

Results of Primary 6 English Language in TSA 2013

The territory-wide percentage of P.6 students achieving English Language Basic Competency in TSA 2013 is 72.4%. There is a slight increase in the percentage achieving basic competency in 2013 relative to performance level in 2011.

Primary 6 Assessment Design

The assessment tasks for P.6 English Language were based on the *Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version) for English Language at the end of Key Stage 2 (Primary 6)* and the *CDC Syllabus for English Language (Primary 1 – 6) 1997*. The tasks covered the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking, and were designed in accordance with the learning objectives in three interrelated strands: Interpersonal (IS), Knowledge (KS) and Experience (ES).

The P.6 written assessment consisted of three sub-papers for Listening and three sub-papers for Reading and Writing, comprising a total of 122 items and 134 score points. The duration of each Listening sub-paper was approximately 30 minutes, while each Reading and Writing sub-paper was 50 minutes. The oral assessment consisted of 12 sub-papers. The composition of the P.6 sub-papers is summarised in Table 7.11.

Table 7.11 Composition of P.6 Sub-papers

Written Assessment				Speaking Assessment			
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)			Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)		
Listening L3-L-1-P6BC (discriminating sounds)	6EL1	6EL2	6EL3	L3-R-3-P6BC (reading aloud)	6ES1/ 6ES3 2(8)	6ES5/ 6ES7 2(8)	6ES9/ 6ES11 2(8)
	2(2)	2(2)	2(2)		L3-S-3-P6BC (ideas)	6ES1 to 6ES4 4(16)	6ES5 to 6ES8 4(16)
	L4-L-2-P6BC (language use)	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)		L4-L-3-P6BC (listening strategies)	26(26)
Reading L3-R-5-P6BC (reading strategies)	6ERW1	6ERW2	6ERW3	L3-S-4-P6BC (language use)	6ES1 to 6ES4 4(12)	6ES5 to 6ES8 4(12)	6ES9 to 6ES12 4(12)
	27(27)	23(23)	28(28)		L4-S-1-P6BC (pronunciation)	6ES2/ 6ES4 2(6)	6ES6/ 6ES8 2(6)
	L3-R-6-P6BC (reference skills)	2(2)	6(6)	1(1)		L3-W-3-P6BC (relevant ideas)	$\frac{1}{2}$ (4)
Writing L3-W-3-P6BC (relevant ideas)	6ERW1	6ERW2	6ERW3	eye contact (not B.C.)	6ES2/ 6ES4 2(2)	6ES6/ 6ES8 2(2)	6ES10/ 6ES12 2(2)
	L4-R-4-P6BC (language use)	1(1)	1(1)		1(1)	L3-W-4-P6BC (language use)	$\frac{1}{2}$ (3)

P.6 Listening Items

Each student was required to attempt three listening tasks in one of the three listening sub-papers (about 30 minutes each). Listening materials were played twice. Descriptions of the listening tasks are provided in Tables 7.12 and 7.13.

Table 7.12 P.6 Listening: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L3-L-1-P6BC	Discriminating between words with a range of vowel and consonant sounds	4
L4-L-2-P6BC	Understanding the use of a small range of language features in simple literary / imaginative spoken texts	2
L4-L-3-P6BC	Using a range of strategies to understand the meaning of simple texts on familiar topics which are delivered clearly in familiar accents	52
TOTAL		58

Table 7.13 P.6 Listening: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L4-L-3-P6BC L3-L-1-P6BC	Booking a Holiday Camp <i>6EL1/6EL3 Part 1A</i>	Blank filling	4(4) 2(2)
L4-L-3-P6BC	Pocket Money <i>6EL1/6EL3 Part 1B</i>	Multiple choice	4(4)
L4-L-3-P6BC	Learning English <i>6EL1/6EL2 Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)
L4-L-3-P6BC L4-L-2-P6BC	Living on Lamma <i>6EL1 Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	10(10) 1(1)
L4-L-3-P6BC L3-L-1-P6BC	Holiday Camp <i>6EL2 Part 1A</i>	Multiple choice	4(4) 2(2)
L4-L-3-P6BC	How to Spend Pocket Money <i>6EL2 Part 1B</i>	Multiple choice	4(4)
L4-L-3-P6BC L4-L-2-P6BC	Talking about Lamma <i>6EL2/6EL3 Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	10(10) 1(1)
L4-L-3-P6BC	An Exchange Programme <i>6EL3 Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)

P.6 Reading Items

Each student was required to attempt four reading tasks in one of the three Reading and Writing sub-papers (50 minutes each). About 25 minutes were allotted for the reading tasks in each sub-paper. Descriptions of the reading tasks are provided in Tables 7.14 and 7.15.

Table 7.14 P.6 Reading: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L3-R-5-P6BC	Using a range of reading strategies to understand the meaning of simple texts with the help of cues	52
L3-R-6-P6BC	Applying simple reference skills with the help of cues	8
L4-R-4-P6BC	Understanding the use of a small range of language features in simple literary / imaginative texts	2
TOTAL		62

Table 7.15 P.6 Reading: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Weekend Activities	Multiple choice	6(6)
L3-R-6-P6BC	6ERW1/6ERW3 Part 1		1(1)
L3-R-5-P6BC	A Writer 6ERW1 Part 2	Multiple choice	6(6)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Sports Day (A) 6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 3	Multiple choice	6(6)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Sports Day (B) 6ERW3 Part 3	Multiple choice	6(6)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Life in Canada 6ERW1 Part 4	Multiple choice	9(9)
L3-R-6-P6BC			1(1)
L4-R-4-P6BC			1(1)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Extra-curricular Activities 6ERW2 Part 1	Multiple choice	5(5)
L3-R-6-P6BC			2(2)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Results of Competitions 6ERW2 Part 2	Multiple choice	2(2)
L3-R-6-P6BC			4(4)
L3-R-5-P6BC	An Author 6ERW2/6ERW3 Part 4	Multiple choice	10(10)
L4-R-4-P6BC			1(1)
L3-R-5-P6BC	A French Artist 6ERW3 Part 2	Multiple choice	6(6)

P.6 Writing Tasks

Each student was required to attempt one writing task of about 80 words in one of the three Reading and Writing sub-papers (50 minutes each). About 25 minutes were allotted for the writing task in each sub-paper. Descriptions of the writing tasks are provided in Tables 7.16 and 7.17.

Table 7.16 P.6 Writing: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L3-W-3-P6BC	Writing and/or responding to simple texts with relevant information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with the help of cues	1
L3-W-4-P6BC	Writing simple texts using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns, cohesive devices and verb forms fairly appropriately with the help of cues despite some spelling and grammatical mistakes	1
TOTAL		2

Table 7.17 P.6 Writing: Item Description

Basic Competency	Item Description	No. of Items (Score Points)
L3-W-3-P6BC	An Unforgettable Outing	$\frac{1}{2}(4)$
L3-W-4-P6BC	6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 5	$\frac{1}{2}(3)$
L3-W-3-P6BC	Spending Time with My Family	$\frac{1}{2}(4)$
L3-W-4-P6BC	6ERW3 Part 5	$\frac{1}{2}(3)$

P.6 Speaking Tasks

Each selected student was required to attempt either ‘Reading Aloud and Teacher-Student Interaction’ or ‘Presentation’ in one of the 12 sub-papers (each sub-paper was about 5 minutes in length including preparation time). A set of four sub-papers were allocated to each session, totalling three sessions over 1.5 days of oral assessment. Sub-papers consisted of different topics: *Mango Cakes (6ES01)*, *Bun Festival (6ES02)*, *Saving a Dog (6ES03)*, *Lions (6ES04)*, *Study Tour (6ES05)*, *Keeping in Touch with Friends (6ES06)*, *South China Sea (6ES07)*, *Sai Kung Holiday Camp (6ES08)*, *Old Hong Kong (6ES09)*, *Preparing for a Hike (6ES10)*, *Go Green (6ES11)* and *A Village House (6ES12)*. Descriptions of the speaking tasks are provided in Table 7.18.

Table 7.18 P.6 Speaking: Distribution of Tasks

Basic Competency	Task Description	Descriptor
L3-R-3-P6BC	Reading Aloud <i>6ES01, 6ES03, 6ES05, 6ES07, 6ES09, 6ES11</i>	Showing a basic understanding of simple and familiar texts by reading aloud the texts with comprehensible pronunciation and generally appropriate pace, stress, rhythm and intonation
L3-S-3-P6BC	Teacher-Student Interaction <i>6ES01, 6ES03, 6ES05, 6ES07, 6ES09, 6ES11</i>	Providing and / or exchanging (asking and answering) simple information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks), and attempting to provide some elaboration with the help of cues
L3-S-4-P6BC		Using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices to convey simple information and ideas fairly appropriately with the help of cues despite some grammatical mistakes
L4-S-1-P6BC		Pronouncing familiar words comprehensibly
L3-S-3-P6BC	Presentation <i>6ES02, 6ES04, 6ES06, 6ES08, 6ES10, 6ES12</i>	Providing and / or exchanging (asking and answering) simple information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks), and attempting to provide some elaboration with the help of cues
L3-S-4-P6BC		Using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices to convey simple information and ideas fairly appropriately with the help of cues despite some grammatical mistakes

Performance of P.6 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in TSA 2013

P.6 Listening

In listening, students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to extract specific information, grasp main ideas, understand connections between ideas, and with the help of pictorial cues, they could predict the development of the text. They could also discriminate between numbers and letters. They were generally capable of understanding the overall meaning of simple spoken texts on familiar topics.

Sounds

- Almost all students were able to distinguish between numbers and letters, e.g. a telephone number with eight digits (6EL2 Part 1A 'Holiday Camp' Q.2) and part of an email address 'nsw96' (Q.3).

Predicting Development

- Most students were able to predict the likely development of the text with pictorial cues given as multiple choice (MC) options, e.g. what Mary will do with her pocket money (a picture showing Mary who buys a flag for charity) by referring to the text 'My parents encourage me to help others. So I usually give money to help children in need...' (6EL1/6EL3 Part 1B 'Pocket Money' Q.3), and what Jim and Lily will do on Lamma Island (a picture where Lily shows Jim around on an island) by referring to what Lily says, 'If you (Jim) come, I'll show you around.' (6EL1 Part 3 'Living on Lamma' Q.10).

Connection between Ideas

- Most students were capable of identifying a causal relationship between ideas, e.g. the reason why David went overseas by listening to 'My school chose ten students to go to America to learn English' (6EL1/6EL2 Part 2 'Learning English' Q.3) and the reason why Lily's children only go home at weekends by listening to '...because they are very busy.' (6EL1 Part 3 'Living on Lamma' Q.5).
- Many students were competent in connecting ideas involving more than one piece of information, e.g. Peter spends his money on transport and food by referring to the

spoken text: 'I have to pay for my bus fares. Also, I have to buy my lunch and snacks five days a week.' (6EL2 Part 1B 'How to Spend Pocket Money' Q.1). Many students were able to connect and interpret ideas in spoken texts, e.g. the American family had 'two children' by referring to the text 'a boy aged 14 and a girl aged 12' (6EL1/6EL2 Part 2 'Learning English' Q.5).

Specific Information

- Most students were able to extract specific information with the help of pictorial cues given as MC options. For example, they could identify the correct picture by extracting specific information from the dialogue 'I live in a small house with a garden' (6EL1 Part 3 'Living on Lamma' Q.3), and they chose the correct picture (showing a lady having a meal with two children in a restaurant) by referring to the dialogue: 'I'll take you to my favourite restaurant for lunch. I'll also invite my aunt to join us' (6EL2/6EL3 Part 3 'Talking about Lamma' Q.10).
- The majority of students could extract specific information from one spoken sentence, e.g. the idea 'My two cousins were both born on Hong Kong Island in Queen Mary Hospital' when asked the place where John's cousins were born (6EL2/6EL3 Part 3 'Talking about Lamma' Q.3), and the idea 'Well, last month I spent two weeks overseas' (6EL1/6EL2 Part 2 'Learning English' Q.1) when asked how long David stayed overseas.

Gist / Main Ideas

- The majority of students were capable of grasping the gist of spoken texts on familiar topics, e.g. how to spend pocket money. They were required to interpret a few sentences: '...and save the rest of the money... Saving money every week, even a very small amount, is a good habit' in order to grasp the idea that Mary thinks saving money is useful. (6EL1/6EL3 Part 1B 'Pocket Money' Q.4).
- The majority of students were competent in interpreting the main idea in a spoken text, e.g. the radio programme is about 'places' by referring to the spoken text 'This week, we'll talk about Lamma Island' (6EL1 Part 3 'Living on Lamma' Q.1) and people like living on Lamma because 'it is cheap' by referring to the spoken text 'It's cheap living there...' (Q.7).

P.6 Reading

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were capable of locating information, extracting specific information, interpreting main ideas, and understanding connections between ideas. When the reading load required was light and pictorial cues were provided, they could make simple inferences and predict the likely development of the text.

Specific Information

- Almost all students were able to extract specific information with pictorial cues given as MC options, e.g. when asked what Susan should bring when she goes to swimming lessons, they could identify the items required (6ERW2 Part 1 ‘Extra-curricular Activities’ Q.5) and they could figure out what Susan did on Sports Day (a picture showing Susan dancing with her cheering team members) (6ERW3 Part 3 ‘Sports Day (B)’ Q.2).
- The majority of students could interpret a piece of information in one sentence when similar wording was given in the question and the text, e.g. Lily Tam had a car accident ‘in Canada’ by referring to the text ‘... you (Lily Tam) were seriously injured in a car accident in Canada’ (6ERW2/6ERW3 Part 4 ‘An Author’ Q.5) and Lily Tam is famous for ‘writing children’s books’ by referring to the text ‘... Lily Tam, a famous writer of children’s books’ (Q.1).

Gist / Main Ideas

- Most of the students were able to skim for gist from a list of information presented in point form, e.g. they knew David is reading about the life of a person when reading a biography (6ERW1 Part 2 ‘A Writer’ Q.1).
- The majority of students were capable of interpreting the main idea of a notice. For example, they were able to identify that Mary Li’s presentation is about art (Q2) and she is a painter (Q.6) by referring to the text ‘Prize-winning artist, Mary Li, will share her love of painting...’ (6ERW1/6ERW3 Part 1 ‘Weekend Activities’).

Connection between Ideas

- The majority of students were able to understand the connection between two ideas when the first idea is immediately followed by the second. For example, they knew the reason why David will remember this Sport Day for a long time is that he had to go to hospital by referring to the text: ‘I will remember this Sports Day for a very long time (first idea). Why? I ended up going to hospital (following idea)’ (6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 3 ‘Sports Day (A)’ Q.1).
- Many students were able to understand the connection between ideas in a phrase or a sentence, e.g. the reason why Maria Ho is famous is that she has won many prizes in competitions by referring to the catchphrase ‘A Famous Prize-winning Writer – Maria Ho’ (6ERW1Part 2 ‘A Writer’ Q.4).

Simple Inference Skills

- The majority of students were able to make simple inferences when interpreting the implicit ideas from informational texts. For example, when reading a notice, they knew that the speaker is Miss Chan who says, ‘The best actor is Andy Chan of Class 4D’ by referring to a notice about a drama competition which mentions: Miss Chan is one of the judges and Class 4D is one of the groups entering the competition (6ERW2 Part 1 ‘Extra-curricular Activities’ Q.7). Also, they knew that the speaker is Sally Choi who says, ‘... the best things you can do for yourself – eat well, get plenty of rest...’ by referring to the advice mentioned in the notice of a talk about ‘Staying Healthy’: ‘eating healthily, getting enough sleep’ (6ERW1/6ERW3 Part 1 ‘Weekend Activities’ Q.4).

Predicting Development

- The majority of students were capable of predicting the likely development of the text when interpreting the ideas in one sentence. For example, they were able to predict that Tom will be a helper on the next Sports Day by referring to ‘I was glad to help on Sports Day and I want to help again.’ (6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 3 ‘Sports Day (A)’ Q.6).

Simple Reference Skills

- Many students were able to obtain information about the reading materials from informational texts with pictorial cues given as MC options. For example, when reading a notice of ‘Extra-curricular Activities’, they could figure out where the members of the Photography Club will go (a picture showing the countryside) by

locating the topic of the outing in the notice – ‘Our Beautiful Countryside’ (6ERW2 Part 1 ‘Extra-curricular Activities’ Q.2).

P.6 Writing

The writing assessment at this level required the completion of one writing task of about 80 words in 25 minutes. Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence generally understood the task requirements and produced the required word length with relevant content and ideas. Students could write with an adequate range of vocabulary, sentence patterns, cohesive devices and verb forms. However, some grammatical errors and spelling mistakes were apparent.

An Unforgettable Outing (6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 5)

This writing task asked students to give an account of an outing with their family based on the prompts given.

You went on an outing with your family last weekend. You are writing an article about the outing for the school magazine.

Write about 80 words. Use the following pictures and ideas for your article.



- Where did you go for your outing?
- What did you do?
- What happened?
- How did you feel?
- What did you do in the end?

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence demonstrated the following characteristics:

Student Exemplar 1

Content

- Provides a factual account of the event without an appropriate ending
- Communicates ideas quite clearly
- Provides brief ideas

Language

- Uses basic sentence patterns and vocabulary
- Incorrect use of reported speech e.g. 'I was saying to my brother that what are we going to do after lunch?'
- Some awkward sentence patterns e.g. 'We were happy then we enjoyed the picnic.'

Student Exemplar 1

An Unforgettable Outing

Last weekend, my family and I went to picnic. We went there by bus. We were very excited about the picnic.

We were enjoying the BBQ. We ate a lot of food such as chicken leg, fishballs and meat. I was saying to my brother that what are we going to do after lunch? My brother say we will fly the kite and play batminton.

Suddenly, the rain start. We feel very upset about the picnic then we go under the tree and sit.

Then later the rain stop. We were happy then we enjoyed the picnic. We play kite and batminton. Then we have a lot of fun.

Student Exemplar 2

Content

- Provides a factual account of the event
- Communicates ideas quite clearly

Language

- Uses basic vocabulary
- Appropriate use of cohesive devices e.g. 'Suddenly', 'because', 'In the end'
- Makes some spelling mistakes e.g. 'barbear' (barbecue), 'Morover' (Moreover), 'pinic' (picnic)
- Makes some grammatical mistakes e.g. 'the sky is (was) too back (dark)'

Student Exemplar 2

An Unforgettable Outing

Last weekend, We went to the country park to have a pinic. Then, we prepared the food for barbear. I asked my father what are we going to do after lunch. My father said 'we played badminton and played fly kite. Suddenly, the sky is too back and here a very big rain, we all is wet. We fast to took the things and ran fast to the bus stop. We felt so unhappy because the rain was too big now. In the End, we went to the bus and went back home. Morover

Spending Time with My Family (6ERW3 Part 5)

This writing task asked students to write about how they spend time with their family based on the prompts given in a mind map.

You are writing to the school magazine about how you spend time with your family.

Write about 80 words. You may use the following ideas for your composition.

- What do you usually do with your family?
- Where do you usually go with your family?
- Do you like spending time with your family? Why/Why not?

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graph TD; A((Spending Time with My Family)) --- B((beach)); A --- C((countryside)); A --- D((home)); A --- E((games hall)); A --- F((?)); B --- B1[Beach illustration]; C --- C1[Countryside illustration]; D --- D1[Home illustration]; E --- E1[Games hall illustration]; F --- F1[Question mark illustration];
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Student Exemplar 3

Content

- Provides some brief ideas
- Communicates ideas quite clearly

Language

- Uses a limited range of vocabulary
- Makes a few grammatical mistakes e.g. 'go (to the) countryside', 'play games balls (ball games) with my family'
- Uses some basic cohesive devices e.g. 'because', 'and'

Student Exemplar 3

Spending Time with My Family

I usually go countryside and play games balls with my family. Go to countryside, we can see the beautiful views, cycling, go hiking, breath some fresh air and I have a barbecue. Play balls games, we can play football, basketball, volleyball, waterball, badminton, table tennis and tennis. That sounds fun. I like spending time with my family. It is because we can play games together, do sport can make us more healthy and have a happy family day with my family.

Student Exemplar 4

Content

- Provides some brief ideas
- Ideas are quite clear

Language

- Uses basic vocabulary and sentence patterns
- Attempts to use complex sentence patterns e.g. 'If it is a rainy day, we prefer to stay home and play chess while we watch TV.'
- Uses a limited range of cohesive devices e.g. 'and', 'or'
- A few spelling mistakes e.g. 'eithe' (either)

Student Exemplar 4

Spending Time with My Family

On holidays, I like to go out with my family. We usually like to go to the games hall and play badminton or table tennis. If it is hot and sunny, we can eithe go to the beach and swim or play beach volleyball or drive to the countryside and have a barbecue feast with fishballs, sausages and chicken wings.

If it is a rainy day, we prefer to stay home and play chess while we watch TV.

I love to spend time with my family.

P.6 Speaking

12 or 24 students (depending on the school size) were randomly selected from each school to participate in the oral assessment. No attempt was made to report results for schools in terms of the percent achieving basic competency in speaking because of the sample size. However, a summary of the overall performance levels of students is given in the ‘General Comments on P.6 Student Performances’ section.

Best Performance of P.6 Students in TSA 2013

P.6 Listening

Students with the best performance demonstrated their ability in the following areas:

Connection between Ideas

- Students were able to draw ideas from contextual clues in short conversations. For example, students could figure out that ‘seeing many old cars’ was the special thing David did from listening to the reply David made when Susan asked if he did anything special: ‘Yes. My family took me to a car museum. I saw cars from different periods of time, from the 1920s up to now.’ (6EL1/6EL2 Part 2 ‘Learning English’ Q.7). Students understood that the children were very kind to David from the spoken text ‘They (The children) were very kind. They spoke to me (David) slowly and clearly so that I understood their English easily.’ (Q.6).

Main Ideas

- Students were able to identify the main ideas involving more than one piece of information. For example, students knew that Sally’s father will say no if Sally asks him for money by referring to ‘When I (Sally) want to buy something, I just ask my mother. I try not to ask my father because he usually refuses to give me any.’ (6EL2 Part 1B ‘How to Spend Pocket Money’ Q.3). Students understood that Peter will ask his parents if he spends all his money by referring to ‘Sometimes I spend all the money in four days Then I ask my parents for more. They don’t want me to walk to school or go hungry.’ (Q.2).

Sequence

- Students were able to identify the sequence of events in a spoken text, e.g. putting the sequence of topics mentioned on a radio programme (6EL1 Part 3 ‘Living on Lamma’ Q.11) and in a conversation (6EL2/6EL3 Part 3 ‘Talking about Lamma’ Q.11) into the correct order.

Simile

- Students could interpret similes in a spoken text. For example, they understood that the expression ‘The scenery on the island is like a picture postcard’ means that the scenery on Lamma is beautiful (6EL1 Part 3 ‘Living on Lamma’ Q.8) and that

another expression ‘I eat like a horse’, with information ‘I like eating there very much’ given as a background in the conversation, means that ‘John eats a lot’ (6EL2/6EL3 Part 3 ‘Talking about Lamma’ Q.8).

Specific Information

- Students were able to extract specific information by interpreting more than one piece of information in a spoken text, e.g. Paul bought ‘paint and drawing brushes’ (a pictorial cue given as an MC option) by referring to the text ‘I bought paint and brushes. I like to paint pictures of flowers’ (6EL1/6EL3 Part 1B ‘Pocket Money’ Q.2).

• P.6 Reading

Students with the best performance demonstrated their ability in the following aspects:

Connection between Ideas

- Students were able to connect and interpret ideas in continuous prose, e.g. students found out that Lily Tam is living with ‘her daughter’ by referring to the text: ‘I live in Canada most of the time with one of my children. She has two kids...’ (6ERW2/6ERW3 Part 4 ‘An Author’ Q.8) and understood the meaning of an expression ‘I’m like most grandmothers’ by connecting this idea with another idea in the same text: ‘... We enjoy spending time with our grandchildren.’ (Q.9).

Details Supporting a Main Idea

- Students could identify details which support a main idea, e.g. they identified ‘Bird’s Nest Stadium’ is an example of ‘Olympic architecture’ (6ERW1 Part 4 ‘Life in Canada’ Q.6), and they understood that to learn how to buy a painting online, Susan should go to the centre on ‘13 July’, where ‘online shopping’ is being taught. (6ERW1/6ERW3 Part 1 ‘Weekend Activities’ Q.3)

Gist / Main Ideas

- Students were able to skim for gist from different texts, e.g. when reading a newsletter they knew that it was about activities held by the youth centre (6ERW2 Part 2 ‘Results of Competitions’ Q.1) and when reading a news article, the purpose of the article is to tell readers about an exhibition (6ERW3 Part 2 ‘A French Artist’ Q.1).

- Some students could interpret the main ideas involving more than one piece of information. In order to understand that Sally was angry with herself because she broke a rule, students knew that the following details mean breaking a rule: ‘Just before the teacher gave the signal to start, I began to run. I did this two times and so I was not allowed to take part in the race any more.’ (6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 3 ‘Sports Day (A)’ Q.3).

Inference Skills

- Students could infer information which was not explicitly stated, e.g. students could infer the fact that Lily Tam does not write a lot now because she hurt her hands badly by referring to the text ‘... but I can only write a little My hands were hurt in the crash.’ (6ERW2/6ERW3 Part 4 ‘An Author’ Q.7).
- Student were able to interpret an idea by inferring two pieces of information found in different parts of the text, e.g. students could infer the fact that the letter was written in January 2013 by inferring ‘My family and I had a happy, healthy year in 2012’ (first paragraph) and ‘Two weeks ago on Christmas Day’ (second last paragraph) (6ERW1 Part 4 ‘Life in Canada’ Q.10).

Onomatopoeia

- Students could identify words which sound like the things they represent, e.g. ‘boom’ which is the sound of a car crash (6ERW2/6ERW3 Part 4 ‘An Author’ Q.6), and ‘sizzling’ which is the smell of the turkey cooking in the oven by using the contextual clue ‘heard’ – a sense of hearing. (6ERW1 Part 4 ‘Life in Canada’ Q.8).

Reference Skills

- Students could find the meanings of words using definitions and examples from a dictionary entry, such as ‘occupied’ which means ‘involved or busy’ by referring to the text: ‘I’m always occupied with my studies. I’m also busy preparing for my piano exam’ (6ERW1Part 4 ‘Life in Canada’ Q.5), and ‘close’ which means ‘the end of something’ by referring to ‘The organiser was happy to receive ... before the close of the competitions’ (6ERW2 Part 2 ‘Results of Competitions’ Q.6).

Sequence

- Students were able to identify the sequence of events in a text, e.g. the events showing what Mary’s family did over the year (6ERW1 Part 4 ‘Life in Canada’ Q.11) and

what happened to Lily Tam as mentioned in the text (6ERW2/6ERW3 Part 4 ‘An Author’ Q.11).

Unfamiliar Words/Expressions

- Students were able to interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words/expressions in different reading texts, e.g. when reading a letter, they understood the meaning of ‘special events’ by choosing the correct example: a wedding (6ERW1 Part 4 ‘Life in Canada’ Q.2) and when reading a news article, they could interpret the meaning of ‘maiden event’ as ‘Marie has never had an exhibition in Hong Kong before’ from the text ‘It is the first time she has had an exhibition outside France ...’ (6ERW3 Part 2 ‘A French Artist’ Q.2).

P.6 Writing

Students with good writing skills could write simple descriptions and narrations in paragraph form and provide relevant ideas with supporting details. They were able to communicate their ideas effectively, clearly and coherently. They demonstrated good language skills by using a range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices. Students generally made few or no grammatical and spelling mistakes.

An Unforgettable Outing (6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 5)

Students gave an account of an outing with their family based on the prompts given. Ideas were very clear and coherent with supporting details.

Student Exemplar 5

Content

- Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details e.g. ‘Suddenly, it started to rain, all of our food were soaked with water, and the barbeque fire was also put out.’
- Good paragraphing with very clear ideas
- Gives appropriate concluding remarks – ‘... we got sick the next day!’

Language

- Good use of vocabulary and phrases e.g. 'disastrous', 'soaked with water', 'looked like a swamp'
- Attempts to use passive voice e.g. 'it had been ruined by the rain'
- Good use of complex sentence patterns e.g. 'We quickly ran to a nearby tree, hoping the rain would stop.', 'With no choice, we went home, took a bath, and went down the street to eat at a restaurant instead.'
- Makes a few grammatical mistakes

Student Exemplar 5

An Unforgettable Outing

Last weekend, me and my family went out for a family outing, we took a minibus to arrive at a camp site.

The bright sun light was shining right at us, and we were having a barbeque, we also decided to play badminton and kite after we eat, we were having a fabulous time.

Suddenly, it started to rain, all of our food were soaked with water, and the barbeque fire was also put out. We quickly ran to a nearby tree, hoping the rain would stop.

But luck wasn't with us, we waited for two hours until the rain stopped, and the whole campsite looked like a swamp, we were covered in water. With no choice, we went home, took a bath, and went down the street to eat at a restaurant instead.

We weren't happy with this day's outing, it was disastrous, it had been ruined by the rain, and something worse^{happened}, we got sick the next day!

Student Exemplar 6

Content

- Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details e.g. ‘... and as I stepped out of the car, a warm breeze blew through my hair. I took a deep breath of the fresh air. What an amazing day to have a picnic here!’
- Ideas are very clear
- Coherent links between sentences within paragraphs
- Gives an appropriate ending e.g. ‘I hope next time we can have a good weather, so...’

Language

- Uses a good range of vocabulary
 - verb-preposition combinations: ‘stepped out’, ‘settled down’, ‘spilled onto’, ‘tidied up’, ‘ripped through’
 - adjectives: ‘amazing’, ‘entire’, ‘sudden’
 - nouns: ‘breeze’, ‘breath’
- Good use of complex sentence patterns e.g. ‘With a loud thunder, a heavy rain spilled onto us.’
- Appropriate use of cohesive devices e.g. ‘After’, ‘but’
- A few grammatical mistakes e.g. ‘made us sneezed (sneeze)’

Student Exemplar 6

An Unforgettable Outing

Last weekend, I went on an outing with my family. After a long journey in a car, we finally came and as I stepped out of the car, a warm breeze blew through my hair. I took a deep breath of the fresh air. What an amazing day to have a picnic here! We went to the barbeque place and settled ourselves down.

The smell of barbeque filled the air. There was nothing smelled better in this entire world. My sister and I talked about what we were going to do after the meal but suddenly, a lightning ripped through the sky. With a loud thunder, a heavy rain spilled onto us. We quickly picked up our things and ran for the car. The sudden change of temperature made me sneeze. "What?" said my sister. "Is this over? Just like that?" "Well, I a..... a....." "Yes, I afraid!" I sneezed.

This outing is amazing..... at least it supposed to be. I hope next time we can have a good weather, so we can enjoy the fresh air and beautiful sight of the nature for longer.

Spending Time with My Family (6ERW3 Part 5)

Students wrote about how they spend time with their family based on the prompts given in a mind map. Relevant ideas were given with plenty of supporting details based on the prompts given. Ideas were very clear and well organized.

Student Exemplar 7

Content

- Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details e.g. activities with families, trip to Australia
- Gives an appropriate introduction
- Coherent links between and within paragraphs e.g. ‘They (holiday activities) are all very fun. But my favourite activity: spending time with my family is going on a trip to other countries, I love looking at the beautiful views of other countries. My favourite country is Australia. It has a lot of bird because they are my favourite animals.’
- Gives appropriate concluding remarks

Language

- Good use of complex sentence patterns e.g. ‘I am good at sports so I am the strongest among them.’
- Good use of vocabulary and phrases e.g. ‘delighted’, ‘gathering’, ‘looking forward to’
- Good use of cohesive devices e.g. ‘such as’, ‘so’, ‘but’, ‘because’
- Appropriate use of verb forms
- Makes a few grammatical mistakes

Student Exemplar 7

Spending Time with My Family

Everyone has a family. I love my family and I usually spend a lot of time with them.

At weekends, we usually go to the games hall to do sports. I am good at sports so I am the strongest among them. We are delighted after doing sports. At night, we stay at home to take a rest. We will play games such as Chinese chess, we will also watch TV.

At holidays, I usually go to ^{the} countryside, and ^{countryside} beaches with my family. I like to have a picnic in the ^{countryside}. I also like to swim in the beach. They are all very fun. But my favourite activity: spending time with my family is going on a trip to other countries. I love looking at the beautiful views of other countries. My favourite country is Australia. It has a lot of birds since birds are my favourite animals.

I like spending time with my family. It is because my parents love me and are very nice to me, so I like spending time with them. I am looking forward to the next family gathering.

Student Exemplar 8

Content

- Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details e.g. playing sports, engaging in indoors activities
- Ideas are very clear
- Coherent links between sentences within paragraphs
- Gives appropriate remarks e.g. ‘When we are young, we should spend more time with our parents because parents are our best friends.’

Language

- Uses a range of vocabulary e.g. ‘keep our relationship well’, ‘building a sand castle’
- Correct use of complex sentence patterns e.g. ‘I love to spend time with my family because it is a good habit (habit).’
- A few grammatical mistakes, e.g. ‘We alway (always) have fun together.’

Student Exemplar 8

Spending Time with My Family

Spending time with our family is very important. It can keep our relationship well. I love to play with my family. We always have fun together.

Sometimes, I play badminton with my parents. We will take a bus to go to the sport centre. Although my parents aren't good at sports, we play happily! Also, we often play basketball with our friends. It is great fun! I think doing more sports can let us be healthier and stronger!

Moreover, we will go to countryside once a month because we like nature very much. Also, we can see a wonderful view too!

Although we will go outside to have fun, we can also have fun at home. In the summer, we will stay at home and enjoy the air-con. We can play chess, watch the TV, even fighting, we can have a great morning at home. In the afternoon, we can go shopping or go to the beach to buy clothes or building a sand castle.

I love to spend time with my family because it is a good habit. When we are young, we should spend more time with our parents because parents are our best friends!

P.6 Speaking

Students with good speaking skills were competent in the following areas:

- In 'Reading Aloud', students read the texts aloud fluently and clearly with appropriate pausing and intonation. They made very few pronunciation mistakes.
- In 'Teacher-Student Interaction', students provided relevant answers to most of the questions and were often able to elaborate by providing examples or further details. They responded naturally and readily to different topics, using a small range of vocabulary, varied sentence patterns and cohesive devices with few grammatical mistakes.
- In 'Presentation', students were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topic and elaborate with details, e.g. students could make use of the pictorial cues to tell a story about a family going to Cheung Chau Bun Festival (*6ES02*), and utilize the prompts to talk about the preparation for a hike with parents (*6ES10*). Students spoke very clearly and presented well-organized ideas with few mistakes in pronunciation. They used a range of vocabulary, varied sentence patterns and cohesive devices with few grammatical errors. Appropriate eye contact with the oral examiners was maintained throughout the presentation.

General Comments on P.6 Student Performances

P.6 Listening

- There was no significant improvement in listening performances as compared to the previous years. However, students generally performed well in listening tasks on familiar topics, for example, a holiday camp, pocket money, learning English and Lamma Island.
- In the previous years, most students performed well in some listening skills when pictorial cues were given as multiple choice (MC) options, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, and understanding connections between ideas. This trend was extended to the skills in predicting the likely development of the text. Also, many students performed satisfactorily in these skills even without the help of pictorial cues, when only written cues were given as MC options.
- Students showed very good performance in interpreting expressions of happiness but their performance in interpreting expressions of doubt or uncertainty was not satisfactory.
- A slight improvement in connecting ideas using contextual clues was observed this year. However, their performance was steady in identifying main ideas in a spoken text when more than one piece of information was given.
- Even when listening to the same piece of tapescript, students showed better performance on items with written MC options than on items with blanks to fill in. The former required students to distinguish between numbers (for a phone number) and alphanumeric figures (for an email), while the latter required students to jot down the telephone number and part of an email address. However, taking notes is a useful skill for P.6 students and the enhancement of this skill will benefit students' learning to a large extent.
- Students with weak listening skills made use of their personal experience and/or common knowledge to interpret the listening texts rather than comprehending what was actually played to them. For example, students might think 'going to a local school in America' (an option as a distractor) is a special experience. They failed to interpret that 'going to a car museum' is special according to the tapescript. Another example is that students thought 'native speakers normally teach them English (in their

daily context)' and so chose an answer where the native English speaking children taught English.

P.6 Reading

- Students' performances in reading, on the whole, were steady over years. As in the previous years, students generally performed better in reading tasks on familiar topics, e.g. weekend activities, sports day and extra-curricular activities.
- The majority students were capable of identifying main ideas, making simple inferences, connecting ideas, sequencing events as well as locating and extracting specific information with pictorial clues given as MC options and when the reading load of the texts was light. In general, students did not perform well in these skills when they were required to read texts involving continuous prose. In other words, the student performances in these skills varied, depending on the text-types and question types used in the assessment.
- The majority of students could grasp the gist and extract simple facts from informational texts, e.g. notices, but only about half of the students were able to infer information which was not explicitly stated in continuous prose.
- As in the previous few years, quite a number of students could find the meanings of words by using definitions and examples from a dictionary entry. The data over the years since 2008 show that their dictionary skills still need development. Moreover, many students had difficulty identifying basic parts of speech, e.g. an adjective, a noun and a verb.
- Students, by and large, did not perform satisfactorily in interpreting unfamiliar words or expressions using contextual clues. Some weak students made use of their personal experience rather than the contextual clues to predict the meaning. Also, their performance in understanding the use of some language features, e.g. onomatopoeia, showed that many of them failed to interpret the meaning by using contextual clues.
- Students lacked the skills of building a cognitive schema to comprehend a written text. Apart from grasping basic vocabulary, these skills also include predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words, interpreting information and connecting ideas using contextual clues. This issue has been mentioned in previous years.

- It has been suggested since the introduction of the P.6 TSA that students at this key stage would benefit from exposure to a broader variety of reading materials including riddles, poems and extended prose. Exposure to such genres would encourage use of pronominal reference and lexical cohesion to connect ideas in a text.

P.6 Writing

- There was a slight improvement in writing performances for this year when compared to the previous years. However, there were no significant differences in student performance on the narrative ‘An Unforgettable Outing’ and on the expository piece of writing ‘Spending Time with My Family’. These two writing tasks were provided with prompts and set in a familiar context where students’ writing ability could be fully stretched, even for some weaker students.
- For ‘An Unforgettable Outing’, capable students could provide very interesting ideas with relevant details. They could give detailed descriptions of the weather (from sunny to rainy), the countryside and food items of the barbecue. In general, students could write the story clearly and coherently with some details. Some of them were able to use a good range of vocabulary to describe the changing weather, e.g. ‘the sky started to turn grey’, ‘wind started to blow’, ‘rain started to pour in torrents’, and their feelings about the picnic, e.g. ‘After half an hour, the sun came out again. We were really happy and we continued our trip.’ Some showed successful attempts at complex sentences and direct speech, which added to the overall richness and vividness of the text. Most students were also able to use simple cohesive devices to link ideas. A number of them could create coherent links using topic sentences and develop ideas within a paragraph. A few could even give concluding remarks with a moral perspective, e.g. ‘We have to think positive when we face difficulties – there is a rainbow after rain.’ while most of the others could provide a reasonable ending to the story.
- For ‘Spending Time with My Family’, capable students could elaborate on the prompts given. They were also able to illustrate a good organization of the text, e.g. giving an appropriate introduction, coherent links between and within paragraphs using topic sentences and cohesive devices. On the whole, students were able to provide relevant ideas with some details of the activities their family was engaged in and give concluding remarks at the end of their writing. Most of them were able and willing to

write since the topic was related closely with their own experience. However, instead of telling how they spend time with their family in a general sense, a small number of students gave a personal recount or wrote about a particular event.

- Problematic language patterns and awkward phrasing were common in the writing of students with weak ability. This showed that these students lacked the necessary accuracy to compose correct sentence structures and their incorrect use of language patterns was mostly traceable to L1 interference.
- As in the previous years, many students could use explicit cohesive devices to make their writing more coherent. Some could use varied sentence patterns and a range of vocabulary in their writing. However, the incorrect use of verb forms and spelling mistakes were common.
- Most students were eager to write and some could write more than 80 words. Skills in grammar and spelling need to be enhanced so as to enable students to strengthen their ability in composing basic sentence structures. Most students had problems in using some common phrases, e.g. instead of writing 'fly a kite', many of them wrote 'play kite'. They wrote 'It rained bigger and bigger', but not 'It rained heavier and heavier'. Many students, including some capable ones, did not consistently use past tense to narrate a past event. They mixed up with other tenses, e.g. 'Two hours have (had) passed and we finally arrived.' or regularized the past tense of irregular verbs, e.g. 'flyed' instead of 'flew'. Many students misspelled common words, e.g. 'freash' for 'fresh', 'sunly' for 'sunny' and 'batminton/badmaner/badmenten' for 'badminton'. The misspelling of words indicated an inadequate grasp of phonics and the syllable structure of words. Weak control of basic sentence patterns was found in some of their writing, e.g. 'My family me go to a part' (My family and I went to the park), 'The sky was have a rainbow' (There was a rainbow in the sky).

P.6 Speaking

- Students were generally able to present their ideas clearly using a limited range of vocabulary and basic sentence patterns though some grammatical mistakes were apparent.
- In the 'Reading Aloud' component, more than half of the students were able to read the texts fluently and clearly despite a few mistakes in pronunciation. Some students had difficulty pronouncing words like 'powder', 'fridge' (6ES01), 'fence' (6ES03), 'Australia' (6ES05), 'different', 'pollution' (6ES07), 'stone', 'neighbours' (6ES09), and

‘protect’, ‘recycling’ (6ES11). A lot of students dropped end consonants for words such as ‘walked’, ‘scared’, ‘saved’ (6ES03), ‘liked’ (6ES05), and ‘played’ (6ES09). Some students mispronounced the consonant digraphs /θ/ as /f/ in words like ‘thing’ (6ES05) and ‘Earth’ (6ES11). The word ‘oven’ (6ES01) was also problematic. Some students could not pronounce the vowel sound /ʌ/ correctly and they pronounced /oʊ/ instead. Moreover, they had difficulty pronouncing words with more than three syllables, such as ‘activities’ and ‘air-conditioners’ (6ES11).

- During the ‘Teacher-Student Interaction’, most students were able to provide relevant responses to most of the oral examiner’s questions. Some students could provide additional details on some familiar topics, such as *Mango Cakes* (6ES01) which is about cooking and *Old Hong Kong* (6ES09) which is related to the neighbourhood.
- In *Go Green* (6ES11), some students lacked the experience of having environmental protection activities at school or somewhere else. They also had limited background knowledge about environmental protection: what they can do at school to protect the Earth. Therefore, they found it difficult to answer or provide elaboration on the oral examiner’s questions during the teacher-student interaction.
- In their two-minute presentations, many students were able to provide relevant information and ideas based on the pictures or written prompts when delivering a speech or telling a story. They were able to communicate their ideas quite clearly despite some mistakes in pronunciation. Most students displayed an awareness of their audience by using appropriate eye contact with the oral examiners and were awarded a bonus score.
- The sub-paper *A Village House* (6ES12) was challenging for some students. They were required to give an account of a story about a family renting a house with a sensible ending. Although they understood the development of the story, they could not use appropriate vocabulary like ‘cockroaches’ and ‘mosquitoes’ to describe the insects in the picture. They also did not know how to describe water leaking from the ceiling on a rainy day. Some students did not use simple past tense to narrate a story.

Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 6 TSA 2010, 2011 and 2013

The percentage of P.6 students achieving Basic Competency in 2013 was 72.4%, slightly higher than the percentage for the year 2011 as shown in Table 7.19.

Table 7.19 Percentage of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency in 2010, 2011 and 2013*

Year	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency
2010	71.6
2011	71.7
2013	72.4

Note: * The 2012 P.6 TSA was suspended. As participation in the 2012 P.6 TSA was on a voluntary basis, not all P.6 students were involved and hence no territory-wide data is provided in this report.

A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of P.6 student performances in TSA from 2010 to 2013 provides useful information on how teachers can help students improve. Table 7.20 summarizes such a comparison.

Table 7.20 Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 6 TSA from 2010 to 2013*

Year Skill	2010	2011	2013
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general students could extract specific information, interpret main ideas, locate information, obtain information from instructions and skim for gist from informational texts. • The majority of students could use the context to infer the meaning from a poem's lines but only slightly more than half of them could extract information not explicitly stated in the text. • With the help of pictorial cues, many students could comprehend a poem by identifying specific information and main ideas and about half of them could interpret figurative language, e.g. personification and simile. • Quite a number of students could predict the meaning of unfamiliar words or expressions from context. However, many students had difficulty distinguishing between a noun and a verb when looking up the meaning of a particular word from a dictionary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students generally performed better in reading tasks on familiar topics, e.g. school life, keeping healthy and meeting old friends. • The majority of students could grasp the gist and extract simple facts from informational texts, e.g. encyclopaedia and glossaries, but less than half of the students were able to infer information which was not explicitly stated in a written text. • Quite a number of students understood the use of some language features in simple literary texts, e.g. simile and onomatopoeia. However, students by and large had difficulty in identifying alliteration with an example given. • Quite a number of students could find the meanings of words by using definition and examples from a dictionary entry. However, their skills did not extend to interpreting unfamiliar words or expressions from context or connecting ideas from a text involving continuous prose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students generally performed better in reading tasks on familiar topics, e.g. weekend activities, sports day and extra-curricular activities. • The majority of students could grasp the gist and extract simple facts from informational texts, e.g. notices, but only about half of the students were able to infer information which was not explicitly stated in continuous prose. • Their performance in understanding the use of some language features, e.g. onomatopoeia, showed that many of them failed to interpret the meaning by using contextual clues. • Some weak students made use of their personal experience rather than the contextual clues to predict the meaning. The data show that their dictionary skills still need development and many students had difficulty identifying basic parts of speech, e.g. an adjective, a noun and a verb.

Note: * The 2012 P.6 TSA was suspended. As participation in the 2012 P.6 TSA was on a voluntary basis, not all P.6 students were involved and hence no territory-wide data is provided in this report.

Year Skill	2010	2011	2013
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, students performed slightly better in writing a narrative than an informal letter. • Most students were able to express their ideas clearly on the two writing tasks. In writing a story, they could provide a factual account of the story and an appropriate ending. In writing a letter, they were capable of conveying their ideas clearly when suggesting places they were familiar with. • Use of cohesive devices was evident in many students' works. However, a lack of vocabulary and language patterns was still evident in some students' writing. • Most students were eager to write and could produce a written task of 80 words in length. However, they had problems in grammar, spelling and sentence structures. Literal translation from Chinese was also found in some of their writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, there were no significant differences in student performance between a narrative and an informal letter. • For the narrative, most students could provide interesting content with relevant details. When writing a recount, they could provide a factual account of the event with some details, such as the date, the place and the activities they were engaged in. • Many students could use simple cohesive devices to make their writing more coherent. However, repeated use of action verbs and inconsistent use of past tense to narrate past events were found and spelling mistakes were common. • Most students were eager to write and could produce a written task of 80 words in length. However, they had problems in grammar, spelling and sentence structures. Their incorrect use of language patterns was mostly traceable to L1 interference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a slight improvement in writing performances for this year when compared to the previous years. However, student performance on a narrative and on an expository piece of writing did not have any significant differences. • For both types of writing, most students could write their ideas clearly and coherently with some details. Most of them were also able to provide a reasonable ending / concluding remarks at the end of their writing. • Most students could use explicit cohesive devices to enhance the organization of their writing. However, incorrect use of verb forms and spelling mistakes were common. • Most students were eager to write and some could write more than 80 words. Skills in grammar and spelling need to be enhanced so as to enable students to strengthen their ability to compose sentences.

Year Skill	2010	2011	2013
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of students could distinguish between various initial consonants and between vowels. • Students performed well in some listening skills when given pictorial cues, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, understanding the connections between ideas and identifying the sequence of events. • Some students had difficulty in connecting ideas using contextual clues or reference words and more than half of them had problems identifying the main ideas when more than one piece of information was given in a spoken text. • Although students experienced difficulty with main ideas, they performed better in interpreting information and predicting the likely development of the spoken texts when pictorial cues were given as options rather than written cues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students generally performed better on tasks with familiar topics than on unfamiliar topics. • The majority of students performed well in some listening skills even without the help of pictorial cues, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, understanding connections between ideas. • Some students had difficulty in connecting ideas using contextual clues or reference words but a slight improvement was observed in identifying main ideas in a spoken text when more than one piece of information was given. • Students' steady performance in interpreting information and predicting the likely development was not limited to items where pictorial cues were given as MC options. They also performed steadily in these skills when written cues were given as MC options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the whole, students performed well in listening tasks on familiar topics. • Most students performed well when pictorial cues were given as MC options, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, and connecting ideas. This trend was extended to the skills in predicting the likely development of the text. • A slight improvement in connecting ideas using contextual clues was observed this year. However, their performance was steady in identifying main ideas in a spoken text when more than one piece of information was given. • Students showed better performance in items with written cues given as MC options than items involving filling in blanks when listening to the same piece of material. Some weak students made use of their personal experience and/or common knowledge to interpret the listening texts rather than comprehending the spoken texts.

Year Skill	2010	2011	2013
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were generally capable of reading the given texts aloud quite clearly but some mistakes in pronunciation were evident. Some students dropped end consonants and had problems with initial consonant blend sounds, long vowel sounds as well as consonant digraphs. • Most students were able to provide relevant responses to some of the questions. Some could even provide further elaboration on topics familiar to them. • In ‘Presentation’, many students could provide relevant information and ideas based on the given pictures and communicate their ideas quite clearly in spite of some mistakes in pronunciation. • Students with top scores were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics with some elaboration. They could communicate their ideas clearly and readily despite some pronunciation mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than half of the students could read the texts fluently and clearly despite a few mistakes in pronunciation. Some dropped end consonants and had difficulty pronouncing words with more than three syllables. Words with ‘v’ sounds, initial consonant blend sounds, long vowel sounds and consonant digraphs were also problematic. • Students were generally able to provide relevant answers to the questions. Some could provide additional details on some more familiar topics. • In ‘Presentation’, students were generally able to give a talk or tell a story based on the information provided. Most students were awarded a bonus score for having appropriate eye contact with the oral examiners. • Students with good speaking skills were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics and elaborate with some details. They presented well-organized ideas clearly with few mistakes in pronunciation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were able to read all or most of the texts aloud quite clearly and audibly but some students dropped end consonants. Words with more than three syllables were also problematic for the students. • Most students were able to provide relevant responses to most of the questions. Some could even provide additional details on familiar topics. • In ‘Presentation’, students were able to present their ideas or tell a story clearly using a limited range of vocabulary and basic sentence patterns although grammatical mistakes were apparent. • Students with good speaking skills were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics with some elaboration. They showed confidence and could communicate their ideas quite clearly despite some mistakes in pronunciation.