# **Guide Through Complexity**

What Makes Good Supervision for Hard Reasoning Tasks?

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Model (up to 2024 Sept)	AIME/%	OlympicArena/ %
Claude-3.5-Sonnet	10.0	23.2
GPT-4o (2024-08-06)	14.0	28.3
Grok-2	15.2	-
GPT-4o-mini	11.5	27.4
Gemini-1.5-Flash	17.5	-
Gemini-1.5-Pro	13.7	20.0
Llama-3-70B-Instruct	-	11.9



- How can we further effectively supervise these AI systems on super-hard tasks?
- Or, what supervision data should "weak teacher models", like humans and current LLMs, annotate or synthesize?



• From perspective of data, two directions:

Strategy 1: annotate on hard task for supervision



Strategy 2: annotate on easy task for supervision



From perspective of data, two directions:

Strategy 1: annotate on hard task for supervision

Pros: The reasoning difficulty matches with our studied downstream tasks

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Cons: Quality may be low since they're challenging for humans/current models to annotate

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From perspective of data, two directions:

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Pros: The reasoning difficulty matches with our studied downstream tasks

for huma

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Strategy 2: annotate on easy task for supervision

Pros: Quality will be higher since they're simpler to handle

Cons: Difficulty level of training data does not match with test

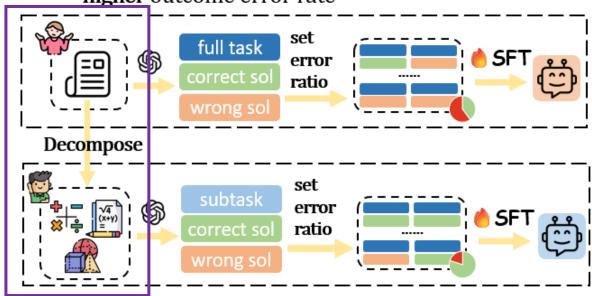


- Compare the 2 strategies in a simulated setting
  - 1. Decompose subtasks from hard math problems, original task -> hard task (strategy 1), subtask -> easy task (strategy 2)

#### New setting

Hard full task supervision data with

higher outcome error rate







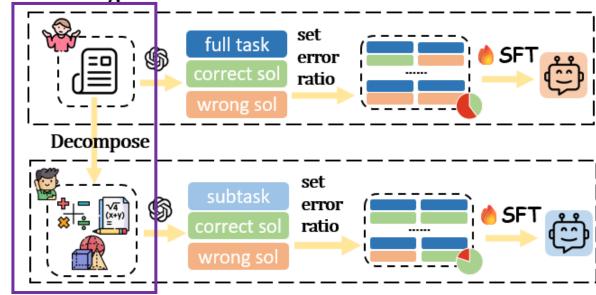
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**Key point 1**: Hard task is **strictly more complex** than easy task due to decomposition

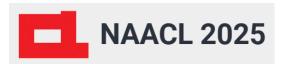
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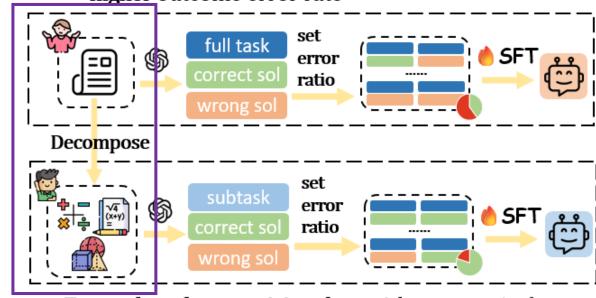
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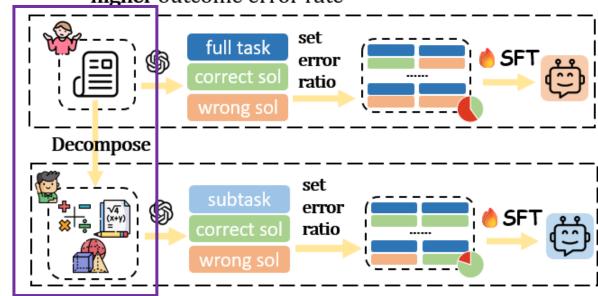
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 K1&2 make the comparison fairer, which are ignored by most previous works

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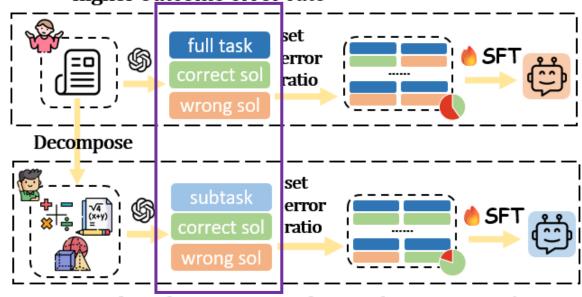




- Compare the 2 strategies in a simulated setting
  - 2. **Generate** correct & incorrect solutions (check final result of the solution to judge the correctness)

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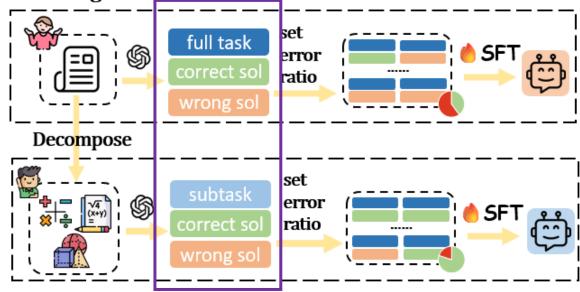
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Make sure all full-task and subtask have one correct solution and one wrong solution.

#### New setting

Hard full task supervision data with

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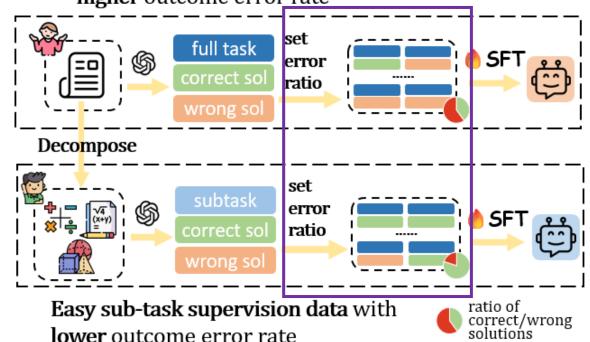




- Compare the 2 strategies in a simulated setting
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  - 3. Control supervision quality by replacing part of correct sols with incorrect ones

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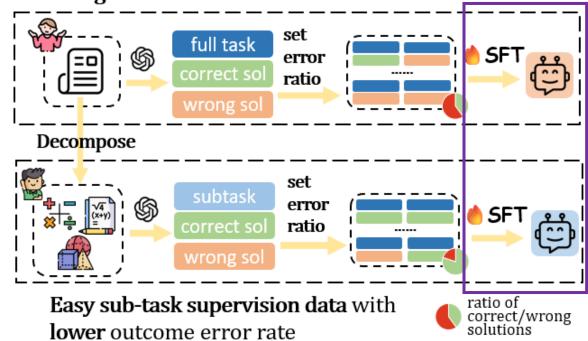




- Compare the 2 strategies in a simulated setting
  - 2. **Generate** correct & incorrect solutions (check final result of the solution to judge the correctness)
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  - 4. Conduct **Supervised Fine-Tuning** (SFT) on the two types of data.

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Hard full task supervision data with higher outcome error rate





#### • Test finetuned models

• 5 hard math test sets: MATH-500, Olympic-Arena, SAT, JEE-Bench, Gaokao-math-cloze

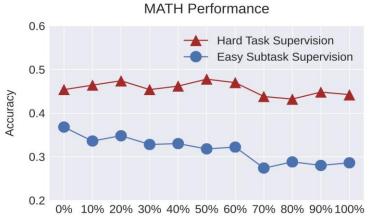
Test Tasks	Sizes	Difficulty
MATH	500	high school competition
JEE-Bench	163	high school & college
Olympic-Arena	213	Olympiad competition
SAT-Math	220	college entrance exam
Gaokao-Mathcloze	118	college entrance exam



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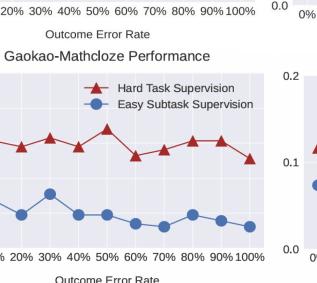
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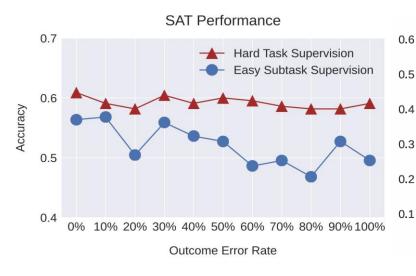


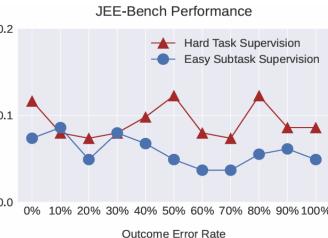
Outcome Error Rate

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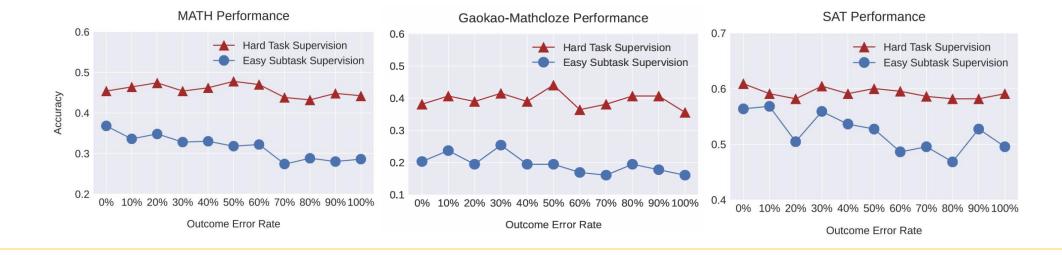




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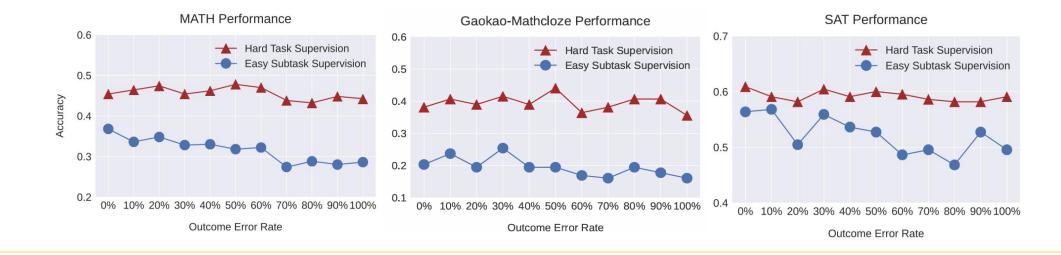


 Observation-1: Hard task supervision consistently outperforms subtask supervision, even with higher outcome error rates



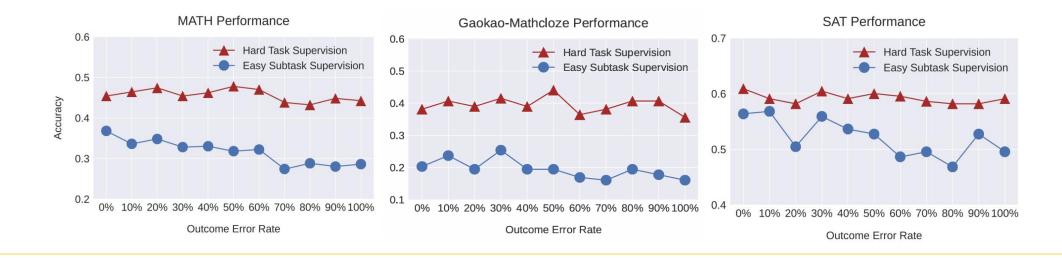


- Observation-1: Hard task supervision consistently outperforms subtask supervision, even with higher outcome error rates
- Observation-2: Performance does not consistently degrade with increasing outcome error rates





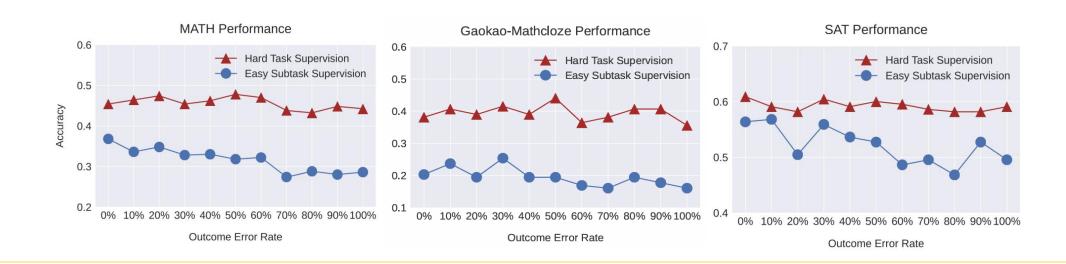
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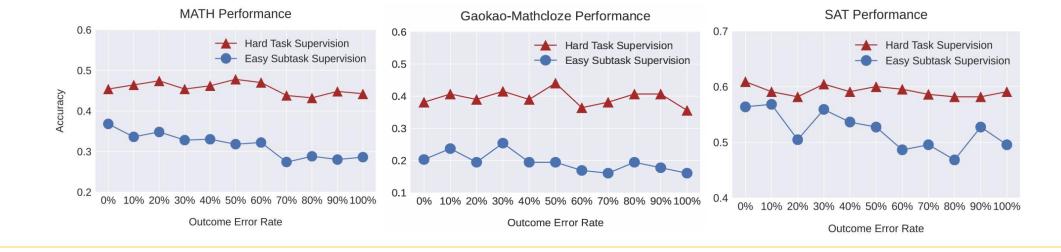
#### Why does these happen?





- Observation Summary
  - Irrespective of outcome ER, hard task supervision outperforms subtask one and is robust across varying quality levels.

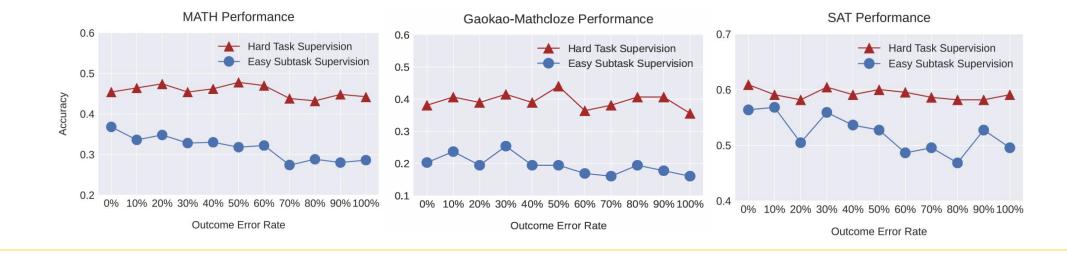






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  - In domains requiring long-form reasoning, outcome error rate MAY NOT be a reliable indicator for supervision quality.

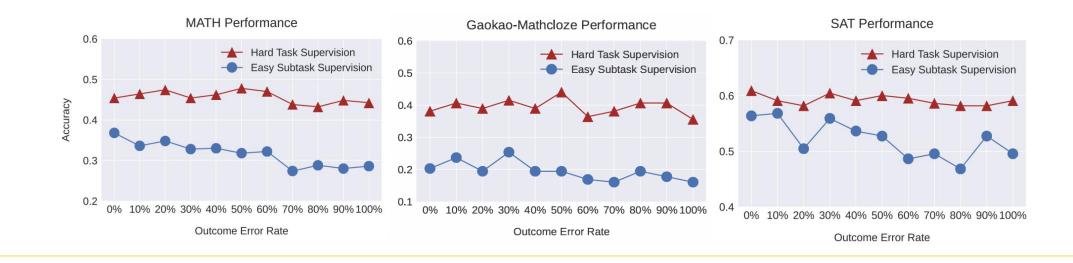






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  - Look deeper into "severity of wrong solution". Try using ratio of incorrect steps or "step-wise error rate"!







- Control the previous metric outcome error rate,
  but vary the new metric step-wise error rate.
  - Use "weaker teacher models" like GPT-3.5-turbo, Command-R to generate solutions with more incorrect intermediate steps.

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Human evaluation result on 50 problems:

Teacher models	Step-wise Error Ratio (%)
GPT-4o-mini	11.7
Llama-3-70B-Instruct	30.2
Command-R-2024-08	40.0
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from

GPT-40-mini

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#### Solution:

Let's denote the position vectors of points A, B, and C as  $\overrightarrow{A}$ ,  $\overrightarrow{B}$ , and  $\overrightarrow{C}$  respectively. The position vector of the centroid G of triangle ABC is given by:

$$\vec{G} = \frac{1}{3}(\vec{A} + \vec{B} + \vec{C})$$
 (Step 1: correct)

We can express  $\overrightarrow{GA}$ ,  $\overrightarrow{GB}$ , and  $\overrightarrow{GC}$  as follows:

$$\overrightarrow{GA} = \overrightarrow{A} - \overrightarrow{G} = \overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}(\overrightarrow{A} + \overrightarrow{B} + \overrightarrow{C}) = \frac{2}{3}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{B} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{C}$$
 (Step 2: correct)

$$\overrightarrow{GB} = \overrightarrow{B} - \overrightarrow{G} = \frac{2}{3}\overrightarrow{B} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{C}$$
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$$\overrightarrow{GC} = \overrightarrow{C} - \overrightarrow{G} = \frac{2}{3}\overrightarrow{C} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{B}$$
 (Step 4: correct)

Substituting these into the given equation:

 $\frac{a}{5}\overrightarrow{GA} + \frac{b}{7}\overrightarrow{GB} + \frac{c}{8}\overrightarrow{GC} = \overrightarrow{0}$  (Step 5: correct)

This becomes

$$\frac{a}{5}\left(\frac{2}{3}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{B} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{C}\right) + \frac{b}{7}\left(\frac{2}{3}\overrightarrow{B} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{C}\right) + \frac{c}{8}\left(\frac{2}{3}\overrightarrow{C} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{1}{3}\overrightarrow{B}\right) = \overrightarrow{0} \text{ (Step 6: correct)}$$

Combining the terms gives

$$\frac{2a}{15}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{a}{15}\overrightarrow{B} - \frac{a}{15}\overrightarrow{C} + \frac{2b}{21}\overrightarrow{B} - \frac{b}{21}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{b}{21}\overrightarrow{C} + \frac{2c}{24}\overrightarrow{C} - \frac{c}{24}\overrightarrow{A} - \frac{c}{24}\overrightarrow{B} = \overrightarrow{0} \text{ (Step 7: correct)}$$

Collecting the coefficients of  $\overrightarrow{A}$ ,  $\overrightarrow{B}$ , and  $\overrightarrow{C}$ :

$$(\frac{2a}{15} - \frac{b}{21} - \frac{c}{24})\overrightarrow{A} + (-\frac{a}{15} + \frac{2b}{21} - \frac{c}{24})\overrightarrow{B} + (-\frac{a}{15} - \frac{b}{21} + \frac{2c}{24})\overrightarrow{C} = \overrightarrow{0}$$
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For this equation to hold, each coefficient must equal zero:

$$\tfrac{2a}{15} - \tfrac{b}{21} - \tfrac{c}{24} = 0, -\tfrac{a}{15} + \tfrac{2b}{21} - \tfrac{c}{24} = 0, -\tfrac{a}{15} - \tfrac{b}{21} + \tfrac{2c}{24} = 0$$

(Step 9: wrong, since  $\overrightarrow{A}$ ,  $\overrightarrow{B}$  and  $\overrightarrow{C}$  are all 2-D vectors, the expression  $\left(\frac{2a}{15} - \frac{b}{21} - \frac{c}{24}\right) \overrightarrow{A} + \left(-\frac{a}{15} + \frac{2b}{21} - \frac{c}{24}\right) \overrightarrow{B} + \left(-\frac{a}{15} - \frac{b}{21} + \frac{2c}{24}\right) \overrightarrow{C} = \overrightarrow{0}$  does not imply all the coefficients are zeros, there exist non-zero solutions for those coefficients.)

After solving, we can use the Law of Cosines to find the angle B.

### Finding Angle B:

To find B using the cosine rule:

$$\cos B = \frac{a^2 + c^2 - b^2}{2ac}$$
 (Step 10: correct)

From the relationships derived from the above equations, substituting a, b, and c will yield the angle B.

After computation, we find:

 $B = 90^{\circ}$  (Step 11: correct)

Thus, the measure of angle B is:

90°



from

from

Command-R

GPT-40-mini

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#### Solution:

From the given information, we have:

$$\frac{a}{5}\overrightarrow{GA} + \frac{b}{7}\overrightarrow{GB} + \frac{c}{8}\overrightarrow{GC} = \overrightarrow{0}$$

$$\implies \frac{a}{5} \cdot \frac{2\overrightarrow{HA}}{\sin A} + \frac{b}{7} \cdot \frac{2\overrightarrow{HB}}{\sin B} + \frac{c}{8} \cdot \frac{2\overrightarrow{HC}}{\sin C} = \overrightarrow{0} \text{ (Step 1: wrong, } \overrightarrow{HA}, \overrightarrow{HB}, \overrightarrow{HC} \text{ are not defined.)}$$

$$\implies \frac{2a}{5\sin A} \cdot \overrightarrow{HA} + \frac{2b}{7\sin B} \cdot \overrightarrow{HB} + \frac{2c}{8\sin C} \cdot \overrightarrow{HC} = \overrightarrow{0} \text{ (Step 2: correct)}$$

Since the three vectors  $\overrightarrow{HA}$ ,  $\overrightarrow{HB}$  and  $\overrightarrow{HC}$  are coplanar and sum to  $\overrightarrow{0}$ , the only way for their scaled versions above to also sum to  $\overrightarrow{0}$ , is for each of them to be zero individually. (Step 3: correct)

This means that: 
$$\frac{2a}{5\sin A} = 0 \implies \sin A = \frac{5a}{2}$$
 (Step 4: wrong,  $\sin A = \frac{5a}{2}$  can not be inferred from  $\frac{2a}{5\sin A} = 0$ .)

This also implies  $\sin B = \frac{5b}{2}$ ,  $\sin C = \frac{5c}{2}$ . (Step 5: wrong, the reason is same as above step.)

Using the fact that  $\sin A + \sin B + \sin C = 1$ , we get: (Step 6: wrong,  $\sin A + \sin B + \sin C = 1$  does not always hold for general cases.)

$$\frac{5a}{2} + \frac{5b}{2} + \frac{5c}{2} = 1 \implies \frac{5}{2}(a+b+c) = 1 \text{ (Step 7: correct)}$$

Since a+b+c is just twice the area of the triangle, we get that the area of  $\triangle ABC$  is  $\frac{1}{10}$ . (Step 8: wrong, it's not mentioned in the problem or we cannot infer that a+b+c is twice the area of the triangle)

In particular, this means that the angle B, which measures  $\frac{2\pi}{10}$ , or  $\boxed{12^{\circ}}$ , is the smallest angle of the three. (Step 9: wrong, we cannot infer from the above steps that angle B is  $\frac{2\pi}{10}$ . Also,  $\frac{2\pi}{10} \neq 12^{\circ}$ )



• Calculate the outcome error rate of "weaker teacher's supervision" (e.g. 87.7%), and select the supervision data from previous teacher (GPT-4o-mini) with closest outcome error rate (e.g. 90%).

from previous teacher (GPT-4o-mini)



from new "weaker" teacher (like Command-R)



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Almost the same outcome ER, but different step-wise ER



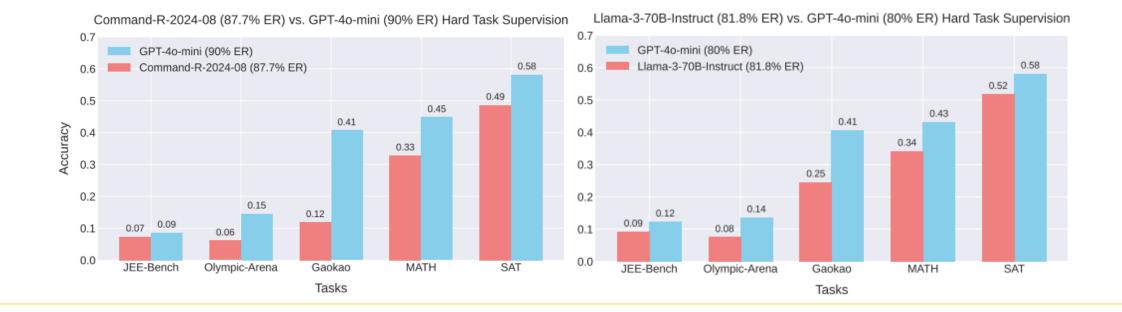
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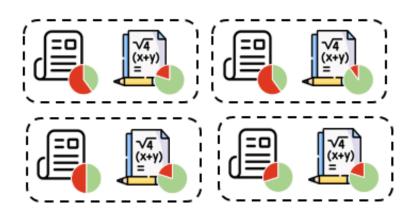
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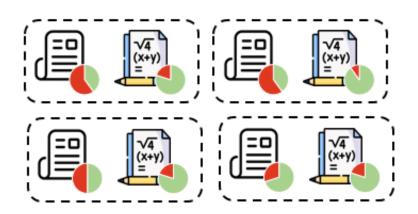




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Tasks	Comb	ination 1		Comb	oination 2			Combinatio	on 3	
	(20%, 10%)	(20%,0%)	20%	(50%, 10%)	(50%,0%)	50%	(80%, 40%)	(80%, 10%)	(80%, 0%)	80%
MATH	43.2	48.0	47.4	48.6	45.8	47.8	43.8	46.8	47.2	43.2
Olympic-Arena	13.6	16.4	12.7	12.7	18.8	12.7	14.1	19.2	17.8	13.6
JEE-Bench	12.3	10.4	7.4	11.7	9.2	12.3	12.3	9.8	7.4	12.3
Gaokao-Mathcloze	40.7	40.7	39	45.8	43.2	44.1	42.4	37.3	43.2	40.7
SAT-Math	58.2	60.5	58.2	61.0	63.2	60.0	60.0	66.8	62.3	58.2
Average	33.6	35.2	32.9	36.0	36.0	35.4	34.5	36.0	35.6	33.6



(2) Combine with decomposed subtask supervision from different weaker teacher models

	Combination			
Outcome ER Combinations	GPT-40-mini (80%, 10%)	Llama-3-70B-Instruct (81.7%, 10%)	Command-R-2024-03 (87.7%, 10%)	
Step-Wise ER of Hard Task Supervision	11.7%	30.2%	62.6%	
MATH	46.8	31.2	24.6	
Olympic-Arena	19.2	12.2	5.2	
JEE-Bench	8.7	10.4	5.5	
Gaokao-Mathcloze	37.3	23.7	5.1	
SAT-Math	61.0	54.5	47.7	



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(3) combine with rephrased hard supervision to increase task diversity;

Combine with **rephrased** hard tasks



(4) combine with itself – double the training epoch

Combine with itself - Double training epochs





(2) Combine with decomposed subtask supervision from different weaker teacher models

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combination method (2)(3)(4) are not better than (1)

(3) combine with rephrased hard supervision to increase task diversity;

Combine with **rephrased** hard tasks

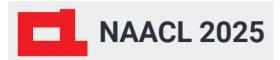


(4) combine with itself – double the training epoch

Combine with itself - Double training epochs



Tasks	Combination				
	(50%, 10%)	50% (Doubled Epochs)	50% (Merge Rephrased.)		
MATH	48.6	45.0	48.4		
Olympic-Arena	12.7	12.7	12.7		
JEE-Bench	11.7	9.2	10.4		
Gaokao-Mathcloze	45.8	42.4	44.1		
SAT-Math	61.0	55.5	57.3		



• Summarize data-driven guidance for improving LLMs in future reasoning-heavy applications:



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(1) Prioritize hard task supervision for better performance on challenging reasoning tasks



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• Summarize data-driven guidance for improving LLMs in future reasoning-heavy applications:

(1) Prioritize hard task supervision for better performance on challenging reasoning tasks

(2) Step-wise error rates of teacher models is more critical than outcome error rates for supervision quality

(3) Consider sampling or annotating hard tasks and their associated subtasks then use the combined supervision for further enhancement

# Thanks For Watching

