

Results of Secondary 3 English Language in TSA 2015

The territory-wide percentage of S.3 students achieving English Language Basic Competency in TSA 2015 is 69.4%, indicating no significant change in the percentage of students achieving basic competency in 2015 as compared to that of 2014.

Secondary 3 Assessment Design

Assessment tasks for S.3 English Language were based on the *Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version) for English Language at the end of Key Stage 3 (Secondary 3)* and the *CDC Syllabus for English Language (Secondary 1 – 3) 1999*. 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 S.3 written assessments consisted of three sub-papers for Listening, Reading and Writing, comprising a total of 127 items and 136 score points. Some items appeared in different Listening and Reading sub-papers acting as inter-paper links. The duration of each Listening sub-paper was approximately 35 minutes, Reading sub-paper was 35 minutes and Writing sub-paper was 40 minutes. The oral assessment was comprised of two components, Individual Presentation and Group Interaction, with eight sub-papers in each component. The number of items on the various sub-papers is summarized in Table 7.21a. These numbers include several overlapping items that appear in more than one sub-paper to enable the equating of test scores. The composition of the S.3 sub-papers is provided in Table 7.21b.

Table 7.21a Number of Items and Score Points for S.3

Subject	No. of Items (Score Points)				
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4	Total*
English Language					
Written Paper					
Listening	30(30)	30(30)	30(30)	--	52(52)
Reading	36(36)	36(36)	36(36)	--	72(72)
Writing	1(12)	1(12)	1(12)	--	3(12)
Total	67(78)	67(78)	67(78)	--	127(136)
Speaking					
Presentation	2(14)	2(14)	2(14)	2(14)	8(14)
Group Interaction	2(6)	2(6)	2(6)	2(6)	8(6)

* Items that appear in different sub-papers are counted once only.

Table 7.21b Composition of S.3 Sub-papers

Written Assessment				Speaking Assessment		
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)			Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)	
Listening L5-L-2-S3BC (listening strategies) L5-L-1-S3BC (language features)	9EL1	9EL2	9EL3	L5-S-3-S3BC (ideas)	9ESP1 – 9ESP8 Individual Presentation	9ESG1 – 9ESG8 Group Interaction
	28(28)	27(27)	25(25)		8(4)	8(4)
	2(2)	3(3)	5(5)			
Reading L6-R-1-S3BC (reading strategies) L5-R-3-S3BC (language features) L5-R-4-S3BC (reference skills)	9ER1	9ER2	9ER3	L6-S-6-S3BC (organisation)	8(4)	0
	34(34)	36(36)	32(32)	L5-S-4-S3BC (vocabulary & language patterns)	8(4)	0
	2(2)	0	2(2)	L5-S-2-S3BC (pronunciation & delivery)	8(4)	0
	0	0	2(2)	L6-S-5-S3BC (strategies for oral communication)	8(2)	8(2)
Writing L6-W-1-S3BC (content) L6-W-2-S3BC (language) L6-W-3-S3BC (organisation) L5-W-5-S3BC (features)	9EW1	9EW2	9EW3			
	1(4)	1(4)	1(4)			
	1(4)	1(4)	1(4)			
	1(2)	1(2)	1(2)			
	1(2)	1(2)	1(2)			

S.3 Listening Items

Each student attempted three listening tasks in one of the three Listening sub-papers (about 35 minutes each). All parts or sections were played twice. Descriptions of the listening tasks are provided in Tables 7.22 and 7.23.

Table 7.22 S.3 Listening: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L5-L-1-S3BC	Understanding the use of a range of language features in simple literary / imaginative spoken texts	5
L5-L-2-S3BC	Using an increasing range of strategies to understand the meaning of simple texts on familiar and less familiar topics which are delivered clearly and in generally familiar accents	47
TOTAL		52

Table 7.23 S.3 Listening: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L5-L-1-S3BC L5-L-2-S3BC	Conversation – <i>Green Day Activities</i> <i>9EL1 – Part 1</i> <i>9EL3 – Part 1</i>	Multiple choice Short Answer	7(7) 7(7)
L5-L-1-S3BC L5-L-2-S3BC	Radio Programme – <i>Library Promotion</i> <i>9EL1 – Part 2</i> <i>9EL3 – Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)
L5-L-2-S3BC	School Radio Report – <i>School Picnic</i> <i>9EL1 – Part 3</i> <i>9EL2 – Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)
L5-L-2-S3BC	Conversation & Announcements – <i>Hong Kong Weather Watch</i> <i>9EL2 – Part 1</i>	Multiple choice	14(14)
L5-L-1-S3BC L5-L-2-S3BC	Poem – <i>My Smartphone Isn't Very Smart</i> <i>9EL2 – Part 3</i> <i>9EL3 – Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)

S.3 Reading Items

Each student attempted three reading tasks in one of the three Reading sub-papers. 35 minutes were allotted for the reading tasks in each of the sub-papers. Descriptions of the reading tasks are provided in Tables 7.24 and 7.25.

Table 7.24 S.3 Reading: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L6-R-1-S3BC	Using an increasing range of reading strategies to understand the meaning of texts with some degree of complexity	68
L5-R-3-S3BC	Understanding the use of a range of language features and other techniques to present themes, characters, experiences and feelings in simple literary / imaginative texts	2
L5-R-4-S3BC	Applying a range of reference skills for various purposes with the help of cues	2
TOTAL		72

Table 7.25 S.3 Reading: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L6-R-1-S3BC	Magazine Articles – <i>Technology Today</i> <i>9ER1 – Part 1</i> <i>9ER2 – Part 1</i>	Multiple choice	12(12)
L6-R-1-S3BC L5-R-3-S3BC	Poem – <i>I Tried To Do My Homework</i> <i>9ER1 – Part 2</i> <i>9ER3 – Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)
L6-R-1-S3BC	Pamphlet – <i>Job Hunting Information For Students</i> <i>9ER1 – Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	16(16)
L6-R-1-S3BC	Letter – <i>Job Application</i> <i>9ER2 – Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	8(8)
L6-R-1-S3BC	Graphic Novel Cover & Chapter Extract – <i>The Fawn Sword</i> <i>9ER2 – Part 3</i> <i>9ER3 – Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	16(16)
L6-R-1-S3BC L5-R-4-S3BC	Blog – <i>Disasters Runners Can Avoid</i> <i>9ER3 – Part 1</i>	Multiple choice	12(12)

S.3 Writing Tasks

Each student attempted a writing task of about 150 words from one of the three Writing sub-papers. Forty minutes were allotted for the writing task in each of the sub-papers. Descriptions and topics of the writing tasks are provided in Tables 7.26 and 7.27.

Table 7.26 S.3 Writing: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L6-W-1-S3BC	Writing a variety of texts for different purposes with relevant and generally adequate content	3
L6-W-2-S3BC	Writing a variety of texts using punctuation marks and a range of vocabulary and language patterns with some degree of appropriateness and accuracy to convey meaning	
L6-W-3-S3BC	Writing a variety of texts with adequate overall planning and organisation (including the use of cohesive devices and paragraphs, and sequencing of ideas)	
L5-W-5-S3BC	Writing a variety of texts using the salient features of a range of genres generally appropriately with the help of cues	
TOTAL		3

Table 7.27 S.3 Writing: Item Description and Question Types

Basic Competency	Item Description	No. of Items (Score Points)
L6-W-1-S3BC L6-W-2-S3BC	Article – <i>Wild'n'More Theme Park, Hong Kong</i> 9EW1	1(12)
L6-W-3-S3BC L5-W-5-S3BC	Email – <i>Choosing the End-Of-Year Activities</i> 9EW2	1(12)
	Speech – <i>Revising and Preparing for Exams</i> 9EW3	1(12)

S.3 Speaking Tasks

Each student attempted either an ‘Individual Presentation’ (3 minutes for preparation and 2 minutes for assessment) or a ‘Group Interaction’ (3 minutes for preparation and 4 minutes for assessment). There were altogether 16 sub-papers: two sub-papers each for the Individual Presentation and Group Interaction, used in morning and afternoon sessions that took place over two assessment days. Descriptions of the speaking tasks are provided in Table 7.28.

Table 7.28 S.3 Speaking: Distribution of Tasks

Basic Competency	Descriptor	Task Description	No. of Items
L5-S-2-S3BC	Using a range of delivery techniques (including stress, rhythm and intonation) to convey meaning generally appropriately with the help of cues	Individual Presentation <i>9ESP1 – 9ESP8</i>	8
L5-S-3-S3BC	Expressing information and ideas (including personal experiences, feelings, opinions, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with some elaboration		
L5-S-4-S3BC	Using a range of vocabulary and language patterns with some degree of appropriacy and accuracy to convey meaning		
L6-S-5-S3BC	Using formulaic expressions and a range of strategies for oral communication to establish and maintain relationships/ interaction in familiar situations		
L6-S-6-S3BC	Using organising techniques generally appropriately to convey meaning		
L5-S-3-S3BC	Expressing information and ideas (including personal experiences, feelings, opinions, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with some elaboration	Group Interaction <i>9ESG1 – 9ESG8</i>	8
L6-S-5-S3BC	Using formulaic expressions and a range of strategies for oral communication to establish and maintain relationships /interaction in familiar situations		

Performance of S.3 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in TSA 2015

S.3 Listening

Design of the Listening Papers

There are a total of three listening sub-papers, 9EL1, 9EL2 and 9EL3. In the sub-papers there are 5 listening tasks:

Tasks	Text Types
Green Day Activities	Conversation
Library Promotion	Radio Programme
School Picnic	School Radio Report
Hong Kong Weather Watch	Conversation & Announcements
My Smartphone Isn't Very Smart	Poem

Performance of S.3 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in Listening Tasks

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to

- understand the meaning of simple dialogues in both familiar and unfamiliar topics
- apply their knowledge of the world in various contexts
- extract specific information, comprehend main ideas and use cohesive devices to connect ideas, use discourse markers and contextual clues, as well as work out the meaning of unfamiliar words/expressions
- understand intonation when dialogues were delivered clearly and in generally familiar accents.
- identify rhymes

Task Name: Green Day Activities (Conversation). This task has a section for students to fill in blanks while they listen to the conversation.

Task Content: Students and their class teacher are discussing some 'make and take' recycling activities to celebrate the first 'Green Day' at the school.

Connection – cohesive devices

- The majority of students were able to listen to Tommy and Mary's interaction and work out what boys would make in the straw craft activity

6. Boys will probably make _____ straws.
- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Spaceship | 2. Valentine's Day |
| 3. Star and Moon | 4. Animal |
- A. 1, 2 and 4
 B. 2, 3 and 4
 C. 1, 3 and 4
 D. 1, 2 and 3

9EL1/3 Part 1 Q.6

Task Name: Library Promotion (Radio Programme)

Task Content: Simon the radio host is talking to the head librarian Molly about how libraries have changed. They also talk about library promotion and activities at the State Library.

Tone

- Many students were able to identify how Simon felt when they heard him say *'Food and drinks? We were never allowed to eat or drink in the library when I was younger.'*

4. Simon visited the library and saw the coffee shop. He was _____ when Molly mentioned that food and drinks were allowed in the library.

- A. shocked
 B. happy
 C. angry
 D. sad

9EL1/3 Part 2 Q.4

Task Name: School Picnic (School Radio Report)

Task Content: Tony and Winnie are Campus Radio hosts for a programme about the school picnic. They talk to different students about what they did on the day of the school picnic.

Connection – cohesive devices

- Many students were able to work out what food was meant when Toby said that Josie's mum delivered 'it'.

8. Toby says that Josie's mum delivered 'it'. 'It' refers to the _____.

- A. sushi
 B. lemon tea
 C. milk tea
 D. fruit juice

9EL1 Part 3/9EL2 Part 2 Q.8

Task Name: Hong Kong Weather Watch (Conversation and Announcements). This is an integrated task. There is a poster to read about Hong Kong Weather Watch and some announcements to listen to.

Task Content: Ms Wong is talking to her class about designing safety posters for a competition.

Distinguishing main ideas from supporting details

- Many students were able to read the poster and correctly identify another suitable title.



5. The poster is titled 'Hong Kong Weather Watch'. Another title for the poster could be _____.

- A. How To Have Fun In A Typhoon
- B. Announcements For Thrill Seekers
- C. Weather Warnings - What They Mean
- D. When To Use An Umbrella

9EL2 Part 1 Q.5

Task Name: My Smartphone Isn't Very Smart (Poem)

Task Content: The poem is about the owner of a smart phone lamenting how the phone used to do many wonderful things but now doesn't work.

Rhyme

- On hearing the second stanza of the poem many students worked out the rhyming words.

'It used to be so awesome,
but now my phone is lame.
It cannot surf the Internet.
It cannot play a game.'

Stanza 2

3. The rhyming words in this stanza are _____.

- A. awesome and Internet
- B. lame and game
- C. Internet and it
- D. play and lame

9EL2/3 Part 3 Q.3

S.3 Reading

Design of the Reading Papers

There are a total of three reading sub-papers, 9ER1, 9ER2 and 9ER3. In the sub-papers there are 6 reading tasks:

Tasks	Text Types
Technology Today	Magazine Articles
I Tried To Do My Homework	Poem
Job Hunting Information For Students	Pamphlet
Job Application	Letter
The Fawn Sword	Graphic Novel Cover & Chapter Extract
Disasters Runners Can Avoid	Blog

Performance of S.3 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in Reading Tasks

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to

- understand the meaning of simple texts written for various purposes, contexts and audiences
- extract or locate specific information from different text-types such as magazine articles, a poem, a pamphlet, a letter, a blog and a graphic novel cover and chapter extract
- identify rhymes
- identify different text types
- work out the meaning of unfamiliar expressions and use reference skills
- identify connections between supporting ideas and main ideas
- infer meaning from the context provided

Task Name: Technology Today (Magazine Articles)

Task Content: The magazine articles are about technology and advertising in the 21st century and the launch of a particular smartphone.

Main Idea

- Many students were able to work out what the celebrities were using social media for.

3. Celebrities are using Friendsbook and Tweety to _____.

- A. make more friends
- B. work for free
- C. promote clothes and other items
- D. write to pen-pals

9ER1/2 Part 1 Q.3



Some celebrities use their star power to advertise products. If you like a star and follow them on Friendsbook or Tweety, they will probably promote products to you. Stars don't do it for free. Companies know that a star tweetering to their fans about their products reaches more people than any advertisement on television or in a newspaper.

The exposure can be huge! Stars can make lots of money by tweetering. It only takes sentences like...

"Want to see how BlueBlue Jeans make your legs look longer? Look at me!"

Candy Cards, the famous reality TV star, promoted BlueBlue Jeans© with this tweeter!

Task Name: I Tried To Do My Homework (Poem)

Task Content: The poem is about a student who gets distracted by his computer and social media and has problems doing his homework.

Inference

- Many students were able to read and infer what the word 'stuff' referred to in the fourth stanza of the poem.

7. In stanza four, line 16, the student refers to 'stuff'. The 'stuff' that he did was _____.

- A. texting friends, emailing and singing
- B. texting friends, watching videos and playing a game
- C. playing with the cat, watching a video and talking to his mother
- D. talking to his mother, talking to his teacher and going to bed

9ER1/3 Part 2 Q.7

I looked up at the clock
and it was time to go to bed.
I didn't get my homework done;
just other stuff instead.



Task Name: Job Hunting Information For Students (Pamphlet)

Task Content: The pamphlet gives students tips on what to do in an interview, what to wear and how to behave.

Connection between ideas

- Many students were able to connect the ideas and work out what men should wear to an interview.

10. Men should wear a _____.

- A. suit and tie
 B. tie and shorts
 C. character tie and suit
 D. suit and no socks

9ER1 Part 3 Q.10

MENSWEAR

Choose a two-piece matching suit. It should be either dark blue or grey.



Don't wear character ties – ties that have strange designs or characters on them.



Wear a long-sleeved shirt that is white, or has a conservative pattern, or one that complements/matches your suit.



Don't wear shorts.

Don't wear trendy, fashionable clothes.

Don't wear makeup.

Socks should be in a dark colour. Wear business shoes or dress shoes.



Task Name: Job Application (Letter)

Task Content: A student has written a letter applying for the position of Junior Reporter.

Specific Information

- The majority of students were able to work out which position Peter wanted to apply for.

1. Peter wants to apply for the position of _____.

- A. English Society member
 B. Campus TV reporter
 C. English Newsletter Group member
 D. Junior Reporter

9ER2 Part 2 Q.1

I understand that you are setting up a Junior Reporters Group for the local newspaper. I wish to apply for the position of Junior Reporter.

Task Name: The Fawn Sword (Graphic Novel Cover & Chapter Extract)

Task Content: A cover of the graphic novel *The Fawn Sword* is given. The chapter extract is the first page of chapter one in which we learn of the Fawn Sword and Asha's role in the story.

Contextual Clue

- The majority of students could use the contextual clues provided and work out who Asha was.

*Chapter 1**Paragraph One*

5. Asha is _____.

- A. a boy in the story
- B. the main character in the story
- C. the name of the sword
- D. the name of the council

9ER2/3 Part 3 Q.5

∇ No one believed in the existence of the Fawn sword, which had not been seen for a long time. No one even knew what it looked like. There were no pictures or drawings. Every time the sword was mentioned, it was in a story of daring or in a fight of good against evil. How then could Asha find something that probably didn't exist and deliver it to the council to save her family?

Task Name: Disasters Runners Can Avoid (Blog)

Task Content: A blog about what can happen to runners and how to avoid the disasters.

Dictionary Skills

- Many students could use the dictionary entry provided and work out the meaning of the word used in the title.

1. Look at the section titled Cramps. Now look at the dictionary entry for 'cramps' below. Which meaning corresponds to the word in the title?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. (n) a tool used to clamp two objects together for gluing or other work
e.g. <i>The wooden blocks are held together by cramps until the glue dries.</i> | 2. (v) to stop the development of something
e.g. <i>The rules and regulations will cramp the growth of the economy.</i> |
| 3. (n) an involuntary contraction of a muscle or muscles caused by tiredness or stress
e.g. <i>He suffered from severe stomach cramps after eating too much dessert.</i> | 4. (plr) prevent someone from acting freely
e.g. <i>My father is going to cramp my style if he comes to the cinema with us.</i> |

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4

9ER3 Part 1 Q.1

CRAMPS

Caused by...

- not enough running during the week.
- a start that was too fast.

How to avoid cramps

- Strengthen muscles by running more.
- Pay attention to your watch! Excitement makes the early kilometres feel easy, but don't run too fast.
- Drink water/sports drink according to your thirst level.
- Before the race, eat salty foods like pretzels and nuts. Use fast food salt packets during the race.



S.3 Writing

Students were instructed to complete a written assessment of about 150 words in 40 minutes. Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence in writing demonstrated the following characteristics:

- generally relevant and adequate content but with limited ideas and little or no elaboration
- paragraphs generally developed based on prompts with an attempt to use cohesive devices and sequence ideas appropriately
- the use of familiar vocabulary and simple language patterns with some degree of appropriacy and accuracy to convey meaning
- reasonably comprehensible pieces of writing despite a fair number of language and/or stylistic errors

Article – Welcome To Wild'n'More Theme Park (9EW1)

In this task, students were asked to write an article in which they reported on their visit to the new theme park that had just opened in Hong Kong. Picture prompts were provided.

A new theme park just opened in Hong Kong. Your class was lucky enough to visit the park before the grand opening. Write an article for the school magazine describing what happened during your visit and what you think about the new theme park and its attractions. Give your article an interesting title.

You may use some of the ideas from the leaflet and/or your own ideas in your writing. Write the article in about 150 words.

Welcome To Wild'n'More Theme Park!
The newest theme park in Hong Kong

So many exciting activities!

Bring your friends and family!

Buy souvenirs in one of our many gift shops!

Meet the animals in the zoo. You might even get a chance to feed them! Daily animal shows!

Lots of rides and attractions for all ages!

Remember these rules to stay safe. Have a great time in the park!

Opening Hours
Mon – Fri: 9:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Sat, Sun and Public Holidays
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Tickets
Buy online and save time
www.wildnmorethemepark.com

Adult (aged 12 or above)	\$290
Child (aged 3 – 11)	\$110
Full time Student (aged 12 or above)	\$140

Email – Choosing the end-of-year activities (9EW2)

In this task, students were asked to reply to an email to help select some end-of-year activities. Picture prompts were provided for the students as input.

You are a member of the Student Union. You have been asked by Mr. Lai, the head of the End-of-Year Activity Committee, to help select some end-of-year activities. Read Mr. Lai's email, look at the pictures and write your email.

You may use some of the ideas from the email and pictures and/or your own ideas in your writing. Write your email in about 150 words.

TO: jackieleung234@skfgrss.edu.hk; marywong@skfgrss.edu.hk;
tommyau@skfgrss.edu.hk; adamhon@skfgrss.edu.hk

SUBJECT: **Choosing the end-of-year activities**

SEND

Dear Members of the Student Union,

The End-of-Year Activity Committee met recently and we have come up with some suggestions for the end-of-year activities. We would like to have the input of all members of the Student Union.

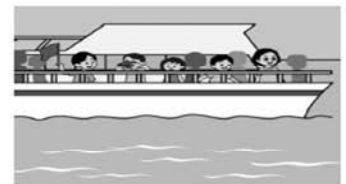
We need to have a list of activities that students will be interested in. They have to be activities that won't cost too much money and aren't too far away from the school. They can be half day or whole day activities.

We have included some pictures of activities. Choose some and let us know in an email what you think about them, and which ones students would prefer and why. If you have any ideas for other activities, then please add your suggestions to the email.

I look forward to reading your emails.

Attachment: Pictures of some suggested end-of-year activities

Best regards,
Mr. Lai

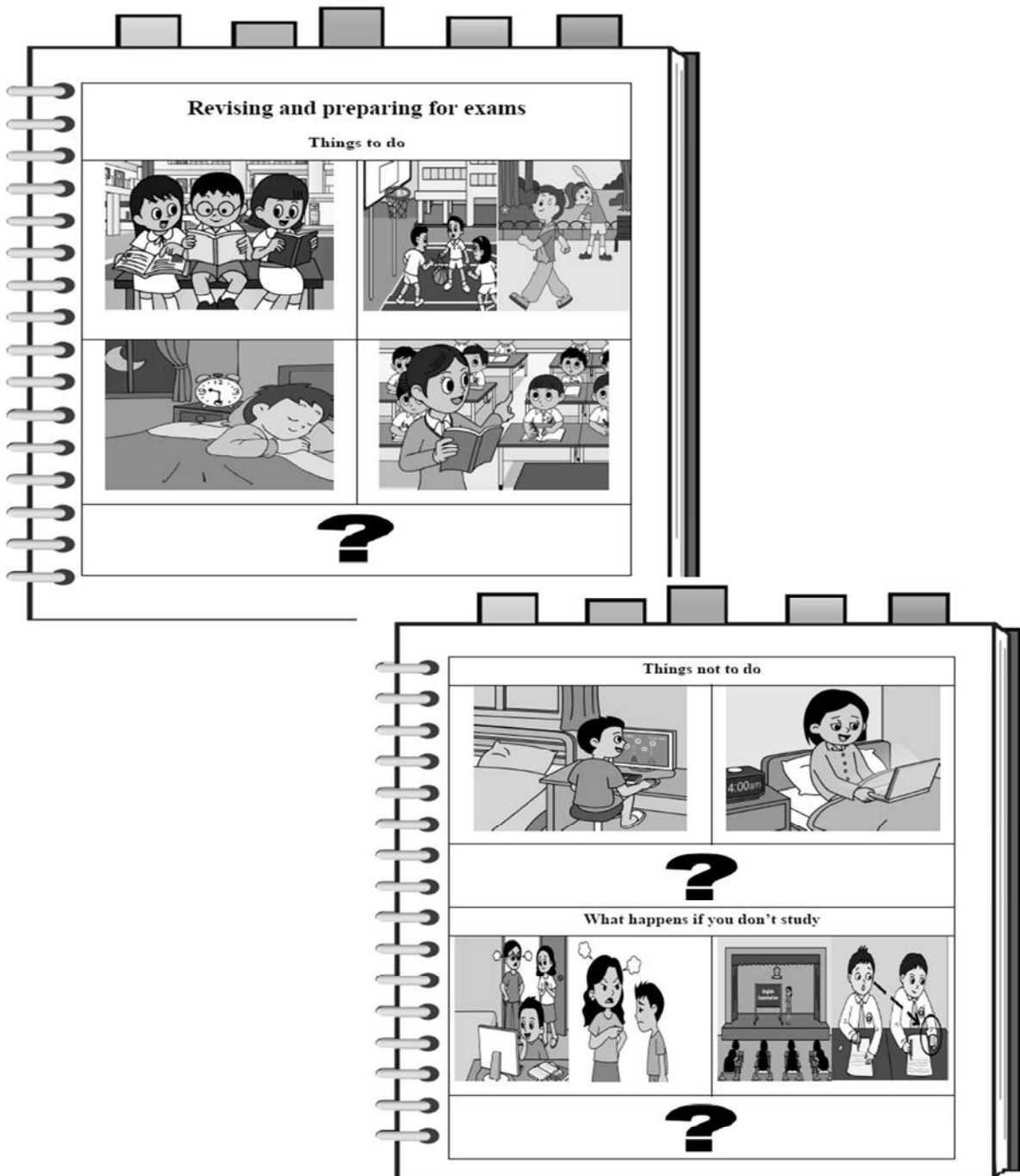


Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams (9EW3)

In this task, students were asked to write a speech about how students can prepare for exams. Picture prompts were provided.

Exams are coming soon. Your principal has asked you to write a speech about how students can prepare for exams, the things they should and should not do and why. You will present your speech at morning assembly.

In about 150 words, write your speech. You may use some of the ideas from the notes the principal gave you and/or your own ideas in your writing.



The following Student Exemplars are written compositions that indicate the minimally acceptable levels of basic competence in writing and the characteristics mentioned previously.

Article – Welcome To Wild'n'More Theme Park (9EW1) - Student Exemplar 1

Title provided → Fun in Wild'n'More Theme Park

Short but suitable introduction → Last week, I was lucky to visit the newest theme park [which called] Wild'n'More before the grand opening. It was so awesome that I would like to introduce to you.

Information copied from picture prompts → [As all the theme park], there are lots of rides and attractions in the park and they are for all ages. The rides I would like to mention is 'Space ride'. It was already well-known that all of you might heard about before. In the 'Space ride', players can sit in the roller coaster and enjoy the amazing journey. All of the stars are 3-D and sometimes you can feel that some stars are [going to crack you down].

Short conclusion → Related to the name of theme park [you may know the the park is wild] Bingo! There are many animals in the zoo! You can watch Daily animal shows in the park and you might even get a chance to feed them. You can also give a loving hug to some of the animals, such as dolphins, ticians and elephants.

What a fantastic place it is! The tickets are also not too expensive. Let bring your friends and family to have fun in the new theme park. You can get more information from www.wildnmorethemepark.com.

Annotation - Student Exemplar 1

1

The writer mentions and gives details about a ride not given in the prompts

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Errors in expression/tense – *which called* instead of *which is called*, *introduce to you* instead of *introduce it to you*, *As all the theme park* instead of *As with all theme parks*, *you may know the the park is wild* instead of *you may know that the park is wild*, *going to crack you down* instead of *going to hit your head/going to crash down on you*

↔

Vocabulary used is simple and understandable but the majority of it has been taken from the prompts provided

Email – Choosing the end-of-year activities (9EW2) - Student Exemplar 2

□ □ □

TO: **mr.lai@skfgrss.edu.hk**

SUBJECT: **My suggestions for the end-of-year activities**

SEND

Dear Mr Lai, 1

Brief introduction → The End-of-Year Activity is coming, I suggest some activities that students will be interested in.

First, we can go to some camping village to have some ^{outdoor} activities, such as hiking and climbing up. These activities can make students be strong and have team work. Also, at these climbing activities we can a pair of group to help each others. Let them don't be scare. Second, our school had many students like drawing or diy something to friend. We can organise a workshop or art day, let all the students had play art. Third, we can also go to theme park, like Disneyland or Ocean Park because there had many games to our students like roller-skactor. Let student relax after exam, because form-3 students was very tired after exam and TSA. Last, I knew the cinema had a new film called minion 3, our school many students like it also these film we can watch with teachers. It is funny.

Lastly, I think [we can organised] a singing concert. Let students had a good choice to show their talent.

2 Overall, I think these activities the students will be like it. I look forward to reading your e-mails.

Complimentary close → Best regards, 1
Eunice

Annotation - Student Exemplar1

The email has a greeting and a complimentary close but the complimentary close is *Best regards, Eunice* – the name is not taken from the address list in the email but the student has used another name. It also has a brief introduction explaining the reason for the email. A brief closing is also provided before the complimentary close to end the email

2

Discourse markers are used – *first, second, third*, but in paragraph two the writer uses *last* and then in paragraph three uses *lastly*

[]

Errors in tenses – *students was tired* instead of *are/were tired*, *the cinema had* instead of *the cinema has*, *we can organised* instead of *we can organise*

◆

There are errors in vocabulary and expression some of which affect meaning – *climbing up* used to describe the rope climbing/hang rope activity, *roller-skactor* instead of *roller coaster*, *there had many games* instead of *there are many games*

Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams (9EW3) - Student Exemplar 3

Good morning everyone,

Brief
introduction

Today I am going to talk about revising and preparing for exams. I think
Students should study hard. Also, we should do some
sport such as jogging. So that we will not feel sick
when we are having exam. Third, We should sleep early
so that we will have enough energy for second day.
We also should pay attention when we are in the
class. Finally, we can study with our friend in
library so that we can study more efficiently.

1

2

Second, we shouldn't play computer game all the
time and do not study. We shouldn't sleep late
for playing or watching computer. We will have not
enough energy when we are having exam.

Third, we will fall our exam if we don't study
Our parents will be so angry and disappointed with
us. We also couldn't cheat when we are having exam.
It will have a very serious punishment if teacher know it.

2

Brief
closing

This is my speech today! Thank you!
(Hop you will agree with my idea!)

1

Annotation - Student Exemplar 3

1

The speech contains an appropriate introduction and closing

2

The speech also contains extremely brief, simple ideas. Ideas are linked within and between paragraphs



There are errors in expression and singular/plural – *we should sleep early* instead of *we should go to sleep early*, *exam* instead of *exams*, *energy for second day* instead of *energy for the second day*, *it will have a* instead of *there will be*, *fall exam* instead of *fail exam(s)*, *it will have a serious punishment if teacher know it* instead of *there will be serious consequences/punishments if the teachers find out*



Discourse markers are used – *second*, *third* (used twice), *finally*, but the writer has mixed up their order and *firstly* is not used at all.

S.3 Speaking

12 or 24 students (depending on the school size) were randomly selected from each school to participate in the oral assessment. A standard of basic competency in speaking was not set due to the relatively small sample size of students. However, a summary of the overall performance levels of students is given in the section ‘General Comments on S.3 Student Performances’.

Best Performance of S.3 Students in TSA 2015

S.3 Listening

Performance of S.3 Students with Best Performance in Listening Tasks

Students with best performance were able to correctly answer a range of higher order questions as well as demonstrate the ability to

- understand topics, ideas, information, preferences, intentions and attitudes in simple spoken texts in familiar and unfamiliar topics
- extract specific information, connect ideas and work out meanings of words using contextual clues
- discriminate between intonation for a range of purposes when dialogues were delivered clearly and in generally familiar accents.
- identify personification in a poem

For task contents please refer to the “*Performance of S.3 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in Listening Tasks*” Section.

Task Name: Green Day Activities (Conversation). This task has a section for students to fill in blanks while they listen to the conversation.

Tone

- The more able students were capable of detecting the tone in the speaker’s voice when Mary said ‘*Look Tommy...*’

4. Tommy makes comments about Mary’s activity. When Mary says ‘*Look Tommy...*’, she is

- _____
- A. calm
 - B. angry
 - C. happy
 - D. sad

9EL1/3 Part 1 Q.4

Task Name: Library Promotion (Radio Programme)**Connection – cohesive devices**

- The more able students were capable of connecting ideas when they listened to the interaction between the Radio Host Simon and the librarian Molly about the ways libraries have changed over the years.

2. Libraries have changed and some of the changes are _____.

- A. the work of the librarian
- B. how the library is used
- C. more activities to attract users
- D. all of the above

9EL1/3 Part 2 Q.2

Task Name: School Picnic (School Radio Report)**Specific Information**

- Students with the best performance were capable of working out what the representatives could report on from the choices provided when they heard Tony say ‘...Today we have one representative from each form in the studio to report on the preparation that took place before the picnic.’ and Winnie continue with ‘We are also going to learn where the different classes went, the activities and what happened on the day as well as anything else they want to tell us.’

4. The representatives can report on _____.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. exchange students at the picnic | 2. where classes went on their picnic |
| 3. the preparation before the picnic | 4. different activities at the picnic |

- A. 1, 2 and 3
- B. 2, 3 and 4
- C. 1, 3 and 4
- D. 1, 2 and 4

9EL1 Part 3/9EL2 Part 2 Q.4

Task Name: Hong Kong Weather Watch (Conversation and Announcements). This is an integrated task. There is a poster to read about Hong Kong Weather Watch and some announcements to listen to.

Unfamiliar Word/Expression

- Students with the best performance were capable of working out the meaning of unfamiliar words and were able to determine what was meant by the term ‘thrill seeker’.

7. Peter calls his brother a ‘thrill seeker’. A ‘thrill seeker’ is a person who _____.
- A. searches for people in dangerous weather
 - B. designs typhoon warning safety posters
 - C. takes part in activities that involve danger
 - D. enjoys taking photos with friends

9EL2 Part 1 Q.7

Task Name: My Smartphone Isn’t Very Smart (Poem)

Personification

- The more able students understood the term personification and were able to work out the words that were used in the first stanza giving the phone human qualities.

My Smartphone isn’t very smart.

In fact it’s rather dumb.

It’s dumber than a doorknob

Or a piece of chewing gum.

Stanza 1

1. Personification is used in poetry to give things human qualities or features. In stanza one, the words that are used to give the phone human qualities are _____.
- A. piece, smart, dumb
 - B. smart, dumber, doorknob
 - C. dumber, doorknob, chewing gum
 - D. smart, dumber, dumb

9EL2/3 Part 3 Q.1

S.3 Reading

Performance of S.3 Students with Best Performance in Reading Tasks

Students with best performance did well at the basic competency level and they were also able to correctly answer a range of higher order questions as well as

- use a wider range of reading strategies to understand the meaning of texts with some degree of complexity
- demonstrate ability to use strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar and unfamiliar topics and for various purposes, contexts and audiences
- extract or locate specific information from different text-types such as magazine articles, a poem, a pamphlet, a letter, the cover of a graphic novel and a chapter extract and a blog
- use inference skills in passages with some degree of complexity

For task contents please refer to the “*Performance of S.3 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in Reading Tasks*” Section.

Task Name: Technology Today (Magazine Articles)

Unfamiliar Word/Expression

- Generally students could determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions. For example, from reading the magazine article about technology students were able to determine how pen-pals communicate.

In the past, people had pen-pals. Now people are ‘friending’ us on our Friendsbook page. We can also email or text someone. If we really like something, we can also tweeter about it using a site like Tweety. Communication is much faster now!

2. ‘Pen-pals’ are people who communicate with someone using _____.
- A. email
 - B. texts
 - C. telephone
 - D. letters

9ER1/2 Part 1 Q.2

Task Name: I Tried To Do My Homework (Poem)**Identifying main ideas**

- Students could generally identify main ideas. They were able to work out who/what the student blames for not getting his homework done when they read the last stanza of the poem.

I hope my teacher listens

to the cause of my inaction.

It's really not my fault the world

is just one big distraction.

**Stanza Five**

8. In the last stanza, the student blames not getting his homework done on _____.

- A. everything else but himself
- B. being lazy and playing with the cat
- C. helping his mother check her email
- D. making a cat video

9ER1/3 Part 2 Q.8

Task Name: Job Hunting Information For Students (Pamphlet)**Knowledge of the world**

- Generally students were able to use their knowledge of the world to correctly determine what they could also audition for.

***Dress For Success***

9. A job interview is an 'audition'. You can also audition for _____.

- A. a play
- B. a film
- C. a musical
- D. all of the above

9ER1 Part 3 Q.9

Task Name: Job Application (Letter)**Inference Skills**

- Students could comprehend information that was implied and were able to correctly determine who the articles would be written for.

Dear Editor,

I understand that you are setting up a Junior Reporters Group for the local newspaper. I wish to apply for the position of Junior Reporter.

I feel that I would be a very suitable candidate as I have a lot of relevant experience. I have been a member of my school's English Newsletter Group for the last three years. I

2. The articles that the Junior Reporters Group will be writing are for _____.
- A. secondary students only
- B. anyone who reads the local newspaper
- C. primary students only
- D. none of the above

9ER2 Part 2 Q.2

Task Name: The Fawn Sword (Graphic Novel Cover & Chapter Extract)**Connection between Ideas**

- Students were able to connect the ideas and work out how many members were in Asha's family.

8. There are _____ people in Asha's family.
- A. four
- B. three
- C. two
- D. five

Asha didn't know how she was going to do it, but she knew that she had to try. The council held her parents, brother and sister. It was her job now to follow the trail of a long lost sword and save those she loved.



9ER2/3 Part 3 Q.8

Task Name: Disasters Runners Can Avoid (Blog)**Dictionary Skills**

- Able students were able to use their dictionary skills to choose the correct meaning from the options provided.

HEATSTROKE

Strokes can be life threatening. In hot weather, runners should slow down. Otherwise, the human body can't supply enough blood to cool the runner and keep muscles working!

**How to avoid heatstroke**

1. The day before a race, drink at least 3.5 litres of water.
2. On race day, drink at least half a litre of a sports drink to prevent electrolyte loss.
3. Wear clothing that allows heat to escape. A white hat deflects the sun. Put ice under your hat to cool your head!

10. Look at the section titled Heatstroke. Now look at the dictionary entry for 'stroke' below. Which meaning corresponds to the word in the title?

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. (n) an act of hitting or striking someone or something; a blow
e.g. <i>The student received a stroke of the cane for misbehaving.</i> | 2. (n) a mark made by drawing a pen, pencil or paintbrush in one direction across paper or canvas
e.g. <i>The painter applied the gold paint with one careful stroke.</i> |
| 3. (v) move one's hand with gentle pressure over a surface; caress
e.g. <i>He put his hand on the dog's body and gave it a long stroke.</i> | 4. (n) a sudden attack or loss of consciousness caused by an interruption in the flow of blood to the brain
e.g. <i>The man suffered a stroke and was taken to hospital.</i> |

- A. 1
B. 2
C. 3
D. 4

9ER3 Part 1 Q.10

S.3 Writing

Most students with good performance in writing demonstrated competence and an attempt to communicate relevant ideas, information, opinions and feelings appropriate to the context and purpose.

The following Student Exemplars are written passages that have the following characteristics:

- relevant content and ideas expressed effectively
- adequate overall planning and organisation
- paragraphs developed with supporting details
- coherent links within and between paragraphs
- wider range of vocabulary and language patterns used appropriately
- few grammatical, spelling, capitalisation and punctuation mistakes
- features used correctly with few tense shifts and a better focus on the subject and event
- clear understanding of the audience and format as well as context and purpose

Article – Welcome To Wild'n'More Theme Park (9EW1) - Student Exemplar 41 The Encounter of the Seal and I

My class was lucky enough to visit the newest theme park,

1 Wild'n' More Theme Park before its grand opening. I am honoured to write an article here, describing my visit to the park.

We arrived at the Wild'n' More Theme Park at nine o'clock

2 in the morning that day. Firstly, I went for a roller coaster ride with two of my friends. I found the ride too much for me but

3 Sally, my best friend, who was really fond of exciting rides thought the ride was the best ride ever in her life. Then, I queued up for

a roller coaster for kids. Sally did not join as she thought that one

would be boring. However, after the ride, I would certainly recommend it for kids and those who find adults' roller coasters too exciting as the

3 level is absolutely suitable. After that, I couldn't get enough of the

rides so I went on a 'Coffee Cup' ride. I felt dizzy after playing a

4 round of it but still, it was enjoyable.

My friends and I took the cable car and went to the upper

part of the theme park. We went to watch the animal show of the day.

The 'guest' that day was a seal! It was fun watching it flap its tail and

clap its hands. It was even capable of saying 'hello' to the audience!

3 What's more, I was really fortunate as I got picked to feed the seal!

I found the Animal Theatre the most memorable part throughout the day.

4 I even took photos with the seal!

At last, we bought some souvenirs at the shop. I will recommend

this park to everyone I know after this visit. There are rides for both

adults and kids. Food, drinks and souvenirs at the park are not too

expensive. The prices are reasonable. Besides, the staff there are really

nice and are willing to answer all your enquiries patiently. Tickets

for students are also provided with relatively cheaper price compared

to that of adults'. I am sure that adults, teenagers and kids will all find

1 the Wild'n' More Theme Park fun. Do pay a visit to the park when you have

time!

Annotation - Student Exemplar 4

- 1 Appropriate title, introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph and features of an article are evident
- 2 Ideas are generally expressed clearly and effectively – and an example of this is the encounter with the seal. The basis of the idea comes from the prompt but the idea has been elaborated on with details like the seal clapping and saying hello to the audience...
- 3 Good range of language patterns
- 4 Coherent links throughout the article
- ↔ Good range and use of topic specific vocabulary – *rollercoaster, cable car, seal, dizzy*
- [] Ideas are generally expressed clearly and effectively with elaboration. The writer talks about the visit and the various attractions, and also mentions rides he/she went on and personal experience of these rides as well as the feelings of others who went on the rides. The writer also mentions rides that are suitable for adults and children as well as recommending the park to everyone she/he knows and encouraging the reader to visit the park. The writer also mentions food and ticket prices and compares the prices briefly
- ~ Some expressions used incorrectly but these do not impede the understanding/meaning – *At last* instead of *finally*, *staffs* instead of *staff*
- ←.....→ Tense – *queues* instead of *queued*

Email – Choosing the end-of-year activities (9EW2) - Student Exemplar 5

TO: mr.lai@skfgrss.edu.hk

SUBJECT: My suggestions for the end-of-year activities

SEND

1 Dear Mr. Lai, the head of the End-of-Year Activity committee,

The end-of-year is approaching! Sure that everyone is also looking forward. Now, I will suggest a few activities that won't cost too much money and aren't too far away from the school. All activities will be finished within half day.

From looking some pictures you have included. I would like to choose 3 for my first priority.

It is climbing, hiking and going to theme park perspective. The remaining I think it is not a good suggestions as those activities are so common. We have always encountered these activities. And the ship party may be a bit costing. Not all of our students could afford the price of it.

I am definitely sure that majority ^{of our} students would prefer theme park. And then hiking and then climbing. Now, I will talk about the reason why they would prefer theme park first.

As we all know, Hong Kong's theme park has a good reputation and is eminent.

Different tourists around the world visit them because of their fame. There is no doubt that why majority would like to choose theme park for their first priority. Inside the theme park, there are a variety of choices for different age people. Teenagers such as us are crazy about roller coaster, because it is fast and furious. People can feel very excited. Although it is quite expensive, I still think it is worthy and a chance that we should grasp it.

Apart from the above, I think the remaining two activities, hiking and climbing, can be combined as one activity. I would like to talk about the advantage and why the student would prefer.

Hong Kong is a high density city. Living conditions is well known are cramped. Lack fresh air.

And hiking offers us a golden opportunity to feel what is Natural. Hiking helps us strengthen our body and muscle. Help us prevent suggesting disease. Lots of advantage that I can't count

it one by one. Except hiking, climbing or playing some games that require cooperation can help us build up team spirit and learn how to cooperate with other. I think we should also remind our student to wear caps and prepare abundant water and adequate hiking equipment amount of in order to

prevent injured and heatstroke.
 That is all my suggestions. I look forward
 to seeing your reply.
 Best regards,
 Members of the student Union

1

Annotation - Student Exemplar 5

1 The email has a greeting and a complimentary close but the greeting has additional information provided – *Dear Mr. Lai, the head of the End-of-Year Activity committee* and the complimentary close is a sign off from a group, rather than from just the writer – *Best regards, Members of the student Union*

2 Each paragraph is well developed with lots of details, especially the fifth paragraph where the writer suggests combining two activities into one

3 The email has been expanded beyond the prompts/pictures provided by also using original ideas linked closely to the topic

↔ Some good use of vocabulary – *my first priority, eminent, living conditions as we all know are cramped, hiking offers us*

~ Some errors in vocabulary and expression – *reputation* instead of *reputation*, *approaching* instead of *approaching*, *perspectively* instead of *respectively*, *within half day* instead of *within half a day*, *help us prevent from suffering disease* instead of *prevent disease*

↔.....> Verb subject agreement – *it is* instead of *they are*

Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams (9EW3) - Student Exemplar 6

Good morning everyone,

1 Today I am going to talk about revising and preparing for exams. I want to talk about the things that we should do. Before the exam, I will revise the things that the teachers taught in the lesson after school. In lessons, paying attention is an attitude that students should have. After the lessons, even in recesses or lunch time, I will read books with my friends. But if we just keep studying everytime, it may brought a lot of pressure to us, so we can do some exercises or sports with friends to relax ourself. Moreover, we should sleep earlier because we can be more attentive in lessons on the next day. Except the things that we should do on the above, there are also something that we should not do before the exam. For example, we shouldn't play video games for a whole day. It's wasting our time. And we should not sleep after 11:00 P.M., this will affect our attentiveness on the next day. Moreover, some students may not eat breakfast in the morning on school days, but for the exam, we should eat breakfast for better performances. 2

If we don't study, we may be punished by our teachers and parents because of getting bad results. And we will let them down too. Furthermore, if you really want to get good results, except the things above, I recommend you guys to study earlier before the exam for well-prepared performances. Good luck! 1

Annotation - Student Exemplar 6

- 1 The writer has provided an opening and closing of the speech
- 2 Some good ideas that are relevant to the topic and which are elaborated on briefly with few details, like students' attitude. Ideas are given – like reading books but then not connected directly to the next few sentences which refer to relaxing and what students can do to ease pressure. The writer also notes that students must eat breakfast but just briefly mentions that it is to ensure better performances. He/She fails to elaborate on how this would help improve performance
- ◆ The writer switches between the first person singular (I) and first person plural (we) and also uses a very informal expression – *you guys* in the speech, which is not appropriate tone wise given the location/function and the audience – principal, teachers and students
- ~ Errors in spelling and expression are made which do not affect meaning – *even in recesses* instead of *even at recess*, *studying everytime* instead of *studying all the time*, *relax ourself* instead of *relax (ourselves should be ourselves)*, *should not sleep after 11* instead of *we should go to sleep after 11*, *attentiveness on the next day* instead of *attentiveness the next day*, *for well prepared performances* instead of *so that you get good results*

S.3 Speaking

Individual Presentations

Students with good speaking skills were competent in the following four areas: 'ideas and organisation', 'vocabulary and language patterns', 'pronunciation and delivery' and 'strategies for oral communication'.

- Students expressed ideas, information and opinions that were relevant and reasonably clear with supporting details.
- Students were capable of using varied and appropriate language patterns and vocabulary to enrich their presentation.
- They could also speak fluently with few errors in pronunciation and use intonation to enhance their presentation.
- They showed an awareness of their audience by maintaining good eye contact with the oral examiners.

Group Interactions

Students with good speaking skills were competent in conveying ideas intelligibly as well as using simple strategies for effective oral communication.

- Students could respond to relevant ideas with supporting details provided. They demonstrated a good range of vocabulary and were reasonably clear in expressing opinions. Pronunciation of familiar and unfamiliar words was generally clear and accurate.
- Students could use various strategies for oral communication. They could maintain interaction through a range of communicative strategies, such as posing questions to elicit opinions from other group members by asking 'What do you think?' and 'What's your opinion?' They also encouraged other members to further elaborate their ideas by saying things like 'Can you tell us more about...' They were effective group facilitators.

General Comments on S.3 Student Performances

S.3 Listening

- Students at the Basic Competency level performed well with extracting specific information from spoken texts. They could understand conversations supported by context, careful or slowed speech, repetitions or rephrasing. They could distinguish most common word-order patterns but had difficulty with tense shifts and more complex sentence structures.
- Most students understood simple texts with familiar topics. Generally students could work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions when a simple and familiar context was given.
- Most students were also able to select answers based on contextual clues provided as well as connect ideas.
- Generally students were able to identify the context provided and also identify the main idea of the piece.
- Students were able to distinguish a speaker's feelings from the information provided.
- Students were also able to apply their knowledge of the world to correctly select answers.

S.3 Reading

- Most students were capable of locating specific information from different text types.
- Many students could interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions with contextual clues.
- Quite a number of students were able to infer meaning from the context provided.
- Many students were able to understand the connection between ideas and also locate information to support or connect ideas.
- Students could also identify details that support a main idea using the information provided.
- The majority of students were able to work out simple rhymes when reading a poem.
- Students were also able to apply their knowledge of the world to correctly select answers.

S.3 Writing

- Students writing well-organised paragraphs and providing additional details for their ideas scored 3 and 4 for Content and Language.
- Students scoring 2 or 1 for Content and Language tended to provide few ideas and generally based their writing on the prompts.
- Off-topic writing passages were awarded 0 for Content and Features and did not score more than a 2 for Organisation and Language.
- Using a wider range of vocabulary with fewer grammatical errors, capable students could provide more supporting details to their main ideas in their writing. (Student exemplar #4 – Article – Welcome To Wild’n’More Theme Park and student exemplar #5 – Email – Choosing the end-of-year activities and exemplar #6 – Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams)
- Although students could write well-organised paragraphs, few could elaborate on the topic and generally based their comments on the prompts. (Student exemplar #1 – Article – Welcome To Wild’n’More Theme Park)
- Students with better writing skills could develop well-organised paragraphs and could, for instance, give a detailed account of a visit to the latest theme park and why it was a great visit, or determine which end-of-year activities would be better for students and give reasons to support their choices. They elaborated on the prompts provided and also added their own information. (Student exemplar #4 – Article – Welcome To Wild’n’More Theme Park and Student exemplar #5 – Email – Choosing the end-of-year activities)
- On the topic about preparing for exams, students generally used simple language patterns and their ideas generally lacked elaboration or connection to the topic – for example, exercise was mentioned, but it was not clearly connected to why exercise would benefit a student revising and preparing for exams, only to say that you would not feel sick in the exam. Although errors in spelling and grammar were evident, comprehension was not hindered. (Student exemplar #3 – Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams)
- Capable students also wrote speeches in which they elaborated on ideas of revising and preparing for exams. They were able to continue and finish the speech correctly. (Student exemplar #6 – Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams)
- Students, in many instances, misused common words and expressions. They also misspelled common words and it was evident that proofreading was not being done. It was also evident that some students were hindered by their inability to use simple tenses as well as using the singular or plural. (Student exemplar #1 – Article –

Welcome To Wild'n'More Theme Park, Student exemplar #2 – Email – Choosing the end-of-year activities and Student exemplar #3 – Speech – Revising and Preparing for Exams)

S.3 Speaking

Overall speaking performance

- Students were generally able to present relevant ideas clearly, though some had difficulties in organising their ideas coherently.
- Although some students used limited vocabulary, basic sentence structures or inaccurate grammatical structures, they understood the tasks and made a good attempt to share their ideas logically.

Individual Presentation

- About half of the students could support their ideas with adequate examples and deliver their presentation using simple language patterns and familiar vocabulary. Some of them, however, relied heavily on the given prompts and could not elaborate their ideas.
- Some students were unfamiliar with some key words and made errors in their pronunciation, for example, 'traffic problem', 'traffic', 'elective', 'extra-curricular activities', 'career' and 'product'.
- Some weaker students read directly from their notes and did not make eye contact with their audience.

Group Interaction

- Although most students could express and respond to ideas that were relevant to the topics, some of them failed to elaborate their ideas in greater detail. Some weaker students managed to join the discussion with the help of more capable students or prompts.
- Students could generally use limited range of formulaic expressions to respond to others, for example, 'I agree with you'.
- Most students were able to sustain the discussion. Although some students responded very well to others' ideas before adding their own points, many of them responded mechanically or unnaturally to others and continued by making their own 'individual presentations'. Greater amounts of 'fixed' turn-taking (i.e. one student after another and this fixed order would be followed by the students instead of turn-taking being determined by those with ideas to contribute) were evident with conversations being stilted and unnatural as a result.

Overview of Student Performances in English Language at Secondary 3 TSA 2013-2015

The percentage of S.3 students achieving Basic Competency in 2015 was 69.4 %. The percentage for the year 2014 was 69.3 % as shown in Table 7.29.

Table 7.29 Percentages of S.3 Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency in 2013-2015

Year	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency
2013	69.5
2014	69.3
2015	69.4

An overview of Student Performances in English Language at S.3 TSA 2013-2015 provides useful information on how teachers can help students improve their skills. Table 7.30 summarises such an overview.

Table 7.30 Overview of Student Performances in English Language at S.3 TSA 2013-2015

Year	2013	2014	2015	Remarks
<p>Reading Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high percentage of students could generally use strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar topics and could identify general and specific information. Many students were capable of distinguishing views and attitudes through contextual clues. More than half of the students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions of the meaning of unfamiliar expressions using reference skills. Almost half of the students were able to identify details that supported a main idea. Many students were adept at inference and could also identify details that supported a main idea as well as understand the connection between ideas. Almost half of the students could understand language features and correctly identify the atmosphere of the poem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high percentage of students could generally use strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar topics and could identify general and specific information. Many students were capable of distinguishing views and attitudes through contextual clues in familiar topics. Many students were able to identify details that supported a main idea. Students were generally able to identify sequences in familiar genres such as a poem. Many of the students could understand language features and correctly identify the various rhymes in the poem. The majority of students were also able to apply a range of reference skills and locate information in simple charts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high percentage of students could generally use strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar topics and could identify general and specific information. Many students were capable of distinguishing views through contextual clues in familiar topics. Many of the students could understand language features and correctly identify the various rhymes in the poem. Students were also able to identify the features of various text types used. Many students were able to identify details that supported a main idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While students are generally able to work out general and specific information in familiar topics, exposure to a wider range of current/topical and unfamiliar topics may help to strengthen their skills in identifying general and specific information and also working out contexts and connecting ideas. Students need to be exposed to a variety of familiar and unfamiliar topics and vocabulary so that they are able to understand the context and also work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions. 	
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even with picture prompts provided students still found it difficult to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions as well as contextual clues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even with picture prompts provided students still found it difficult to understand the meaning of unfamiliar topics. They were also unable therefore to work out unfamiliar words and expressions as well as contextual clues in unfamiliar topics. Students found it difficult to identify sequences in unfamiliar topics such as the Treasure Hunt Build-A-Book. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students found it difficult to identify main ideas despite picture prompts being provided. Even with picture prompts provided students still found it difficult to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions as well as some contextual clues. 		

Year Writing	2013	2014	2015	Remarks
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, students could communicate ideas, information and opinions appropriate to the context and purpose in writing Students in most cases were able to provide some details to support main ideas. Many students could write well-organised paragraphs. Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'firstly' and 'secondly' in writing paragraphs. Paragraphs were generally well-organised with coherent links. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, students could communicate ideas, information and opinions appropriate to the context and purpose in writing Students in most cases were able to provide some details to support main ideas. Many students could write well-organised paragraphs. Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'firstly' and 'secondly' in writing paragraphs. Paragraphs were generally well-organised with coherent links. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most cases students were able to provide some details to support main ideas. Many students could write well-organised paragraphs with coherent links. Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'firstly' and 'secondly' in writing paragraphs. In general, students could communicate ideas, information and opinions appropriate to the context and purpose in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proofreading is always an issue. A distinct lack of proofreading is evident, resulting in misspellings of words which can affect meaning. Students should try to expand on the prompts provided and include their own ideas and opinions Lack of a detailed vocabulary means that some students find it difficult to express themselves in anything other than simple concepts using only simple sentences. A wider range of vocabulary and knowledge of topic based vocabulary would see an improvement in the content of students' writing. Connecting ideas was a weakness for some students. Students need to think about how their ideas can connect to each other and also to the topic. They should not assume
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only a moderate number of students could provide reasons and elaborate on topics such as a visit by overseas students and protecting the environment. A lack of topic specific vocabulary hindered some students from expressing their ideas logically or fluently and they relied predominantly on prompts provided. Misspelling of simple vocabulary affected meaning as well with many not being able to spell simple topic based vocabulary, for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only a moderate number of students could provide reasons and elaborate on topics such as problems encountered and solved by the discipline committee and the films to watch during film week. A lack of topic specific vocabulary hindered some students from expressing their ideas logically or fluently and they relied predominantly on the picture prompts provided. Misspelling of simple vocabulary affected meaning as well with many not being able to spell simple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lack of topic specific vocabulary hindered some students from expressing their ideas logically and/or fluently and they relied predominantly on the picture prompts provided. The length of some passages was too short and did not allow for much, if any elaboration. Misspelling of simple vocabulary affected meaning as well with many not being able to spell simple topic based vocabulary, for example, the vocabulary associated with the trip to the theme park, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using only simple sentences. A wider range of vocabulary and knowledge of topic based vocabulary would see an improvement in the content of students' writing. Connecting ideas was a weakness for some students. Students need to think about how their ideas can connect to each other and also to the topic. They should not assume

	<p>example, the name of the animal that attacked swimmers, food eaten and also terms and vocabulary related to environmental issues and measures to save the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of students were not familiar with the format of a formal letter and mistakes were also made with features required, for example, the opening and closing of the letter and also the tone used. 	<p>topic based vocabulary, for example, the vocabulary associated with the typhoon and weather as well as the issues encountered by the discipline committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students also find it difficult to express in their writing what they are able to imagine, resulting in simple stories about the typhoon day based solely on the prompts and with little detail or individual input/elaboration of students ideas. • Some students were not familiar with the format of an email and mistakes were also made with features required, for example, the opening and closing of the email and also the tone used. 	<p>exam revision and end-of-year activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students did not use the appropriate opening and closing in the email and some neglected to include explanatory paragraphs in their speech and article to let the reader know what they were writing about. 	<p>that the reader will understand the connection.</p>
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Listening	Year	2013	2014	2015	Remarks				
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students could extract specific information from simple, clear and slower spoken texts. • Many students were also competent in understanding and identifying feelings in spoken texts. • Quite a number of students could understand language features and correctly identify examples of rhyme. • Quite a number of students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions about the meanings of unfamiliar expressions or words. • More than half of the students were adept at connecting ideas and about the same number could interpret and evaluate information in dialogues using contextual clues. • More than half of the students were able to use an increasing range of strategies to understand the intonation of a speaker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students could extract specific information from simple, clear and slower spoken texts. • Many students were adept at connecting ideas. A considerable number of students could interpret and evaluate information in dialogues using contextual clues. • The majority of students were able to apply their own knowledge of the world to various topics and correctly determine the answers. • The majority of the students could correctly identify the tone of an individuals comment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students could extract specific information from simple, clear and slower spoken texts. • Many students were adept at connecting ideas. A considerable number of students could interpret and evaluate information in dialogues using contextual clues. • The majority of students were able to apply their own knowledge of the world to various topics and correctly determine the answers. • The majority of the students could correctly identify the tone of an individuals comment. • Quite a number of students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions about the meanings of unfamiliar expressions or words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students could extract specific information from simple, clear and slower spoken texts. • Many students were adept at connecting ideas. A considerable number of students could interpret and evaluate information in dialogues using contextual clues. • Students were able to apply their own knowledge of the world to various topics and correctly determine the answers. • The majority of the students could correctly identify the tone of an individuals comment. • Quite a number of students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions about the meanings of unfamiliar expressions or words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proofreading was an issue in the poster section of the Green Day Make 'n' Take Activity, resulting in the misspelling of simple words. This also indicates that students would benefit from revision of simple foundation level and topic based vocabulary. They would also benefit from exposure to and development of a wider range of topic based vocabulary. • While students were generally able to identify unfamiliar words/expressions, there were some expressions that students at basic competency level found it difficult to work out. This indicates that students need wider exposure to more colloquial, everyday spoken English. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students found it difficult to identify the emotion expressed by a speaker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students experienced difficulty in the integrated tasks. • Many students found it difficult to transcribe what they heard in the dialogue correctly into the notes section on the Morning Show Technology Addiction Episode. • Many students also found it difficult to apply given information to working out the answers in the integrated tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling of vocabulary is problematic. Students were not able to spell simple stationary items correctly in the poster section of the Green Day Make 'n' Take Activity and the errors made also indicated that proofreading was not being done. 		

Speaking Year	2013	2014	2015	Remarks
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were generally capable of expressing their ideas which were comprehensible In "Individual Presentation", most of the students could give details on their own and deliver their presentation using simple language patterns and vocabulary In "Group Interaction", most of the students could make some contributions to the discussion Students could generally use formulaic expressions to maintain interaction, for example, "I agree with you", "How about you?" or "What do you think?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were generally able to present relevant ideas clearly In "Individual Presentation", about half of the students could support their ideas with adequate examples and deliver their presentation using simple language patterns and familiar vocabulary In "Group Interaction", most students could express and respond to ideas that were relevant to the topics Students could generally use limited range of formulaic expressions to respond to others, for example, "I agree with you" Most students were able to sustain the discussion. Some students responded very well to others' ideas before adding their own points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were generally capable of expressing comprehensible ideas In "Individual Presentation", more than half of the students could support their ideas with adequate examples and deliver their presentation using simple language patterns and familiar vocabulary In "Group Interaction", most students could express and respond to ideas that were relevant to the topics Students could generally use limited range of formulaic expressions to respond to others, for example, "I agree with you" Most students were able to sustain the discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were expected to express relevant ideas using simple language patterns and vocabulary It is observed that students could generally use limited formulaic expressions to facilitate their conversation Students are recommended to further elaborate their ideas and provide adequate supporting details in the presentation or discussion Teachers can focus on training students on the strategies for oral communication so that students would be able to show appropriate awareness of audience and use appropriate and varied formulaic expressions or turn-taking strategies to maintain interaction Students should be familiar with a wide range of formulaic expressions but be careful not to overuse them Conversations should flow naturally so students need to be aware and take care that turn-taking does not become rigid and affect the natural flow of the discussion
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students had difficulties with pronunciation, intonation or pacing Some weaker students did not make attempts to display an awareness of their audience. They simply presented what they had prepared beforehand In "Group Interaction", many students failed to explain their ideas in greater details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students had difficulties in organising their ideas coherently In "Individual Presentation", some students relied heavily on the given prompts and could not elaborate their ideas Some weaker students read directly from their notes and did not make eye contact with their audience In "Group Interaction", some students failed to elaborate their ideas in greater detail. Many students responded mechanically or unnaturally to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students had difficulties in organising their ideas coherently In "Individual Presentation", some students relied heavily on the given prompts and could not elaborate their ideas In "Group Interaction" the interaction became stilted and followed a set pattern determined by the students and this did not allow for the conversation to progress naturally Many students responded mechanically or unnaturally to others 	

Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 3, Primary 6 and Secondary 3 TSA 2015

This was the tenth year that Secondary 3 students participated in the Territory-wide System Assessment at the end of Key Stage 3. The percentage of S.3 students achieving Basic Competency in 2015 was slightly higher than the percentage for the year 2014 as shown in Table 7.31.

Table 7.31 Percentage of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency

Year Level	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency											
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
P.3	75.9	78.8	79.4	79.5	79.3	#	79.2	79.8	79.7	80.4	80.3	80.4
P.6	--	70.5	71.3	71.3	71.5	#	71.6	71.7	^	72.4	^	72.0
S.3	--	--	68.6	69.2	68.9	68.8	69.2	69.2	69.1	69.5	69.3	69.4

Due to Human Swine Influenza causing the suspension of primary schools, the TSA was cancelled and no data has been provided.

^ The 2012 and 2014 P.6 TSA were suspended. As participation in the 2012 and 2014 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.

Table 7.32 Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 3, Primary 6 and Secondary 3 TSA 2015

Level	P.3	P.6	S.3
Skill Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were able to identify key words on familiar topics (e.g. weather conditions). Contextual clues were found to be useful to students. Students were generally able to identify the connection between ideas linked by cohesive devices (e.g. 'and', 'too'). They could also identify the connection of ideas in a table and a poster. Students could identify information from the book cover (e.g. author and the title of the book) and the contents page (e.g. total number of parts in the book). When students were given pictorial cues and contextual clues, they could deduce the possible content of the book. Students could interpret a reference word when it referred to the sender or the receiver of a letter or a postcard. Only the more able students could identify key words on less familiar topics. It was still challenging for students to follow pronoun references in longer texts (e.g. letters and postcards). When applying simple reference skills to obtain information from the book cover, only the more able students were able to identify there was a page of stickers inside the book. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students generally performed better in non-continuous prose with a lighter reading load, e.g. 'Mid-Autumn Festival 2015' and 'TV Guide' than continuous prose with a heavier reading load, e.g. 'An Email to a Pen-friend'. Many students could grasp main ideas and extract simple facts from informational texts, e.g. timetables. Many students could interpret similes on familiar topics. Some students could not work out the meaning of unfamiliar words by using contextual clues. Weaker students could not find the meaning of words by using definitions and examples from a dictionary entry. They had difficulty identifying basic parts of speech although examples were provided. Their dictionary skills need development. Most students were not able to infer information from contextual clues in a text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high percentage of students could generally use strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar topics and could identify general and specific information. Many students were capable of using contextual clues as well as being able to connect ideas and identify main ideas. Capable students were able to comprehend and make a plausible conclusion of the meanings of unfamiliar words and expressions using reference skills. Capable students could respond to ideas, themes, characters and feelings presented in simple literary texts. Their relevant responses showed they had some ability to understand the use of language features like rhyme and personification.

Level Skill	P.3	P.6	S.3
<p>Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students were able to provide a factual account of the story about 'A Naughty Cat' with almost no supporting details. For the writing task 'Helping Other People', students could write about their experiences in helping other people with given prompts. • Some students were able to use cohesive devices such as 'and', 'but', 'so' to link or contrast ideas. • More students were able to write relevant ideas with elaboration. • Spelling mistakes were common among students, e.g. <i>robot (robot), dropped (dropped), cak, calk (cake), tabe, tabld (table), git, gif (gift), etc.</i> • Grammatical mistakes were common: '<i>But the cat jump (jumps) on the cake...</i>', '<i>His mum is bring (brings) a birthday cake to Tom.</i>', '<i>There had (were) chicken wings, chips...</i>' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The performance of students in writing was stable compared to that of previous years. • For both topics, quite a number of students could provide some relevant ideas with some details. They could use a limited range of vocabulary and sentence patterns to elaborate their ideas. • Many of them could use simple cohesive devices to tie the ideas together more smoothly and clearly. • Most students were eager to write and could write at least 80 words based on the prompts provided. • Inconsistent use of tenses was still very common. • Incorrect use of verb forms, spelling mistakes and problematic sentence structures were easily found in students' writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, capable students could provide reasons and elaborate on familiar topics. • A moderate number of students could provide details to support main ideas. Given a variety of prompts ranging from a poster about a new theme park, to information in an email from a teacher and pictures, as well as pictures prompts about revising and preparing for exams, the things to do and not do, students could provide relevant ideas and write a coherent and well organised passage. • Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'firstly' and 'secondly' in their writing passages. Some students used the connectives but not in order and also incorrectly. • Paragraph development was evident in most passages of writing but many lacked coherent links with some information being almost randomly placed for the reader to make connections. Topic and idea elaboration was limited and comments were based primarily on the prompts. • A lack of topic specific vocabulary hindered some students who were not able to express their ideas logically or fluently. • Misspelling of simple vocabulary affected meaning as well with many not being able to spell simple topic based vocabulary, for example, school based activities, the name of particular animals at the theme park, names of rides and activities, and also terms and expressions related to studying for exams. • Proofreading needs to be done to avoid the mistakes being made in spelling and expression. • Students also need to correctly use tenses, the singular and plural as well as personal pronouns. • Some of the pieces of writing were extremely short and lacked any substantial content and/or ideas

Skill / Level	P.3	P.6	S.3
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students could identify key words on familiar topics (e.g. people, time) or on topics related to daily life experiences (e.g. classes, musical instruments). • Students were able to identify the connection of ideas that were linked or contrasted by cohesive devices (e.g. 'also', 'but' and 'too'). They could understand the causal relationship of ideas linked explicitly by cohesive devices. • Students could distinguish a small range of initial consonants, vowels and end consonants (e.g. 'Rock' from 'Rod', 'Ron' and 'Roy'). • Students could distinguish the tone of a speaker expressing anger and doubt. • Students were unable to identify the connection of more than one idea with causal relationship in the spoken text. • Only students with best performance could distinguish '13' from '3', '30' and '33'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The performance of students in listening was stable compared to that of previous years. • Students generally performed well in listening tasks on familiar topics. • Students performed better in shorter tasks with a lighter listening load, e.g. 'Survey', 'Riddles' than longer ones, e.g. 'Green Day'. • Students generally were able to extract a specific piece of straightforward information, grasp gist / main ideas on familiar topics, discriminate between intonation when the expression being explicitly presented, and identify rhymes. • Some students had difficulty in connecting ideas by identifying cohesive devices / contextual clues. • Some students could not predict the likely development of a text. • In the note-taking task, students performed better in writing numbers than writing words, even when the word was simple like 'bed'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many students were competent in understanding and identifying feelings in spoken texts. • The majority of students could extract specific information from simple, clear and slower spoken texts. • Many students were capable of understanding the meaning of simple dialogues on familiar and less familiar topics. Students were adept at connecting ideas and they were also able to interpret and evaluate information in dialogues using contextual clues. • Quite a number of students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions about the meanings of unfamiliar expressions or words. • Quite a number of students could understand language features and correctly identify examples of rhyme. A small number of students were able to correctly identify personification in the poem. • Almost half of the students were able to use an increasing range of strategies to understand the intonation of the speaker.

Level Skill	P.3	P.6	S.3
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 'Reading Aloud', students were able to read fluently and clearly with very few pronunciation mistakes. • For 'Expression of Personal Experiences', students were able to provide relevant answers with some prompting. • In 'Picture Description', students could provide relevant answers to most of the questions with little prompting. Students with the best performance were able to provide elaboration to some questions. • For 'Reading Aloud', students continued to drop end consonants for words like 'teaches' and 'sunglasses'. Some students were not able to say 'Thank you' correctly. They said 'Thank you you' instead. • For 'Expression of Personal Experiences', some students had difficulty answering simple questions. For example, 'What does she look like?' They did not understand the meaning of 'look like'. • In 'Picture Description', some students were not able to express their ideas appropriately due to their limited choices of words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than half of the students were able to read the texts aloud fluently and clearly with very few pronunciation mistakes. Some of them used appropriate pausing and intonation. • Students were generally able to provide relevant responses to the questions. • In 'Presentation', students were generally able to deliver a talk based on the prompts provided. Most of them were awarded a bonus score for having eye contact with the oral examiners. • Students with better performance could provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics and elaborate with some details. • Many students dropped end consonants and mispronounced the 'th' consonants. • They tended to have difficulty pronouncing words with three or more syllables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 'Individual Presentation', most students generally spoke clearly with some fluidity of expression, though difficulties with pronunciation and intonation were noticeable. • While more capable students made attempts to display an awareness of their audience, some students, however, simply read their presentation and followed the prompts without adding further information. • In 'Group Interaction', although most of the students could make some contributions to the discussion, many of them failed to explain their ideas in greater detail. Controlled turn taking resulted in stilted and unnatural conversations. • Students could generally use formulaic expressions to maintain interaction, for example, 'I agree with you', 'How about you?' or 'What do you think?'