

Results of Primary 6 English Language in TSA 2009

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).

For the year 2009, the P.6 oral assessment consisted of 16 sub-papers as shown below in Table 7.11.

Table 7.11 Composition of P.6 Sub-papers

Speaking Assessment				
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)			
L3-R-3-P6BC (Reading aloud)	6ES01 & 6ES03 2 (8)	6ES05 & 6ES07 2 (8)	6ES09 & 6ES11 2 (8)	6ES13 & 6ES15 2 (8)
L3-S-3-P6BC (Ideas)	6ES01 to 6ES04 4 (16)	6ES05 to 6ES08 4 (16)	6ES09 to 6ES12 4 (16)	6ES13 to 6ES16 4 (16)
L3-S-4-P6BC (Language Use)	6ES01 to 6ES04 4 (12)	6ES05 to 6ES08 4 (12)	6ES09 to 6ES12 4 (12)	6ES13 to 6ES16 4 (12)
L4-S-1-P6BC (Pronunciation)	6ES02 & 6ES04 2 (6)	6ES06 & 6ES08 2 (6)	6ES10 & 6ES12 2 (6)	6ES14 & 6ES16 2 (6)
Eye Contact (not B.C.)	6ES02 & 6ES04 2 (2)	6ES06 & 6ES08 2 (2)	6ES10 & 6ES12 2 (2)	6ES14 & 6ES16 2 (2)

P.6 Speaking Tasks

Each student was required to attempt either ‘Reading Aloud and Teacher-Student Interaction’ or ‘Presentation’ in one of the 16 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, totaling four sessions over two days of oral assessment. Sub-papers consisted of different topics: *Tourism* (6ES01 & 6ES02), *School Interview* (6ES03 & 6ES04), *Collecting* (6ES05 & 6ES06), *To the Beach* (6ES07), *Family Weekend Activities* (6ES08), *Lost* (6ES09), *Buying a Sofa* (6ES10), *School Uniforms* (6ES11), *Pandas* (6ES12), *Sick Note* (6ES13), *Boy Scouts* (6ES14), *Hairdresser* (6ES15) and *Elephants* (6ES16). Descriptions of the speaking tasks are provided in Table 7.12.

Table 7.12 P.6 Speaking: Distribution of Tasks

Basic Competency	Task Description	Descriptor
L3-R-3-P6BC	Reading Aloud 6ES01, 6ES03, 6ES05, 6ES07, 6ES09, 6ES11, 6ES13, 6ES15	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 6ES01, 6ES03, 6ES05, 6ES07, 6ES09, 6ES11, 6ES13, 6ES15	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
		Using a limited 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 6ES02, 6ES04, 6ES06, 6ES08, 6ES10, 6ES12, 6ES14, 6ES16	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 limited 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 in 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 2009

P.6 Speaking

Students with good speaking skills demonstrated their ability in the following areas:

- In the ‘Reading Aloud’ component, students showed competence in reading the texts aloud fluently and clearly with appropriate pausing and intonation. They made very few mistakes in pronunciation.
- Students provided relevant answers to most of the questions and responded naturally and readily to different topics in ‘Teacher-Student Interaction’. They could elaborate on some of the questions as well, providing further details in their responses. They could use a wider range of vocabulary with few grammatical mistakes.
- In the two-minute ‘Presentation’, students were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topic and elaborate with some details, e.g. students could make use of the pictorial cues to describe popular places for tourists to visit like The Peak, Tsim Sha Tsui, Mongkok, etc. (6ES02); describe what their family did at the weekend, such as going to a restaurant, cinema, playground, theme park, shopping centre or country park (6ES08); utilize prompts to give a short talk on elephants including where they live, how long they live, what they can do, what they eat and what they look like (6ES12). Students presented well-organized ideas clearly 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 during the presentation.

General Comments on P.6 Student Performances

P.6 Speaking

- Students generally were 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 could read the texts fluently and clearly despite a few mistakes in pronunciation. Some students dropped

end consonants for words such as ‘Park’ (6ES01), ‘good’, ‘hard’ (6ES03), ‘gates’(6ES09) and ‘think’ (6ES13). Words that some students had difficulty pronouncing included ‘tourism’, ‘congee’ (6ES01), ‘interview’, ‘worried’ (6ES03), ‘comics’, ‘reasons’ (6ES05), ‘costumes’, ‘splash’ (6ES07), ‘leather’, ‘cyclist’ (6ES09), ‘badge’, ‘sweatshirt’ (6ES11), ‘cough’, ‘temperature’ (6ES13) and ‘London’, ‘regularly’ (6ES15). Also some students were not able to pronounce final consonant blend sounds in words, such as ‘best’ (6ES01 & 6ES03), ‘last’, ‘cyclist’ (6ES09) and ‘must’ (6ES11) as well as long vowel sounds in words, like ‘Peak’ (6ES01), ‘teacher’ (6ES03), ‘beach’ (6ES07) and ‘please’ (6ES09). Some of them had problems with consonant digraphs like ‘shopping’ (6ES01), ‘things’ (6ES05) and ‘children’ (6ES07).

- Students generally could provide relevant answers to the questions in ‘Teacher-Student Interaction’. Some students failed to give elaboration while others could provide additional details on some more familiar topics, such as *Friend Visiting Hong Kong* (6ES01) and *Going to the Beach* (6ES07).
- In the ‘Presentation’ component, many students demonstrated their ability in delivering a speech or telling a story based on the information provided. Many of them could communicate their ideas quite clearly despite a few mistakes in pronunciation. Most students were awarded a bonus score for having appropriate eye contact with the oral examiners.
- Sub-paper *Visiting Hong Kong* (6ES02) was challenging for some students. Despite having knowledge about the tourist spots, they lacked the vocabulary needed to further elaborate what the places were about and what people could see and find there. For another topic, *Pandas* (6ES12), some students were not able to describe the weight and height of a panda based on the information given. Many students had limited vocabulary to talk about the problems that pandas were facing.

Comparison of Student Performances in English Language Speaking at Primary 6 TSA 2007, 2008 and 2009

A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of P.6 student performances in speaking in TSA 2007, 2008 and 2009 provides useful information on how teachers can help students improve. Table 7.13 summarises such a comparison.

Table 7.13 Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 6 TSA 2007, 2008 and 2009

Year Skill \	2007	2008	2009
Speaking	<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. In addition to providing additional details on familiar topics, some students responded naturally and readily to different topics. In ‘Presentation’, many students were able to provide relevant information and ideas based on the picture prompts when delivering a speech or telling a story. However, some students had difficulty completing storytelling. They tended to express details in the pictures rather than the main idea. Students with good speaking skills were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topic with some elaboration. They could communicate their ideas quite clearly despite 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. Most students were able to provide relevant responses to most of the oral examiner’s questions. Some could even provide additional details on familiar topics. In ‘Presentation’, students presented their ideas well using a limited range of vocabulary and basic sentence patterns although grammatical mistakes were often apparent. Some students misinterpreted the pictorial cues by giving an account of a story rather than delivering a general presentation on a topic. Students with good speaking skills were able to expand their ideas based on the topic given. They showed confidence and could communicate their ideas quite clearly despite mistakes in pronunciation. 	<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 students dropped end consonants and had problems with final consonant blend sounds, long vowel sounds as well as consonant digraphs. Students generally could provide relevant answers to the questions. Some could even provide further details on the topics familiar to them. In ‘Presentation’, many students could express their ideas quite clearly based on the information provided despite some errors in pronunciation. Students with a better performance could elaborate their ideas when interacting with oral examiners. However, some students lacked the vocabulary needed to express themselves clearly.