A Lost Marks Analysis After a Marked Test

Contains answers. Give students the one-page student sheet, and keep these notes until they have tried the work.

WHAT IT IS FOR

Students turn a marked test into one change they will try on the next question, by counting where their marks went.

HOW TO RUN IT (ABOUT 10 MINUTES AFTER MARKING, OUR ESTIMATE)

1. **Hand back the marked scripts with a blank sheet each.** Students need the script, not just the mark.
2. **Tally (5 minutes).** Students put every lost mark against one reason, then add up each reason. The percentage is marks lost ÷ total marks × 100. Show one row first: a test out of 50, 4 marks lost to calculation errors, so 4 ÷ 50 = 8%. Marks obtained plus marks lost should equal the test total.
3. **Pick two (2 minutes).** Students write the two reasons that cost the most marks in the box on the sheet.
4. **Choose one change (3 minutes).** Students write one change they will try on the next question and the date they will try it. It should name a step on paper, such as "mark the start date, the year-end and the months left before I calculate".

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- **A change like "study harder".** Ask for a step they can see on paper, such as "draw a timeline of the cover before I calculate".
- **Most marks under "Lack of knowledge".** Teach that topic again. Another reflection task is not the remedy on its own.
- **Most marks under "Calculation errors".** A wrong method and an arithmetic slip need different changes.
- **Copied corrections.** Writing the right answer next to a wrong one is not a change. Check a new question.

Worked anchor for the example change (answers: lecturer only). A business pays $1,200 on 1 October for twelve months of insurance and records it as Prepaid insurance. Its reporting date is 31 December. Cover is used evenly by month.

Monthly cost: $1,200 ÷ 12 = $100. Three months have expired: $100 × 3 = $300. Adjustment: debit Insurance expense $300, credit Prepaid insurance $300. Remaining asset: $1,200 less $300 = $900.

Fresh check for the next lesson. $2,400 paid on 1 November for twelve months, same year-end. Two months have expired: $2,400 × 2 ÷ 12 = $400. Debit Insurance expense and credit Prepaid insurance $400. Remaining asset: $2,000. Hold this answer back until students have tried it.

USING IT WELL

Do not grade the sheet. If you cannot read every one, say so and offer a help route for unresolved questions. Reading selected examples aloud is not feedback to every student. A completed sheet, or a higher mark next time, does not show that the routine caused learning.

EVIDENCE BASIS

Editorial material, untested. The Editorial Desk wrote this sheet. Tsay and colleagues (2023) describe and use exam wrappers, crediting Ambrose et al. (pp. 4, 6; Appendix B, p. 17). We read their course-redesign paper, not the Ambrose book or its original tool. Their post-exam task asked for three missed questions; this sheet tallies every lost mark by reason and asks for one change, so it is ours. The redesign combined several changes, varied by instructor and used class-level data at one institution, so it cannot show that wrappers alone made a difference (p. 11). The focus on strategy draws on Smith's (2001) review, which rests mainly on evidence from outside accounting (p. 692), Schleifer and Dull's (2009) correlational self-report survey (pp. 347, 355–356) and Leggett, Sandars and Roberts' (2019) medical-education guide, which reports no new outcome data. The lost-marks tally is our own design, and we have not tested it. The timings, steps and notes under "What to look for" are ours, not findings of Tsay et al., Smith, Schleifer and Dull or Leggett et al.

This is the "adapt" step of the Issue 05 routine. The planning and confidence prompts in that article are not on the sheet. Ask them aloud if you want them.

Smith, P. A. (2001). Understanding self-regulated learning and its implications for accounting educators and researchers. *Issues in Accounting Education, 16*(4), 663–700. https://doi.org/10.2308/iace.2001.16.4.663

Schleifer, L. L. F., & Dull, R. B. (2009). Metacognition and performance in the accounting classroom. *Issues in Accounting Education, 24*(3), 339–367. https://doi.org/10.2308/iace.2009.24.3.339

Leggett, H., Sandars, J., & Roberts, T. (2019). Twelve tips on how to provide self-regulated learning (SRL) enhanced feedback on clinical performance. *Medical Teacher, 41*(2), 147–151. https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2017.1407868

Tsay, B.-Y., Campbell, J. E., Ariail, D. L., Miller, S. K., & Shumate, L. S. (2023). Improving introductory financial accounting learning and retention through course redesign. *Journal of Accounting Education, 62*, 100816. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaccedu.2022.100816