

The assessments included five speaking tasks that involved students in giving oral descriptions: two based on viewing and listening to video recordings, two based on viewing photographs, and one based on viewing a video recording without sound. Four of the tasks used the one-to-one interview approach, while the fifth used the team approach.

Four of the tasks were identical for year 4 and year 8 students. Only year 8 students attempted the fifth task.

One task is a trend task (fully described with data for both 1996 and 2000), two are released tasks (fully described with data for 2000 only), and two are link tasks (to be used again in 2004, so only partially described here). The tasks are presented in that order.

The performances of year 4 and year 8 students in 2000 were compared on 50 components of the four tasks attempted by both year levels. On average, 17 percent more year 8 than year 4 students succeeded on these components. The largest differences (averaging 29 percent) occurred on *Statues*, which required developing and delivering a complex set of instructions. The smallest differences (averaging 11 percent) occurred on *Link Task 9*, a task that largely required description.

Changes in performance between 1996 and 2000 could be examined on the trend task, *Bike Puncture*. Averaged across the 16 components of this task, there was no change in the performance of year 4 students between 1996 and 2000, but 2 percent fewer year 8 students succeeded in 2000 than in 1996. In both cases it is appropriate to conclude that performance was not significantly different in 2000 than in 1996.



Bike Puncture



Trend task

Approach: One to one

Focus: Retelling a process.

Resources: Video recording on laptop computer, tyre tube and puncture repair kit.

Level: Year 4 and year 8



Questions/instructions:

Video showed bicycle technician Peter Goding checking tube for a puncture, repairing it, reinflating and checking for further leaks.

Have you ever fixed a bike puncture?

Have you ever watched someone else fix a bike puncture?

We are going to watch a video showing how to fix a bike puncture once the tube has been taken out of the tyre. After watching the video, I want you to tell me what you would do to fix a puncture.

Click the **Play** button to start the video.

Now I want you to explain to me, as clearly as you can, how you would fix a puncture. Here is a bike tube and a puncture repair kit. Use these to show and explain how you would fix the puncture.

Steps included	% responses	
	2000 ('96) year 4	2000 ('96) year 8
pump tube up	51 (48)	81 (86)
find hole	78 (64)	93 (97)
check for other holes	31 (31)	55 (56)
rough up tube with sandpaper	65 (73)	86 (94)
roughened area as large as patch	5 (2)	20 (20)
put glue on roughened area	93 (98)	97 (97)
wait for glue to dry	72 (77)	86 (84)
peel cover off patch	39 (41)	63 (63)
place patch over area of glue/hole	74 (68)	79 (82)
press down firmly	30 (29)	53 (53)
peel off backing paper	57 (57)	77 (74)
check all edges pressed down	27 (33)	46 (52)
pump up tube	16 (15)	29 (39)
check for leaks	24 (20)	43 (40)

Sequencing

	% responses	
	2000 ('96) year 4	2000 ('96) year 8
all steps mentioned are in correct order	53 (45)	61 (59)
1 or more steps out of order, but later corrected	21 (28)	29 (28)
1 step out of order	12 (15)	6 (9)
2 steps out of order	5 (7)	3 (0)
explanation jumbled or very incomplete	9 (5)	1 (4)

Speech clarity

	% responses	
	2000 ('96) year 4	2000 ('96) year 8
very clear and well articulated	19 (22)	44 (50)
some minor limitations	62 (64)	54 (46)
significant limitations	17 (14)	2 (4)
very hard to understand	2 (0)	0 (0)
Total score: 16-19	2 (1)	24 (22)
13-15	27 (23)	45 (50)
10-12	43 (46)	25 (22)
7-9	19 (24)	5 (6)
4-6	6 (3)	1 (0)
0-3	3 (3)	0 (0)

Commentary:

On average 18 percent more year 8 than year 4 students succeeded with each task component, with 40 percent more gaining a total score of 13 or more. The 2000 results were very similar to the 1996 results, at both year levels.



Statues

Approach: Team

Focus: Giving instructions.

Resources: 5 photographs.

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Questions/instructions:

This activity is called *Statues*.

Show example photograph.



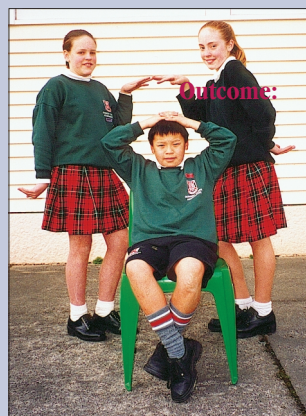
The children in this photograph are using their bodies to make a statue. Have a good look at the photo, then try to make the same statue. Three of you can make the statue and one of you can check to make sure they have made it correctly.

Allow time.

Now you're going to take turns at telling the others in the group how to make a statue. One person will have a photo. That person will *tell* the others how to make the statue - but they can't show them or touch them. They need to make the instructions very clear. Let's begin with [A1 name]. I'll give you a photo. The others in the team can't see it, so you have to tell them how to make the statue.

Give photo 1 to A1. Ensure that students are arranged so that they cannot see the photo being described.

Repeat for students A2, A3, A4.



	% responses	
	y4	y8
Clarity of the individual instructions	high	8 26
	moderate	60 57
	low	32 17
Sequencing of set of instructions <i>gross movement first, then finer details</i>	very appropriate	11 38
	moderately appropriate	76 57
	inappropriate	13 5
Completeness of instructions	most details covered	20 55
	moderately complete	61 41
	very incomplete	19 4
Overall effectiveness of the instructions	very high	1 13
	quite high	21 45
	moderate	54 34
	low	24 8
Total score:	8-9	5 24
	6-7	12 28
	4-5	45 30
	2-3	22 15
	0-1	16 3

Commentary:

About 30 percent more year 8 than year 4 students were successful on each task component and overall.

News

Approach: One to one

Level: Year 8 only

Focus: Presenting a news report based on observed events.

Resources: Video recording without sound on laptop computer, still pictures from video.



The video recording showed a raging flood with substantial damage occurring and then a person being swept away and rescued.

% responses
y8

Questions/instructions:

In this activity you will be watching a video clip showing something that could be on the news. Watch the video carefully, because at the end I want you to tell me all about it.

Click the *Play* button to start the video.

Now I want you to imagine that you are a news reporter. You are going to tell a news story about what you saw on the video. You should try to describe what happened, and to tell the news so that it sounds interesting. Here are some pictures from the video to help you tell the news story.

Give student pictures. (left)

Tell me all about the news story.

Aspects mentioned:	heavy rain	65
	flooding through town	88
	car stranded	52
	debris threatening bridge	28
	house collapsing	82
	houses threatened by water swells	26
	man falling into flood	66
	emergency services rushing to rescue	76
	man rescued with rope and float	69
	everyone recovering	22

Appropriate introduction:

<i>highlighting drama, capturing attention</i>	strong	23
	medium	37
	weak	40

Coherence, flow, continuity:	strong	27
	medium	64
	weak	9

Sense of drama conveyed:	strong	21
	medium	52
	weak	27

Speech clarity:	very clear & well articulated	20
	some minor limitations	68
	significant difficulties	11
	very hard to understand	1

Commentary:

About two thirds of the students included the major aspects in their account, but only about one quarter were rated strong in how they introduced and linked their story or conveyed the sense of drama.

Link tasks 8-9

LINK TASK 8

Approach: One to one

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Focus: Retelling a process viewed.

Resources: Video recording on laptop computer;
still photos from video.

	% responses	
	y4	y8
Total score: 16-18	4	20
13-15	21	44
10-12	38	26
7-9	28	8
4-6	6	2
0-3	3	0

Commentary:

About 40 percent more year 8 than year 4 students scored a total of 13 or more.

LINK TASK 9

Approach: One to one

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Focus: Presenting an advertisement based on a photograph.

Resources: Photograph.

	% responses	
	y4	y8
Total score: 17-23	2	8
13-16	12	35
10-12	27	30
7-9	31	19
4-6	16	6
0-3	12	2

Commentary:

About 30 percent more year 8 than year 4 students scored a total of 13 or more.