Results of Primary 6 English Language in TSA 2015

The territory-wide percentage of P.6 students achieving English Language Basic Competency in TSA 2015 is 72%, indicating a slight decrease in the percentage of students achieving basic competency in 2015 as compared to that of 2013.

Primary 6 Assessment Design

The assessment tasks for TSA 2015 P.6 English Language were based on the *Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version) for English Language at the end of Key Stage 2 (Primary 6)* and the *CDC Syllabus for English Language (Primary 1 – 6) 1997*. The tasks covered the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking, and were designed in accordance with the learning objectives in three interrelated strands: Interpersonal (IS), Knowledge (KS) and Experience (ES).

The P.6 written assessment consisted of three sub-papers for Listening and three sub-papers for Reading and Writing, comprising a total of 120 items and 132 score points. Some items appeared in different written sub-papers, acting as inter-paper links. The duration of each Listening sub-paper was approximately 30 minutes, while that of each Reading and Writing sub-paper was 50 minutes. The oral assessment comprised of two components, 'Reading Aloud and Teacher-Student Interaction' as well as 'Presentation', with six sub-papers in each component. The oral assessment consisted of twelve sub-papers. The number of items on the various sub-papers is summarized in Table 7.11a. 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 P.6 written sub-papers is provided in Table 7.11b and that of the Speaking sub-papers is given in Table 7.11c.

Table 7.11a Number of Items and Score Points for P.6

Subject	No. of Items (Score Points)				
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4	Total*
English Language					
Written Paper					
Listening	29(29)	29(29)	29(29)	--	58(58)
Reading	30(30)	30(30)	30(30)	--	60(60)
Writing	1(7)	1(7)	1(7)	--	2(14)
Total	60(66)	60(66)	60(66)	--	120(132)
Speaking					
Reading Aloud	2(4)	2(4)	2(4)	--	6(4)
Teacher-Student Interaction	2(7)	2(7)	2(7)	--	6(7)
Presentation	2(10)	2(10)	2(10)	--	6(10)

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

Table 7.11b Composition of P.6 Written Sub-papers

Written Assessment			
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)		
Listening	6EL1	6EL2	6EL3
	29(29)	29(29)	29(29)
Reading	6ERW1	6ERW2	6ERW3
	30(30)	30(30)	30(30)
Writing	6ERW1	6ERW2	6ERW3
	1(7)	1(7)	1(7)

Table 7.11c Composition of P.6 Speaking Sub-papers

Speaking Assessment			
Basic Competency	No. of Items (Score Points)		
L3-R-3-P6BC (Reading aloud)	6ES01 & 6ES03 2 (8)	6ES05 & 6ES07 2 (8)	6ES09 & 6ES11 2 (8)
L3-S-3-P6BC (Ideas)	6ES01 – 6ES04 4 (16)	6ES05 – 6ES08 4 (16)	6ES09 – 6ES12 4 (16)
L3-S-4-P6BC (Language use)	6ES01 – 6ES04 4 (12)	6ES05 – 6ES08 4 (12)	6ES09 – 6ES12 4 (12)
L4-S-1-P6BC (Pronunciation)	6ES02 & 6ES04 2 (6)	6ES06 & 6ES08 2 (6)	6ES10 & 6ES12 2 (6)
Eye contact (Not B.C.)	6ES02 & 6ES04 2 (2)	6ES06 & 6ES08 2 (2)	6ES10 & 6ES12 2 (2)

P.6 Listening Items

Each student was required to attempt one of the three sub-papers (about 30 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 7.12 and 7.13.

Table 7.12   P.6 Listening: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L3-L-1-P6BC	Discriminating between words with a range of vowel and consonant sounds	4
L4-L-2-P6BC	Understanding the use of a small range of language features in simple literary / imaginative spoken texts	5
L4-L-3-P6BC	Using a range of strategies to understand the meaning of simple texts on familiar topics which are delivered clearly in familiar accents	49
	TOTAL	58

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

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L4-L-3-P6BC	Booking a Hotel *6EL1 Part 1A*	Blank filling	6(6)
L4-L-3-P6BC L4-L-2-P6BC	Survey *6EL1 Part 1B/6EL2 Part 1A*	Multiple choice	6(6)
L4-L-3-P6BC L3-L-1-P6BC	Faye's Birthday *6EL1 Part 2*	Multiple choice	6(6)
L4-L-3-P6BC L3-L-1-P6BC	Green Day *6EL1 Part 3/6EL3 Part 3*	Multiple choice	11(11)
L4-L-3-P6BC	Booking a Hotel (MC) *6EL2 Part 1B/6EL3 Part 1B*	Multiple choice	6(6)
L4-L-3-P6BC L4-L-2-P6BC	Riddles *6EL2 Part 2/6EL3 Part 2*	Multiple choice	6(6)
L4-L-3-P6BC L4-L-2-P6BC	Visiting Korea *6EL2 Part 3*	Multiple choice	11(11)
L4-L-3-P6BC L3-L-1-P6BC	Going for a Hike *6EL3 Part 1A*	Multiple choice	6(6)

P.6 Reading Items

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

Table 7.14   P.6 Reading: Distribution of Items

Basic Competency	Descriptor	No. of Items
L3-R-5-P6BC	Using a range of reading strategies to understand the meaning of simple texts with the help of cues	48
L3-R-6-P6BC	Applying simple reference skills with the help of cues	7
L4-R-4-P6BC	Understanding the use of a small range of language features in simple literary / imaginative texts	5
	TOTAL	60

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

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L3-R-5-P6BC L3-R-6-P6BC	TV Guide *6ERW1 Part 1*	Multiple choice	5(5)
L3-R-5-P6BC L3-R-6-P6BC	Mid-Autumn Festival 6ERW2 Part 1/6ERW3 Part 1	Multiple choice	5(5)
L3-R-5-P6BC	Using Mobile Phones 6ERW1 Part 2/6ERW2 Part 2	Multiple choice	7(7)
L3-R-5-P6BC L4-R-4-P6BC	Graduation *6ERW3 Part 2*	Multiple choice	7(7)
L3-R-5-P6BC L4-R-4-P6BC	Grandma's Birthday *6ERW2 Part 3/6ERW3 Part 3*	Multiple choice	6(6)
L3-R-5-P6BC L3-R-6-P6BC	Bali *6ERW1 Part 3*	Multiple choice	6(6)
L3-R-5-P6BC L4-R-4-P6BC	Interview with Clara Lau *6ERW1 Part 4/6ERW3 Part 4*	Multiple choice	12(12)
L3-R-5-P6BC L4-R-4-P6BC L3-R-6-P6BC	An Email to a Pen-friend *6ERW2 Part 4*	Multiple choice	12(12)

P.6 Writing Tasks

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

Table 7.16   P.6 Writing: Distribution of Items

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

Table 7.17   P.6 Writing: Item Description

Basic Competency	Item Description	No. of Items (Score Points)
L3-W-3-P6BC	A Bad Day	$^1/_2(4)$
L3-W-4-P6BC	*6ERW1/6ERW2 Part 5*	$^1/_2(3)$
L3-W-3-P6BC	An Email to Peter	$^1/_2(4)$
L3-W-4-P6BC	*6ERW3 Part 5*	$^1/_2(3)$

P.6 Speaking Tasks

Each selected student was required to attempt either 'Reading Aloud and Teacher-Student Interaction' or 'Presentation' in one of the 12 sub-papers (each sub-paper was about 5 minutes in length including preparation time). A set of four sub-papers were allocated to each session, totalling three sessions over 1.5 days of oral assessment. Sub-papers consisted of different topics: *A Famous Person (6ES01), Going to the Cinema (6ES02), A Newcomer in the House (6ES03), Home Accident (6ES04), Our Countryside (6ES05), Dreaming in Class (6ES06), My School Garden (6ES07), My Eating Habits (6ES08), Washing Our Hands (6ES09), Kowloon Fun Park (6ES10), My New Classmate (6ES11) and Where I Live (6ES12)*. Descriptions of the speaking tasks are provided in Table 7.18.

Table 7.18   P.6 Speaking: Distribution of Tasks

Basic Competency	Descriptor	Task Description	No. of Items
L3-R-3-P6BC	Showing a basic understanding of simple and familiar texts by reading aloud the texts with comprehensible pronunciation and generally appropriate pace, stress, rhythm and intonation	Reading Aloud *6ES01, 6ES03, 6ES05, 6ES07, 6ES09, 6ES11*	6
L3-S-3-P6BC	Providing and / or exchanging (asking and answering) simple information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks), and attempting to provide some elaboration with the help of cues	Teacher-Student Interaction *6ES01, 6ES03, 6ES05, 6ES07, 6ES09, 6ES11*	6
L3-S-4-P6BC	Using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices to convey simple information and ideas fairly appropriately with the help of cues despite some grammatical mistakes		
L4-S-1-P6BC	Pronouncing familiar words comprehensibly	Presentation *6ES02, 6ES04, 6ES06, 6ES08, 6ES10, 6ES12*	6
L3-S-3-P6BC	Providing and / or exchanging (asking and answering) simple information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks), and attempting to provide some elaboration with the help of cues		
L3-S-4-P6BC	Using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices to convey simple information and ideas fairly appropriately with the help of cues despite some grammatical mistakes		

Performance of P.6 Students with Minimally Acceptable Levels of Basic Competence in TSA 2015

P.6 Listening

Design of Listening Papers

There are three listening sub-papers altogether, namely 6EL1, 6EL2 and 6EL3. In the sub-papers, there are eight listening tasks:

Tasks	Text Types
Survey	Personal Description
Faye's Birthday	Poem
Booking a Hotel (Blank Filling)	Note and Message
Green Day	Conversation
Booking a Hotel (Multiple Choice)	Conversation
Visiting Korea	Conversation
Going for a Hike	Conversation
Riddles	Riddles

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

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to

• understand the connection between ideas by identifying pronoun references

• extract a specific piece of straightforward information

• grasp gist / main ideas on familiar topics

• discriminate between intonation when the expression being explicitly presented

• identify rhymes

Task Name: Survey (Personal Description)

Task Content: Three students talk about what they do for fun. Susan likes badminton. Mike loves video games. Gigi enjoys music.

Understanding the Connection between Ideas by Identifying Pronoun References

- Most students were able to connect between ideas by identifying pronoun references. In this task, an immediate pronoun reference, 'they', refers to the 'classmates' of the previous sentence. Students knew that Mike sometimes played video games with his classmates when Mike said, '…_my classmates like 'tennis'…Sometimes they come to my home to play video games_ with me.'

4. Mike sometimes plays video games with his _____.

   ○ A. dad

   ○ B. mum

   ○ C. brother

   ● D. classmates

   6EL1 P1B Q.4 / 6EL2 P1A Q.4

Extracting a Specific Piece of Straightforward Information

- Most students could extract a specific piece of straightforward information from a spoken text. They knew that Gigi wanted to be a singer when they heard, '_I want to be a pop singer when I grow up.'_

6. Gigi wants to be a _____ in the future.

   ● A. singer

   ○ B. pianist

   ○ C. teacher

   ○ D. story writer

   6EL1 P1B Q.6 / 6EL2 P1A Q.6

Task Name: Faye's Birthday (Poem)

Task Content: Miss Fung is reading a poem about Faye's birthday celebration.

(1) [We held a party for my sister, Faye.
It is her sixth birthday today.] (1)

(2) [When Faye's best friend, Lucy, came,
We sang songs and played some games.] (2)

(3) [Lucy gave her a teddy bear.
I bought a clip for her hair.] (3)

(4) [We could not stop eating the food
As it was all delicious and good.] (4)

(5) [I hope when my birthday comes,
We will again have so much fun.] (5)

Grasping Gist on Familiar Topics

- The majority of students could grasp the gist of spoken texts on familiar topics. In this task, they were able to spot some key words related to a birthday celebration in the poem, i.e. '…*a party for my sister, Faye. It is her sixth birthday today….best friend, Lucy, came…could not stop eating the food…when my birthday comes, we will again have so much fun.*'

1. What is the best title for this poem?

   ○   A.   Eating at Home

   ○   B.   A Christmas Party

   ○   C.   Some Lovely Gifts

   ●   D.   A Birthday Celebration

   6EL1 P2 Q.1

Task Name: Environmental Protection (Conversation)

Task Content: Cindy and Mr Wong talk about environmental protection on a campus radio programme called 'Lunchtime Show'.

Grasping Main Ideas on Familiar Topics

- The majority of students could grasp main ideas of spoken texts on familiar topics. In this task, they were able to identify that Mr Wong wanted the students to use the recycling bins more when they heard a familiar topic about 'recycling', '*In our school, there are some recycling bins. But most students don't use them. They throw all their paper and bottles in rubbish bins, not the recycling bins. They can do better than that.*'

3. Mr Wong wants the students to _____.

   ○   A.   throw away more paper

   ○   B.   throw away more bottles

   ○   C.   use the rubbish bins more

   ●   D.   use the recycling bins more

   6EL1 P3 Q.3 / 6EL3 P3 Q.3

Discriminating between Intonation When the Expression Being Explicitly Presented

- Almost all students were able to discriminate between expressions of anger, happiness, sadness and doubt. They could identify the correct picture of Cindy looking doubtful when they heard the presenter's explicit expression, i.e. '*Really? Do you 'really' think that?*'

2. How does Cindy feel?

   ○ A.   ● B.

   ○ C.   ○ D.

   6EL1 P3 Q.2 / 6EL3 P3 Q.2

Task Name: What am I? (Riddles)

Task Content: Cindy's teacher, Mr White, is reading some riddles to his students for them to guess what or who they are.

Identifying Rhymes

- Most students could identify pairs of rhymes in the poem by noting words end with common consonant blends /st/: best /best/ and rest /rest/.

Question 6: You will hear four pairs of words, which <u>pair</u> of words rhymes?

A: on, our   B: best, rest ✓   C: table, bodies   D: thin, taste

6EL2 P2 Q.6 / 6EL3 P2 Q.6

P.6 Reading

Design of Reading Papers

There are three reading sub-papers altogether, namely 6ERW1, 6ERW2 and 6ERW3. In the sub-papers, there are eight reading tasks:

Tasks	Text Types
TV Guide	Timetable
Mid-Autumn Festival	Poster
Using Mobile Phones	Discussion
Graduation	Poem
Grandma's Birthday	Diary
Bali	Postcard
Interview with Clara Lau	Conversation
An Email to a Pen-friend	Email

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

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to

- locate information

- grasp main ideas on familiar topics

- understand the connection between ideas by identifying pronoun references

- work out the meaning of unfamiliar words using explicit contextual clues

- sequence events with the help of pictorial cues given as options

- grasp the gist with the help of pictorial cues

- interpret similes on familiar topics

Task Name: TV Guide (Timetable)

Task Content: Information is provided about programme schedules of Channels A and B.

Time	Channel A	Channel B
6:00 p.m.	**Animal World** Take an inside look at the life of animals	**Teen Time** *Dr Ma* takes telephone calls and gives advice to teenagers
7:00 p.m.	**News Report** News about Hong Kong and the world	**All about Korea** *Timothy Wong* talks about Korean cooking
7:45 p.m.	**Weather Report** Weather for Hong Kong and the world	**Weekend Movie** ***The Forest*** Two best friends find their way home through a forest full of dangerous animals and plants
8:00 p.m.	**Home Videos** Videos about the funny things that happen to people and pets	
8:30 p.m.	**Friday Special** Korean pop singers *Johnny Lee* and *Sonny Sung* in concert	

Locating Information

- The majority of students were able to locate information about TV programmes. The meaning of the word associations between 'funny' and 'laugh' was applied to the interpretation of the descriptors of TV programmes. They knew that 'Home Video' would make people laugh from its description, i.e. '*Videos about the <u>funny</u> things that happen to people and pets.*'

1. Which programme makes people laugh?

   ○ A. Teen Time

   ● B. Home Videos

   ○ C. Animal World

   ○ D. All about Korea

   6ERW1 P1 Q.1

Task Name: Using Mobile Phones (Discussion)

Task Content: Tina, Jimmy and Leon wrote some articles for their school magazine.

__Grasping Main Ideas on Familiar Topics__

- The majority of students were able to grasp main ideas on familiar topics relating to their personal experience. When reading Jimmy's article on mobile phones they picked up on: '*useful*', '*can look up difficult words*', '*contact our friends*' and '*call our parents*', and they could determine that Jimmy thinks mobile phones are good for students.

> Mobile phones can be very useful at school. We can look up difficult words in an online dictionary. We can also contact our friends easily. We can even call our parents when something bad happens.
>
> *Jimmy Yeung (Class 6B)*

3. Jimmy thinks _____.

    ○ A. everyone has a phone dictionary

    ● B. mobile phones are good for students

    ○ C. parents love talking to their children

    ○ D. students play with friends every day

6ERW1 P2 Q.3 / 6ERW2 P2 Q.3

__Understanding the Connection between Ideas by Identifying Pronoun References__

- The majority of students were able to connect ideas by identifying and using pronoun references. In this task, 'some' refers to 'students' when the text is about students using mobile phones, i.e. '*Students already spend too much time on … If they also use… They will not pay much attention… Some may even cheat…*'

2. In line 3, 'some' refers to some _____.

    ○ A. phones

    ○ B. schools

    ○ C. teachers

    ● D. students

6ERW1/2 P2 Q.2

Task Name: Bali (Postcard)

Task Content: Cindy reads a postcard from Aunt Susan. In the card, Aunt Susan talks about her holiday in Bali with her husband.

```
1   Dear Cindy,                          18 May 2015
         Hello from Bali! It's very sunny here! The sky is clear
    all day but it isn't too hot.
         We're staying in a really good villa. The beach is just
5   outside our bedroom. Uncle James loves diving. I can't
    swim so I just go sunbathing. I also enjoy walking under
    the trees. Yesterday we visited a village. Most of the
    villagers grow vegetables but some make souvenirs to sell.
    We bought a wooden mask for you!
10      It's been great to relax for a few days - no stress
    from work - but we'll be back in HK tomorrow. See you
    soon.
                                         Love,
                                         Aunt Susan
```

Bali

Cindy Lee
Flat 17E
Block 16
Lucky Gardens
Shatin
Hong Kong

Working out the Meaning of Unfamiliar Words Using Explicit Contextual Clues

- The majority of the students were able to work out the meaning of an unfamiliar word when explicit contextual clues were given. In this task, students knew the meaning of 'villa' in a postcard when explicit contextual clues – 'staying' and 'our bedroom' – which are associated with a place are provided, i.e. *'We're staying in a really good villa. The beach is just outside our bedroom.'*

2. In line 4, a 'villa' is _____.

   ○   A.   a tree

   ●   B.   a place

   ○   C.   a person

   ○   D.   an activity

6ERW1 P3 Q.2

Task Name: Interview with Clara Lau (Conversation)

Task Content: A reporter interviews actress Clara Lau. In the interview, they talk about how Clara Lau felt when she won the Best Actress Award and how she became an actress.

Sequencing Events with the Help of Pictorial Clues Given as Options

- The majority of students were able to sequence the pictures by reading about Clara's working experiences before she became famous.

I left school at 17 to make money. My results were good, but I needed to work to support my family. So I became a clerk at a TV company. One day a director asked me to play a small role as a policewoman in a TV drama. That's how I got started.

11. The following pictures show how Clara became famous. Put them in the correct order.
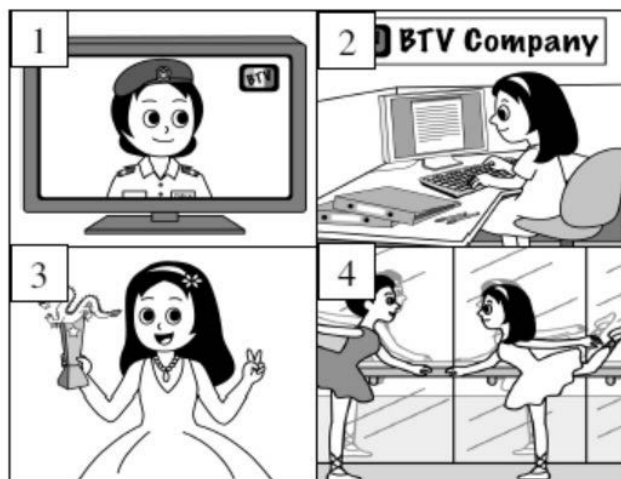
   ○   A.   4 → 1 → 2 → 3

   ●   B.   2 → 1 → 4 → 3

   ○   C.   1 → 2 → 3 → 4

   ○   D.   3 → 2 → 1 → 4

6ERW1 P4 Q.11 / 6ERW3 P4 Q.11

Task Name: Mid-Autumn Festival (Poster)

Task Content: Cindy reads a poster about an event celebrating Mid-Autumn Festival.

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL 2015

Come and share the joy of Mid-Autumn Festival!

Date: 27 September 2015 (Sunday)
Time: 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm
Place: Mong Kok Football Stadium

Stalls
Mooncakes, fruit and drinks for sale

Performances
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm   Puppet Show
8:00 pm – 9:00 pm   Chinese Opera
                       (Story of Chang'e)
9:00 pm – 10:00 pm   Fire Dragon Dance

Ticket Prices

- $10 for adults
- Half price for children under 12
- Free for people over 65

Classes
Free lantern-making classes
(contact Ms Jenny Cheng on 5134 0484 to book a place)

Lanterns will be given out for FREE!

Pictorial cue showing a rabbit and a character representing Mid-Autumn Festival →

Organiser: Kwun Tong Youth Centre
Website: www.midautumn2015.com

Grasping the Gist with the Help of Pictorial Cues

- The majority of students could grasp the gist of information texts. In this task, they were able to skim for gist of topic from a poster with the given pictorial cue showing a rabbit and a character representing Mid-Autumn Festival.

5. People go to this event to _____.

   ○ A. tell Chinese stories

   ○ B. learn to make puppets

   ○ C. practise fire dragon dancing

   ● D. celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival

6ERW2 P1 Q.5 / 6ERW3 P1 Q.5

Task Name: Grandma's Birthday (Diary)

Task Content: Cindy wrote about her grandma's birthday in her diary. The writing is about how they prepared and enjoyed the big birthday dinner.

19 March 2015 (sunny)   1

    Today is Grandma's 70th birthday. We had a big celebration!

    Grandma does not like going out to eat - she prefers homemade food. So we prepared a big dinner for her at home.

    In the morning, Mum and Dad went to the market and bought a lot   5 of food. Mum was busy in the kitchen all afternoon. Grandma told her not to make too many dishes. But she got excited when Mum began to make spring rolls, her favourite food. Dad and I baked a cake. We needed help from Mum because we seldom cook.

    It was such a big, delicious meal! We kept eating and eating until we   10 all <u>burped</u> loudly.

    <u>Grandma's smile was as big as the sun</u> the whole evening!

Interpreting Similes on Familiar Topics

- The majority of students were able to interpret the meaning of '_Grandma's <u>smile</u> was as big as the sun…_' by associating the word 'smile' with a happy mood.

5. In line 12, 'Grandma's smile was as big as the sun…' This means she _____.

   ○ A. was hot

   ● B. was happy

   ○ C. likes cooking

   ○ D. likes sunny days

6ERW2 P3 Q.5

P.6 Writing

Students were required to complete one writing task in about 80 words. Students generally understood the task requirements. In terms of content, students were able to <u>provide a factual account of the story based on the pictures with some details</u> for '_A Bad Day_' and they could <u>provide some relevant ideas with some details using the prompts</u> for 'An Email to Peter'. In terms of language, students were able to <u>use a limited range of vocabulary, sentence patterns, cohesive devices and verb forms fairly appropriately, with some grammatical and spelling mistakes</u> in both writing tasks.

A Bad Day (6ERW1 / 6ERW2 Part 5)

In this writing task, students were asked to write a story about <u>what happened before and on the day of Cindy's oral examination</u> based on the given pictures and guiding questions.

Part 5

Last Friday was a bad day for you. You could not speak in your oral examination.

Write about what happened for the school magazine.

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

1 stayed up late / chips

2 sore throat

3 Oral Examination

4 ?

- What did you do last Thursday night?
- What happened to you the next day?
- How did you feel?
- What did the teacher say?
- What did you do?
- What happened in the end?

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

Student Exemplar 1

Last Friday was a bad day for me. I couldn't speak
in my oral examination! I was so upset about this because
I prepare a lot of time fo the examination. a lot of chip.
I was stayed up late after last Friday midnight and I eat)
Although I knew I had a oral examination. Therefore when
I growed up, I got a sore throat.
I couldn't speak in the oral examination. The teacher
was so disappointed with myself.
At last, I got zero make in the exam. Last Friday was
a bad day for me!

Content:

1 Provides some brief ideas and communicates ideas quite clearly

Language:

◆—▶ Uses a limited range of vocabulary with some grammatical mistakes: *growed up*

···· Writes a limited range of sentence patterns with some grammatical mistakes: *I was so upset about this because I prepare a lot of time fo the examination…Although I knew I had a oral examination.*

◯ Uses a limited range of cohesive devices: *because, at last*

Student Exemplar 2

A Bad Day

Last Friday was a really bad day for me. I did not want it to happen again. I watched TV until midnight on Thursday. I also ate a lot of potato chips. At last I went to bad at two o'clock. On Friday, I got up late because I have just slept for four hours. I got sore throat because I ate a lot of potato chips. It was terrible. It was Oral Examination on Friday. I could not speak well in the test. At last, I got a low marks. From now on, I won't eat lots of chips and went to bad late. Getting sore throat was a horrible expirience.

Content:

1 Provides a factual account of the story with some details
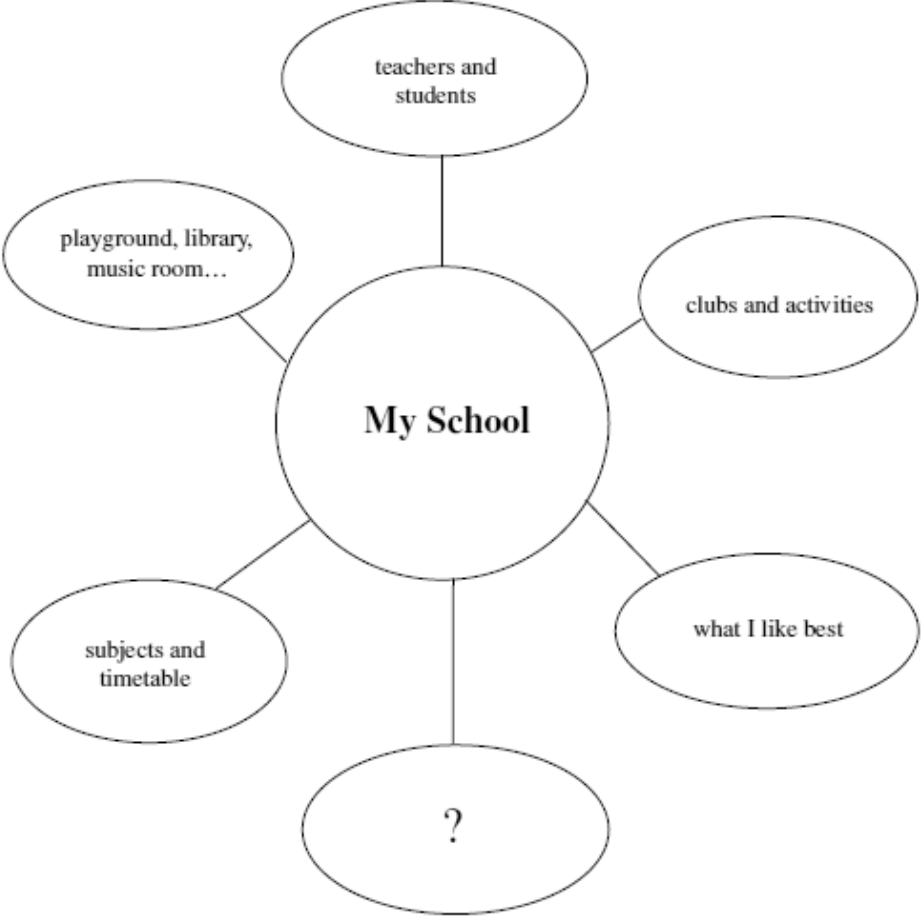
Language:

◆—◆ Uses a limited range of vocabulary with spelling mistakes: *went to bad, expirience*

···· Uses a limited range of sentence patterns with grammatical mistakes: *I did not want it to happen again…I got up late because I have just slept for four hours.*

◯ Uses cohesive devices: *At last, From now on*

An Email to Peter (6ERW3 Part 5)

In this writing task, students were asked to write about <u>Cindy's school</u> with the help of prompts.

Part 5

You are Cindy. Your cousin, Peter, is coming to study at your school next year.

Write an email to Peter to describe your school and what you like best about it.

Write the email in about 80 words. You may use the information below to help you.

teachers and students

playground, library, music room…

clubs and activities

My School

subjects and timetable

what I like best

?

Student Exemplar 3

1 My school have a music room, playground, library ..... very time I go to the music room, *because* I like sing, very time I with my best friend go to music room to sing.

→ playground, library, music room…

I like my music teachers because she talk me now ma many with music.

→ teachers and students

My favourite subjects is music and English

→ subjects and timetable

1 It is because I like music *with* I want to be a pop-singer. I like English because It can help me now many bn,not y.

That school is very good, because the teachers is very nice : when you dont don't now how to do some, the teachers can help you. If you don't, now how to do homework. the teacher will talk you about how to do. 1

→ what I like best

→ teachers and students

That is about my school.

by,

cindy.

Content:

1 Provides some relevant ideas with some details

Language:

◆—◆ Uses a limited range of vocabulary: *favourite, nice*

•••• Uses a limited range of sentence patterns: *It is because I like music and want to be a pop-singer…That school is very good.*

◯ Uses some cohesive devices: *because, and*

Student Exemplar 4

1

My school is very big. There are a lot of factilies such as library, art room, music room, computer room. There is a big hall too. We have assembly in there every morning. Our school starts from 8 AM to 3P.M. We have 10 lessons every day.
The teachers are kind to students. They seldom shout at us. They always teach us patiently. The classmates are very friendly. They will make friends with you. 1
I hope you will enjoy in the new school!

friends
Cindy.

playground, library, music room…

subjects and timetable

teachers and students

what I like best

Content:

1 Provides some brief ideas and communicates ideas quite clearly

Language:

◆— Uses a limited range of vocabulary: *seldom, patiently, friendly*

•••• Uses a limited range of sentence patterns: *The teachers are kind to students. They seldom shout at us. They always teach us patiently.*

◯ Uses some cohesive devices: *too, there*

P.6 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 of 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.6 Student Performances' section.

Best Performance of P.6 Students in TSA 2015

P.6 Listening

Performance of Students with Best Performance in Listening Tasks

Students with best performance did well at the basic competency level and they were **also** able to correctly answer questions requiring them to

- understand the connection between ideas by identifying cohesive devices / contextual clues

- predict the likely development of a text

- distinguish between sounds

- understand the use of onomatopoeia

Understanding the Connection between Ideas by Identifying Cohesive Devices / Contextual Clues

- Students with the best performance were capable of drawing ideas from multiple contextual clues provided in a conversation. They could figure out whom the completed form should be handed to (i.e. Mr Wong) when they heard:

  Cindy: So how can we enter the competition?

  Wong: Get an entry form in the library. Fill it in. And then <u>hand it to</u> <u>me</u>.

  They understood the clues which were the pronoun 'it' referring to the completed form and 'me' referring to Mr Wong.

10. Students should give their completed forms to _____.
    - ● A. Mr Wong
    - ○ B. Cindy Lee
    - ○ C. the librarian
    - ○ D. their class teachers

    6EL1/3 P3 Q.10

- Best performing students could determine that Cindy and Mr Wong were talking on a radio programme from the repeated contextual clue 'listeners' which indicated the genre of the text (radio programme), i.e. '*Good afternoon, <u>listeners</u>…I'm sure all our <u>listeners</u> know what to do now.*'

11. They are talking _____.
    - ○ A. at a party
    - ○ B. at a meeting
    - ○ C. on a TV show
    - ● D. on a radio programme

    6EL1/3 P3 Q.11

Predicting the Likely Development of a Text

- By hearing what Cindy said beforehand:

  Cindy: …I hope I can travel around the world like you in the future!

  students with the best performance could infer that travelling around the world is Cindy's dream and could then predict what Uncle Alan would say (with reference to social conventions).

9. Uncle Alan will say 'I hope _____'.
    - ○ A. you get well soon
    - ○ B. you have good health
    - ● C. your dream comes true
    - ○ D. you have better luck next time
         6EL2 P3 Q.9

Distinguishing between Sounds

- Students with the best performance were able to distinguish between 'twenty-first', 'twenty-third' and 'twenty-fifth' then match the utterance to a written representation.

5. Green Day is on _____.
    - ○ A. 20th June
    - ○ B. 21st June
    - ○ C. 23rd June
    - ● D. 25th June
         6EL1 P3 Q.5

Understanding the Use of Onomatopoeia

- Students with the best performance understood that '*humming*' is a sound made by producing a wordless tone, and therefore they knew that '*humming*' in a spoken text referred to singing wordlessly to oneself.

5. Gigi is always _____.
    - ○ A. listening to the radio
    - ○ B. writing poems at home
    - ● C. singing quietly to herself
    - ○ D. getting songs from the Internet
    6EL1 P1B Q.5 / 6EL2 P1A Q.5

P.6 Reading

Performance of 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 questions requiring them to

- work out the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary

- make inferences

- connect ideas by gathering and interpreting multiple pieces of information

- understand parts of speech and use dictionary skills

Working out the Meaning of Unfamiliar Vocabulary

- Best performing students were capable of working out the meaning of the unfamiliar phrase 'well-off' in the text by using contextual clues provided. They could use these clues: *'weren't well-off'*, *'work long hours'*, *'just to get enough money'* and *'food'* to infer that the family was poor.

7. In line 3, what does 'well-off' mean?

   ● A. rich

   ○ B. happy

   ○ C. healthy

   ○ D. hardworking

     6ERW1/3 P4 Q.7

Making Inferences

- Students with the best performance were able to infer that most people in the village were farmers by referring to these clues in the text: *'Most'*, *'the villagers'* and *'grow vegetables'*.

4. Most people in the village are _____.

   ○ A. artists

   ○ B. divers

   ● C. farmers

   ○ D. shopkeepers

     6ERW1 P3 Q.4

Connecting Ideas by Gathering and Interpreting Multiple Pieces of Information

- More able students could gather and interpret a few pieces of information in a text, i.e. *'Leon Chan'*, *'project at school'* and *'mobile phones'*. From this, they knew that Leon Chan was the one who had used a mobile phone in the classroom as he stated, '*Last week we did a group project at school. Our teacher allowed us to look for information on our mobile phones.*'

7. Read all the 3 articles again. Who used a mobile phone in the classroom?

   ○ A. Tina Leung

   ○ B. Jimmy Yeung

   ● C. Leon Chan

   ○ D. All the three students

     6ERW1/2 P2 Q.7

Understanding Parts of Speech and Using Dictionary Skills

- Students with the best performance understood the part of speech and meaning of the word 'view' in the text with the help of the contextual clue, i.e. '*At the top, we'll enjoy the view of Victoria Harbour…*' so that they knew that 'view' is a noun referring what can be seen from a place.

On the first day, we'll go to The Peak. We can take the Peak Tram to get to the top and walk back down. At the top, we'll enjoy the <u>view</u> of Victoria Harbour and take some photos. There's a shopping centre there, but we won't have time to shop that day.

8.   In line 6, what does the word 'view' mean?

> **view** /vju:/
> *verb*
>   1. to look at something in a careful way
>   ◊ *She wants to view the house tomorrow.*
>   2. to have an opinion about something
>   ◊ *How do you view his chances in the competition?*
> *noun*
>   3. what you can see from a place
>   ◊ *The view from the top floor is great.*
>   4. an opinion
>   ◊ *Her view is that we should not go there.*

   ○   A.   1
   ○   B.   2
   ●   C.   3
   ○   D.   4

6ERW2 P4 Q.8

P.6 Writing

For '*A Bad Day',* students with good writing skills were able to <u>provide interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details and an appropriate ending. The description was very clear and coherent</u>. For '*An Email to Peter'*, students could <u>provide relevant ideas with supporting details and an appropriate ending. The ideas were clearly presented and coherent</u>. In terms of language, students were able to <u>use a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns, cohesive devices and verb forms fairly appropriately with some grammatical and spelling mistakes</u>.

A Bad Day (6ERW1 / 6ERW2 Part 5)

Student Exemplar 5

Last Friday was an extremely bad day. I couldn't speak even a word in my oral examination. This happened was to last Thursday night.

[1] Last Thursday, I saw an advertisement about my favourite cartoon on the television. However, the cartoon only started at midnight. So I stayed up late in my bed room until I realised all my parents had slept.

At that time, I turned on the television and turned down the sound to prevent waking up my family.

One o'clock chimed, I was so tired and I nearly fell asleep, so decided to eat some chips to keep me waking up. After watching the cartoon, I went to bed.

[1] The next day sun shines through the window and woke my up. However, I realised I had a sore throat. At that time, I could still speak so I ignored it. When I went to school, I realised that Friday was oral examination. I was so petrified and quickly found information to prepare for it.

[1] In English lesson, Miss Wong, my English teacher called, "Amy, it's your turn." I sat on the chair, trembling in fear, I tried to said, "Good morning, Miss Wong." But I couldn't said even one of the word. "Did you prepare your oral examination?" Since I couldn't speak, the only way to let Miss Wong know I had a sore throat was to write it on the paper.

"Since you had a sore throat, we'll do the examination until you recover, remember to drink more water." said Miss Wong. I was glad that Miss Wong gave me a chance. I realise I shouldn't eat too many chips again. **[2]**

Student Exemplar 6

Last Thursday, I stayed up late until one o'clock in the morning. I ate chips and watch cartoons on TV all night.

five packets of

The next day I woke up with a sore throat. My voice was croaked but I still went to school.

1 I didn't talk to anyone at school. My friends are all wondering what happen to me. The fifth lesson is the oral examination 1 When it was my turn, the teacher gave me a piece of paper and told me to read it. I tried to read it, but no voice came out of my mouth. The teacher was very puzzled. She asked me what happen and told me to write my answer on a piece of paper. I wrote to her and showed her how I got my sore throat. She told me to do my oral examination when my throat is better. I thanked her with all my heart.

2 Fortunitely, my voice was normal last day. I do my oral examination perfectly. This is a bad experience to have a sore throat. I won't eat five packets of chips at a time ever. Hope you won't too!

Content:

1 Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details and communicates ideas very clearly

2 An appropriate ending

Language:

◆▬▶ Uses a small range of vocabulary and expressions: *croaked, puzzled, perfectly*

•••• Uses a range of sentence patterns: *She asked me what happen and told me to write my answer on a piece of paper…She told me to do my oral examination when my throat is better.*

⬭ Uses a range of cohesive devices: *the next day, but, and, when*

An Email to Peter (6ERW3 Part 5)

Student Exemplar 7

Our classmates are very kind and nice. They seldom
shouted at one another [1] her teachers are very patient too,
they will teach you until you know what they mean. My
best friend in the school is Ben. Because he is polite, like
playing with me.
I knew that you wanted to be a cub scout and
their are a lot of clubs or activities for us to take part.
We once went to visit the cemetry too
There are many subjects such as sport, computer,
General studies is fun and you like sport besi. There
is a big playground for us to have fun. There are
a lot of school teams to choose, and I am also
a school team. I have joined the for two years and
our school is very clever at doing many
sport such as football, basketball, table tennis.
your most clever things is basketball and you can
[1] take part too.
There are a lot of place and I always go
to the music room because it has all the
music instrument and I like playing the violin
best since it is beautiful.
Every weekday, you can take the basketball
to practise your basketball skill because there are
a sport room but it just opened for primary six.
[2] I am looking forward to seeing you in the
new school.

(Margin labels, top to bottom):
- teachers and students
- clubs and activities
- subjects and timetable
- clubs and activities
- playground, library, music room…
- what I like best
- playground, library, music room…

Content:

[1] Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details and communicates ideas very clearly

[2] An appropriate ending

Language:

◆— Uses a small range of vocabulary and expressions: *patient, instrument, looking forward to*

•••• Uses a range of sentence patterns: *Our classmates are very kind and nice. They seldom shouted at one another…There are a lot of school teams for us to choose…I have joined the volleyball team for two years…*

◯ Uses a range of cohesive devices: *too, because, but*

Student Exemplar 8

[1]

My school is wonderful! It has 40 years already and it just need to go to school for half day only!

My school has different kinds of clubs, such as, drama clubs, writing clubs, dancing clubs, football clubs, etc. It even has a school choir, it is fun! I know that you love singing very much so that I thick school choir is good for you.

→ clubs and activities

The teachers is good here, they are kind and patient, thay won't shout at you, The students here are full of kindness, they are generous too. They often share their food with one another

→ teachers and students

[1]

My school has a big big playground for us to play football or basketball and it is use for PE lessons. School library is wonderful, it's full of different kinds of books and magazines. The music room is good too.

→ playground, library, music room…

The subjects in this school have many kinds, such as English, Chinese, Maths, Arts, PE, GS, Computer and even Science.

→ subjects and timetable

[1]

I love the teachers and my classmates very much, they are friendy, they will teach me when I have problems on homeworks so I think they are helpful too.

→ what I like best

Hope you will love it [2]

love;
Cindy

234

Content:

1 Provides interesting ideas with plenty of supporting details and communicates ideas very clearly

2 An appropriate ending

Language:

◆━▸ Uses a small range of vocabulary and expressions: *patient, generous, helpful*

•••• Uses a range of sentence patterns: *They often share their food with one another…it's full of different kinds of books and magazines…Hope you will love it.*

◯ Uses a range of cohesive devices: *so that, too, and, when*

P.6 Speaking

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

Reading Aloud

- Students with the best performance were able to read a short text **fluently and clearly with appropriate pausing and intonation**. They made <u>very few or no pronunciation mistakes</u>.

Teacher-Student Interaction

- Students with good speaking skill could **provide relevant answers** to most of the questions and give **elaboration** to some of the questions. They were able to use <u>a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices with few grammatical mistakes</u>.

Presentation

- Students with the best performance could **provide plenty of information and ideas relevant to the topic** and **communicate ideas very clearly**. They were able to use <u>a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices with few grammatical mistakes</u>. They could speak clearly with <u>very few mistakes in pronunciation</u>.

General Comments on P.6 Student Performances

P.6 Listening

- The performance of students in listening was <u>stable</u> compared to that of previous years.

- In the previous years, most students performed satisfactorily in skills like extracting specific information and understanding connection between ideas when pictorial cues were provided as multiple choice options. By comparison, their performance in <u>interpreting expressions of doubt</u> in a text was less than satisfactory. However, students in 2015 showed <u>good performance</u> in grasping this skill, when the <u>expression was explicitly presented</u> in the spoken text.

- Students generally performed better in <u>shorter listening tasks with a lighter listening load</u>, e.g. *'Survey'* and *'Riddles'* than in longer ones, e.g. *'Green Day'*.

- Some students had <u>difficulty in connecting ideas using contextual clues</u>.

- Some students had <u>problems predicting the likely development of a text</u>.

- In the note-taking task *'Booking a Hotel'*, students <u>performed better in number writing</u> than in word writing, even when the word was simple like *'bed'*.

P.6 Reading

- The performance of students in reading was <u>stable</u> compared to that of previous years.

- Students generally <u>performed better in non-continuous prose with a lighter reading load</u>, such as *'Mid-Autumn Festival 2015'* (Poster) and *'TV Guide'* (Timetable) than continuous prose with a heavier reading load *'An Email to a Pen-friend'* (Email).

- As in the previous years, many students <u>lacked basic knowledge of parts of speech</u> e.g. noun, verb. This hindered them from working out meaning of a word in a dictionary entry. <u>Their dictionary skills need development</u>.

- Students were generally <u>able to identify the connection between ideas</u> by using pronoun references.

- Many students could <u>grasp main ideas and extract simple facts from information texts</u>, e.g. timetables.

- Many students <u>could interpret similes on familiar topics</u>.

- Most students had <u>difficulty in inferring information from contextual clues</u> in a text.

- Some students lacked the skills to build a cognitive schema for comprehending a written text. They <u>failed to use contextual clues to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words</u> though the skill of prediction of meaning is an integral part of reading comprehension.

P.6 Writing

- There were two writing tasks in the three sub-papers. <u>No significant improvement</u> in writing performance was made compared to previous years.

- The overall performance of students in writing stories in 2015 was <u>similar</u> to that of 2013. For '*A Bad Day*', students were given word prompts 'stayed up late / chips' and 'sore throat' for the three pictures and were asked to write a story about what happened on that day and provide an appropriate ending to the story.

- In general, students were <u>able to write a short story with a clear storyline based on the picture prompts</u>.

- <u>The ideas provided were quite clear and relevant, though more original ideas and elaboration could be given</u>.

- They could <u>use the word prompts properly and apply a limited range of vocabulary and cohesive devices fairly appropriately</u>.

- As the topic was relevant to their school life, more students <u>could provide interesting ideas with supporting details in their writing</u>.

- In '*An Email to Peter*', students taking the role of Cindy wrote a letter to Peter to describe her school. Prompts were given to help students write: *'teachers and students', 'clubs and activities', 'what I like best', 'playground, library, music room…'* and *'subjects and timetable'*.

- Students were generally <u>able to respond to the questions and provide relevant ideas with some details</u>.

- As the topic was also familiar to the students, they <u>could use more vocabulary related to the topic to express their ideas</u>.

- For both topics, most students were <u>eager to write</u> and could write at least write 80 words based on the prompts provided. Many of them could <u>use simple cohesive devices</u> to tie the ideas together more smoothly and clearly.

- However, students' <u>inconsistent use of tenses, incorrect use of verb forms, spelling mistakes and problematic sentence structures</u> were common.

P.6 Speaking

Reading Aloud

- More than half of the students were <u>able to read the texts aloud fluently and clearly</u> making very few or no pronunciation mistakes. Some of them could use appropriate pausing and intonation.

- Many students <u>dropped end consonants</u> for words like 'heart' *(6ES01),* 'think' *(6ES03)* and 'toilet' *(6ES09).*

- Many of them <u>mispronounced the 'th' consonants /θ/ and /ð/</u> in words like 'there' *(6ES05),* 'healthy' *(6ES09)* and 'things' *(6ES11).*

- Some students had difficulty pronouncing words like 'performs', 'famous' *(6ES01),* 'angel' *(6ES03),* 'prevent' *(6ES09),* 'country' *(6ES11).* Moreover, they tended to have <u>difficulty pronouncing words with three or more syllables</u>, such as 'beautiful' *(6ES03),* 'butterflies' *(6ES05)* and 'celebrate' *(6ES11).*

Teacher-Student Interaction

- More than half of the students <u>could provide relevant answers to most of the questions</u>. Some of them were able to give elaboration to some of the questions.

- Almost half of the students were able to <u>use a small range of vocabulary and sentence patterns</u> with some grammatical mistakes.

- Some students <u>could provide additional details on some more familiar topics</u>, such as *My School Garden (6ES07)* which is about a place in school, and *Washing Our Hands (6ES09)* which is about keeping healthy.

- In *My New Classmate (6ES11),* some students <u>lacked exposure to foreign culture</u>. They could hardly think of what food from other countries they liked which affected their performance.

Presentation

- In their two-minute presentations, more than half of the students were <u>able to provide information and ideas relevant to the topics and communicate clearly</u>.

- Half of the students <u>could use a small range of vocabulary and sentence patterns</u> with some grammatical mistakes.

- About half of them <u>spoke quite clearly and were able to provide appropriate responses to questions</u> despite a few mistakes in pronunciation.

- The majority of students <u>could maintain eye contact</u> with their oral examiners.

- However, some students <u>did not respond well to open-ended questions</u> such as *'Do you like going to the countryside? Why / Why not?' (6ES05), 'Do you like it? Why / Why not?' (6ES07)* and *'Do you want to visit other countries? Why / Why not?' (6ES11).*

Overview of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 6 TSA 2011-2015

The percentage of P.6 students achieving Basic Competency in 2015 was 72%, slightly lower than the percentage for the year 2013 as shown in Table 7.19.

Table 7.19   Percentage of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency in 2011-2015*

Year	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency
2011	71.7
2013	72.4
2015	72.0

Note: * 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.

A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of P.6 student performances in TSA from 2011 to 2015 provides useful information on how teachers can help students improve. Table 7.20 summarises such a comparison.

Table 7.20   Overview of Student Performances in English Language at P.6 TSA 2011-2015

Reading \ Year	2011	2013	2015	Remarks
Strengths	• Students generally performed better in reading tasks on familiar topics, e.g. school life, keeping healthy and meeting old friends. • The majority of students could grasp the gist and extract simple facts from informational texts, e.g. encyclopedia and glossaries. • Quite a number of students understood the use of some language features in simple literary texts, e.g. simile and onomatopoeia, and could find the meanings of words by using definition and examples from a dictionary entry.	• Students generally performed better in reading tasks on familiar topics, e.g. weekend activities, sports day and extra-curricular activities. • The majority of students could grasp the gist and extract simple facts from informational texts, e.g. notices. • Only about half of the students were able to infer information which was not explicitly stated in continuous prose.	• 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.	• Working out meaning of unfamiliar words is still a challenge to students. Reading skills on prediction of meaning need development. • More exposure to a wider range of vocabulary and a variety of continuous prose can also help students improve their skills of reading comprehension. This is because such exposure requires them to use contextual clues to decipher unfamiliar vocabulary and this is the most possible way to attack unfamiliar texts.
Weaknesses	• Less than half of the students were able to infer information which was not explicitly stated in a written text. • Students by and large had difficulty in identifying alliteration with an example given. • Some students were unable to interpret unfamiliar words or expressions from context or connecting ideas from a text involving continuous prose.	• Their performance in understanding the use of some language features, e.g. onomatopoeia, showed that many of them failed to interpret the meaning by using contextual clues. • Some weak students made use of their personal experience rather than the contextual clues to predict the meaning. The data show that their dictionary skills still need development and many students had difficulty identifying basic parts of speech, e.g. an adjective, a noun and a verb.	• 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.	

Writing / Year	2011	2013	2015	Remarks
Strengths	• In general, there were no significant differences in student performance between a narrative and an informal letter. • For the narrative, most students could provide interesting content with relevant details. When writing a recount, they could provide a factual account of the event with some details, such as the date, the place and the activities they were engaged in. • Many students could use simple cohesive devices to make their writing more coherent. • Most students were eager to write and could produce a written task of 80 words in length.	• There was a slight improvement in writing performances for this year when compared to the previous years. • For both types of writing, most students could write their ideas clearly and coherently with some details. Most of them were also able to provide a reasonable ending / concluding remarks at the end of their writing. • Most students could use explicit cohesive devices to enhance the organization of their writing. • Most students were eager to write and some could write more than 80 words. • Student performance on a narrative and on an expository piece of writing did not have any significant differences.	• 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.	• Most of the students were able to provide some relevant ideas with some details using the prompts provided, though grammatical and spelling mistakes are evident. • Students should be advised to spare some time to proofread their writing to minimize their grammar errors. • Students should try to elaborate their ideas based on the prompts provided.
Weaknesses	• Repeated use of action verbs and inconsistent use of past tense to narrate past events were found and spelling mistakes were common. • They had problems in grammar, spelling and sentence structures. Their incorrect use of language patterns was mostly traceable to L1 interference.	• Students' skills in grammar and spelling need to be enhanced so as to enable students to strengthen their ability to compose sentences. • Incorrect use of verb forms and spelling mistakes were common.	• 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.	

Listening \ Year	2011	2013	2015	Remarks
Strengths	• Students generally performed better on tasks with familiar topics than on unfamiliar topics. • The majority of students performed well in some listening skills even without the help of pictorial cues, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, understanding connections between ideas. • Students' steady performance in interpreting information and predicting the likely development was not limited to items where pictorial cues were given as MC options. They also performed steadily in these skills when written cues were given as MC options.	• On the whole, students performed well in listening tasks on familiar topics. • Most students performed well when pictorial cues were given as MC options, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, and connecting ideas. This trend was extended to the skills in predicting the likely development of the text. • A slight improvement in connecting ideas using contextual clues was observed this year. • Students showed better performance in items with written cues given as MC options than items involving filling in blanks when listening to the same piece of material. • Their performance was steady in identifying main ideas in a spoken text when more than one piece of information was given.	• 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.	• Students did well in distinguishing between numbers. • Some of them need to improve spelling. • Students were able to distinguish different tones of speakers.
Weaknesses	• Some students had difficulty in connecting ideas using contextual clues or reference words but a slight improvement was observed in identifying main ideas in a spoken text when more than one piece of information was given.	• Some weak students made use of their personal experience and/or common knowledge to interpret the listening texts rather than comprehending the spoken texts.	• 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'.	

Year / Speaking	2011	2013	2015	Remarks
Strengths	• More than half of the students could read the texts fluently and clearly despite a few mistakes in pronunciation. • Students were generally able to provide relevant answers to the questions. Some could provide additional details on some more familiar topics. • In 'Presentation', students were generally able to give a talk or tell a story based on the information provided. Most students were awarded a bonus score for having appropriate eye contact with the oral examiners. • Students with good speaking skills were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics and elaborate with some details. They presented well-organised ideas clearly with few mistakes in pronunciation.	• Students were able to read all or most of the texts aloud quite clearly and audibly. • Most students were able to provide relevant responses to most of the questions. Some could even provide additional details on familiar topics. • In 'Presentation', students were able to present their ideas or tell a story clearly using a limited range of vocabulary and basic sentence patterns although grammatical mistakes were apparent. • Students with good speaking skills were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics with some elaboration. • Many of them showed confidence and could communicate their ideas quite clearly.	• 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.	• Students could generally display an awareness of their audience by maintaining eye contact. • Many students only provided brief responses to questions. They should try to provide some elaboration on their responses.
Weaknesses	• Some dropped end consonants and had difficulty pronouncing words with more than three syllables. Words with 'v' sounds, initial consonant blend sounds, long vowel sounds and consonant digraphs were also problematic.	• Some students dropped end consonants. Words with more than three syllables were also problematic for the students. • Some of them made mistakes in pronunciation.	• Many students dropped end consonants and mispronounced the 'th' consonants. • They tended to have difficulty pronouncing words with three or more syllables.	

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