



# O'LEVEL NOTES: **EDITING**

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**SUBJECT**  
O'LEVEL ENGLISH

**EDITED BY**  
THE HYCO TEAM



# I. FRAMEWORK (STAMP CARD)

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- A. Each letter in **STAMP CARD** represents a common type of editing mistake.
- B. Think of it like a bubble tea stamp card. Go through the letters one by one, check each line, and “stamp” the errors you find until you **collect all 8 corrections**.

## STAMP CARD

"Stamp out all 8 errors -- collect full marks!"

<b>S</b>	<b>Subject-Verb Agreement</b>	Does the verb match the subject? Singular subject = singular verb.
<b>T</b>	<b>Tense</b>	Is the verb in the right tense? Check time markers (yesterday, now, every day).
<b>A</b>	<b>Articles</b>	Is "a", "an", or "the" used correctly? Based on sound, not spelling.
<b>M</b>	<b>Match Pronouns</b>	Does the pronoun match the noun it refers to in number and gender?
<b>P</b>	<b>Prepositions</b>	Is the right preposition used? (e.g., "good at", not "good in").
<b>C</b>	<b>Connectors</b>	Are linking words correct? Never use "although" and "but" together.
<b>A</b>	<b>Adjective / Adverb (Word Form)</b>	Is it describing a noun (adjective) or a verb (adverb ending in "-ly")?
<b>R</b>	<b>Right Number</b>	Is the noun singular or plural? Check the quantifier (many = plural, each = singular). Also: many/few = countable, much/less = uncountable.
<b>D</b>	<b>Degree of Comparison</b>	Is the comparative/superlative correct? Never double up ("more taller" is wrong).

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION****C. How to Use the STAMP CARD in the Exam**

- Before you start, write **S-T-A-M-P-C-A-R-D** in the margin of your exam paper.
- For every line, run through each letter and ask the matching question. When you find and correct an error, cross off that letter if you like -- just like stamping a card.
- After going through all the lines, you should have collected 8 corrections and identified 2 error-free lines to tick.

**D. Which letters to check first?**

The three most commonly tested errors are

- T (Tense),
- S (Subject-Verb Agreement), and
- A (Adjective/Adverb Word Form).

If you are stuck on a line, start with these three before checking the rest.

## II. ERROR TYPES IN DETAIL (STAMPCARD)

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- A. Each error type from STAMP CARD is explained below with examples. The letter from the acronym is shown in brackets so you can connect each rule back to the card.

### 2.1 Tense Errors [STAMP CARD: T]

- The verb tense must match the time frame of the passage. Narrative and recount passages use the past tense. Informative and factual passages use the present tense. Watch for time markers such as "yesterday", "last year", "now", or "every day".

Wrong	Correct
She walk to school yesterday.	She walked to school yesterday.
He has visit the museum last week.	He visited the museum last week.
They are enjoy the show now.	They are enjoying the show now.

#### Quick Check

Look at time markers in the sentence. Words like "yesterday" and "last week" signal past tense. Words like "every day" and "usually" signal present tense.

## 2.2 Subject-Verb Agreement [STAMP CARD: S]

- The verb must agree with its subject in number. A singular subject takes a singular verb. A plural subject takes a plural verb. Watch out for tricky subjects separated from the verb by a prepositional phrase.

Wrong	Correct
The group of students were noisy.	The group of students was noisy.
Each of the boys have a book.	Each of the boys has a book.
Neither the teacher nor the students was present.	Neither the teacher nor the students were present.

### Quick Check

Identify the true subject. Ignore words between the subject and verb (e.g., "of students" is not the subject). Words like "each", "every", "everyone", "nobody" are always singular.

## 2.3 Word Form Errors (Parts of Speech) [STAMP CARD: A]

- The wrong word form is used. For example, an adjective is used where an adverb is needed, or a noun is used where a verb is needed. This is the most common word form error tested.

Wrong	Correct
He spoke confident in front of the class.	He spoke confidently in front of the class.
The beauty girl won the contest.	The beautiful girl won the contest.
Her improve was remarkable.	Her improvement was remarkable.

### Quick Check

Ask: Does this word describe a noun (adjective), a verb (adverb), or is it the subject/object itself (noun)? Adverbs typically end in "-ly" and describe how something is done.

## 2.4 Pronoun Errors [STAMP CARD: M]

- The pronoun does not match its antecedent in number, gender, or person. Also look for unclear pronoun references and incorrect pronoun forms (e.g., "me" instead of "I" as a subject).

Wrong	Correct
Everyone must bring their own pen. (formal)	Everyone must bring his or her own pen.
The students submitted her work.	The students submitted their work.
Me and my friend went to the park.	My friend and I went to the park.

**Quick Check**  
Check: Does the pronoun clearly refer to one noun? Does it match in number (singular/plural) and gender?

## 2.5 Preposition Errors [STAMP CARD: P]

- The wrong preposition is used with a verb, adjective, or noun. These are often tested through phrasal verbs and fixed expressions.

Wrong	Correct
She is good in Mathematics.	She is good at Mathematics.
I never have to go for school on my birthday.	I never have to go to school on my birthday.
He insisted at going alone.	He insisted on going alone.

**Quick Check**  
Many preposition errors involve fixed phrases (e.g., "good at", "interested in", "afraid of"). Read widely to build familiarity with common collocations.

## 2.6 Article Errors [STAMP CARD: A (Articles)]

- The pronoun does not match its antecedent in number, gender, or person. Also look for unclear pronoun references and incorrect pronoun forms (e.g., "me" instead of "I" as a subject).

Wrong	Correct
She is a honest person.	She is an honest person.
He bought the some books.	He bought some books.
I saw a elephant at the zoo.	I saw an elephant at the zoo.

### Quick Check

"A" vs "an" depends on the sound, not the letter. "Hour" starts with a vowel sound, so use "an hour". "University" starts with a consonant sound, so use "a university".

## 2.7 Singular / Plural Noun Errors [STAMP CARD: R]

- The wrong preposition is used with a verb, adjective, or noun. These are often tested through phrasal verbs and fixed expressions.

Wrong	Correct
There are many student in the hall.	There are many students in the hall.
She has three brother.	She has three brothers.
Each student brought their book.	Each student brought his or her book.

### Quick Check

Quantifiers are your clue. "Many", "few", "several", "two" all require plural nouns. "Each", "every", "one" require singular nouns.

## 2.8 Connector / Conjunction Errors [STAMP CARD: C]

- The wrong preposition is used with a verb, adjective, or noun. These are often tested through phrasal verbs and fixed expressions.

Wrong	Correct
Although he was tired, but he continued working.	Although he was tired, he continued working.
She studied hard, so she failed the test.	She studied hard, but she failed the test.
Despite he was ill, he came to school.	Despite being ill, he came to school.

### Quick Check

"Although" and "but" cannot be used together in the same sentence -- choose one. "Despite" is followed by a noun or gerund, not a clause.

## 2.9 Comparative and Superlative Errors [STAMP CARD: D]

- The wrong preposition is used with a verb, adjective, or noun. These are often tested through phrasal verbs and fixed expressions.

Wrong	Correct
She is more taller than her sister.	She is taller than her sister.
This is the most easiest question.	This is the easiest question.
He is the more intelligent of the two.	He is the more intelligent of the two. (correct for comparing two)

### Quick Check

For two items, use the comparative ("-er" or "more"). For three or more, use the superlative ("-est" or "most"). Never double up ("more better" is always wrong).

## 2.10 Determiner and Quantifier Errors [STAMP CARD: R]

- The wrong preposition is used with a verb, adjective, or noun. These are often tested through phrasal verbs and fixed expressions.

Wrong	Correct
There is many water in the tank.	There is much water in the tank.
She has less friends than before.	She has fewer friends than before.
He ate much cookies.	He ate many cookies.

### Quick Check

Ask: Can I count this noun? If yes (e.g., books, students), use "many" / "few" / "fewer". If no (e.g., water, information), use "much" / "little" / "less".

### III. EXAMPLE (STAMPCARD)

Exam Passage			How to STAMP CARD		
Passage	Line	Answer	STAMP	Correction	Explanation
Many caregivers of the elderly have their own health problems. The			—	—	<i>Always correct.</i>
average age of caregivers are about 62. It is estimated that by 2030, about	1	..... ..	<b>S</b>	are → <b>is</b>	"The average age" is singular. Singular subject = singular verb.
25 per cent of Singaporeans will be 65 years and oldest. The	2	..... ..	<b>D</b>	oldest → <b>older</b>	Comparing two (now vs 2030). Use comparative "-er".
problems facing the elderly are not just medical one. Asset-rich but cash-poor,	3	..... ..	<b>R</b>	one → <b>ones</b>	"Problems" is plural. Pronoun must match: "ones".
this patients are grateful for subsidies in healthcare, but what they fear	4	..... ..	<b>M</b>	this → <b>these</b>	"Patients" is plural. Use "these".
most is to be afflicted through chronic diseases like dementia or stroke that	5	..... ..	<b>P</b>	through → <b>with</b>	Fixed phrase: "afflicted with".
leave them unable to cope mentally and physical, with conditions such as	6	..... ..	<b>A</b> (Adj./A dv.)	physical → <b>physically</b>	"Cope" is a verb. Use adverb (-ly).
depression, and often accompanied by insomnia. A person with such	7	..... ..	✓	✓ <b>No error</b>	No error.

ailments would need not only caregivers, and also the financial means to	8		C	and → but	"Not only ... but also" is the correct pair.
afford long-term treatment. When the caregivers, who are often spouses	9		✓	✓ No error	No error.
and close relatives, are also unwell, the problem is compounding. Thus,	10		T	compounding → compounded	Use past participle as adjective.
Singapore needs to be prepared for the growing caregiving challenges.			—	—	<i>Always correct.</i>