

These are the errors that appear year after year in examiner reports. Knowing *what not to write* is just as important as knowing what to write. ★ marks Higher Tier only. Every mistake here has cost students marks in real exams.

Exchange Surfaces and Digestion

■ **Students often write:** *"Alveoli are adapted for gas exchange mainly because they are large."*

✓ **Correct answer:** Alveoli have several adaptations working together: large TOTAL surface area (millions of alveoli), thin walls (one cell thick = short diffusion distance), moist lining (gases dissolve), dense capillary network (maintains concentration gradient).

■ **Examiner insight:** Never give just one adaptation. The full list for 4 marks: large SA + thin walls + moist lining + good blood supply. Missing any one of these in a 4-mark question loses a mark.

■ **Students often write:** *"Bile digests fat in the small intestine."*

✓ **Correct answer:** Bile does NOT digest fat chemically — it EMULSIFIES it (physically breaks large fat droplets into small ones). LIPASE is the enzyme that chemically digests fat into fatty acids and glycerol.

■ **Examiner insight:** Bile = emulsifier (physical). Lipase = enzyme (chemical digestion). Bile makes fat digestion faster by increasing surface area for lipase. Bile is not an enzyme and does not break chemical bonds.