easy for you. The first thing that most Bangladeshi students do when they see their work with lots of writing in red pen on it is to want to hide it or throw it away, or put it in their bag and forget about it. There is a very strong habit of denial about mistakes but you must fight this if you are going to be good people and well-educated people.

There is no shame in making mistakes. When we are learning, it is OK to make mistakes. How many of you have baby brothers and sisters? Do you remember when they were learning to walk - how often they fell over? You did not say, "What a stupid baby!" You smiled and picked them up and they tried again. Of course, babies who are learning to walk, fall over! They are learning! It is natural to make mistakes if you are a learner! Don't hide your exam papers. *Look* at the mistakes, see *why* they are mistakes and correct them. Write out the spelling mistakes at least 3 times so that you never misspell that word again. Understand how the brain works of the examiner. . . You may have written a brilliant composition and got zero! Why? Because you did not read the question carefully and you did not write what the question asked for! *Look* at those STUPID mistakes and resolve that you will *never* waste marks in that way again. *Look* at the SERIOUS mistakes and revise any part of the subject that you did not understand properly. *Ask* the teacher about any correction that you do not understand.

IF you do all these things, then, examination by examination, you will develop your examination technique so that when you take your O levels or any other exam you want to take, you will not waste any marks. Learn from your mistakes so that you do not make the same mistakes again and again and again. Your teachers are here to help you to do your corrections but they cannot do their corrections for you. YOU have to do them!

But it is not only in examinations that we have to learn from our mistakes. We should be learning every day, not to make the same mistake again and again. If we use our water bottle and do

not screw the top back on it and we leave it on our desk and someone bumps the desk and all the water spills out, then I hope we remember, in the future, to screw the top back on it! If we go out with some friends and do not come back home at the time we told our parents that we would come back and they are very worried and angry and upset, then you will have to learn that it can take a long time to re-build your parents' trust in you. If you behave in a responsible way with the little freedoms that they give you now, you *may* be lucky if you ask for bigger freedoms later! Learn from the mistakes you make. God bless you.

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THE DANCE EXTRAVAGANZA

Assembly 65 - May 6th 2003

Please can the girls of the dance teams come and stand at the front?

Yesterday evening, our two school minibuses went to the International School, Baridhara for the Dance Extravaganza. Eight English - medium schools were taking part and we were by far the newest. Our school is only 3 ½ years old and some of these other schools have been developing their dancing teams and events for years and years and years. We had two teams - one under 10 and one older - and it was a great challenge to them and some were very nervous. We met in the large baseball court area where a carpeted stage had been set up and all the right lighting and sound systems. The event had been sponsored by two commercial companies - Keya cosmetics and the Afsar Group. A professional dancer called Benazir Salam opened the performances just to show us what standards a professional dancer has. There were a lot of special guests and lots of parents, teachers and pupils and, of course, hundreds of performers.

It was an amazing evening for two reasons. Firstly, it was a very happy event with lots of dance teams doing either traditional or modern dances in their own way. Some had practiced only for a short time but just had a lot of fun - and some had obviously practised for hours and hours - but all the children were very happy to take part and gave a lot of pleasure to the audience.

The second reason why this was an amazing evening was that the standard of most of the dancing was very high indeed. When I said to a representative of one exceptional school, "Your girls must have practised so hard," she said, "Just for 2 weeks in their lunch hours," and I did not believe her! What *we* can be so proud of, is that our own two teams looked wonderful and danced wonderfully and we are very proud of them indeed.

All the teams doing the traditional dances looked stunning. I have to say, Bengali girls know how to look stunning! Their make-up, their jewelry (the jewelry boxes of all their female relatives must have been empty of gold ornaments!) and the design and colour of their clothes made them look breathtakingly beautiful even before they began to dance. Each dance was to different music, a different style and different mood. When they danced, each girl danced in her own special way and they moved wonderfully. The audience clapped and cheered and murmured their thanks and congratulations all through the evening and their cameras flashed. I hope such an event may become a regular one.

When this event was first suggested, at the very first meeting of English-medium schools that I attended, the International School, who hosted it, wanted it to be a competition and nearly all the Principals there shouted, "NO!" A competition would have spoiled the atmosphere. There would be tears from the losers! No, it was lovely as it was. The big news is - that you and your parents will have the chance to see our girls dancing on Saturday morning at our cultural event in the Upper Assembly Room beginning just after 8.30am - so please tell your parents to be there. Your

grannies and uncles can come too, if they can get up the stairs. If people are not there, they will miss a real treat. Yesterday, all pupils were given invitations to give to their parents to inform them of the Saturday meeting. How many of you remembered to give it to them? If you were absent yesterday, get your invitation from the office or Form teachers give out some extra copies. Be there on Saturday! Don't miss the dancing!

Now we have some presents to give to the girls in the two teams - tea-shirts to commemorate the extravaganza - and let us congratulate them all as we give them. And please can we first give a very grateful and admiring clap, to their trainer, Miss Nehreen Khan who has put so much of her very creative time and work into this event.

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PREPARING TO HOST A MEETING

Assembly 66 – May 7th 2003

A friend of mine wants a puppy, a baby dog, for his little boy, who is 5 years old. Little Joshua is studying in our Reception class by distance learning because his father is the Indian Headmaster at the Mission High School in Haluaghat where I taught for 3 years. I wonder if any of you could help me find the right puppy for Joshua. It would have to be a puppy that has had all its right vaccinations – the injections against diseases - and has a good character suitable for the pet of a small child. And it must not be too big, because they live in a flat, and not too small because my other doggy friends there may think he was breakfast if he was too small – and eat him! He must be able to defend himself. He should not be a fancy bideshi dog because this dog will not be a fashion statement or a prestige object but a real pet. St Andrew's is a lovely old Mission campus with hostels and