



# Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment



**HANDBOOK  
FOR  
PARENTS**

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**CARIBBEAN PRIMARY  
EXIT ASSESSMENT  
(CPEA™)**

**HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS**

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# Introduction

This document is written to encourage all persons involved in the implementation of the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA™) to initiate conversations on one aspect of CPEA™, namely, effecting *meaningful parental involvement* in their children's primary school education. As a parent or caregiver, you play an important role in your child's academic achievement. By taking steps to get involved in your child's education, you can bridge the gap between home and school to ensure your child's success in learning and in life.

This aspect of the CPEA™ is supported by research which has indicated that there is a direct correlation between effective parental involvement and student achievement. This involvement has a positive effect on your child and is greatly appreciated by the school. The exact nature of this relationship will be defined in collaboration with ministries of education, schools and parents.

The research-based tips in this publication provide both practical guidance and valuable information about how parents can successfully support their children and the school. We hope that you will find the information in this booklet helpful, as you get involved and stay involved in your child's education and help prepare him/her for school success and for a rewarding life of continuous learning.

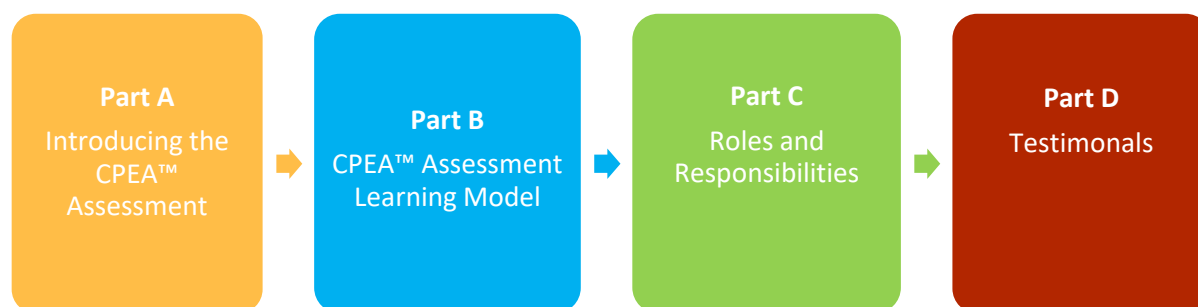
## Overview

This *Parents' Handbook* is designed for parents whose child/children at the primary level who are preparing for the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (**CPEA™**). The purpose of this handbook is to assist parents to work effectively with the teachers and their child/children during the learning process to enhance the performance of pupils. The handbook also provides suggestions on the roles and responsibilities of parents as effective partners in this venture.

The handbook is divided into four parts:

- **Part A** provides an **overview** of and the rationale for the **CPEA™**
- **Part B** provides details about the **CPEA™ Assessment Model**.
- **Part C** outlines the **roles and responsibilities** as a key partner in ensuring pupils' success
- **Part D** contains testimonials from teachers, parents and pupils about the **CPEA™**

## Your Guide through this Handbook



## Part A: Introducing the CPEA™

### What is the CPEA™?

The Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (**CPEA™**) is an assessment of the key literacies possessed by all pupils exiting the primary school system. The **CPEA™** focuses on a set of literacies which are common to all primary curricula and are necessary for pupils to optimise achievement in life and at the next level of education. These include mathematical, language, civic and scientific literacies, all of which are solidly grounded in learning theories espoused by Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky among others. The **CPEA™** will therefore focus on the assessment of literacies and not individual subjects as is the case with traditional end-of-primary examinations.

### Why the CPEA™?

As a regional assessment offered by CXC, the **CPEA™** will provide the foundation for a seamless transition to secondary education and facilitate portability of qualifications across the Caribbean Region. It will:

1. assist with the quality measures in the primary education system;
2. offer a common measure across schools and territories in the region;
3. respond to the calls for a regional assessment at the primary level.



## Part B: Assessment Model for the CPEA™

### How will my child be assessed in the CPEA™?

The **CPEA™** is based on solid educational principles and includes formative (internal) and summative (external) assessment activities.



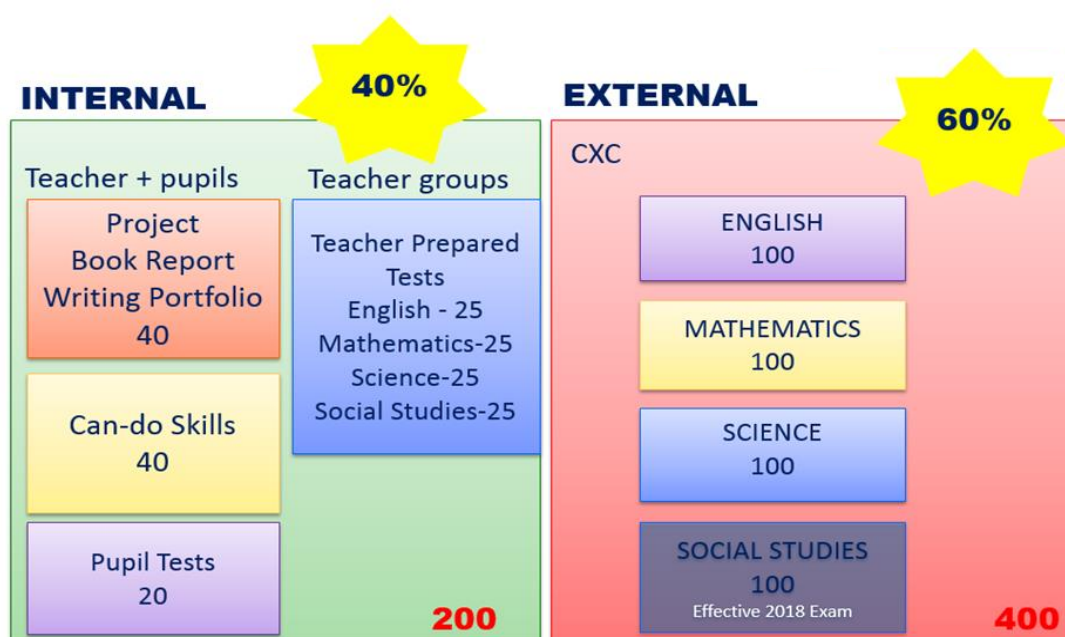
The Formative assessment activities will be conducted in class to help improve your **child's** performance.



The summative assessment activities will help to provide information about how far your child has reached in his/her learning journey.

The **CPEA™** assessment model, formative assessment (assessment *for* learning and assessment *as* learning) and summative assessment (assessment *of* learning) are carefully balanced. It also provides information in multiple ways on different aspects of your knowledge, skills and abilities obtained under a variety of conditions from a variety of sources. The formative and summative aspects jointly involve you, CXC®, and your child and their teacher.

### What are the kinds of activities that will be included in the CPEA™?





The information collected from activities listed under **INTERNAL** will be used by your child's teacher to help improve his/her performance in school. CXC® will carry out assessment in the literacies listed under **EXTERNAL** to provide information about how far your child has reached in his/her learning journey.

### Will the curriculum change for the CPEA™?

The teacher will not be required to teach a new curriculum. The curriculum followed by the school would be that which is used. The internal (formative) assessment will be based on these curricula while the external (summative) assessment will be based on those literacies that are common in the various curricula across the region.

### How is the final grade for the CPEA™ determined?

As illustrated in Figure 1 above, the final grade your child is determined by summing final scores of all the external examination and School-Based Assessment, and express this score as a percentage of the total score.

### How is the grade reported?

This final grade is reported as a final percentage for the overall performance of your child.

### What does the external examination look like?

The external examination will assess the three core literacies namely English, Mathematics, and Science.

#### Mathematics

- Duration = 75 minutes
- Number of questions = 50
- Types of questions = Multiple Choice
- Administration of exam = One day
- Month of administration = May
- Time of administration = 9:00 a.m.

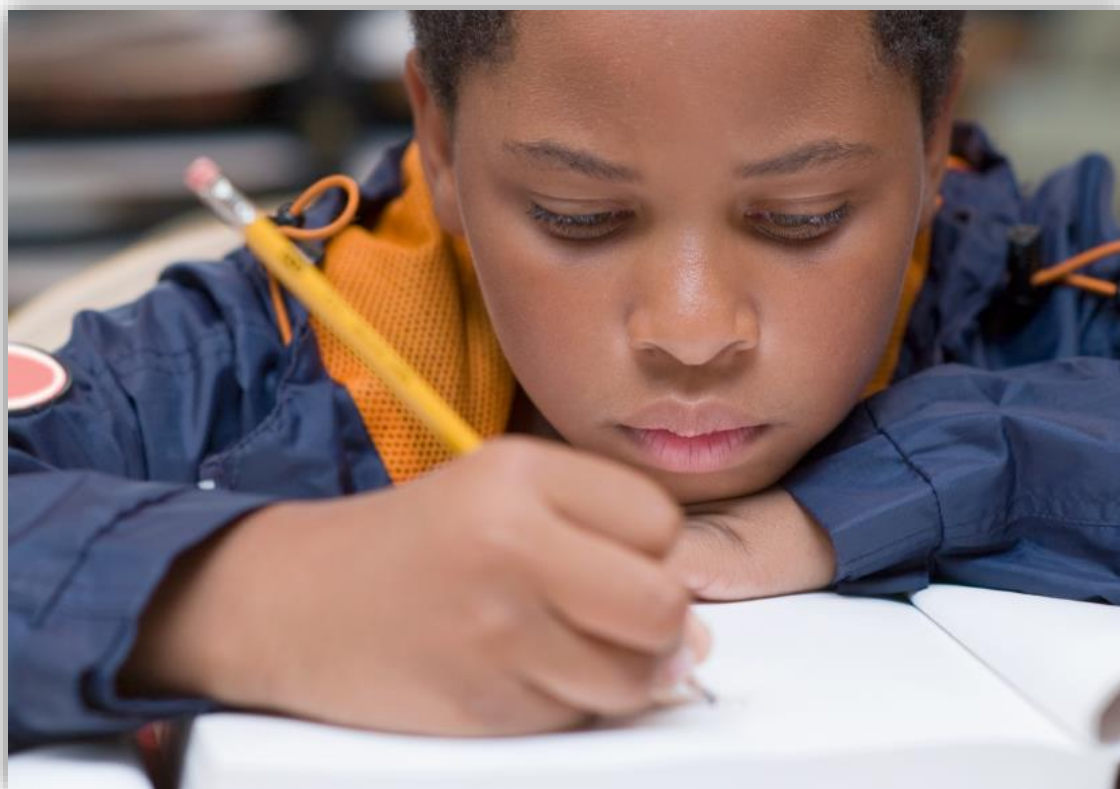
Language Arts

- Duration = 75 minutes
- Number of questions = 50
- Types of questions = Multiple Choice
- Administration of exam = One day
- Month of administration = May
- Time of administration = 10:45 a.m.

Integrated Science

- Duration = 75 minutes
- Number of questions = 50
- Types of questions = Multiple choice
- Administration of exam = One day
- Month of administration = May
- Time of administration = 12:45 p.m.

All examinations are scheduled for the same day, during the third week of May.



## Part C: Roles and Responsibilities

The Assessment Model for the **CPEA™** assumes a number of complementary roles for teachers, pupils and parents and requires:

1. teachers, pupils and parents to participate in developing pupil's ability to learn, to learn how to learn and to learn about learning;
2. teachers to play critical roles in collecting evidence about the development of pupils as learners and teaching under a formative assessment model;
3. pupils to accept and practise leadership roles by conducting self-assessment and peer assessment and by defining the way they behave, what it means to learn and how to learn;
4. parents (or guardians) to participate in the activities of the PTA where members discuss educational issues associated with the growth and development of pupils and seek to support relevant learning experiences at home.

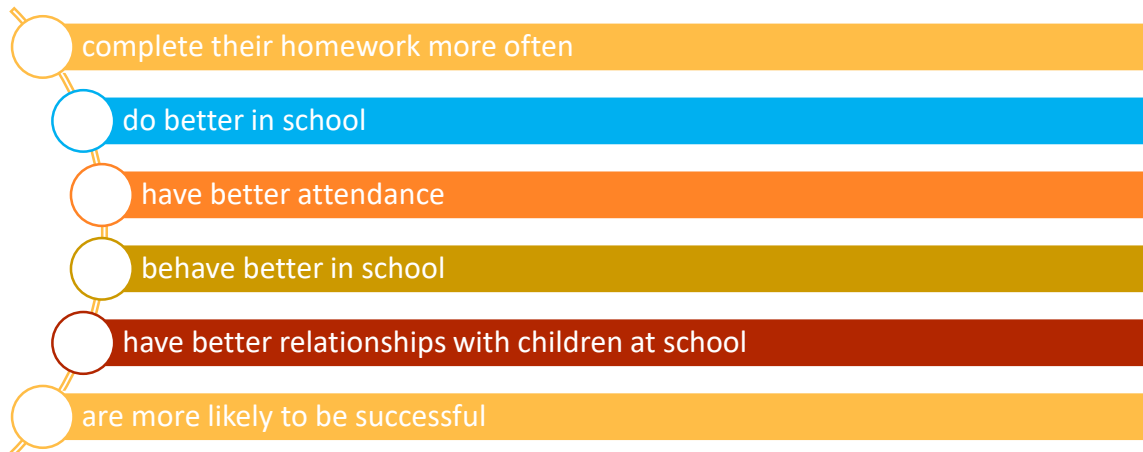
### What are my roles in preparing my child for the CPEA™?

Fundamental to the assessment model employed in the **CPEA™** is that pupils do better where there is strong parental involvement in their learning. Involving you in your child's education improves parent-child relationships. In addition, a strong relationship between the school, family and the larger community has a powerful positive impact on pupil achievement. It means therefore that it is critical you are engaged in the learning process and that you engaged a number of activities to support the teacher and your child.



## How do I become an effective partner in my child's education?

Parents, you are very important to your children's success. Research has shown that when you get involved in supporting your children's learning, they:



You must be a partner and collaborate with the teacher in your children's learning and achievement.

You can:



**These are questions you might wish to reflect on.**

- ✚ What role can I play in my child's learning?
- ✚ How do I share my views with my child's teachers and the school community?
- ✚ What steps do I need to take?
- ✚ How much time do I need to spend assisting and supervising my child's homework?
- ✚ When will I participate?

**I have only 15 minutes. What can I do?**

**You can ask your child something specific about his/her day and listen to his/her stories.**

- ✚ What did you make in art today?
- ✚ How did your English test go?
- ✚ What did you do during recess?
- ✚ What was the best thing that happened to you today?
- ✚ Tell me about something you learned today.
- ✚ What about your homework? Is it done? How difficult was it? Did it take very long?
- ✚ Was there anything that you could not do? How can I help you?

You will have the greatest impact on your child's education right in your own home, doing things together.



Helping with homework can be a way for families to learn more about what their children are learning in school and an opportunity for them to communicate both with their children and with teachers and principals.





## Homework: An Important Arena for Parental Involvement

Homework can serve as the catalyst and a vehicle for parents to begin the dialogue with teachers about their children's learning and their academic success. Homework can open the doors to effective parental involvement and effective partnership with the school. It also sensitizes parents to the work covered in class.

Homework is a significant and important strategy in the teaching/learning process. The teacher will set activities to consolidate recently covered learning experiences and promote good study habits.

### How can you make the parent-child interaction with homework a positive experience?

You can:

-  encourage your child.
-  ensure that he/she has the necessary resources (for example, books).
-  talk with your child about his/her school work.
-  ensure that there is quiet time and a place for homework activities.

### What strategies do you need to know in order to help your child with homework?

There are basic things that parents can do to help their children with homework.







1. **Let your child take responsibility for completing assignments.** Make sure you know the purpose of the assignments and how the teacher wants you to be involved in helping your child complete them.
2. **If your child has a problem, ask him/her what he/she can do to solve it.** Support your child if he/she needs an adult to step in. Problem-solving skills are especially important as your child gets older, it will give your child confidence.
3. **Praise your child for his/her effort and for the progress he/she is making in school.** Focus less on the grade and more on how diligent your child is. Instead of saying "You're just naturally good at Math so you'll do well." Say, "You didn't give up on that homework and gave it your best, so I think you will do well."
4. **Keep it positive.** When your child is stressed or frustrated and wants to give up, take the time to listen. Be encouraging and help your child figure out how to work through his/her frustrations. Focus on the things your child is learning.
5. **Have great expectations.** What you believe about your child's abilities affects what your child believes he/she can do. Regularly tell your child that you expect him/her to do well in school and to try hard. It is important to your child's success in school for him/her to know that you will listen to him/her and that you care.



6. **Make sure the materials needed to do assignments — papers, books, pencils, a dictionary, encyclopedia, computer — are available.** Show your child how to use reference books or computer programs and appropriate websites. If you are unable to help your child with a subject, ask for help from a relative. Ask your child to let you know if special materials are needed and have them ready in advance.
7. **Talk with your child about assignments to see that he/she understands them.** When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. Doing assignments for your child will not help him/her understand and use information or help him/her become confident in his/her own abilities.
8. **Read the teacher's comments on assignments that are returned.** If a problem comes up, arrange to meet with the teacher and work out a plan and a schedule to solve it. *You may wish to suggest amendments to the assignment/task that would have allowed your child to do better.*
9. **Watch for signs of frustration or failure.** Let your child take a short break if he/she is having trouble keeping his/her mind on an assignment.
10. **Reward progress.** If your child has been successful in completing an assignment and is working hard, celebrate to reinforce the positive effort.

You may wish to select the conditions under which you find that your child learns best.





**My child learns best when he/she:**

-  listens to when I discuss the nature of the task/assignment
-  talks about the assignment
-  reads material related to the task
-  writes about the research related to the task
-  does some enabling activities related to the task
-  see samples of how the task should be done









The research has indicated that through modelling, reinforcement, and instruction, homework involvement appears to influence pupil success insofar as it supports pupil attributes related to achievement (for example, attitudes about homework, perceptions of personal competence, self-regulatory skills).

### **How to help our child with learning skills used in:**

-  Reading
-  Mathematics
-  Science
-  Homework

### **HELPING WITH READING**





-  Reading with your child is vital.
-  It is best to read little and often.
-  Research shows that reading with your child is the single most important thing you can do to develop your child's learning skills.
-  Set aside some time each day for reading with your child.
-  Books contain more than words and pictures. They also contain new ideas and information for you and your child to discuss.
-  If your child enjoys talking about the content of any page, linger over it and talk about it for as long as you like.

### **Five tips for helping your child to enjoy books**

1. Enroll your child in the library and visit the library as often as possible.
2. Schedule a regular time for reading – perhaps just before bed.
3. Talk about books and stories and develop a love for them.
4. Look for books that you know your child is interested in – maybe insects, cooking or a certain sport.
5. Make sure that children's books are within their reach around the house.









## HELPING WITH MATHEMATICS

-  As with reading, try to make mathematics as much fun as possible.
-  Play games (dominoes, checkers), puzzles and jigsaws with your child. This is a great way to start helping them to develop learning skills in mathematics.
-  It is important to show how we use mathematics skills in our daily lives and to involve your child in this. Cooking requires weighing and measuring and provides many opportunities for using mathematical skills.
-  Identifying problems and solving them can also help your child develop mathematical skills. If you see your child puzzling over something at home, talk about the problem and try to work out the solution together.

### Four tips for helping your child to enjoy Mathematics

1. Point out the different shapes to be found around your home.
2. Take your child shopping and talk about the quantities of anything you buy.
3. Let your child handle money and work out how much things cost.
4. Look together for numbers on street signs and on car registration plates. Talk about the information contained in these numbers.

## HELPING WITH SCIENCE

-  As with reading and mathematics, science is much fun.
-  Science is the way human knowledge advances. It depends on human beings asking questions and trying to find answers to their questions.
-  Science provides explanations about how and why things happen in the world around us. Some explanations have been with us for many years; for other explanations, we are now collecting more and more evidence.
-  The search for evidence to explain things around us is very important for all children, their teachers and their parents.
-  Every teacher is required to provide children with experiences in science as described in the Science curriculum (MOE).
-  Parents too should participate with their children in searching for evidence to explain things around them — in their homes, their gardens, and in the foods they eat.

### Four tips for helping your child to enjoy Science

1. Encourage your child to measure or weigh objects around the home — often and accurately.
2. Give your child practical experiences in growing and caring for pets and plants at home, under your careful guidance.
3. Engage your child in conversation as you and your child participate in measuring and estimating quantities for cooking.
4. Encourage your child to handle home appliances safely — using a knife, a pair of scissors, a screw-driver, heating water, moving hot liquids from one container to the next.



Children participating in science activities



Children participating in cooking activities

### HOMEWORK AT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Homework at primary school is very important.

First, it strengthens what your child is learning in school. It also provides opportunities for your child to practice certain skills.

Second, it gives you a chance to become involved in the learning process.

In certain classes, reading is the most important homework. Your child may have a book from the classroom library to read. Try to read the book together every night.

Sometimes your child will be asked to talk to you about what he or she learned in school on a particular day. This can be the most valuable homework of all, especially if you ask your child questions about his or her day.

### Six tips for good homework habits

1. Find a quiet place at home to use as a homework area.
2. Do plan a homework timetable and agree on when your child will do homework.
3. Do allow your child to eat something nutritional before starting on homework.
4. Do discuss any homework tasks with your child and how it connects with what they are studying at school.
5. Do turn off the TV.
6. Do NOT teach your child methods you used at school. It could confuse them.



## Part D: Testimonials

### PARENTS:

#### Overall impression of the CPEA™ programme.

1. My child enjoyed her presentation even though she is a quiet child.
2. My son who doesn't like to read had fun researching in flags. He even taught me some details that I didn't even know about.
3. Book reviews are interesting.
4. Loved hands on approach.
5. Holistic development is encouraged, for example, last year my Grade 4 child was developing questionnaires, doing real life interviews and making notes.
6. **CPEA™** is learning for life.
7. It has motivated both me and my child.
8. Challenging work load initially. However, despite the work load feels CPEA influenced:
  - (a) reasoning ability;
  - (b) interaction with community;
  - (c) extension of knowledge base as it is not very text book.
9. I actually enjoyed working on the projects with my child.
10. **CPEA™** needs to be implemented in all schools and grades.
11. The child had to be more reflective and felt a sense of pride seeing the end product.
12. Good for my son. Kept him on his toes.

**STUDENTS:****1. One word which best describes how you feel about the CPEA™ programme.**

- (a) Informative.
- (b) Interesting.
- (c) Fun.
- (d) Pretty good (*despite the fact that this was not one word the student insisted this was how CPEA should be described*).
- (e) Educational.
- (f) Challenging.
- (g) Excellent.
- (h) Sense of belonging.

**2. Reasons you selected that word.**

- (a) Informative
  - (i) You have to do research.
  - (ii) You get a chance to interview people.
- (b) Interesting
  - (i) The project and book report allows you to do the things you like to do.
  - (ii) Coming up with the personal reflection even though it was sometimes challenging.
- (c) Fun
  - (i) Got to be the group leaders and really liked it.
  - (ii) Got to make things, for example a fishing village.

- (iii) Got to make videos with tablets, cameras and smart phones.
- (iv) Got to choose the book they wanted to read.
- (v) Got to go on field trip.
- (vi) Got to interview fishermen.
  
- (d) Pretty Good (*despite the fact that this was not one word the student insisted this was how CPEA should be described*)
  
- (e) Important based on the things done in the project.
  
- (f) Educational
  - (i) Got to practise things in class.
  - (ii) Enjoyed making oral presentations because I love to talk.
  - (iii) Changed how I feel about school.
  - (iv) Challenging- had to think.
  - (v) Excellent-learned a lot of things.
  - (vi) Sense of belonging-felt a part of different activities.
  - (vii) Edutainment-Educational but activities were fun.

**TEACHERS:****Overall impression of the CPEA™ programme.**

1. informative and innovative programme;
2. comprehensive project based work;
3. interesting;
4. comprehensive, good venture that allows students to think and show their own creativity;
5. field trips allow students to express themselves' analyse and collect data;

6. prepares students for secondary school;
7. engaging, student-centred;
8. holistic learning;
9. students take responsibility for their learning;
10. use of differentiated type of teaching and learning;
11. Good that students could give their own ideas instead of teacher coming up with everything.
12. I liked it. The way projects were done in CPEA was different. Students got the chance to choose what they wanted to research.
13. The oral aspect helped, as many who were silent spoke. Groups gelled and this has spilled over to Grade 5. The approach brought out a sense of 'discovery'. Leadership qualities came out. For example, a student who never spoke much before commented during a group activity: "Miss, I don't think this group thing is working. I called everybody last night and nothing". However, when she brought everybody into shape, the result was excellent.
14. My marking style changed. I was forced to find meaningful words rather than 'good' etc. I have even ended up writing 2 paragraphs of meaningful feedback to students. However, it was time-consuming so I had to find different strategies to give feedback. I reserved the major notes for special children and spoke directly to some.

