

Section 1:

#1 Strengths: Your use of vivid imagery in the opening paragraph effectively establishes the emotional impact of traditional exams. Your parallel structure in "prioritizes memorization over understanding, pressure over creativity, and fear over genuine learning" creates a powerful rhythm.

Weakness: Limited evidence → You make a sweeping claim about the reality of exams without acknowledging variation in student experiences. The phrase "This is the reality of traditional exams" presents opinion as fact without supporting evidence. Consider acknowledging that while many students experience anxiety during exams, responses vary, which would strengthen your credibility.

Exemplar: *Picture a classroom where many students experience anxiety during exams—a common scenario that highlights how traditional assessment often emphasises memorisation over deeper understanding.*

#2 Strengths: Your concrete example of a physics student designing a roller coaster model provides a clear illustration of project-based learning. You effectively contrast the short-term nature of exam preparation with the sustained engagement of projects.

Weakness: Underdeveloped comparison → Your comparison between projects and exams lacks specific details about how projects promote retention. The phrase "cements concepts far more effectively" makes a claim without explaining the mechanism. Include specific aspects of project work that contribute to better knowledge retention.

Exemplar: *Projects require students to apply concepts repeatedly through planning, testing and refining their work, helping them connect theory to practice—something a physics student experiences when calculating and adjusting the forces in their roller coaster model.*

#3 Strengths: Your parallel classroom scenes create a compelling visual contrast between exam and project environments. The phrase "This is not chaos—it is creation" effectively addresses a potential counterargument.

Weakness: Oversimplified conclusion → Your final paragraph presents an all-or-nothing approach without acknowledging potential middle ground. The phrase "leave behind the test and embrace the project" suggests complete replacement rather than balanced integration. Consider how both assessment types might work together in a comprehensive system.

Exemplar: *While projects should become our primary assessment tool, strategically placed short assessments might still serve as useful checkpoints, creating an educational approach that balances innovation with accountability.*

■ Your piece presents a passionate case for project-based assessments with some compelling examples and vivid imagery. To improve the depth of your argument, consider addressing counterarguments more thoroughly in paragraphs 4 and 5. Rather than briefly mentioning critics' concerns about fairness and time constraints, engage with these points by showing specifically how well-designed projects can overcome these challenges. Also, your second body paragraph about real-world skills would be stronger with an example of how specific industries or universities value these project-based skills. You could include a brief mention of how a university admissions officer or employer might view a portfolio of projects versus exam results. Additionally, your claim about mental health benefits needs more support—perhaps mention studies or specific examples of how project assessment has improved student wellbeing in schools that have implemented this approach. Remember to keep your tone balanced by acknowledging that some traditional assessment might still have value in specific situations.

Score: 42/50

Section 2:

Schools should replace traditional exams with project-based assessments

Schools should replace traditional exams with project-based assessments because they foster deeper learning, develop essential life skills, and reduce student stress.

#1 Picture a classroom filled with students, their minds clouded with anxiety, fingers trembling as they clutch their pencils. This is the reality of traditional exams—a system that prioritizes memorization over understanding, pressure over creativity, and fear over genuine learning. Schools must replace traditional exams with project-based assessments to foster deeper learning, develop essential life skills, and reduce student stress.

First, project-based assessments promote meaningful learning. Exams often encourage cramming, where students absorb information for a short period only to forget it soon after. In contrast, projects require sustained engagement, research, and application, ensuring that students truly understand and retain knowledge. Imagine a physics student designing a roller coaster model instead of memorizing formulas—this hands-on experience cements concepts far more effectively than a timed test ever could.

Second, projects cultivate real-world skills that exams fail to measure. Success in life depends on teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving—skills that filling in bubbles on a test cannot develop. A student tasked with creating a business plan or engineering a water filtration system must collaborate, manage time, and think critically. These are the very abilities demanded by future employers and universities, making project-based assessments a superior preparation for life beyond school.

Most importantly, project-based assessments reduce stress and support mental health. Exams create high-pressure environments where a single mistake can ruin months of effort. Anxiety, panic attacks, and burnout are common, especially among high-achieving students. In contrast, projects allow time for reflection, revisions, and teacher feedback. Students can work at their own pace, express themselves creatively, and learn from mistakes—turning education into a journey rather than a race.

Critics argue that exams ensure fairness and ~~standardization~~ [standardisation], but structured rubrics and checkpoints can make projects equally objective. Others worry that projects require too much time and effort, yet the payoff is undeniable: increased engagement, deeper learning, and better preparation for the future.

#3 Imagine two classrooms. In one, students sit in rigid rows, heads down, hearts racing, surrounded by silence and ticking clocks. In the other, students are sketching designs, debating ideas, building prototypes, rehearsing presentations. This is not chaos—it is creation. It is learning in motion.

The time has come to leave behind the test and embrace the project. For our students' future, it's the only choice that makes sense.