

## DESIGNING AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS FOR ASSESS STUDENTS' HIGHER-ORDER THINKING SKILL IN WRITING: A NARRATIVE REVIEW

By

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**Abstract:** Authentic assessment has an important role in measuring students' higher order thinking skills in writing. However, designing an authentic assessment to measure higher order thinking skills in writing is a challenge. This abstract outline the steps needed to design an authentic assessment that is effective in measuring students' higher-order thinking skills in writing. The method used includes identifying learning objectives, determining assessment criteria, developing authentic writing assignments, and carrying out assessments that involve clear scoring rubrics. Current research and practice in this field is reviewed to provide a sound theoretical foundation. This abstract also discusses the benefits and challenges of using authentic assessment, including the development of assessments that are relevant to curriculum needs and competency-based learning. By paying attention to these aspects, a better understanding is gained on how to design effective authentic assessments to measure students' higher-order thinking skills in writing, thereby enabling the development of better learning strategies and improving student learning outcomes.

## INTRODUCTION

Assessing students' higher-order thinking skills is a crucial aspect of education, particularly in the domain of writing. As educators strive to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, it becomes essential to design authentic assessments that effectively measure these skills. Authentic assessments provide students with real-world contexts and tasks that mirror the challenges they may encounter beyond the classroom. However, creating such assessments that accurately gauge higher-order thinking skills in writing poses a significant challenge.

This introduction aims to explore the importance of designing authentic assessments to assess students' higher-order thinking skills in writing. It outlines the key steps involved in crafting effective authentic assessments and highlights the need for clear learning objectives and assessment criteria. By leveraging current research and best practices in the field, educators can gain valuable insights into designing assessments that truly capture students' abilities to engage in critical thinking and produce quality written work.

Moreover, this introduction discusses the benefits and challenges associated with implementing authentic assessments. It emphasizes the importance of aligning assessments with curriculum requirements and competency-based learning approaches. By considering these aspects, educators can gain a deeper understanding of how to design authentic assessments that effectively measure students' higher-order thinking skills in writing. This, in turn, enables the development of more effective teaching strategies and ultimately enhances students' learning outcomes.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Designing evaluation strategies for use in courses necessitates paying attention to the processes of student intended learning. Many learning theories exist to address the question of how individuals learn; three prominent learning theories attempted to explain how pupils learn and gain information. These theories are behaviorist, cognitive, and constructivist, with each having its own set of assumptions. Learning is viewed as a linear and sequential process by behaviorists, with complicated abilities being broken down into smaller skills that may be taught and mastered independently. The cognitive view, on the other hand, considers learning to occur when knowledge is internally contained and individualized. The constructivist approach to learning, on the other hand, differs from the preceding two ideas. According to this approach, learning occurs when the student is actively engaging, contributing, and creating new information to be built on pre-existing knowledge, with the instructor acting as a facilitator (Anderson & Elloumi, 2004).

All educators and educational stakeholders believe the development of students' higher-order thinking to be a primary aim. They are attempting to accomplish this aim at all educational levels. It is also seen as a tool for developing both individuals and communities. Since the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a greater emphasis on conducting studies to improve pupils' higher-order thinking skills. Beyer (1983); Costa (1981); Sterberg (1984). These Research demonstrated the need of improving the teaching-learning process in order to enhance these skills. Higher-order skills may be developed in two ways: 1) through lessons and specific workshops in building higher skills, and 2) through normal mathematics classes and other school topics (Beyr, 1983; NCTM, 1999). Furthermore, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) claim that strengthening students' higher-order thinking abilities may be accomplished by developing new curriculum and instruction models that can aid in the use of critical thinking and problem-solving approaches.

### Definition Of Terms

#### 1. Critical Thinking

Because the term thinking relates to many various patterns of activity, it is difficult to define or pick a particular definition that covers the nature, means, and products of thinking (Crenshaw, P., Hale, E., & Harper, S. L., 2011). However, Dewey (1966) regards thinking as a mental activity that may be used in many ways. According to Nosich (2012), critical thinking consists of numerous relevant categories, including being introspective, incorporating standards, being honest, and being reasonable. According to Facione (2011), critical thinking is "the process of reasoned judgment" (p. 3). The Foundation of Critical Thinking by Scriven and Paul (2004) provided the following definition: "Critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker

improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them" (para. 10). In this study, thinking will be described as "a consciously goal-directed process" (p. 12) by Mosely et al. In addition, critical thinking will be used in the evaluation process and to examine students' level of thinking.

## **2. Higher Order Thinking Skill**

Lewis and Smith (1993) both ask if there is a distinction between lower-order and higher-order cognitive abilities. In reality, the phrase "higher order" thinking skills appears to be a misnomer because it suggests that another set of "lower order" skills must arrive before. To discriminate between the two groups of talents, Newman (1990) believes that the lower skills require simple applications and regular actions. Higher order thinking abilities, on the other hand, "challenge students to interpret, analyze, or manipulate information," according to Newman (1993) (P.44).

Students are required to acquire lower-order level thinking abilities through a process of remediation through repetition, which will allow them in later stages to master higher order skills. Furthermore, breaking down skills into simple skills and higher in level skills will assist curriculum developers in designing the subject's contents according to this splitting by focusing on basic skills in lower grades and on higher-order thinking skills in later grades. Higher-order thinking abilities are defined by educators as high order thinking that happens when a student acquires new knowledge and stores it in his memory, after which this knowledge is correlated, structured, or appraised to reach a certain goal.

Ennis and Wheary (1995) responded to the first question by stating the importance of improving students' higher thinking skills because developing these skills will diagnose students' higher thinking levels, provide students with feedback about their levels of thinking and encourage them to think in a better way, provide teachers with information on the extent to which they achieved the educational goals, and conduct research on how to teach higher-order thinking skills.

## **3. Assessment and Higher-Order Thinking Skill**

Assessment is regarded as one of the most difficult topics of educational theory and practice. It is utilized to attain a variety of goals by employing various ways and procedures; each approach has its own set of traits and attributes. It may be used to report on a specific student's performance as well as to analyze the whole system's success. Furthermore, mathematics assessment may be used "to provide educators with useful insight into students' understanding and knowledge of a specific subject, rather than just identifying their ability to use specific skills and apply routine procedures."

Assessment, according to Airasian (1994) and Pellegrino, Chudowsky, and Glaser (2001), serves three purposes: to aid learning, to quantify a specific student's success, and to evaluate the entire program. As a result, without adequate evaluation methodologies, it is impossible to determine if instructional and curriculum improvements are effective. A proper assessment is one that can be employed or lead to improvements in the learning of students. Furthermore, it may identify the student's weakness and strong regions; the strength area that has to be improved and the weakness area that needs to be treated.

Traditionally, the term "assessment" has been used to refer to the process of

obtaining information in order to make evaluative judgements (Appi, 2000; Penta & Hudson, 1999), and has been associated with quizzes and exams. However, in a larger sense, assessment is about learning and teaching rather than only testing and assessing student knowledge. As previously stated, new assessment methods and models (for example, performance-based or alternative ones) are intended to introduce a wide range of opportunities and potential measures for students, with the goal of creating and demonstrating what the students are capable of doing with their education program. Assessment approaches continue to prioritize student achievement above student capacity to apply acquired information.

The growing use of difficult activities and performance-based evaluations has significantly altered how instructors approach assessment. The desire for improved forms has given rise to several issues about their shortcomings and relative benefits in comparison to the most basic types of evaluation. However, general comparisons are constrained by the diversity of different forms, especially since each of these forms has its own set of benefits, drawbacks, and challenges to contend with. Many hurdles and impediments exist in the transition from traditional evaluation to authentic assessment. One of these issues is the prevalence of standardized norm-referenced multiple-choice exams, which are commonly employed to assess lower-level cognitive abilities and educational attainment.

#### **4. Writing Skill**

Writing skills are regarded as difficult to comprehend as one of the productive talents. As one of the language skills, kids should be able to write. This is owing to the numerous factors that must be addressed when writing. According to Golpour (2014), writing talents are a linguistic transformation of one's thoughts. As a result, pupils require not just physical inventiveness, but also analytical and methodical thought before putting it into paper. In terms of teaching, writing does not include assigning pupils to write an essay consisting of multiple paragraphs.

Teaching writing should begin with a briefing in which students learn that writing is an endeavor to progressively build ideas. These steps include assembling sentences, assembling paragraphs, and assembling discourse. So the basis of teaching writing is to assist students in understanding how to convey ideas in writing, to support students in freely expressing themselves in writing, and to educate students how to employ suitable and harmonious forms in written expression. Writing is a necessary procedure that uses symbols to record, transmit, and accommodate desires to be communicated to others. Writing may also be described as the act of communicating using written language as a tool or medium. Thus, writing may be defined as an indirect method of communication in the form of transmitting concepts via the use of language structure, graphology, and vocabulary with symbols that can be understood as what the symbols represent. Writing is a method of documenting language by placing signals on a visible surface. Writing may also involve communicating facts, ideas, views, emotions, and feelings in writing (Bakeer, 2018).

The use of language in essay writing is classified into five categories or fundamental features. For example, the written phrase must be clear or have the ability to generate double meaning, be succinct, and avoid extraneous kinds of repetition. It is also prudent to be courteous or reflect the writer's good faith and respect. Furthermore, the written phrase

must be correct, conveying facts with proper language, spelling, punctuation, and formatting. Furthermore, the phrases are carefully picked to construct the reader's perspective with nice and clear media.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative research design. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand the process of designing effective authentic assessments in measuring students' higher order thinking skills in writing. A narrative research design is used to describe the steps required in designing authentic assessment and to analyze the benefits and challenges associated with using authentic assessment in the context of learning to write.

This study analyzes writing related to the design of thinking skills in writing which is managed by a library in the form of a journal. The publication of the journal under study was searched for in May 2023 on the Google and Libgen databases. The journal you are looking for has a publication period from 2009 to 2020. The search strategy uses keywords such as "assessment in writing", and "high-order thinking skills in writing".

**Table 1. Article's Review**

No	Articles
1	Lynette Pretorius, Greg P. van Mourik, and Catherine Barratt. 2017. <i>Student Choice and Higher-Order Thinking: Using a Novel Flexible Assessment Regime Combined with Critical Thinking Activities to Encourage the Development of Higher Order Thinking</i> . Volume 29. Monash University: International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. <a href="#">autentik order thinking (2).pdf</a>
2	Setyani Rohmatul Muthohharoh, Dwi Anggani Linggar Bharati and Fahrur Rozi. 2020. <i>The Implementation of Authentic Assessment to Assess Students' Higher Order Thinking Skills in Writing at MAN 2 Tulungagung</i> . English Education Journal. <a href="#">The Implementation of Authentic Assessment to Assess Students' Higher Order Thinking Skills in Writing at MAN 2 Tulungagung (2).pdf</a> <a href="https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/eej/article/view/36590">https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/eej/article/view/36590</a>
3	Sri Sarwanti. 2015. <i>Authentic Assesment in Writing</i> . Volume 11. Transformatika. <a href="https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/145603856.pdf">https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/145603856.pdf</a>
4	Thuong Thi Kim Nguyen and Huyen Minh Phan. 2020. <i>Authentic Assessment: A RealLife Approach to Writing Skill Development</i> . Vol. 2(1), pp. 20-30. International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences. <a href="https://fepbl.com/index.php/ijarss/article/view/97">https://fepbl.com/index.php/ijarss/article/view/97</a>
5	Lilis Lisdawati & Amalul Umam. 2022. <i>Promoting HOTS and critical thinking to English students of higher education through authentic assessment</i> . Vol. 2, No. 1, 2022, 15-25. Erudita: Journal of English Language Teaching. <a href="file:///C:/Users/Asus/Downloads/5289-Article%20Text-19141-1-10-20220726.pdf">file:///C:/Users/Asus/Downloads/5289-Article%20Text-19141-1-10-20220726.pdf</a>
6	Razmawaty Mohamed and Othman Lebar. 2017. <i>Authentic Assessment in Assessing Higher Order Thinking Skills</i> . Vol. 7, No. 2. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences <a href="https://ir.upsi.edu.my/files/docs/2020/4130_4130.pdf">https://ir.upsi.edu.my/files/docs/2020/4130_4130.pdf</a>



7	Juuso Henrik Nieminen, Margaret Bearman and Rola Ajjawi. 2022. <i>Designing the digital in authentic assessment: is it fit for purpose?</i> . <a href="https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=id&amp;as_sdt=0%2C5&amp;q=Juuso+Henrik+Nieminen%2C+Margaret+Bearman+and+Rola+Ajjawi.+2022.+Designing+the+digital+in+authentic+assessment%3A+is+it+fit+for+purpose%3F.&amp;btnG=">https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=id&amp;as_sdt=0%2C5&amp;q=Juuso+Henrik+Nieminen%2C+Margaret+Bearman+and+Rola+Ajjawi.+2022.+Designing+the+digital+in+authentic+assessment%3A+is+it+fit+for+purpose%3F.&amp;btnG=</a>
8	Verónica Villarroel, Daniela Brun, Gavin T. L. Brown, and Claudio Bustos. 2021. <i>Changing the Quality of Teachers' Written Tests by implementing an Authentic Assessment Teachers' Training Program</i> . <a href="https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1291102">https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1291102</a>
9	Faisal, Elvi Mailani, Stelly Martha Lova, and Husna P. Tambunan. 2019. Portrait of The Effectiveness of Authentic Assessment Based on High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Elementary School of Medan. Vol. 335. Atlantis Press. <a href="file:///C:/Users/Asus/Downloads/125914622.pdf">file:///C:/Users/Asus/Downloads/125914622.pdf</a>
10	Yuli Novita Sari, Isda Pramuniati, and M. Oky Fardian Gafari. 2019. <i>Developing an Authentic Assessment Instrument of Exposition Text Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Class X Students of Senior High School</i> . <a href="http://digilib.unimed.ac.id/38512/">http://digilib.unimed.ac.id/38512/</a>
11	Putu Sri Warmadewi, Dewa Ayu Eka Agustini, & Nyoman Karina Wedhanti. 2019. <i>Analysis of Learning Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) Toward English Subject</i> . <a href="https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/JPPSH/article/view/21278">https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/JPPSH/article/view/21278</a>
12	Yousef Abosalem. 2016. <i>Assessment Techniques and Students' Higher-Order Thinking Skills</i> . <a href="https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/43701481/Assessment+Techniques+and+Students+Higher-Order+Thinking+Skills-libre.pdf">https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/43701481/Assessment Techniques and Students Higher-Order Thinking Skills-libre.pdf</a>
13	Muhammad Wildan Hakim & Dina Merris Maya Sari . 2022. <i>Practicing Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach to Enhance Students' Higher Order Thinking Skill on Writing Ability</i> . <a href="http://journal.unilak.ac.id/index.php/elsya/article/view/11541">http://journal.unilak.ac.id/index.php/elsya/article/view/11541</a>

## FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 2. Article's Finding**

No.	Article's Title	Findings	Author
1	Student Choice and Higher-Order Thinking: Using a Novel Flexible Assessment Regime Combined with Critical Thinking Activities to Encourage the Development of Higher Order Thinking	✓ This article describes an evaluation of the flexible assessment approach using a mixed-method quantitative and qualitative research design. Quantitative data were obtained using an anonymous online survey created using Google Forms.	Lynette Pretorius, Greg P. van Mourik, and Catherine Barratt(2017)

2	The Implementation of Authentic Assessment to Assess Students' Higher Order Thinking Skills in Writing at MAN 2 Tulungagung	✓ The findings of this articles revealed that in implementing authentic assessment to assess students' Higher Order Thinking Skills, these two English teachers did not share scoring rubrics and implement self-assessment for the students because of time limitation. To overcome the difficulties in implementing the authentic assessment, they manage time effectively and efficiently.	Setyani Rohmatul Muthohharoh, Dwi Anggani Linggar Bharati and Fahrur Rozi. (2020)
3	Authentic Assesment in Writing	✓ This article showed of assessment in the teaching learning process does undergo crucial paradigm shifts. This condition indeed influenced the improvement of the way teachers assess their students' performances. By understanding the paradigm shift, teachers are now wiser to determine what is the most appropriate model of assessment done to the students. Rubrics will help teachers much in doing the assessment.	Sri Sarwanti(2015)
4	Authentic Assessment: A real life Approach to Writing Skill Development	<p>✓ This article is going to advocate authentic assessments as it fosters students' growth and teachers' pedagogical strategies. In addition, it helps to reach the goals of educational practices through the authenticity of equity and innovation when students actively seek their own ways to appreciate what they have learnt.</p> <p>✓ The result of the study revealed that using authentic assessment is an effective strategy for enhancing students' interest in writing process and writing task fulfillment. Students would find it easier to become skillful writers at their English levels.</p>	Thuong Thi Kim Nguyen and Huyen Minh Phan. (2020)

5	Promoting HOTS and critical thinking to English students of higher education through authentic assessment	✓ This article used qualitative descriptive approach by giving participants a bunch of discussion in a form of interview where the participants were four college students from a private university in Bogor. The result of this study showed that authentic assessment promotes English students' critical thinking and HOTS through the activity where they were able to explore and reflect their comprehension to their situation and make a product related to their learning.	Lilis Lisdawati & Amalul Umam. (2022)
6	Authentic Assessment in Assessing Higher Order Thinking Skills.	✓ This article covers concepts and definitions of authentic assessments and higher order thinking skills. Authentic assessments are a form of alternative assessment. The methodology used for this literature review was adapted from the Systematic Guide to Literature Review by Okoli & Schabram. The results of this literature review shows that authentic assessments have potential to measure higher- order thinking skills among students.	Razmawaty Mohamed and Othman Lebar. (2017).
7	Designing the digital in authentic assessment: is it fit for purpose?	<p>✓ This Article that despite the growing number of publications on digitally mediated authentic assessment, the digital world was largely not accounted for, and many of these did so at an instrumental level.</p> <p>✓ Authentic assessment research has sought to connect assessment in higher education with the requirements of students' disciplines and future professions; it is only through a proper understanding of its digital dimensions, that authentic assessment designs can meaningfully prepare students for the digital world.</p>	Juuso Henrik Nieminen, Margaret Bearman and Rola Ajjawi. (2022).



8	Changing the Quality of Teachers' Written Tests by implementing an Authentic Assessment Teachers' Training Program	<p>✓ This case study aimed to change the construction of teachers' written tests so that items were designed to assess competencies in an authentic and challenging way.</p> <p>✓ The results showed written tests had: a) more open-response items of higher cognitive complexity, b) fewer items requiring closed, memorized responses, c) more use of realistic contexts to measure knowledge in a situated way, and d) improvement in curriculum alignment of tests and greater consistency in measuring competencies.</p>	Verónica Villarroel, Daniela Brun, Gavin T. L. Brown, and Claudio Bustos. (2021).
9	Portrait of The Effectiveness of Authentic Assessment Based on High Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Elementary School of Medan.	<p>✓ Based on these findings, it is concluded that the implementation of authentic HOTS-based assessments in elementary schools of Medan has not been effective.</p> <p>✓ Thus, this study recommends that a comprehensive follow-up effort from various parties be needed, especially in improving teacher competence in formulating assessment instruments oriented to high-level thinking skills in elementary schools of Medan.</p>	Faisal, Elvi Mailani, Stelly Martha Lova, and Husna P. Tambunan. (2019)
10	Developing an Authentic Assessment Instrument of Exposition Text Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Class X Students of Senior High School. Developing an Authentic Assessment Instrument of Exposition Text Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Class X Students of Senior High School. Analysis of Learning Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) Toward English Subject	<p>✓ This article used the type of research was Research and Development, using the Borgand Gall research model.</p> <p>✓ According to Tegeh et al. (2014), development research is a research method that is powerful enough to improve learning practices, with the aim of developing new products or improving existing products to be accountable.</p> <p>✓ The results of the teacher's assessment of the assessment instrument obtained a score of 109 with a percentage of 88% or in very good criteria; this means that the assessment instrument did not need to be improved. The average percentage of assessment in individual trials on HOTS-based assessment instruments was 73%. The average percentage of</p>	Yuli Novita Sari, Isda Pramuniati, and M. Oky Fardian Gafari. (2019). Yuli Novita Sari, Isda Pramuniati, and M. Oky Fardian Gafari. (2019). Putu Sri Warmadewi, Dewa Ayu Eka Agustini, & Nyoman Karina Wedhanti. (2019).

		assessment in small group trials on HOTS-based assessment instruments was 78.86%. Based on the results of the assessment on the exposition text material, individual trials and small group tests were in good criteria with little revision.	
11	Analysis of Learning Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) Toward English Subject	<p>✓ This article used qualitative research employing a document study design. The subject of this study was the English teacher in SMA Negeri 2 Banjar. The data were collected qualitatively through observation, documentation and interview.</p> <p>✓ The results showed that Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) was not expressed in the whole of the lesson plan and the assessment, it was covered in several parts of the lesson plan as well as the assessment. The results of the implication for the English teacher to develop the implementation of Higher Order Thinking (HOT) in the content of the lesson plan and assessment holistically.</p>	Putu Sri Warmadewi, Dewa Ayu Eka Agustini, & Nyoman Karina Wedhanti. (2019).
12	Assessment Techniques and Students' Higher- Order Thinking Skills. Assessment Techniques and Students' Higher- Order Thinking Skills. Practicing Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach to Enhance Students' Higher Order Thinking Skill on Writing Ability	<p>✓ This article it may be said that although traditional paper and pencil tests are still effective for assessing some student skills such as listening, because they can be measured, and the measurements can be used to compare students, schools, districts, states and countries.</p> <p>✓ However, they fail to assess student's productive skills (e.g. writing or speaking) and to prepare students for the real world. Paper and pencil tests (e.g., completion, true-false, matching, multiple choices, short answer, essay, etc.).</p>	Yousef Abosalem. (2016)  Yousef Abosalem. (2016) Muhammad Wildan Hakim & Dina Merris Maya Sari. (2022)

13	Practicing Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach to Enhance Students' Higher Order Thinking Skill on Writing Ability	✓ This article findings revealed that the contextual teaching and learning approach was successful to enhance students' higher order thinking skill in writing ability. Moreover, it is recommended that CTL and higher order thinking skill have significant influence toward writing ability	Muhammad Wildan Hakim & Dina Merris MayaSari. (2022)
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## CONCLUSIONS

The present study highlighted the importance of authentic assessment to support students' learning. Authentic assessment is an effective measure of intellectual achievement or ability because it requires students to demonstrate their in-depth understanding, higher-order thinking, and complex problem-solving through the performance of exemplary tasks (Koh, 2017).

The change in the area of learning assessment is very challenging, because some teachers are reluctant to transform their practices and instruments, and because some institutions do not offer the conditions to support academic skills in writing test items and tasks that are realistic and require complex cognition. There is also resistance on the part of the students themselves, who from their academic experience have concluded that learning is memorizing, and since they have been successful in conventional methods, they do not want to threaten their performance with innovations in assessment (Struyven & Devesa, 2016).

The findings to construction of teachers' written tests to achieve design items to assess competencies in an authentic and challenging way, and that was achieved. This training study shows that it is possible to make changes within the testing and examination practices of the classroom, especially when the training is of a practical nature, allowing application of what has been learned and receiving feedback on how to improve. The results of the implication for the English teacher to develop the implementation of Higher Order Thinking (HOT) in the content of the lesson plan and assessment holistically.

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