

Stage S4

beginning

example 1

The student**Year Level:** Year 10, 16 years old**Background:** Born in Vietnam**Language:** Vietnamese**Schooling:** Age equivalent schooling in Vietnam where he also took English classes, two terms in an English language centre in Victoria**The task**

Response to an issue (same task as for S2 Standard, example 2). Students had reviewed newspaper articles on the issue. Oral discussion and debate followed information gathering. Information and essay grids were completed. A carefully scaffolded response was completed, although no model was provided. The topic was covered over a period of about four weeks.

The text shows that the student:

has a clear understanding of audience and purpose

organises ideas into a structured text

includes structural elements consistent with the text type

uses simple, compound and complex sentences

uses a range of persuasive techniques e.g. rhetorical questions, quotes an authoritative source

10/11/08

Dear Editor,

I'm writing this letter to express my opinion about a great deal of a controversy in the media recently. This argument has arisen over the issue of whether the death of the mountaineer - David Sharp was preventable. I'm not a callous person but I'm in favour that he should have been left to die on Mount Everest for these following reasons.

In my opinion, David Sharp really risked his life when he decided to ~~do~~ climb solo to the roof of the world. This is quite dangerous because he wouldn't be able to get help from anyone. He ~~do~~ didn't have enough reserved oxygen, no proper gloves and things like that. Then, he had frost bite on his elbow and knee down, ~~so~~ couldn't move and huddled under a rock. I'm can make sure that David Sharp was definitely dying when he had been in that various states of health. Also, he got help from no one at that time.

Which leads to my next reason why David Sharp should have been left to die ~~that~~ is he might prefer dead than alive. It's nearly impossible to save a man who was dying slowly and unable to move. To carry him down would have taken 20 Sherpas and he would have died while descending. Some studies proved that ~~he~~ David could have been saved if they have enough oxygen. But supposing that if he could have been revived and the doctors must cut his four limbs because of frostbite. Would he like to continue his disabled life? So I think between life and death, David would prefer die than alive.

I wonder was it possible to save David Sharp at that time? I agree with what Sir Edmund Hillary said: "Human life is far more important than just get to the top of a mountain. However, I sympathize with those 40 climbers including Mark Inglis who ~~passed~~ left David Sharp to die. Actually, I think they tried to saved him by all their effort. They gave him oxygen, sent out a radio distress call and even when they abandoned him, they left a few cans of oxygen. At such an altitude, all of them were weak, exhausted, having breathing difficulties and cold, so carry ~~some one~~ someone else is almost impossible. It's true that

includes a range of topic related vocabulary e.g. Sherpas, descended, 'roof of the world', frost bite

uses various cohesive devices, e.g. then, also, 'In my opinion', 'which leads to my next reason'

uses a wide range of modal verbs

shows control over tenses

includes some inappropriate choices e.g. 'David would prefer die than alive', 'he might prefer dead than alive'

Continued...

Human life is very important. If those 40 climbers saved David Sharp and some of them could die with him. Is that a bigger loss of human life? Therefore, I think their responsibility is save themselves, not anyone else. ⁴

The death of David Sharp is really a tragedy. ⁵ However, I think death would be better for him and I believe those 40 climbers did ~~nothing~~ nothing wrong. If you were there, you would do the same thing as ~~them~~ what they do. You love your life, don't you?

This is an example of a student beginning to work towards the standard at S4 (S4.1). In preparation for the task, the student contributed to brainstorming activities, took notes and selected relevant information to provide supporting evidence for his arguments. The text is well structured and the student uses cohesive devices at the text and at the sentence level. Arguments are clearly defined and supported by evidence.