

7. ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Results of Primary 3 English Language in TSA 2013

The territory-wide percentage of P.3 students achieving English Language Basic Competency in TSA 2013 is 80.4%. The percentage of students achieving basic competency in 2013 is slightly higher than that of 2012.

Primary 3 Assessment Design

The assessment tasks for TSA 2013 P.3 English Language were based on the *Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version) for English Language at the end of Key Stage 1 (Primary 3)* and the *CDC Syllabus for English Language (Primary 1 – 6) 1997*. The tasks covered the four language skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking, as well as learning objectives in three interrelated strands, i.e. Interpersonal (IS), Knowledge (KS) and Experience (ES).

The P.3 written assessment consisted of three sub-papers for Listening and three sub-papers for Reading and Writing, comprising a total of 92 items and 104 score points. The duration of each Listening sub-paper was approximately 20 minutes, while each Reading and Writing sub-paper was 25 minutes. The oral assessment consisted of twelve sub-papers. The composition of the P.3 written sub-papers is provided in Table 7.1a and that of the Speaking sub-papers is given in Table 7.1b.

Table 7.1a Composition of P.3 Written Sub-papers

Written Assessment			
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)		
Listening	3EL1	3EL2	3EL3
	19(19)	20(20)	18(18)
Reading	3ERW1	3ERW2	3ERW3
	26(26)	25(25)	25(25)
Writing	3ERW1	3ERW2	3ERW3
	1(7)	1(7)	1(7)

Table 7.1b Composition of P.3 Speaking Sub-papers

Speaking Assessment			
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)		
L2-R-3-P3BC (Reading aloud)	3ES01 & 3ES03 2 (8)	3ES05 & 3ES07 2 (8)	3ES09 & 3ES11 2 (8)
L1-S-3-P3BC (Short answers)	3ES01 – 3ES04 4 (16)	3ES05 – 3ES08 4 (16)	3ES09 – 3ES12 4 (16)
L3-S-1-P3BC (Picture description – pronunciation)	3ES02 & 3ES04 2 (4)	3ES06 & 3ES08 2 (4)	3ES10 & 3ES12 2 (4)

P.3 Listening Items

Each student was required to attempt one of the three sub-papers (about 20 minutes), each of which consisted of three listening tasks. All listening materials were played twice. Descriptions of the listening assessment tasks are provided in Tables 7.2 and 7.3.

Table 7.2 P.3 Listening: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L2-L-1-P3BC	Discriminating between common words with a small range of vowel and consonant sounds	7
L2-L-3-P3BC	Using a small range of strategies to understand the meaning of short and simple texts on familiar topics which are delivered slowly and clearly in familiar accents	32
	TOTAL	39

Table 7.3 P.3 Listening: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L2-L-1-P3BC L2-L-3-P3BC	Judy's Art Lesson <i>3EL1 / 3EL2 Part 1A</i>	Multiple Choice	5(5)
L2-L-3-P3BC	Judy's Grandma <i>3EL1 / 3EL3 Part 1B</i>	Multiple Choice	4(4)
L2-L-1-P3BC L2-L-3-P3BC	The Sea Journey <i>3EL1 Part 2</i>	Multiple Choice	10(10)
L2-L-1-P3BC L2-L-3-P3BC	Grandpa Loves Cooking <i>3EL2 Part 1B</i>	Multiple Choice	6(6)
L2-L-1-P3BC L2-L-3-P3BC	The Music and Magic Show <i>3EL2/3EL3 Part 2</i>	Multiple Choice	9(9)
L2-L-3-P3BC	Judy's Wish <i>3EL3 Part 1A</i>	Multiple Choice	5(5)

P.3 Reading Items

Each student was required to attempt four reading tasks in one of the three Reading and Writing sub-papers (25 minutes each). About 15 minutes was allotted for completion of the reading tasks in each sub-paper. Descriptions of the reading tasks are provided in Tables 7.4 and 7.5.

Table 7.4 P.3 Reading: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L2-R-5-P3BC	Using a small range of reading strategies to understand the meaning of short and simple texts with the help of cues	45
L2-R-6-P3BC	Applying a small range of simple reference skills	6
TOTAL		51

Table 7.5 P.3 Reading: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L2-R-5-P3BC L2-R-6-P3BC	Contents Page <i>3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 1</i>	Multiple Choice	5(5)
L2-R-5-P3BC	Summer Timetable <i>3ERW1 Part 2</i>	Multiple Choice	7(7)
L2-R-5-P3BC	Student Activities <i>3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 3</i>	Multiple Choice	7(7)
L2-R-5-P3BC	My Favourite Subject <i>3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 4</i>	Multiple Choice	7(7)
L2-R-5-P3BC L2-R-6-P3BC	Book Cover <i>3ERW2 Part 1</i>	Multiple Choice	5(5)
L2-R-5-P3BC	Mother's Day <i>3ERW2 / 3ERW3 Part 2</i>	Multiple Choice	6(6)
L2-R-5-P3BC	People Who Help Us <i>3ERW2 Part 3</i>	Multiple Choice	7(7)
L2-R-5-P3BC	Aunt Annie <i>3ERW3 Part 4</i>	Multiple Choice	7(7)

P.3 Writing Tasks

Each student was required to attempt one writing task in one of the three Reading and Writing sub-papers (25 minutes each). About 10 minutes was allotted for completion of the writing task in each sub-paper. Descriptions of the writing tasks are provided in Tables 7.6 and 7.7.

Table 7.6 P.3 Writing: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L2-W-3-P3BC	Writing and/or responding to short and simple texts with relevant information and ideas (including personal experiences and imaginative ideas) with the help of cues	1
L2-W-4-P3BC	Writing short and simple texts using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices fairly appropriately with the help of cues despite some spelling and grammatical mistakes	1
TOTAL		2

Table 7.7 P.3 Writing: Item Description

Basic Competency	Item Description	No. of Items (Score Points)
L2-W-3-P3BC	At the Market	1/2 (4)
L2-W-4-P3BC	3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 5	1/2 (3)
L2-W-3-P3BC	My New Friend	1/2 (4)
L2-W-4-P3BC	3ERW3 Part 5	1/2 (3)

P.3 Speaking Tasks

Two components were designed for P.3 oral assessment. The first was ‘Reading Aloud and Expression of Personal Experiences’ (hereafter RA & PE) which required students to read aloud a text of approximately 35 – 40 words in length and then answer a set of questions based on the theme of the text. Students were assessed on their reading fluency and response to the Oral Examiners’ questions. For this task, students were given two minutes to prepare for the assessment, one minute to complete the RA text and two minutes to complete the questions for PE. The second task was ‘Picture Description’ (hereafter PD) which required students to answer the Oral Examiner’s questions based on a single picture or a series of smaller pictures. Students were assessed on the relevancy and response to the questions as well as their pronunciation. For PD, students were given three minutes to study the question paper and two minutes to complete the Oral Examiners’ questions.

Each component represented one-half of the total sub-papers used for the oral assessment. RA & PE comprised sub-papers *3ES01, 3ES03, 3ES05, 3ES07, 3ES09, 3ES011* and PD comprised *3ES02, 3ES04, 3ES06, 3ES08, 3ES10, 3ES12*. A set of four sub-papers (two RA & PE tasks and two PD tasks) were alternately assessed in an assessment session. Sub-papers consisted of different topics: *Rainbow (3ES01), In a Country Park (3ES02), My Pet (3ES03), Story-telling Competition (3ES04), Mother’s Day (3ES05), In a Park (3ES06), A Birthday Card (3ES07), In a Restaurant (3ES08), Sundays (3ES09), At Recess (3ES10), Summer Holidays (3ES11)* and *In a Shopping Centre (3ES12)*. A total of three sessions were conducted over the 1.5 days of assessment held on 2 and 3 May 2013. Descriptions of the speaking tasks are provided in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8 P.3 Speaking: Distribution of Tasks

Basic Competency	Task Description	Descriptor
L2-R-3-P3BC	Reading Aloud <i>3ES01, 3ES03, 3ES05, 3ES07, 3ES09, 3ES11</i>	Showing a basic understanding of short, simple and familiar texts by reading aloud the texts clearly and comprehensibly
L1-S-3-P3BC	Expression of Personal Experiences <i>3ES01, 3ES03, 3ES05, 3ES07, 3ES09, 3ES11</i>	Providing short answers to short and simple questions
L3-S-1-P3BC	Picture Description <i>3ES02, 3ES04, 3ES06, 3ES08, 3ES10, 3ES12</i>	Pronouncing simple and familiar words comprehensibly
L1-S-3-P3BC		Providing short answers to short and simple questions

Performance of P.3 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in TSA 2013

P.3 Listening

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence showed that they were able to identify key words on familiar topics with clear verbal cues. They also showed competence in identifying the connection of ideas linked by a small range of cohesive devices. They could even identify the implicit connection between ideas. They were able to distinguish basic differences in intonation and discriminate between common words with a small range of consonant and vowel sounds.

Key Words

- Almost all students at this level were able to identify key words of familiar topics. Students were able to identify key words related to food. When students listened to a conversation between Judy and her grandpa, they were able to identify ‘dim sum’ as the food that Grandpa cooked in the restaurant when he was young (*3EL2 Part 1B ‘Grandpa Loves Cooking’ Q.2*).
- Students were good at identifying numbers. They could identify prices and ages correctly. Most students were also able to identify the price of a student ticket for the music and magic show even with distractors given in the spoken text: ‘*There are four kinds of tickets: \$150, \$180, \$270 and \$330. The \$150 tickets are for students.*’ (*3EL2 / 3EL3 Part 2 ‘The Music and Magic Show’ Q.3*). When listening to the conversation between Judy and her grandpa, most students could identify that the restaurant in which Grandpa worked closed down when he was 65 (*3EL2 Part 1B ‘Grandpa Loves Cooking’ Q.3*). When asked how old Judy’s Grandma was, the majority of students could identify ‘86’ when hearing ‘*Judy, I’m 86.*’ (*3EL1 / 3EL3 Part 1B ‘Judy’s Grandma’ Q.1*).
- With straightforward verbal cues given in the spoken texts and pictorial cues, the majority of students were able to identify key words to get the answers correctly. When they listened to a story about Billy and the fish (King of the East Sea), they could identify the picture of the King’s children singing a song as the correct answer while they heard ‘*They were the King’s children. They sang a song to welcome Billy.*’ (*3EL1 Part 2 ‘The Sea Journey’ Q.5*).

Connection between Ideas

- Students demonstrated an understanding of the connection between ideas linked by a small range of cohesive devices including ‘and’ and ‘also’ in the spoken texts. Most students at this level showed their understanding of the connection between ideas linked by ‘and’. When they heard *‘The animal in the picture had one eye, two tails and three legs.’*, they were able to choose the correct picture of the animal (3EL1 / 3EL2 Part 1A ‘Judy’s Art Lesson’ Q.5). In another listening task, some of the students were also able to identify that the King of Magic could do magic with both playing cards and flowers when the ideas were linked by ‘and’ in the spoken text: *‘People call him the “King of Magic”. He does magic with flowers and playing cards.’* (3EL2 / 3EL3 Part 2 ‘The Music and Magic Show’ Q.7).
- The majority of students could also identify the connection of ideas linked by ‘also’. They could identify the two reasons for Judy’s Grandma staying young by interpreting *‘...I eat healthy food like vegetables, fish and rice every day. Also I’m always happy.’* (3EL1 / 3EL3 Part 1B ‘Judy’s Grandma’ Q.2).
- Most students could understand the connection of two contrasting ideas. They could identify ‘the chairs’ as the only things that the poor children in India had by interpreting *‘You’re lucky that you have books, pencils and computers at school. They only have chairs to sit on.’* (3EL2 / 3EL3 Part 2 ‘The Music and Magic Show’ Q.4).
- Many students also showed their understanding of the connection between two ideas. When asked why Judy wanted to make a cake, students could identify ‘It was for Grandpa’s birthday’ as the reason by interpreting *‘The cake is for you, Grandpa. It’s your birthday next week!’* (3EL2 Part 1B ‘Grandpa Loves Cooking’ Q.5).

Intonation

- Most students showed their competence in distinguishing speakers’ tones when expressing happiness, praise and anger. They were able to identify the correct picture of Judy with her arms up showing that she was in a good mood when they heard her saying *‘Hurray! I always get high marks!’* (3EL2 / 3EL3 Part 2 ‘The Music and Magic Show’ Q.9). Most students also knew that Judy’s grandpa was feeling happy when they heard him saying *‘Oh, you’re a lovely child! I love you!’* (3EL2 Part 1B ‘Grandpa Loves Cooking’ Q.6).

- Most students could identify the speaker's tone expressing praise and anger. Students understood how Judy felt about Grandma. They knew that Judy praised Grandma for learning how to use the computer when they heard '*Now I'm learning to use the computer to find my friends...Oh, you are very smart, Grandma!*' (3EL1 / 3EL3 Part 1B '*Judy's Grandma*' Q.4). Students could also identify Billy's angry tone when he said '*Don't hurt my friend!*' to the shark (3EL1 Part 2 '*The Sea Journey*' Q.8).

Sounds

- Most students could identify the name of the restaurant in which Judy's Grandpa worked. They were capable of distinguishing initial consonants 'F', 'K', 'L' and 'W'. They could identify '*Ho Wa Restaurant*' as the correct answer from '*Ho Fa Restaurant*', '*Ho Ka Restaurant*' and '*Ho La Restaurant*' (3EL2 Part 1B '*Grandpa Loves Cooking*' Q.1).
- A majority of the students could distinguish the name of a beach with different initial consonants. They could distinguish '*Benson Beach*' from '*Sanson Beach*', '*Jenson Beach*' and '*Hanson Beach*' (3EL1 Part 2 '*The Sea Journey*' Q.1). The majority of them at this level could also distinguish initial consonants 'B', 'M', 'K' and 'W'. They could distinguish '*Milo*' from '*Bilo*', '*Kilo*' and '*Wilo*' (3EL1 / 3EL2 Part 1A '*Judy's Art Lesson*' Q.4).

P.3 Reading

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to identify key words with the help of straightforward contextual clues and pictorial cues. Cohesive devices were found to be useful in helping students to identify the connection between ideas. Students at this level could apply a small range of simple reference skills to obtain information from book covers and the contents page. They could also follow pronoun references when reading some notes. They were capable of predicting content from book covers with the help of pictorial cues and contextual clues.

Key Words

- A majority of the students at this level were able to match the correct pictures with the key words identified in the notes about 'People Who Help Us' and a letter. When reading some notes about 'People Who Help Us', students were asked what Mr and Mrs Wong sold. They could match the picture of some fruits with the key words

identified *'Mr and Mrs Wong sell yummy and fresh fruit.'* (3ERW2 Part 3 *'People Who Help Us'* Q.1). Students were asked to read a letter from Grace to her friend. When asked to identify Grace's music box, students could match the picture of a music box with a little bear with the key words found in the letter: *'There is a cute bear on it.'* (3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 4 *'My Favourite Subject'* Q.1).

- A majority of the students were able to identify key words about dates, venues, time and people with straightforward contextual clues. When asked about the date on which the funfair was held and the venue for the Games Day, students at this level were able to locate the date '3/7' and the venue *'Classrooms'* in the notice (3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 3 *'Student Activities'* Q.1 & Q.4).
- Students were asked to read Grace's summer timetable. A majority of them could identify the date '18/7' in the timetable when Grace was going to have lunch with Aunt Jane (3ERW1 Part 2 *'Summer Timetable'* Q.1). When reading the timetable, students could identify the venue of Peter's birthday party and the starting time of Grace's cooking class by referring to the information *'Peter's birthday party (Happy Club)'* and *'Cooking class, Time: 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.'* in the timetable (3ERW1 Part 2 *'Summer Timetable'* Q.2 & Q.3). They could also identify *'Kitty'* who would be going to Red Stone Park with Grace by identifying the information *'go to Red Stone Park with Kitty'* in the timetable (3ERW1 Part 2 *'Summer Timetable'* Q.6).

Connection between Ideas

- A majority of the students showed their understanding of connection between ideas which were linked by 'and'. When asked what the teachers did in the lessons, students were able to provide the correct answer *'Read stories and teach Maths'* by using contextual clues *'Miss Sun reads English stories to me and I learn Maths from Miss Chan.'* (3ERW2 Part 3 *'People Who Help Us'* Q.6). In reading Grace's summer timetable, students could also identify that Grace had both cooking and art classes on Tuesday (3ERW1 Part 2 *'Summer Timetable'* Q.5). They could understand the implicit connection of ideas presented in the timetable.

Reference Skills

- Most students were able to obtain information from the contents page of a book. They could identify that there were altogether six chapters in the book *'Jacky Goes Shopping'* (3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 1 *'Contents Page'* Q.1). The majority of them could also tell that Jacky went shopping at the market by reading the information

'Chapter Two: Jacky goes to the market' in the contents page of the book (3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 1 *'Contents Page'* Q.2).

- Students at this level demonstrated their competence in obtaining information from a book cover. A majority of the students were able to identify 'Susan Hill' as the author and many of them could identify 'Down in the Big Sea' as the book title by reading the book cover (3ERW2 Part 1 *'Book Cover'* Q.1 & Q.2). Many students were also capable of identifying the book as the third book of Lily Children's Readers (3ERW2 Part 1 *'Book Cover'* Q.5).

Predicting Content

- Many students could deduce meaning from the book cover of 'Down in the Big Sea'. When reading the book cover, students with the help of the pictorial cues and contextual clues were able to predict that Grace could not see a sparrow down in the sea (3ERW2 Part 1 *'Book Cover'* Q.4).

Reference Words

- Students at this level showed understanding of the pronoun reference 'She'. In reading some notes about 'People Who Help Us', students were asked to read a paragraph about Mrs Tam, a school bus driver. Many students were able to identify that 'She' referred to Mrs Tam in that paragraph and showed they could follow pronoun references across a few lines (3ERW2 Part 3 *'People Who Help Us'* Q.3).

Unfamiliar Words

- When reading the letter from Grace's friend, Mary, students were asked how Grace felt when she listened to the music box. A majority of the students were able to predict the meaning of an unfamiliar word 'delighted' as feeling happy by using straightforward contextual clues: *'I like the music and I am delighted to listen to it. I sing and dance to the music!'* (3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 4 *'My Favourite Subject'* Q.2).

Student Exemplar 1

Peter and his mum go to Tai Tai Market and buy some fruits. Then they choose some fruits. Then Peter sees a man is takes the people a purse. Then he tell his mum and the people.

Annotation

- The student is able to provide a factual account of the story based on the pictures, with almost no supporting details (“Peter and his mum go to Tai Tai Market and buy some fruits...Then Peter sees a man is takes the people a purse.”). The description is quite clear and an ending is given by the student (“Then he tell his mum and the people.”).
- The student uses a small range of vocabulary (“buy”, “see”, “tell”), sentence patterns (“Then they choose some fruits.”) and cohesive devices (“Then”) fairly appropriately with some grammatical mistakes (“Then Peter sees a man is takes the people a purse.”, “Then he tell his mum and the people.”).

Student Exemplar 2

Today was market day. Today, I went to
Tai Tai Market and boght the fruit.
Next, we boght the apple but I saw
one boy, he and took Mary bag. I and
policeman catched the boy. In the end,
Mary said, 'You are cleve, you help me.'
Today was good day.

Annotation

- The student is able to provide a factual account of the story based on the pictorial cues, with almost no supporting details (“Today was market day. Today, I went to Tai Tai Market and boght the fruit. Next, we boght the apple but I saw one boy and took Mary bag.”). The description is quite clear and an ending is provided (“I and policeman catched the boy.”).
- The student uses a small range of vocabulary (“saw”, “took”), sentence patterns (“Next, we boght the apple but I saw one boy...”, “In the end, Mary said, ‘You are cleve, you help me.’”) and cohesive devices (“Next”, “but”) fairly appropriately with some grammatical mistakes (“I and policeman catched the boy.”) and spelling mistakes (“boght” (bought), “cleve” (clever)).

My New Friend (3ERW3 Part 5)

Part 5
You are writing about your new friend.
Write about 30 words.
You may use your own ideas or the following questions to help you:

Please do not write in the margin. 請勿在此書寫。

Please do not write in the margin. 請勿在此書寫。

Please do not write in the margin. 請勿在此書寫。

In this writing task, students were asked to write about a new friend with the help of prompts.

Student Exemplar 3

Today I made a new friend she
was kind and helpful. at school

We went to the park after school,
then, we ate ice-cream together,
she told me she like playing foot-
ball.

Annotation

- The student is able to provide brief and relevant ideas/responses to the questions (“Today, I made a new friend at school.”, “We went to the park after school...”, “She told me she like playing foot-ball.”). The ideas are quite clear.
- The student uses a small range of vocabulary (“kind”, “helpful”), sentence patterns (“We went to the park after school, then, we ate ice-cream together.”) and cohesive devices (“and”, “then”) fairly appropriately with some grammatical mistakes (“She told me she like playing foot-ball.”)

Student Exemplar 4

My new friend Rudy Chan, she is
kind. She plays with me. I met her at
3B. She hobbies is reading books
She looks like a mokey, she is
cute and beautiful.

Annotation

- The student is able to provide brief and relevant ideas/responses to the questions (“My new friend Rudy Chan, she is kind.”, “I met her at 3B.”, “She hobbies is reading books.”). The ideas are quite clear.
- The student uses a small range of vocabulary (“kind”, “cute”, “beautiful”), sentence patterns (“She plays with me.”, “...she is cute and beautiful.”) and cohesive devices (“and”) fairly appropriately with some grammatical mistakes (“My new friend Rudy Chan,”, “She hobbies is reading books.”) and spelling mistakes (“mokey” (monkey)).

P.3 Speaking

Depending on the size of the school, a sample of either 12 or 24 students were randomly selected 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 small sample size. However, a descriptive summary of the overall performance levels of students can be found in the ‘General Comments on P.3 Student Performances’ section.

Best Performance of P.3 Students in TSA 2013

P.3 Listening

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

Key Words

- More able students could identify key words showing the home of the ‘King of the East Sea’. When they heard ‘*He took Billy to his home. It was a beautiful glass house.*’, they were able to choose the correct picture of a glass house from a wooden house, a brick house and a house of seashells (3EL1 Part 2 ‘*The Sea Journey*’ Q.4).

Connection between Ideas

- More able students could identify the connection of ideas in spoken texts. The ideas were of causal relationship. Students could identify the reason why Judy liked the paintings of roses most by interpreting ‘*I saw beautiful paintings of flowers. I liked the roses most. They were of different colours.*’ (3EL1 / 3EL2 Part 1A ‘*Judy’s Art Lesson*’ Q.3). They could also identify why Judy’s grandma didn’t feel bored with the reason implicitly built in the spoken texts: ‘*(Are you bored?) No. I always learn new things. I’m learning to use the computer.*’ (3EL1 / 3EL3 Part 1B ‘*Judy’s Grandma*’ Q.3).

Sounds

- More able students could also distinguish some vowel sounds. They were able to distinguish ‘Jane’ from ‘June’, ‘Jean’ and ‘Joan’ (3EL1 / 3EL2 Part 1A ‘*Judy’s Art Lesson*’ Q.2).

P.3 Reading

Students with the best performance did well in the following areas.

Key Words

- Students were asked to read an advertisement about shopping for Mother's Day. More able students could make use of the key words in the word bubble '*Spend over \$300 and get a teapot for free*' to identify a teapot as the free gift that Grace could get when she spent \$350 at the Kowloon Shop (3ERW2 / 3ERW3 Part 2 '*Mother's Day*' Q.6). Students could also identify the finishing time of the Magic Show in the notice (9 p.m.) by reading '*Time: 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.*' (3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 3 '*Student Activities*' Q.3).

Connection between Ideas

- Students were able to identify the connection of ideas in the letter linked by 'and'. When students were asked which musical instruments Miss Chu played, they could identify 'drums and the guitar' as the correct answer by interpreting '*She is good at playing drums and the guitar.*' (3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 4 '*My Favourite Subject*' Q.3).

Reference Skills

- More able students could correctly identify 'Sunny Beach Press' as the publisher of the book 'Down in the Big Sea' (3ERW2 Part 1 '*Book Cover*' Q.3).

Reference Words

- More able students could interpret 'We' as 'Grace and her classmates' when they read '*... my classmates and I sing many songs. We sometimes watch music videos.*' in a letter from Grace to Mary (3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 4 '*My Favourite Subject*' Q.4). More able students could also interpret the pronoun 'She' correctly in the letter: '*It is Betty Ma's new CD. She plays nice songs on the piano.*'. They knew 'She' referred to 'Betty Ma' in the letter in which the pronoun was very close to the subject it referred to (3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 4 '*My Favourite Subject*' Q.7).

- More able students were capable of interpreting the pronoun which referred to the recipient of the notice. They understood that ‘you’ referred to ‘the parents of the students who were reading the notice from school’ when they read this:

‘Dear Parents,

We invite you to join the following activities with your children:’

(3ERW1 / 3ERW3 Part 3 ‘Student Activities’ Q.5)

P.3 Writing

Students with good writing skills were able to provide a logical story based on pictures with many supporting details in 3ERW1 / 3ERW2. Students could provide relevant ideas with many supporting details or examples based on the prompts in 3ERW3. The ideas were well organised and coherent. In terms of language, students at this level were able to use a range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices appropriately with minor, few or no grammatical and spelling mistakes.

At the Market (3ERW1 / 3ERW2 Part 5)

Student Exemplar 5

Today, Peter, mum and Peter went to Tai Tai Market to buy fruits. They had to go to the second floor.

While they were choosing the fruits, Peter saw a man with a mean look stealing the lady's wallet ^{beside him}. Peter quickly told his ^{his} mum. And ~~his~~ mother called the police and then took back the wallet and told the lady that the man stole her wallet.

The police came and the thief was caught. The lady was actually Peter's mum's friend from university. So that lady knew Peter, and she said he was the hero of the day.

Annotation

- The student is able to write an interesting story based on pictorial prompts, with many supporting details (“Today, Peter’s mum and Peter went to Tai Tai Market to buy fruits. They had to go to the second floor.”, “While they were choosing the fruits, Peter saw a man with a mean look stealing the lady’s wallet beside him.”, “And his mother called the police and then took back the wallet and told the lady that the man stole her wallet.”). The description is very clear and coherent. A good ending is given to the story (“The police came and the thief was caught. The lady was actually Peter’s mum’s friend from university. So that lady knew Peter and she said he was the hero of the day.”).
- The student uses a range of vocabulary (“a mean look”, “beside”, “quickly”, “hero”, “actually”, “university”), sentence patterns (“They had to go to the second floor.”, “Peter quickly told his mum.”, “And his mother called the police and then took back the wallet and told the lady that the man stole her wallet.”) and cohesive devices (“While”, “and then”) appropriately.

Student Exemplar 6

One day in the afternoon, Peter and his mum go to Tai Tai Market to buy some fruits. So they go to the second floor.

When Peter and his mum are at the second floor, they go to a shop to buy some fruits. Peter is buying some apples while his mum is choosing some oranges.

Suddenly, a rude-looking face man pushes pass people and stands beside the woman next to Peter. He quietly puts his hands into the woman's bag and takes the woman's purse!

When Peter saw it he quickly shouted, "Stop right there, give the purse back to the woman!" The man stops and give back the purse to the woman. After Peter's mum dialed 999, the woman thanked Peter, Peter's mum praised Peter too! What a good boy it is!

Annotation

- The student is able to write an interesting story based on pictorial prompts with many supporting details ("One day in the afternoon, Peter and his mum go to Tai Tai Market to buy some fruits.", "Suddenly, a rude-looking face man pushes pass people and stands beside the woman next to Peter.", "He quietly puts his hands into the woman's bag and takes the woman's purse!", "When Peter saw it he quickly shouted, 'Stop right there, give the purse back to the woman!'"). The description is very clear and coherent. A good ending is given to the story ("After Peter's mum dialed 999, the woman thanked Peter, Peter's mum praised Peter too!").
- The student uses a range of vocabulary ("choosing", "next to", "quietly", "beside", "dialed", "praised"), sentence patterns ("When Peter and his mum are at the second floor, they go to a shop to buy some fruits.", "Peter is buying some apples while his mum is choosing some oranges.") and cohesive devices ("So", "When", "while", "Suddenly") appropriately.

My New Friend (3ERW3 Part 5)

Student Exemplar 7

Joe is my new Friend, her hobby is swimming. I always meet her at Central Swimming Pool. We always have a swimming competition, she is always wins because she swims very well. She has a sweet voice, I like to listen when she is also singing. She has a small eyes and small ears, and she always puts on her glasses when she is reading. She is kind and polite because she always picks the books up when I drop down. I like her very much.

Annotation

- The student is able to provide relevant ideas/responses to the questions with many supporting details or examples (“Joe is my new Friend, her hobby is swimming. I always meet her at Central Swimming Pool.”, “...she is always wins because she swims very well.”, “...and she always puts on her glasses when she is reading.”, “She is kind and polite because she always picks the books up when I drop down.”). The ideas are very clear and coherent.
- The student uses a range of vocabulary (“swimming competition”, “sweet voice”, “puts on her glasses”, “polite”, “picks the books up”), sentence patterns (“I like to listen when she is singing.”, “She is kind and polite because she always picks the books up when I drop down.”) and cohesive devices appropriately (“because”, “also”, “and”) with few grammatical mistakes (“she is always wins because she swims very well.”, “She has a small eyes and small ears,”, “... when I drop down.”).

Student Exemplar 8

I have a new friend. She is a girl. Her name is Joly. She likes English very much. I like English too. That why I met her in a English class. She has a round face, two big eyes, a small mouth and a pair of glasses. I always ride bicycle with her and swim in the swimming pool with her. One month ago, we won a swimming competition! We also like drawing. We often draw picture in Lo Fung Art Class. I like her very much. She is so kind and she always get good marks in her dictations. She is a smart girl. She plays with me but she doesn't play tricks on me and laugh at me.

Annotation

- The student is able to provide relevant ideas/responses to the questions, with many supporting details or examples (“I have a new friend. She is a girl. Her name is Joly.”, “She likes English very much. I like English too. That why I met her in a English Class.”, “She has a round face, two big eyes, a small mouth and a pair of glasses.”, “We also like drawing. We often draw picture in Lo Fung Art Class.”). The ideas are very clear and coherent.
- The student uses a range of vocabulary (“round”, “smart”, “play tricks”), sentence patterns (“I always ride bicycle with her and swim in the swimming pool with her.”, “One month ago, we won a swimming competition!”, “She plays with me but she doesn’t play tricks on me and laugh at me.”) and cohesive devices (“too”, “also” , “but”) appropriately, with few grammatical mistakes (“That why I met her in a English Class.”) and spelling mistakes (“competition” (competition)).

P.3 Speaking

Students with the best performance demonstrated competence in the following areas:

- In the ‘Reading Aloud’ component, students with the best performance were able to read a short text fluently and clearly with appropriate pausing and intonation. They made very few or no mistakes in pronunciation when reading words with three syllables, such as ‘favourite’ (3ES01 & 3ES09), ‘beautiful’ (3ES03 & 3ES05) and ‘delicious’ (3ES05). They also showed awareness of their audience by maintaining good eye contact with the oral examiners.
- In the ‘Expression of Personal Experiences’ component, students with good speaking skills could provide relevant answers to most of the questions naturally and readily with some elaboration. They were able to give information about their personal experiences related to given topics. They could talk about what they do on different occasions.
- In the ‘Picture Description’ component, students who performed well were able to give a clear description of what they saw in the pictures. They spoke clearly and readily with very few pronunciation mistakes. Their answers to most of the questions were relevant with some elaborated responses. They could explain why the teacher felt angry (3ES04) and were able to talk about the worried mother looking for her son (3ES12).

General Comments on P.3 Student Performances

P.3 Listening

- On the whole, the performance of students in listening was relatively stable. They were generally able to identify key words in conversations and a story. This indicated that students were able to follow the storyline of the story and understand the conversations between speakers. The key words identified were on familiar topics such as food, age, prices and activities. Although distractors were built to the spoken texts, they could identify key words that were delivered slowly and clearly by the speakers in the spoken texts. Straightforward spoken clues and pictorial cues were found to be helpful to students.
- Students continued to do well when distinguishing a speaker’s tone of voice. They could distinguish the tone of a speaker showing happiness, praise and anger. This showed that students could understand basic differences in intonation.

- Students also showed their competence in discriminating between a small range of initial consonants. They could distinguish words with initial consonants 'W', 'B' and 'M'. However, students' performances in discriminating vowel sounds were not satisfactory. Only the more able students could distinguish 'Jane' from 'June', 'Jean' and 'Joan'.
- The performance of students in identifying the connection between ideas in spoken texts was the same as last year. When listening to ideas explicitly linked by a small range of cohesive devices such as 'and' and 'also', students were generally able to identify the connection between ideas. They could also understand the connection of two contrasting ideas.

P.3 Reading

- The performance of students in identifying key words in reading texts was slightly better than that of last year. They were able to identify key words on familiar topics such as date, time, food, people and places. It was also found that when given straightforward contextual clues and pictorial cues, students were able to make use of the clues in identifying the correct answers.
- Students' performances in identifying the connection between ideas were stable across 2012 and 2013. Students were generally able to work out the connection between ideas that were implicitly or explicitly linked by 'and'. However, when students were asked to identify the connection of ideas linked by other cohesive devices such as 'or', fewer students were able to get the correct answer. The implicit connection between ideas in a letter was a challenge for students.
- The performance of students in obtaining information from book covers and contents page was similar to that of last year. They could identify information such as the author and the title on the book cover. When reading the contents page of a book, they were able to identify the total number of chapters in the book and the content of a chapter. Contextual clues and pictorial cues helped students to get the correct answers. However, fewer students could identify the publisher of the book.
- The performance of students in predicting contents based on book covers was similar to that of last year. With the help of pictorial cues and contextual clues on the book cover, many students were able to deduce the contents of the book.

- Students' performance in following pronoun references was similar to that of last year. Students could follow pronoun references when straightforward contextual clues were given.
- Interpreting unfamiliar words was a still a challenge to students. When straightforward contextual clues were given, students were able to interpret meaning of the unfamiliar words.

P.3 Writing

- In the writing task 'At the Market', students were given word prompts 'go', 'choose' and 'take/purse' for the three pictures and were asked to write a story about what happened at the market. They were also asked to provide an ending to the story. Many students were able to write a factual account of the story with an ending, though not many supporting details were given. The ideas that they provided were quite clear and relevant.
- In the writing task 'My New Friend', students were asked to write about their new friend. Prompts were given to help students write: '*Where did you meet your new friend?*', '*What do you do with him/her?*', '*What are his/her hobbies?*', '*What does he/she look like?*', and '*What do you think of your new friend?*'. Students were generally able to respond to the questions with brief but relevant answers. The ideas were quite clear. Students were also able to organize their ideas well.
- The performances of students in the two writing tasks are summarized below.

At the Market

- In general, the performance of students in writing stories in 2013 is similar to that of 2012. Students were able to write the story according to the given pictures. This showed that the topic was familiar to the students and was related to their daily life experiences. In the writing task 'At the Market', many students were able to write a short story about a man stealing a woman's purse at the market based on the given pictures. Based on pictorial cues, students generally were able to provide a factual account of the story with a clear storyline. At the beginning of the story, they were able to write about where Peter and his mum went and what they wanted to buy: '*One day, Peter and his mum went to Tai Tai Market to buy some fruits.*', '*Today, mum with Peter going Tai Tai Market buying some sweet apple.*', '*Today was market day. Today, I went to Tai Tai Market and boght the fruit.*', '*Today my mum and I go to Tai*

Tai Market buy Fruit, vegetables and Meat. We are happy., *'Peter and his mum in a Tai Tai Market. Mum want to buy fruit. Then, They go to second floor.'* Then students developed the story by providing brief but relevant ideas about what Peter and his mum did at the fruit stall. For example, *'Peter choose an apple. His mum choose an orange.'*, *'They choose fruit.'*, *'Next, we bought the apple...'*, *'I choose one apple. The apple is beautiful.'* They further developed the story with ideas about what happened when Peter and his mum were choosing fruits: *'Next, I see the Man take one girl purse. But the girl is choose the apple'*, *'Next, I see the one old man take the girl purse. I is scared. Later, I go to talk for mother.'*, *'Suddenly a thief took her money pocket out of her bag!'*.

- Many students were able to provide a very brief ending to the story, though without much elaboration: *'Finally I fight with the thief...I win. I am very happy.'*, *'Mum call the Goodman to catch him...'*, *'So, Peter quickly called his mum to called the Policeman to catch the thief.'*, *'Finally, I called 999 and a policeman catches the thief. I felt happy.'*, *'Later the police men catch the man. The man gives bak the purse to the woman.'* Most of the students ended the story by saying that the thief was caught by the police. Only a few students were able to provide a story with imaginative ideas: *'The police came and the thief was caught. The lady was actually Peter's mum's friend from university...she said he was the hero of the day.'*
- In general, students were able to use the word prompts 'go', 'choose' and 'take' to write the story. Some students also used the vocabulary given on the directory on the wall in the picture to provide more details to the story. Only a few students were able to use the information '\$20 for 4' in the third picture in their writing. However, some students did not understand the meaning of the word 'purse' and mistook it as a person *'...the purse ran away that street'*, thus impeding the communication of ideas.
- Similar to last year, this year some students were able to include short conversation exchanges in the story. The dialogues made the story more vivid and interesting. The dialogues were between Peter and the woman (*'I said "aunt the boy is take your money"'*), Peter and the thief (*'Suddenly, Peter look the pelope take a woman purse. Peter says, "Don't take the woman purse!"'*), Peter and his mum (*'Peter says with his mum, "We are find the poliman to catch this man."'*), and Peter and the policeman (*'"The policeman says "Peter, you are good boy."'*). However, when students wrote the dialogues, they sometimes forgot to put the close speech marks at the end of the conversations.

- Students were able to use relevant but limited vocabulary related to the topic 'At the Market' in the story. The vocabulary commonly used were 'buy', 'fruit', 'orange', 'apple', 'see', 'say', 'find', 'call', 'happy' and 'good boy'. Short and simple sentences were given in the story, e.g. 'Today, Mum and me go to the market.', 'Mum goes to buy fruit'. The descriptions were quite clear. Some students were able to use cohesive devices to link ideas. They were able to use cohesive devices such as 'so', 'First', 'Then', 'but' and 'Finally'. For example, 'Mum want to buy fruit so we go to 2/F, we choose the fruit.', 'First, we go to Market buy fruit.', 'Mum goes to buy fruit. Then, Mum buys some orange and apples.', 'I choose the apple but I can see the man want to take Mum the purse.', 'Finally, Peter say it to his mum.'
- However, grammatical mistakes were still common among students. Students made errors in tenses such as subject-verb agreement. For example, 'Mum want to buy some fuirt.', 'Mum and I goes to Tai Tai Market.', 'Today mum and I go to Tai Tai Market buy fruit.', 'All the people are choose the best fruit to buy it', 'Today me and my mum go to the Tai Tai Market...There had one girle', 'I choosed a apple because It is yummy.', 'His mum looked at the fruit and buy it', 'Then they go to buy some apples. But have bad people.', 'Mum see a boy took her purse.', 'I can saw one Man take out my mum pures', 'So, Peter quickly called his mum to called the Policeman to catch the thief.', 'Policeman helpful and brave', 'Sister said 'you was a good boy.', 'We is happy.'
- Some students wrote incomplete sentences or sentences with incorrect structure, e.g. 'Then, Peter see a man take out a girl purse...', 'I and policeman catched the boy.'. Students did not use prepositions and pronouns correctly, e.g. '...I see one thief steal the purse for the woman.', 'He fight to the boy.', 'The grille say thank you for me.', 'I tell mum but her doesn't listen.', '...Mum, the man want to take you purse.'. They were not aware of the correct usage of singular and plural nouns: 'My mum bought some apple and orange.', 'My mum choose a oranges, I see the fresh apple'. The use of the apostrophe was weak among students. For example, 'Peter can see it the thieves take his mum purse.', 'The man takes the girl purse.', 'But I saw one boy and took Mary bag.'
- Students also misspelled some common words: 'mather' for 'mother', 'gril', 'grily', 'grile' for 'girl', 'alppy', 'alppes', 'apply' for 'apple', 'organe' for 'orange', 'secand', 'senend', 'scond' for 'second', 'fuirt' for 'fruit', 'boght' for 'bought', 'pelpeo', 'peple', 'peploe' for 'people', 'thieve', 'theif' for 'thief', 'pollceman',

'*poilcemen*' for 'policeman' or 'policemen', '*suddely*', '*sunttenly*' for 'suddenly', '*scard*' for 'scared', '*bake*', '*bak*' for 'back'. Some students mixed up the usage of words which were similar in spelling and the communication of ideas was therefore impeded: '*bed*' for '*bad*' in '*...you can't take the peploe wallet, you are bed..*' and '*form*' for '*from*' in '*I see a man take the purse form a people's handbag.*'.

- A small number of students were able to provide ideas relevant to the topic with elaboration of ideas. They wrote well-organised paragraphs and provided many supporting details to the story: '*One Day in the afternoon, Peter and his mum go to Tai Tai Market to buy some fruits. So they go to the second floor.*', '*While they were choosing the fruits, Peter saw a man with a mean look stealing the lady's wallet beside him.*', '*Peter saw a police officer and told him about the thief. The police caught the thief and put him into the jail.*', '*When Peter saw it he quickly shouted, "Stop right there, give the purse back to the woman."*'.
- Capable students were able to provide conversation exchanges with elaborated ideas and made the story interesting: '*...the cops said, "You're really a good kid because you know that stealing things is not right, we'll give back the girl's purse to her."*. Mum also said, "*Peter, your're a nice citizen."*'. They also provided a good ending with details to the story: '*The woman says, "Thank you little boy, how can I repay you?" But Peter says "No thank you. I'm glad I can help."*'.
- A wide range of vocabulary and sentence patterns were used by capable students. For example, '*When Peter and his mum are at the second floor, they go to a shop to buy some fruits. Peter is buying some apples while his mum is choosing some oranges.*', '*When Mum chose oranges, Peter chose apples, beside him was a tall girl. Suddenly, a man came and took the girl's purse, because the girl was picking apples, so she didn't know.*', '*Suddenly, a rude-looking face man pushes pass people and stands beside the woman next to Peter. He quietly puts his hands into the woman's bag and takes the woman's purse.*'. Cohesive devices such as '*when*', '*while*', '*because*', '*so*', '*suddenly*', '*and*' were used to link ideas and their stories were clear and coherent.

My New Friend

- On the whole, the writing performance of students in responding to questions prompts in 2013 is similar to that of 2012. For the writing task 'My New Friend', they were able to write a lot of things about their new friends. This showed that the topic was familiar to the students. They were able to write about the name of their new friend and where they met with the help of given prompts. They also wrote about their new

friend's appearance, hobbies and the things they did together: *'Jason is my new friend. I playing football with him.'*, *'His hobby is drawing. He always call me to draw with him.'*, *'She plays with me. I met her at 3B.'*, *'I meet her when we have drawing lessons'*, *'...she is cute and beautiful.'*, *'She is tall, thin and her eyes are small, she always come to my home after school.'*, *'I don't shout at him and fight with him.'*, *'We went to the park after school, then, we ate ice-cream together.'*, *'I always play with her and listen to her.'*, *'I like my new friend very much.'*. Brief but relevant ideas about what students thought of their new friend were also included in their writing. For example, *'I think he can do a lot of things.'*, *'I think he is very nice and cleve.'*, *'I think she is a funny girl.'*. The ideas were quite clear but not much elaboration was given. However, some students misunderstood what 'look like' meant and wrote incorrect expressions like *'He looks like kind.'*, *'She looks like a mokey.'*, *'She looks like my school bag.'*

- Students were able to write short and simple sentences, e.g. *'My new friend is Billy...He is helpful and kind. He is good at English, Art and Chinese.'*, *'He doesn't play tricks on me.'*, *'She told me she like playing football.'*, *'She has a small mouth'*. Vocabulary relevant to the topic 'My New Friend' was also used: *'We study in same school'*, *'We always meet in exam week, because we read together.'*, *'She had short hair five years ago, now she has long hair.'*, *'My new friend is Fong Lam. She is cute. She is funny too.'*, *'I like her because she is very funny and kind.'*
- In the writing task 'My New Friend', students were able to organize their ideas well. The ideas provided by the students were coherent and clear. For example, *'My new friend's name is Mary. She is tall and thin. She is friendly. She always talk to me and plays will me. I meet her at school. She likes to play football. I like her very much.'*. Some students were able to use cohesive devices to link ideas, and 'and', 'because', 'so' and 'but' were commonly used in their writing. For example, *'She has big eyes, small ears and a long hair.'*, *'I like her because she is helpful and polite.'*, *'I like him so I gave him some candy.'*, *'She is friendly, she play with me all time, but she just five years old!'*
- However, grammatical mistakes were still common in students' writing: *'Her hobbies running and singing.'*, *'Her hobbies is read books and swim.'*, *'My new friend Rudy Chan.'*, *'I think she very like too help classmates.'*, *'She play with me and always listen to me.'*, *'I like play with her and go shopping with her.'*, *'We plays together at school.'*, *'I feel happy and I do not lonely anymore.'*, *'He has a big eyes.'*. They also

made mistakes when using pronouns and prepositions. For example, *'I play computer game with he.'*, *'I like it because he is friently.'*, *'She hobbies is reading books.'*, *'I have a new friend. He name Billy.'*, *'We always meet at the school bus.'*

- Some students wrote incorrect expressions. They wrote *'He is my good friend very much.'*, *'I think the new friend very like eat food.'*, *'he's hobbies is late wake up'*. *'I in Wanchai met him'*. They were also weak at writing singular or plural nouns: *'...he is fat and has a big eyes.'*
- Spelling mistakes were also found in students' writing. They misspelled words such as *'pinao'* for 'piano', *'tirks'* for 'tricks', *'figlit'* for 'fight', *'classmarr'* for 'classmate', *'noes'* for 'nose', *'becuse'* for 'because', *'shool'*, *'scool'* for 'school', *'wornj'* for 'wrong'. Some spelling mistakes impeded the communication of ideas. They wrote *'fried'* instead of *'friend'* and *'tall'* instead of *'talk'* in *'My new friend is nice, he see his friend sad he will tall to friend and listen to friend.'*, thus causing confusion among the readers.
- A small number of students were able to provide relevant ideas to the topic with some supporting details or examples, *'I have a new friend. She is a girl. Her name is Joly. She likes English very much. I like English too.'*, *'I met Joyce at my classroom. She likes singing and drawing. We played after school.'*, *'I play with him every Mondays, Wednesday and Saturday. We also play football, basketball together.'*, *'My new friend is Sammi Chow. I meet her at the school...She looks like an angel and she is very nice and kind.'* The ideas were clear and coherent. Capable students were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and sentence patterns: *'She is so kind and she always get good marks in her dictations. She is a smart girl. She plays with me but she doesn't play tricks on me and laugh at me.'* They could also use cohesive devices appropriately to link ideas. For example, *'She likes English very much. I like English too.'*, *'We also like drawing. We often draw picture in Lo Fung Art Class.'*, *'I always lost because he plays very well.'*

P.3 Speaking

- In the 'Reading Aloud' component, most of the students could read the texts quite clearly despite some mistakes in pronunciation. Some students mispronounced words, such as 'every' for 'very' (3ES07) and 'watches' for 'watching' (3ES09). Some of them had difficulty correctly pronouncing words with initial consonant blends like 'flowers' (3ES05) and 'free' (3ES11), final consonant blends like 'gift' (3ES07) and 'rest' (3ES11) and long vowel sounds in words, such as 'sleeps' (3ES03) and 'beach' (3ES09).
- In the 'Expression of Personal Experiences' component, more than half of the students could provide brief answers on a familiar topic in their conversation. Yet some students were hesitant or gave no responses even after being prompted by oral examiners. Students tended to perform better with questions that elicited factual information, such as 'What do you bring when you go out on rainy days?' (3ES01) and 'Who goes with you?' (3ES05 & 3ES09). They did not respond as well to questions beginning with 'how' and 'why', such as 'How do you get there?' (3ES05 & 3ES09) and 'Do you like the summer holidays? Why/Why not?' (3ES11).
- In the 'Picture Description' component, students were generally able to respond to the questions about the pictures. With familiar topics, such as *In a Country Park* (3ES02) and *At Recess* (3ES10), students could provide brief answers to most of the questions. However, some students had difficulty explaining why the boy should not feed the fish in the pond (3ES06) and why the little child cried in the shopping mall (3ES12). They also had limited range of vocabulary to describe the actions of the characters (3ES02 & 3ES04).

Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 3 TSA 2011, 2012 and 2013

This was the tenth year that Primary 3 students participated in the Territory-wide System Assessment at the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of students achieving Basic Competency in the last three years is provided in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9 Percentage of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency in 2011, 2012 and 2013

Year	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency
2011	79.8
2012	79.7
2013	80.4

A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of P.3 student performances in TSA 2011, 2012 and 2013 provides useful information on how teachers can help students improve. Table 7.10 summarises such a comparison.

Table 7.10 Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 3 TSA 2011, 2012 and 2013

Year Skill	2011	2012	2013
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.3 students were generally able to identify key words on familiar topics such as means of transport, duration, places, food, games and days. • Most students were able to distinguish initial consonants ‘S’, ‘J’ and ‘C’. • Most students showed understanding of a speaker’s tone of voice (e.g. happy, sad and excited). • Most students were able to distinguish ‘95’ and ‘55’. • Most students were able to understand the connection between ideas by identifying cohesive devices ‘and’ and ‘or’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.3 students were generally able to identify key words related to their daily life experiences (e.g. year) and on familiar topics (e.g. district). • Students were generally able to distinguish initial consonants ‘D’ and ‘B’. • Most students were able to discriminate between basic differences in intonation (e.g. happy, sad, surprised, excited). • Students could distinguish ‘4’ from ‘14’, ‘40’ and ‘44’. • Most students showed understanding of the connection between ideas linked together with cohesive devices ‘because’, ‘but’ and ‘and’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.3 students were generally able to identify key words on familiar topics such as food, age, prices and activities. • Students could distinguish words with initial consonants ‘W’, ‘B’ and ‘M’. • Students could distinguish the tone of a speaker showing happiness, praise and anger. • Most students were able to understand the connection between ideas by identifying cohesive devices ‘and’ and ‘also’.

Year Skill	2011	2012	2013
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were capable of identifying key words related to date, time, places and amount of money with the help of straightforward contextual clues and pictorial cues. • Students were able to work out the connection between ideas linked together with 'and'. • Students were able to obtain information from a contents page and a dictionary cover. • Some students could predict the meaning of unfamiliar words by using more than one contextual clue. • When given contextual clues in the contents page, many students were able to deduce the contents of different chapters in the book. • Students were able to interpret a reference word which was close to the subject to which it referred. They could also follow pronoun references in a letter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the help of straightforward contextual clues and pictorial cues, students were able to identify key words about weather conditions, time and places. • Students were able to work out the connection between ideas with the help of pictorial cues. • Students were able to obtain information from a contents page (e.g. no. of chapters) and a book cover (e.g. the author and the illustrator) • Only the more able students were able to interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words using contextual clues. • Many students were able to predict the contents of the book using the pictorial cues and contextual clues on the book cover and the contents page of the book. • As in the previous year, students were able to interpret a reference word which was close to the subject to which it referred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A majority of the students were able to identify key words on familiar topics such as date, time, food, people and places with straightforward contextual clues and pictorial cues. • Most students were able to obtain information from the book cover (e.g. the author, the title) and contents page (e.g. total no. of chapters) of a book. • Some students could interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words with straightforward contextual clues. • With the help of pictorial cues on the book cover, many students were able to deduce the contents of the book. • Students could follow pronoun references when straightforward contextual clues were given.

Year Skill	2011	2012	2013
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the writing task 'At the Farm', students were generally able to write a factual account of the visit to Happy Farm with an ending, though not many supporting details were given. A small number of students could write interesting or imaginative stories. For the writing task 'Things I Do at Weekends', students could write about what they usually do at weekends with given prompts. Students misspelled common words, e.g. 'gril' for 'girl', 'drick' for 'duck', 'mather' for 'mother', 'chicken' for 'children', 'becuse' for 'because', 'thing' for 'think', 'brind' for 'bring', etc. Students had difficulty with verb forms, e.g. 'I goes to Happy Farm.', 'There have corn...', 'Tom read with me...', 'I feel is happy.' Some students were able to use cohesive devices such as 'and', 'then', 'at last', 'because' in their writing. Capable students were able to provide relevant ideas with details. They could also use a range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many students were able to provide a factual account of the Classroom Cleaning Day with an appropriate ending, though not much elaboration was given. A small number of students were able to write details for the story. For the writing task 'In the Park', students were generally able to write what they did and see in the park with given prompts. Spelling mistakes were common among students, e.g. 'backboard' for 'blackboard', 'tabe' for 'table', 'sarid' for 'scared', 'techer' for 'teacher', 'childen' for 'children', 'paret' for 'parent', 'agin' for 'again', etc. Grammatical mistakes were common: 'Paul is help Jimmy and Mary.', 'My friend are cleaning.', 'Father go to the park with me'. Some students were able to use cohesive devices such as 'and', 'then', 'so', 'because', 'but' in their writing. A small number of students were able to write relevant ideas with many details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the writing task 'At the Market', students were generally able to provide a factual account of the story with an ending, though not many supporting details were given. Few students could provide imaginative ideas. In the second writing task 'My New Friend', when given prompts students could provide brief but relevant ideas about their new friend. Students misspelled common words, e.g. 'alppe' for 'apple', 'theif' for 'thief', 'gril' for 'girl', 'pinao' for 'piano', 'scool' for 'school', 'noes' for 'nose', etc. Grammatical mistakes were still common in students' writing, e.g. 'Mum and I goes to Tai Tai Market', 'Her hobbies running and swimming.' Some students were able to use cohesive devices to link ideas (e.g. 'so', 'then', 'but', 'because', 'and') in their writing. Capable students were able to provide relevant ideas with many supporting details/examples.

Year Skill	2011	2012	2013
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 'Reading Aloud', more than half of the students read the text quite clearly though some mistakes in pronunciation were evident. Students with the best performance were able to read fluently and clearly with appropriate pausing and intonation. • For 'Expression of Personal Experiences', most of the students were able to provide brief answers to the questions. Questions which elicited factual answers were generally more manageable than questions asking for reasons. • In 'Picture Description', more than half of the students were capable of giving appropriate responses to the questions related to the pictures given. They could respond more naturally to familiar topics such as <i>A Birthday Gift</i> and <i>A School Picnic</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 'Reading Aloud', more than half of the students were able to read the short texts fluently and clearly with few pronunciation mistakes. Some students found difficulty pronouncing words with more than two syllables. • For 'Expression of Personal Experiences', about half of the students responded hesitantly to questions. Questions which elicited factual answers were generally more manageable than open-ended questions. • In 'Picture Description', more than half of the students could provide relevant answers to most of the questions with little prompting. They could respond more naturally on topics such as <i>At Home</i> and <i>In a Toy Shop</i> but had difficulty providing the reasons for the questions asking 'Why?' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 'Reading Aloud', most of the students read the texts quite clearly despite some mistakes in pronunciation. Some students had difficulty pronouncing initial consonant blends, final consonant blends and long vowel sounds in certain words correctly. • For 'Expression of Personal Experiences', more than half of the students could provide brief answers to the questions. Students performed better with questions that elicited factual information. They did not respond as well to questions beginning with 'how' and 'why'. • In 'Picture Description', students were generally able to give appropriate responses to the questions. They could respond more naturally to familiar topics such as <i>In a Country Park</i> and <i>At Recess</i>.