

Results of the Secondary 3 English Language in TSA 2010

The Territory-wide percentage of students achieving the S.3 English Language Basic Competency in TSA 2010 was 69.2%, indicating a slight increase relative to the performance level of students in 2009 which was 68.8%.

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 70 items and 79 score points. Some items appeared in all three Listening and Reading sub-papers acting as inter-paper links. The duration of each Listening sub-paper was approximately 25 minutes, Reading sub-paper was 30 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 total. The composition of the S.3 sub-papers is summarised in Table 7.21.

Table 7.21 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	9EL1	9EL2	9EL3	L5-S-3-S3BC (ideas)	9ESP1 – 9ESP8 Individual Presentation	9ESG1 – 9ESG8 Group Interaction
L5-L-2-S3BC (listening strategies)	20 (20)	19 (19)	19 (19)		8 (4)	8 (4)
L5-L-1-S3BC (language features)	0	1 (1)	1 (1)	L6-S-6-S3BC (organisation)	8 (4)	0
Reading	9ER1	9ER2	9ER3	L5-S-4-S3BC (vocabulary & language patterns)	8 (4)	0
L6-R-1-S3BC (reading strategies)	24(24)	24 (24)	24(24)	L5-S-2-S3BC (pronunciation & delivery)	8 (4)	0
L5-R-3-S3BC (language features)	4 (4)	4 (4)	0 (0)	L6-S-5-S3BC (strategies for oral communication)	8 (2)	8 (2)
L5-R-4-S3BC (reference skills)	1 (1)	0 (0)	6 (6)			
Writing	9EW1	9EW2	9EW3			
L6-W-1-S3BC (content)	1 (4)	1 (4)	1 (4)			
L6-W-2-S3BC (language)	1 (4)	1 (4)	1 (4)			
L6-W-3-S3BC (organisation)	1 (2)	1 (2)	1 (2)			
L5-W-5-S3BC (features)	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 25 minutes each). Depending on the content and difficulty of the task, some 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	1
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	25
TOTAL		26

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

Basic Competency	Item Description	Question Type	No. of Items (Score Points)
L5-L-2-S3BC	Interview - ' <i>Hong Kong Experience</i> ' <i>9EL1 - Part 1</i> <i>9EL2 - Part 1</i> <i>9EL3 - Part 1</i>	Multiple choice Short answer	4 (4) 4 (4)
L5-L-2-S3BC	Dialogue - ' <i>Vietnam</i> ' <i>9EL1 - Part 2</i> <i>9EL2 - Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	6 (6)
L5-L-2-S3BC	Dialogue - ' <i>Taxi</i> ' <i>9EL1 - Part 3</i> <i>9EL3 - Part 2</i>	Multiple choice	6 (6)
L5-L-2-S3BC L5-L-1-S3BC	Short Dialogues - ' <i>Hotel Clerk</i> ' <i>9EL2 - Part 3</i> <i>9EL3 - Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	6 (6)

S.3 Reading Items

Each student was required to attempt three reading tasks in one of the three Reading sub-papers. 30 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	31
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	4
L5-R-4-S3BC	Applying a range of reference skills for various purposes with the help of cues	6
TOTAL		41

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 L5-R-4-S3BC	Book Reports <i>9ER1 - Part 2</i> <i>9ER2 - Part 2</i> <i>9ER3 - Part 2</i>	Multiple choice Short answers Matching	2 (2) 7 (7) 5 (5)
L6-R-1-S3BC L5-R-3-S3BC	Poem - <i>Dragonfly</i> <i>9ER1 - Part 1</i> <i>9ER2 - Part 1</i>	Multiple choice	6(6)
L5-R-4-S3BC	Short Passages - <i>Magazines</i> <i>9ER1 - Part 3</i> <i>9ER2 - Part 3</i>	Multiple choice	5 (5)
L6-R-1-S3BC L5-R-4-S3BC	Article - <i>Anti-smoking Laws</i> <i>9ER1 - Part 4, 9ER3 - Part 1</i>	Multiple choice	6 (6)
L6-R-1-S3BC L5-R-4-S3BC	Article - <i>Police Action</i> <i>9ER2 - Part 4</i> <i>9ER3 - Part 4</i>	Multiple choice	5 (5)
L5-R-4-S3BC	Pictorial Clues <i>9ER3 - Part 3</i>	Matching	5 (5)

S.3 Writing Tasks

Each student was required to attempt 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	Reply to an email <i>9EW1</i>	1 (12)
L6-W-3-S3BC L5-W-5-S3BC	Mind map - Fun Ways to Improve English <i>9EW2</i>	1 (12)
	Mind map - An Enjoyable Trip <i>9EW3</i>	1 (12)

S.3 Speaking Tasks

Each student was required to attempt either an ‘Individual Presentation’ (3 minutes for preparation and 2 minutes for assessment) or a ‘Group Interaction’ (3 minutes for preparation and 3 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	Task Description	Descriptor
L5-S-2-S3BC	Individual Presentation <i>9ESP1 – 9ESP8</i>	Using a range of delivery techniques (including stress, rhythm and intonation) to convey meaning generally appropriately with the help of cues
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	Group Interaction <i>9ESG1 – 9ESG8</i>	Expressing information and ideas (including personal experiences, feelings, opinions, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with some elaboration
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 2010

S.3 Listening

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence are generally able to understand the meaning of simple dialogues in both familiar and unfamiliar topics. Students can extract specific information, connect ideas using contextual clues, comprehend main ideas and understand intonation when dialogues are delivered clearly and in generally familiar accents.

Specific Information

- Most students were capable of extracting specific information from spoken passages. For example, when listening to a dialogue between a taxi driver and a passenger, students understood that the driver would take shortcuts to get the passenger to the Arts Centre on time. ('Taxi' - 9EL1 - Part 3 Q.4, 9EL3 - Part 2 Q.4)

Contextual Clues

- Students were able to draw conclusions from contextual clues in short dialogues. For example, when listening to two friends talking, many students responded correctly that they were outside the gym after having played a game of basketball. ('Hotel Clerk' - 9EL2, 9EL3 - Part 3 Q.5)

Connecting Ideas

- Students were able to connect ideas using contextual clues. For example, when listening to two friends talking about Vietnam, many students answered correctly that John liked to jog early in the morning as it was not busy. ('Vietnam' - 9EL1, 9EL2 - Part 2 Q.1)

Unfamiliar Expressions

- Students were able to connect ideas in order to answer questions about unfamiliar expressions. For example, in an interview with a travel writer students responded correctly that he felt Hong Kong was a fast-paced city. ('Hong Kong Experience' - 9EL1, 9EL2, 9EL3 - Part 1 Q.2)

Intonation/Tone

- Students were generally capable of determining a speaker's feelings by the tone of his voice. ('Hotel Clerk' - 9EL2, 9EL3 - Part 3 Q.3)

Gist

- Students were capable of determining the gist of a paragraph. For example, in an interview with the travel writer about Hong Kong, many responded correctly about why the writer likes visiting Stanley Market, that is, there are a lot of good restaurants. ('Hong Kong Experience' - 9EL1, 9EL2, 9EL3 - Part 1 Q.5)

S.3 Reading

Students with minimally acceptable levels of basic competence were able to understand the meaning of simple texts written on familiar topics and for various purposes, contexts and audiences. They could extract or locate specific information from different text-types such as book reports and magazine blurbs as well as pictorial cues. Students were also capable of using inference skills in certain passages with familiar topics.

Specific Information

- Most students could extract specific information in various reading passages. For example, from two book reports, most could identify the title and author of the books. However, when identifying the main characters, most could only identify one. ('Book reports' - 9ER1, 9ER2, 9ER3 - Part 2 Q.3)

Main Ideas

- Most students could extract main ideas from different text types. For example, in an article about smoking, most students chose the correct answer when asked to give the passage a title. They understood that it was about anti-smoking laws. ('Anti-smoking Laws' - 9ER1 - Part 4 Q.6, 9ER3 - Part 1 Q.6)

Inference Skills

- Students could comprehend information that was implied. For example, in reading two book reports, many students could infer which quotes belonged to each book. ('Book Reports' - 9ER1, 9ER2, 9ER3 - Part 2 Q. 8 - 12)

Onomatopoeia

- Students could generally identify words that imitate the sound they denote. In a poem, when the example ‘zoom’ was given in the question, students were able to select another example from the poem, ‘whizz, whizz’. (‘Dragonfly’ - 9ER1, 9ER2 - Part 1 Q.1)

Rhymes

- Most students were capable of identifying rhymes in a poem even with no example given in the question. (‘Dragonfly’ - 9ER1, 9ER2 - Part 1 Q.2)

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
- errors in tenses, incorrectly matching tense with time expressions or causing inappropriate verb tense shifts

Reply to an Email (9EW1) - Student Exemplar 1

Reply to an Email

From: Ying
To: wai@pdwin.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2010 11:15 AM
Subject: RE: Secondary school life

Dear Wai,
How are you? I'm find, you going to secondary school is great event, secondary school is so happy and exciting. I was nervous when I first went to Form 1 but in fact secondary ^{school} is not hard to find friends, you can ~~don't~~ worried that.

And then the students will make fun with me and play with me, I will do my best to met the new classmates and teachers, Form 1 will have so many activities for e.g = camping, visiting the Hong Kong Tour and play more games with us, yes the school must have the dancing club, you can join it at school and then will have other club you can join for e.g = Singing club, drama club, book club and cooking club have many choose, you can ~~don't~~ worried now.

Your Maths is not good not to worry, you can ask your classmates or teachers they can help you all, if I were you I will study hard to Maths. Secondary school is a funny place you can studies more and play with your friends or join more school club that is ^{so} ~~is~~ interesting right? So you ~~don't~~ worried about going to Form 1 enjoy it.

Bye for now,
Cheers,
Ying

Annotation

The passage contains simple language patterns and errors in grammar and spelling; although these do not affect meaning to a degree that it is incomprehensible. The writing also contains inappropriate verb tense shifts and errors in punctuation.

An Enjoyable Trip (9EW3) - Student Exemplar 2

An Enjoyable Trip

had
The enjoyable trip I ~~have~~ go was in
the last weekend. In the last weekend, I in
the morning I went to Ocean park with my
family. There had many exciting games and
we also take many photos in there. There is
very beautiful and I also can saw many
of fish in there and I had win many toys
in there too! ~~It~~ ~~After~~ ~~that~~ We went
to dinner ~~at~~ before we went to Ocean
Park. After the dinner, I went to shopping
with my friends in ~~Tsim~~ sha ~~Tsim~~. We
had buy many things here. such as clothes,
~~the~~ After we went to ~~Tsim~~ sha Tsui me,
went to Mook lok, there have many special
food in Mook kok. and they are also very
cheap but tastes good!

Annotation

The passage contains errors in grammar and no paragraphs, although these do not affect meaning to a degree that it is incomprehensible. The writing also contains inappropriate verb tense shifts and errors in punctuation.

Reply to an Email (9EW1) - Student Exemplar 3

Reply to an Email

From: Ying
To: wai@pdwin.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2010 11:15 AM
Subject: RE: Secondary school life

Dear Wai,

How are you?

When I first went to Form 1 at my school. It was easy to find friends. Teacher and students are nice. Yes, the older students make fun of you. I am adapt many thing to the new school.

There have many activities for Form 1 students. You should do a lot of Maths. In the secondary school, You will happy. Because there is few homeworks, You can go to the library, because in secondary school library is big. If you have many questions about going into Form 1, so please tell your question, I am welcome to listen you question.

Bye for now

Cousin,

Ying

Annotation

The passage contains errors in grammar that do not affect meaning. The writing lacks details and also contains inappropriate verb tense shifts with errors in punctuation. Though the subject and event may be clear, it is prompt dependent.

An Enjoyable Trip (9EW3) - Student Exemplar 4

An Enjoyable Trip

Last summer holiday, I went to mainland China my home town called Zhongshan. My family and my friends went to there with me.

First, we had a lunch in here. We had local food to eat. local chicken and local drinks. My mother also had noodle to eat. after lunch, we went to hotel put down all things of us, washed our body, had a dream at 11:00 ~~am~~ noon. second, we waken up at 11:00 pm. We went to outside and ~~do~~ seafood, fish, meat and so on. My sister is afraid of seafood, so that, my mother and sister went ~~to go~~ shopping. My friend Mia Lee and I ~~was~~ planned a plan. After the seafood-dinner, we should join sister and mother ^{but} that night, we broke our plan. ~~we~~ after seafood-dinner, we went shopping and karaoke. we sang many old songs and new songs we played so ~~at~~ Crazy. But we had a happy time. we felt satisfied.

After that day, we also took some photos and ~~visit~~ visited relatives. we ~~was~~ played Game on Game state. we have many happy memory on it. unit ten days after. we should go we least. But I love this place we ^{will} come back. we will have an enjoyable Trip again and again.

Annotation

The passage contains simple language patterns with many errors in grammar. The writing also contains inappropriate verb tense shifts and errors in punctuation. Subject and event may be clear though it is prompt dependent.

Fun Ways to Improve English (9EW2) - Student Exemplar 5

Fun Ways to Improve English

Now many students have the difficult to learn or study the English. It is a big problem in ~~in~~ ^{the} whole world. How can we learn the english easily or what the fun way can improve their english knowlege? Let me tell you something about this.

First, you can try to read the english newspaper every day because you can change the way to learn more vocabulary in the paper. Sometime you always read the newspaper for chinese. It can not help you to learn because you can know this easily.

Also, If you try to read the english newspaper, you can use ~~it~~ ^{if} you known to writing or speaking, then you will learn this word.

Second, you can try to read the dictionary every week, ~~if~~ ^{if} you still have this habit, you can learn ~~many~~ ^{many} word each year. Another choice is reading the funny comic. Although it is not a good way, ~~it~~ ^{it} also can learn the vocabulary from the book.

Writing also is a good choice ~~you~~ ^{for}. We have a habit to blog in the internet. It is a ~~try~~ ^{good} to learn the english but you ~~should~~ ^{should} use the english ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the blog because it can make you to learn the word. Don't use the speaking voice because ~~now~~ ^{voices have} have many speaking ~~v~~ ^{voice word} appeared in the world. If you alway use the speaking ~~voice~~ ^{voice}, you will have a bad habit and you will forget the true word easily. It is very ~~dangerous~~ ^{dangerous}. E-mailing is a good way to ~~use~~ ^{use}. If you make a new friend ~~from~~ ^{from} the other country, you should emailing with him ~~for~~ ^{for} english because it is a try for yours. If you use the ~~wrong~~ ^{wrong} word, your friend can correct ~~your~~ ^{your} word.

Listening ~~music~~ ^{english} is a good way to improve the english. You can follow the singer to sing the song. You can know the song disappear meaning. Sometime is a sad of the song or happy of the song. Speaking with the other country people can make your english be better.

I also have a suggestion for you. It is a pizze. You can buy a english pizze ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the toy shop, then you can have a game with your family or parents. In the playing game, you can enjoy the game and learn the new ~~words~~ ^{words} from the game.

Finally, I have suggested many fun way to improve the english.

Annotation

The passage contains a simple range of vocabulary and language patterns with errors in spelling and syntax. The writing also contains inappropriate verb tense shifts and errors in punctuation.

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 2010

S.3 Listening

Students demonstrated the ability to understand ideas, information, preferences, intentions and attitudes in simple spoken texts. Students could extract specific information, distinguish main ideas from supporting details, connect ideas with contextual clues and discriminate between intonation for a range of purposes when dialogues were delivered clearly and in generally familiar accents.

Connecting ideas

- Students were competent in connecting ideas. For example, they were capable of understanding that the lady in the taxi was in a hurry to get to the theatre as she didn't want to be late. ('Taxi' - 9EL1 - Part 3 Q.2, 9EL3 - Part 2 Q.2)

Gist

- Students were capable of identifying the essential part of an idea as, for example, what the guest on a radio show liked best. ('Hong Kong Experience' - 9EL1, 9EL2, 9EL3 - Part 1 Q.5)

Intonation

- Students were competent in identifying intonation. For example they could tell that a hotel clerk was being helpful when speaking to a guest. ('Hotel Clerk' - 9EL2, 9EL3 - Part 3 Q.3)

S.3 Reading

Students generally used a wider range of reading strategies to understand the meaning of texts with some degree of complexity. They demonstrated some ability to use some strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar and unfamiliar topics and for various purposes, contexts and audiences.

Contextual Clues

- Students could identify various contextual clues in passages. For example, in a short description of a magazine, students answered correctly that it would be suitable for a 13-year-old girl. ('Magazines' - 9ER1, 9ER2 - Part 3 Q.3)

Unfamiliar Expressions

- Students were able to interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions. For instance, students were able to respond correctly to a passage about smoking that ‘forever’ was the closest in meaning to ‘once and for all.’ (‘Anti-smoking Laws’ - 9ER1 - Part 4 Q.2, 9ER3 - Part 1 Q.2)

Specific Information

- Students could extract information from two book reports to identify the titles, authors, time and setting. (‘Book Reports’ - 9ER1, 9ER2, 9ER3 - Part 2 Q.1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Inference Skills

- Students were capable of making inferences. For example, in two book reports, students could infer which quotes belonged to each book. (Book Reports’ - 9ER1, 9ER2, 9ER3 - Part 2 Q.8 -12)

Main Ideas

- Students could determine main ideas in various texts. For example, after reading a poem, a moderate number of students were capable of understanding what the girl thought about the dragonfly. (‘Dragonfly’ - 9ER1, 9ER2 - Part 1 Q.5)

Literary Texts

- Many students were capable of identifying examples of onomatopoeia, alliteration, personification and rhyming words in a poem. (‘Dragonfly’ - 9ER1, 9ER2 - Part 1 Q.1, 2, 4, 6)

S.3 Writing

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

Student Exemplars 6 – 9 are written passages that have the following characteristics:

- relevant content and ideas expressed effectively
- adequate overall planning and organization
- 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

An Enjoyable Trip (9EW3) - Student Exemplar 6

An Enjoyable Trip

Last Friday I had an enjoyable trip which ~~is~~ was the school picnic. I got up at 8:00 p.m. and had a wonderful breakfast in order to have power to play hard. The distanation of our school picnic was the Saikong country park.

When we arrived, we had a barbecue first. I choose my favourite food and shared it to ~~my~~ my best friend who ^{have got} along with me for two years. Enjoying the warm sunshine, we decided to play some games. The first game we played is "killer". Because of my ~~at~~ carefulness, I discovered the killer and won the ~~ex~~ game. We all had fun in playing this game.

The most interesting part was flying kites. Although I was not the highest one, I tried many times and learnt from the mistakes, finnally, I got ^{success} ~~success~~.

We enjoied this trip very much. If I have time, I must bring my brother here.

Annotation

An organized piece of writing with some minor errors in grammar and syntax.

Reply to an Email (9EW1) - Student Exemplar 7

Reply to an Email

From: Ying
To: wai@pdwin.com
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2010 11:15 AM
Subject: RE: Secondary school life

Dear Wai,

I am fine, thank you for your letter. It's very good that you will be going to secondary school because the life of secondary school is more fun than primary school.

I know that you were nervous because I also feel nervous when I was Form 1. In fact, I think finding friends is easy. You can be more active to find friends, you can try to introduce yourself to your classmates too. I know you also worried about the communication ^{with} the old student. I think the old students are very nice and they will also help you to solve your problems in school.

Also, there are many activities for Form 1 students, such as volleyball team, art club or even your favourite dancing group. You can just take part in those you like so you can continue your dancing lessons. Besides, I think you can visit different places in your secondary school too. Some teachers or old schools will introduce and visit your secondary school with you.

Moreover, the life in secondary school is more busy but I think you can handle it. I suggest you can prepare your book before lessons. It can help you to understand more about your study. You can try to do more exercise on your Maths too. The important thing is when you have any problems about your ~~stud~~ study, you should ask your teachers or classmates immediately. It can improve your study level.

Lastly, I want to ~~remind~~ ^{more} remind you that you should be hard-working in secondary. If you have any problems, you can ask me. I am glad to answer your ^{questions}. Hope you can enjoy your new school life.

Please write soon.

Cheers,

Ying

Annotation

Paragraphs well organized with only few errors in grammar, syntax and tense shifts.

Fun Ways to Improve English (9EW2) - Student Exemplar 8

Fun Ways to Improve English

Students may think that learning English is boring because they believed that ^{they are required to recite the} ~~resting~~ vocabulary. I will tell you the fun ways to improve English!

For reading, students can read ~~magas~~ magazines written in English. No matter it is about fashion or computer games, you can learn a lot from ~~a good~~ magazine. Also, you can see the news on the Internet. The news are latest and written in good sentence structure.

For writing, teenagers like writing their diaries on blogs. Students could try writing them in ~~o~~ English and ask your friends to check ~~to~~ whether there is error. Besides, you can chat with friends in English. Once I tried it, I thought it's fun! I learnt a lot from my peers.

For listening, students could listen to the ^{English} pop songs to learn the beauty of the lyrics. ~~Also~~ After knowing the meaning of the lyrics, you know more about the song. It is the most ~~easist~~ easiest way to learn the vocabulary. You could also watch some western movies or programmes. It helps a lot!

For ~~speaking~~, students may ~~join~~ ^{act in} the drama ^{of English club} performed in English. Students can ~~a~~ participate the games held ~~by~~ in 'English Day'. ^{too} If you think that there is not enough chance for you to speak up, you may play games with friends by speaking English! I believed that your friends will not ~~laugh~~ laugh at you.

There are lots of fun ways to improve English. However, hard working is needed. I hope that students could try out those methods and have ~~improve~~ improvement! Work hard!

Annotation

Paragraphs well organized with only a few errors in grammar, syntax, tense shifts and the use of articles or prepositions.

An Enjoyable Trip (9EW3) - Student Exemplar 9

An Enjoyable Trip

I've gone to many places to visit and to travel, but my most memorable trip is on two years before.

My parents and I took a flight to Tai Wan with about one and half hour. After taking back our luggages, we went to a hotel to rest. Totally, we had five days on Tai Wan, and those five days I was very enjoy.

On the first day, my parents and I went to Sun Moon lake which is located in the centre of Tai Wan. There are very big and full of tourists, we found that there were many waypoints that we could rest and bought souvenirs there.

On the second day, we bought tickets to Tai Pei by boarded Highspeed Railway. It was the fastest railway in Tai Wan which the speed was 300 km per hour. When I wanted to take a shot on the outside view, it moved very fast. As a result, I could just seat down and looked outside.

On the third day, we had gone to a museum which is similar to the one in Beijing. We found that there was not as big as I think, but their products were very long time and remarkable.

On the forth day, we went to a bookstore located near Tai Pei 101, The bookstore contains seven floors and lots of books that can be found there. We looked for our favourite books and bought them back to home.

On the last day, we went to the main site of Tai Pei, Tai Pei 101. We entered a high speed lift and arrived the 88th floor within one minute. We could see the wide view of Tai Wan. Sometimes, we may feel faint because it is very high.

This trip is only five days, for me, I want to stay there longer, but it is my most enjoyable trip in my life.

Annotation

Organized paragraphs with only a few errors in grammar and syntax. The writing also contains occasional inappropriate tense shifts.

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 appropriate language patterns and vocabulary. They could speak clearly and fluently with few errors in pronunciation and could use a wider range of delivery techniques. They showed an awareness of their audience, maintaining good eye contact with the oral assessors.

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. Many capable students could maintain interactions through a range of communicative strategies, such as posing questions to elicit opinions from other group members, encouraging others to elaborate further and consolidating the group's ideas.

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 short 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 and could identify opinions when they were clearly signalled. Generally students could work out the meaning of unfamiliar words when a simple and familiar context was given.
- Students generally found drawing conclusions about feelings and intent of the speaker difficult.
- Students generally did well on written answers though spelling mistakes made it difficult to comprehend at times.
- Students were generally capable of distinguishing a speaker's feelings from the tone of his voice.

S.3 Reading

- Most students were capable of locating specific information from different text types.
- Many students were capable of relating facts and information in various texts using reference skills.
- Some students were able to identify alliterative verse with a given example as well as the ability to understand the tone of a writer in a poem.
- Some students could interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions with contextual clues. They could also infer meaning from context.

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 #6 – An Enjoyable Trip)
- Although students could write well-organised paragraphs, few could elaborate on the topic and generally based their comments on the prompts. (Student exemplar #4 – An Enjoyable Trip) Students with better writing skills could develop well-organised paragraphs and could, for instance, even offer advice. (Student exemplar #8 – Fun ways to improve English)
- On a familiar topic about school, students generally used simple language patterns and their ideas lacked supporting details. Although errors in spelling and grammar were evident, comprehension was not hindered. (Student exemplar #1 – Email)
- Capable students wrote better organized passages and could elaborate their ideas giving valid reasons for improving English language skills. (Student exemplar #8 – Fun Ways to Improve English)
- Many students were unable to use proper tenses correctly. The errors were mainly shifting tenses from the past to the future or past perfect. (Student exemplar #3 – Reply to an Email)
- Students, in many instances, misspelled common words such as ‘forth’ for ‘fourth’, however there were fewer errors compared to past papers.

S.3 Speaking

- When presenting, most students generally spoke clearly, with some fluidity of expression, though difficulties with pronunciation, intonation, or pacing were noticeable. Some students could not express themselves clearly and the relationship between their ideas was not immediately clear, though overall intelligibility was not significantly affected.
- Most students could respond to a speaking task appropriately, but fell short of fully elaborating on a given topic. They were generally intelligible and coherent, with some fluidity of expression, though noticeable lapses in the expression of ideas were evident.
- Although many students spoke with an imprecise or inaccurate use of vocabulary or grammatical structures, or a limited range of structures, it did not interfere with the communication of the message.
- Some students hesitated occasionally and used fillers such as ‘ah’ and ‘hmm’ in their presentations. Others hesitated to the extent that their speech was stilted and difficult for listeners to comprehend.
- Although many students simply read their presentation, others made attempts to display an awareness of their audience using appropriate eye contact with the oral assessors.
- In ‘Group Interactions’, students’ responses were generally brief and they seldom elaborated on their own ideas or provided further details in their discussions.
- Students used only limited interaction strategies when responding to others, for example, ‘I agree’, ‘That’s a good idea!’ or ‘Do you have any idea?’
- In some cases, students were extremely self-conscious about their oral communication skills. They did not actively participate in the interaction or were extremely hesitant when speaking.

Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Secondary 3 TSA 2008, 2009 and 2010

The percentage of S.3 students achieving Basic Competency in 2010 was 69.2, slightly higher than the percentage for the year 2009 which was 68.8% as shown in Table 7.29.

Table 7.29 Percentages of S.3 Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency in 2008, 2009 and 2010

Year	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency
2008	68.9
2009	68.8
2010	69.2

A comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of S.3 student performances in TSA 2008, 2009 and 2010 provides useful information on how teachers can help students improve their skills. Table 7.30 summarises such a comparison.

Table 7.30 Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Secondary 3 TSA 2008, 2009 and 2010

<div>Year</div> <div>Skill</div>	2008	2009	2010
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could generally analyse information and identify main characters in book reviews using contextual clues. Some students were capable of distinguishing views and attitudes and inferring a writer's point of view. Capable students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions of the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions using reference skills. Capable students could identify alliteration in a poem when an example was provided in the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could generally use strategies to determine the meaning of texts written on familiar topics and for various purposes and contexts. Some students were capable of distinguishing views and attitudes and could understand the meaning of texts with some degree of complexity. Some students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions of the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions using reference skills. Many were also adept at inference. Some students could understand language features and correctly identify an example of alliteration. 	<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. A moderate number of students were capable of distinguishing views and attitudes through contextual clues. Students also showed some ability to analyze and integrate relevant points from one or more texts. A moderate number of students were able to comprehend and make plausible conclusions of the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions using reference skills. They were also adept at inference and could also identify main ideas. Many more students could understand language features such as onomatopoeia, alliteration, personification and rhyming words presented in simple imaginative texts.

Year Skill	2008	2009	2010
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could provide reasons and elaborate on familiar topics though with some spelling and grammatical errors. They were competent in using correct formats in writing short, descriptive passages. Students in most cases were able to provide details to support main ideas. Given pictorial cues students could provide relevant ideas and write coherent and organised paragraphs. Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'first', 'second' and 'finally' in writing paragraphs. Paragraphs were generally well-organised with coherent links. Many students were unable to use the correct tenses, in particular the simple past correctly, which made it difficult for readers to comprehend their writing. In addition, students could not provide topic sentences with supporting details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could generally communicate ideas, information and opinions appropriate to the context and purpose in writing. In general, students could provide reasons and elaborate on familiar topics in writing short, descriptive passages. Students in most cases were able to provide details to support main ideas. Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'first', 'second' and 'finally' in writing paragraphs. Paragraphs were generally well-organised with coherent links. Many students were unable to use the correct tenses, in particular the simple past, which made it difficult for readers to comprehend their writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, a high percentage of students could communicate ideas, information and opinions appropriate to the context and purpose in writing. However, only a moderate number of students could provide reasons and elaborate on familiar topics such as school or school subjects. A high percentage of students improved in the use of paragraph writing and were capable of writing well organized passages. Many more students could use connectives although the writing lacked cohesive links between paragraphs. A moderate number of students made errors when using tenses invariably confusing the past and future tenses.

<div>Year</div> <div>Skill</div>	2008	2009	2010
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students were competent in understanding spoken language from a tapescript and integrating the information on an information sheet. • No items on sequencing in the assessments. • Many students were competent in identifying end rhymes in a poem. • Capable students were adept at inference and could interpret and evaluate information not explicit in a dialogue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students were competent in understanding ideas, information, opinions and feelings in simple, clear and slowly spoken texts. • Students could extract relevant ideas and information from spoken texts on familiar topics. • Capable students were adept at inference and could interpret and evaluate information not explicit in a dialogue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high percentage of students could extract specific information from simple, clear and slower spoken texts. They were also competent in understanding ideas, opinions and feelings in spoken texts. • No items on sequencing in the current assessments. • A moderate number of students were adept at connecting ideas and could interpret and evaluate information in dialogues. • A moderate number of students could distinguish main ideas from supporting details in simple narrative dialogues spoken slowly.

<div>Year</div> <div>Skill</div>	2008	2009	2010
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were capable of presenting ideas though pronunciation at times hindered communication of ideas. The addition or dropping of consonants in words made it difficult to understand at times. Many students generally expressed adequate ideas when prompted during 'Individual Presentation' and delivered their presentations using simple language patterns and vocabulary. Many hesitated frequently when presenting which made it difficult for oral assessors to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were capable of expressing ideas and information which were comprehensible although a number of pronunciation and language errors impeded understanding at times. Many students generally expressed adequate ideas when prompted during 'Individual Presentation' and delivered their presentations using simple language patterns and vocabulary. Some students hesitated frequently when presenting which made it difficult for oral assessors to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A moderate number of students were capable of expressing comprehensible ideas and information although, at times, pronunciation and language errors impeded comprehension. A high percentage of students expressed adequate ideas, generally when prompted, during 'Individual Presentation' and delivered presentations using simple language patterns and vocabulary. A moderate number of students hesitated frequently and stuttered hampering the delivery of their presentation. Some would struggle as they lacked the vocabulary to express themselves clearly.

Year Skill	2008	2009	2010
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many cases, students simply read their presentations though some would occasionally make brief eye contact with the assessors. • In 'Group Interaction' students responded to each other with simple, short responses though some attempted to add details in their responses. • During 'Group Interaction', students usually responded to each other using limited interaction strategies, for example, 'That's okay' or 'I agree' or 'I am agree.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many cases, students simply read their presentations though some would occasionally make brief eye contact with the assessors. • In 'Group Interaction' students responded to each other with simple, short responses although, at times, they attempted to add details in their responses. • During 'Group Interaction', students usually responded to each other using limited interaction strategies, for example, 'That's okay' or 'I agree' or 'Do you have any idea?' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many more students made eye contact with their assessors and did not simply read from scripts. • In 'Group Interaction' students responded to each other with simple, short responses. Some students attempted to add further details when responding. • During 'Group Interaction', students usually responded to each other using formulaic expressions, or limited interaction strategies, for example, 'How about you' or 'Yes, I agree' or 'What do you think?'

Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 3, Primary 6 and Secondary 3 TSA 2010

This was the fifth 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 2010 was slightly higher than the percentage for the year 2009 as shown in table 7.31.

Table 7.31 Percentage of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency

<div> <div>Year</div> <div>Class Level</div> </div>	% of Students Achieving English Language Basic Competency						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
P.3	75.9	78.8	79.4	79.5	79.3	#	79.2
P.6	--	70.5	71.3	71.3	71.5	#	71.6
S.3	--	--	68.6	69.2	68.9	68.8	69.2

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

Table 7.32 Comparison of Student Performances in English Language at Primary 3, Primary 6 and Secondary 3 TSA 2010

Level Skill	P.3	P.6	S.3
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many students were able to identify key words with straightforward contextual clues. Some students were able to obtain information from the contents page of a book. They could identify the content of a chapter in a book correctly. Some students could interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words with contextual clues. When given pictorial cues, many students were able to deduce the content of a comic. Students were generally able to follow pronoun reference in which the pronoun was close to the subject it referred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, students could extract specific information, interpret main ideas, locate information, obtain information from instructions and skim for gist from informational texts. Many students could use context to infer the meaning from a poem's lines but only more than half of them could extract information not explicitly stated in a reading passage. With the help of pictorial cues, many students could comprehend a poem by identifying specific information and main ideas and about half of them could interpret figurative language, e.g. personification and simile. Quite a number of students could predict the meaning of unfamiliar words or expressions in context. However, many students had difficulty distinguishing between a noun and a verb when looking up the meaning of a particular word from a dictionary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high percentage of students could generally analyse information from different text types and determine meaning for various purposes and contexts. A moderate number of students were capable of connecting ideas to infer points of view in simple imaginative texts. Capable students were able to comprehend and make a plausible conclusion of the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions using reference skills and contextual clues. 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 personification, alliteration onomatopoeia and rhyme.

Level Skill	P.3	P.6	S.3
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were generally able to write a factual account of the story with an ending, though not much supporting details were given. Students could also provide brief but relevant ideas about his/her day at school with given prompts. Few students could provide imaginative ideas. Students misspelled common words, e.g. 'happly' for 'happy', 'mike' for 'milk', 'prak' for 'park', 'text' for 'test', 'taked' for 'talked', 'sandwitch' for 'sandwich', etc. Grammatical mistakes were still common in students' writing, e.g. 'Tom see poor cat', 'I can played computer games.' Some students were able to use cohesive devices such as 'and', 'but', 'when', 'then', 'because', 'too' in their writing. A small number of students were able to provide relevant ideas with supporting details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, students performed slightly better in writing a narrative than an informal letter. Most students were able to express their ideas clearly on the two writing tasks. In writing a story, they could provide a factual account of the story and an appropriate ending. In writing a letter, they were capable of conveying their ideas clearly when suggesting places they were familiar with. Use of cohesive devices was evident in many students' works. However, lacking vocabulary and language patterns was still common in some students' writing. Most students were eager to write and could produce a written task of 80 words long. However, they had problems in grammar, spelling and sentence structures. Literal translation from Chinese was also found in some of their writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, capable students could provide reasons and elaborate on familiar topics. They were competent in using correct formats in writing short, descriptive passages. A moderate number of students could provide details to support main ideas. Given mind maps, students could provide relevant ideas and write a coherent and well organised passage. Many students could use simple sentences with connectives, such as 'first', 'second' and 'finally' in their writing passages. Paragraph development was evident in most passages of writing but lacked coherent links. A moderate number of students were unable to use appropriate tenses, in particular the simple past. Their sentences contained inappropriate shifts in tenses. Students used a limited range of vocabulary with simple language patterns that would, at times, affect meaning.

Level Skill	P.3	P.6	S.3
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.3 students were able to identify key words on familiar topics such as phone number, age, food, time, activities and objects. • Students were able to distinguish initial consonants 'K' and 'J'. • Students were generally able to distinguish different feelings (e.g. happy, sad, nervous and excited) of speakers from their tones. • Many students were able to distinguish '16' and '60'. However, fewer students were able to distinguish '15' and '50'. • Most students were able to understand the connection between ideas by identifying cohesive devices 'and' and 'because'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of students were able to distinguish between various initial consonants and between vowels. • Students performed well in some listening skills when given pictorial cues, e.g. extracting specific information, grasping main ideas, understanding connections between ideas and identifying a sequence of events. • Some students had difficulty in connecting ideas using contextual clues and had problems identifying the main ideas when more than one piece of information was given in a spoken text. • Although students experienced difficulty with main ideas, they performed better in interpreting information and predicting the likely development of the spoken texts when pictorial cues were given as multiple choice options rather than written cues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capable students were competent in discriminating between intonations for a range of purposes. • No items on sequencing in the assessment. • A high percentage of students were capable of understanding the meaning of simple dialogues on familiar and less familiar topics. Many were capable of distinguishing main ideas from supporting details and listening for gist. • Capable students were adept at understanding the connection between ideas and could infer meaning.

Level Skill	P.3	P.6	S.3
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For 'Reading Aloud', more than half of the students were able to read fluently and clearly. Most of them made a few mistakes in pronunciation. A small number of them were able to use appropriate pausing and intonation. For 'Expression of Personal Experiences', the majority of students were able to respond appropriately to most situations. Many of them provided relevant but brief answers to questions. Students with the best performance were able to provide elaboration to some questions. In 'Picture Description', most students could provide relevant but brief answer to questions. Students with the best performance were able to elaborate on their answers readily. They could provide more elaboration on familiar topics, such as <i>A Birthday Party</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were generally capable of reading the given texts aloud quite clearly but some mistakes in pronunciation were evident. Some students dropped end consonants and had problems with initial consonant blend sounds, long vowel sounds as well as consonant digraphs. Most students were able to provide relevant responses to some of the questions. Some could even provide further elaboration on topics familiar to them. In 'Presentation', many students could provide relevant information and ideas based on the given pictures and communicate their ideas quite clearly in spite of some mistakes in pronunciation. Students with top scores were able to provide a range of ideas relevant to the topics with some elaboration. They could communicate their ideas clearly and readily despite some pronunciation mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When presenting, most students generally spoke clearly, with some fluidity of expression, though difficulties with pronunciation, intonation, or pacing were noticeable. At times assessors found it difficult to comprehend a student's presentation as relationships between ideas were not immediately clear, though overall intelligibility was not significantly affected. Most students could respond to a speaking task appropriately, but fell short of elaborating on a given topic. When presenting, students were generally intelligible and coherent, with some fluidity of expression, though noticeable lapses in the expression of ideas were evident. Many students demonstrated a fairly effective use of grammar and vocabulary with coherent expressions of relevant ideas. Some students, however, presented with an imprecise or inaccurate use of vocabulary and grammatical structures, though it did not interfere with the communication of the message. In 'Group Interaction' students generally responded to each other with simple, short responses and seldom elaborated or further extended their ideas when discussing their assigned topic.