanding	Applying upwards
Easy to grade	Difficult to grade
Difficult to design	Less difficult to design
More reliable	Could be biased

CREATE

EVALUATE

ANALYSE

APPLY

UNDERSTAND

REMEMBER

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Types of Subjective Assessment

> **Short essay**

Requires a brief explanation of a concept or a term, application of such concept or term or personal opinions toward a particular topic.

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> **Extended essay**

Requires a detailed and organized explanation of an idea or an argument based on a given prompt, supported by relevant evidence.

Example of subjective assessment

Short essay

- IELTS Writing (timed writing)

Extended essay

- Self-Reflection Essay

IELTS writing

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

> *New technologies and ways of buying and selling are transforming the lives of consumers.*
>
> *To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?*

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write at least 250 words.

https://www.english-exam.org/IELTS/ielts_writing_samples_task_2/

Self-Reflection essay

Example of useful questions:

- What have you learned about this topic/course?

- What was difficult about this learning experience and why?

- How can I apply what I have learned to other situations?

- What resources or support do I need to improve my understanding of this topic/course?

- How can I set goals and measure progress in this topic/course?

- What could I have done differently to improve my learning outcome?

Strengths

Subjective assessments are appropriate when
- The number of students is small (manageable)
- Wish to encourage and enhance writing skills
- Interested in exploring students' creative and innovative ideas
- Aim to evaluate higher order thinking

Limitations

Potential limitations

- Cannot measure a large amount of content
- Time-consuming for grading
- Subjective bias on the part of the marker

What is Rubric?

- Scoring tool used to evaluate performance of a student along a task-specific set of criteria

Purposes of Rubric

- Provide teachers and students with indicators for success and descriptions of these indicators
- Promote consistent marking of student assessments

Williams, A., Northcote, M., Morton, J. K., & Seddon, J. (2017). Towards engaging students in curriculum transformation: What are the effective characteristics of rubrics? In R. G. Walker & S. B. Bedford (Eds.), Research and Development in Higher Education: Curriculum Transformation. Refereed papers from the 40th HERDSA Annual International Conference (Vol. 40, pp. 423-433). Hammondville, NSW, Australia: Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, Inc.

An effective rubric reduces marker bias.

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What are characteristics of an effective rubric?

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An effective rubric

- Criteria: specific & unidimensional (i.e., align with learning outcomes)
- Level of performance: excellent, good, fair, basic, …
- Continuity: clear differences between each level
- Reliability: can be used by various raters
- Validity: rate what is intended to assess
- Transparent: students understand what's expected of them

Example of Rubric (writing exam)

Criteria	Excellent (4 score)	Basic (3 score)	Fair (2 score)	Poor (1 score)
Content and Understanding	Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the topic with a thorough exploration and insightful analysis. **Presents a clear and focused thesis supported by compelling details.**	Adequate understanding of the topic. Presents a clear thesis with satisfactory supporting details, **though some aspects may lack depth.**	Demonstrates basic understanding of the topic but lacks depth and clarity. **Thesis and supporting details are somewhat vague.**	Poor or no understanding of the topic. **Lacks a clear thesis and meaningful supporting details.**
Organization	Well-structured and logically organized. Smooth transitions between paragraphs. Introduction and conclusion effectively frame the essay.	Generally well-organized with some minor lapses. Transitions may be adequate. Introduction and conclusion are present but may lack full development.	Organization is somewhat unclear. Transitions may be abrupt, and introduction/conclusion may be underdeveloped.	Lack of organization, making it difficult for the reader to follow the essay. No clear introduction or conclusion.
Grammar	Virtually error-free. Strong command of grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.	Minor errors that do not significantly impede understanding. Demonstrates a reasonable command of grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.	Noticeable errors that sometimes impede understanding. Demonstrates a limited command of grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.	Numerous and significant errors that substantially impede understanding. Lacks a command of grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure.
Vocabulary and Style	Uses varied and precise vocabulary. Engaging and effective writing style.	Adequate vocabulary and style, though may lack variety. Writing style is generally clear but may be somewhat plain.	Limited vocabulary and unvaried style. Writing may be tedious or awkward.	Poor choice of vocabulary. Style is unclear and difficult to follow.

Why question/prompt is important in writing an essay?

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Essay prompt

- A statement that sets the topic or purpose for an essay

- Includes a specific question or topic to be addressed, and any constraints or guidelines for the essay, such as length or time provided.
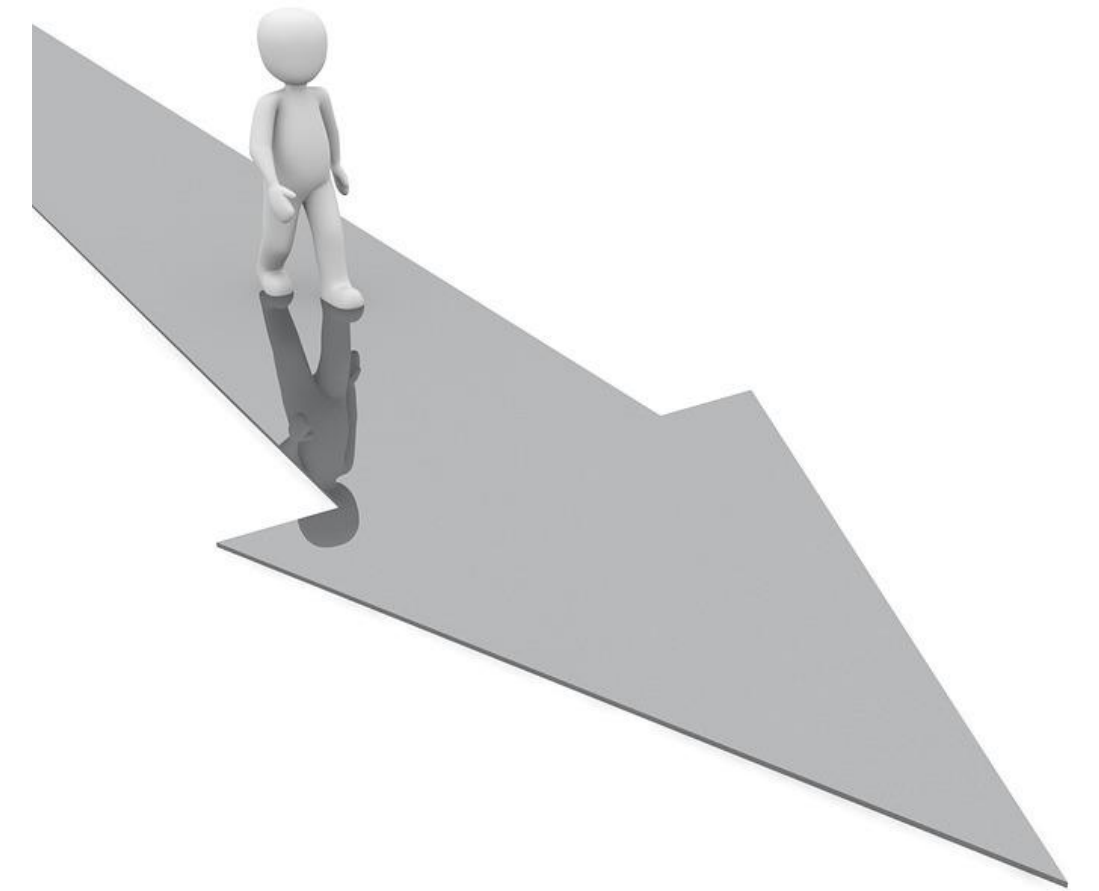
Question/prompt can guide students to plan writing responses and discover and articulate their ideas.

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Principles of generating SA questions

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