THE SMART STUDENT *by Tom Charles* **Issue #03-2023**

A Motivational Newsletter for High School Students

How to Improve in your Worst Performing Subjects

So, what's your worst performing subject?
Is it Chem? Is it Bio? Is it Math? Is it Kiswahili? Or is it Physics?
A better question is, what's your plan to ensure you improve in that given subject?

Poor performance in a given subject is a result of negative attitudes, poor study and revision habits, negative influence, lack of interest, distraction among other issues. Most significantly, poor performance is reinforced when we receive our results with low grades, convince ourselves we should not have wasted time studying or revising in the first place and then develop the mindset that it's a waste of time studying that subject because you tried and still failed. Let me share with you a wonderful formular to have in mind, then we'll see what exactly you're going to do to improve in your "terrible" subjects

Event + Response = Outcome (E+R=O)

Event is what happens to you, and what happens to you, happens to most other people too. Losing a parent, staying home because of fee problem, receiving your terrible results, getting sick, being punished in front of other students, having an embarrassing moment, being taken to a day school instead of the extra-county school you were invited to, being sponsored for your high school education or... (add to the list). Event is something happening to you. Now, your response is what influences everything else. Two people can go through the same circumstances and come out totally different because of their responses. Siblings are raised by an alcoholic father; one vows to never taste alcohol because his father was alcoholic and he never wants to be such a person; the other becomes alcoholic because his father was alcoholic and that's the model he had. Same event, different responses, different outcomes in terms of the kind of people they become. It is our response to the events, that leads to an outcome. Two students from poor background, one uses it as a motivation to work hard, the other uses it as an excuse for poor performance. Two students receive Chemistry results, both of them got 13%. One says; "I knew it, there's no way I can pass Chem, *hata ningelala tu.*" So, he/she stops studying, revising the subject or even concentrating in class, he/she has given up and thinks; "*ikuje vile itakuja*" The other says; "If I'm to achieve my goals, I must do something to improve in this subject." So, he/she starts revising, allocates extra time for the subject, consults the teachers, concentrates more in class, asks and tries to answer questions in class, joins a group discussion for the subject, does personal tests and gives the subject teacher for marking, sets weekly study targets, get interested in the subject, develops a positive attitude and... (add to the list). At the end of the term, one's performance is worse, the other's performance is better.

To change your outcome, don't focus on the "event" focus on your "response" don't focus on what happened, focus on what you're going to do about it.

(Event) 13% in Chem	**Response 1:** Leave Chem alone, spend time for Chem studying "booster" subjects, stop revising, consulting, studying...	**Outcome 1:** 09% at the end of the term
	Response 2: stop making jokes about the subject, follow your timetable strictly to study it, concentrate in class, revise past papers, join a serious group discussion...	**Outcome 2:** 25% at the end of the term

To Do: Pick your two worst performing subjects and allocate 15 minutes of revision time first thing in the morning (dawns) for the first subject and first thing in the evening (preps) for the other, do that every single day. Weekend or weekday, at school or at home. Change your response and you'll change your grades.
Cheers!!!

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