

The focus of this chapter is on students' performance in spelling, punctuation and grammar, using tasks specifically designed for this purpose. These skills were also assessed more indirectly within some of the tasks in Chapters 3 and 4.

Five tasks were identical for year 4 and year 8 students, two were administered only to year 4 students and two were administered only to year 8 students. Four are trend tasks (fully described with data for both 2002 and 2006) and the remaining five are link tasks (to be used again in 2010, so only partially described here). The tasks are presented in that order.

Averaged across 77 task components administered to both year 4 and year 8 students, 15 percent more year 8 than year 4 students succeeded with these components. Year 8 students performed better on all except five of the components. Punctuation of text involving speech and recognition of verbs in text (especially those associated with "to be" and "to have") were areas of particular weakness.

Trend analyses showed slight improvements between 2002 and 2006 for both year 4 and year 8 students, but these were too small to be judged significant. Averaged across 39 task components attempted by year 4 students in both years, 2.5 percent more students succeeded in 2006 than in 2002. Gains occurred on 29 components, with losses on four components and no change on six components. At year 8 level, with 63 task components included in the analysis, on average one percent more students succeeded with the task components in 2006 than in 2002. Gains occurred on 33 components, with losses on 18 components and no change on the remaining 12 components.

The **scary** monster
climbed the mountain.

Full stop	.
Question mark	?
Comma	,
Speech marks	" "
Exclamation mark	!
Capital letter	A
Apostrophe	'

it was a hot day and the
sun was shining children were
having lots of fun playing in
the pool this was a day to
enjoy

Approach: One to one
 Focus: Parts of speech
 Resources: Sentence card

Questions / instructions:

In this activity we are going to look at some of the words in a sentence. I'll read the sentence to you.

Read and show sentence card to the student.



Point to "monster".

- This word "monster" is a noun. What do you think a noun is?

naming word or equivalent 38 (37) 72 (66)

Point to "climbed".

- This word "climbed" is a verb. What do you think a verb is?

action/doing word or equivalent 57 (52) 91 (77)

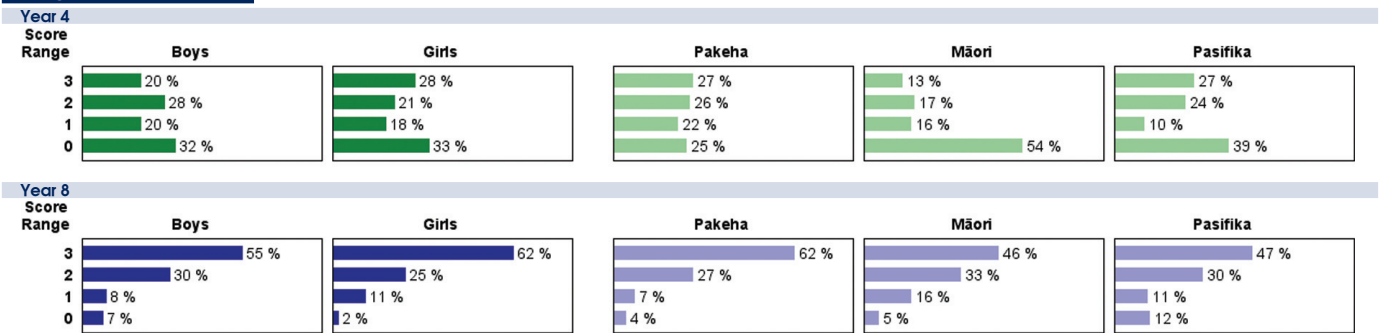
Point to "scary".

- This word "scary" is an adjective. What do you think an adjective is?

describing word or equivalent 45 (33) 76 (60)

Total score:	3	24 (15)	58 (47)
	2	24 (22)	28 (22)
	1	19 (33)	9 (18)
	0	33 (30)	5 (13)

Subgroup Analyses:



Commentary:

Students were more knowledgeable about the function of verbs than the functions of nouns and adjectives. Boys and girls performed comparably, but Māori students and year 8 Pasifika students scored lower than their Pakeha counterparts. There were small improvements at both year levels between 2002 and 2006.

Approach: Station
 Focus: Punctuation – capital letters and full stops
 Resources: Recording book

Year: 4 & 8

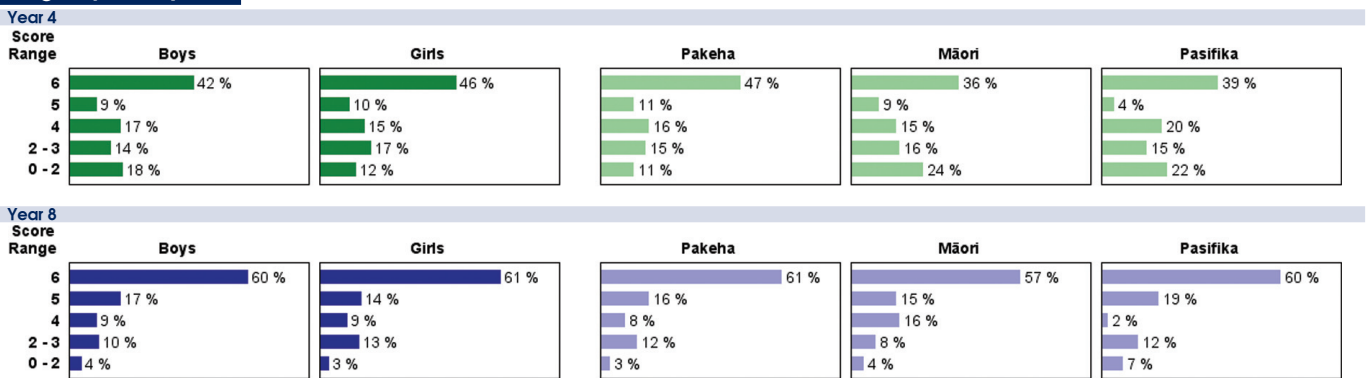
Questions / instructions:

The capital letters and full stops are missing from these sentences. Put in the capital letters and full stops for each sentence.

it was a hot day and the sun was shining children were having lots of fun playing in the pool this was a day to enjoy

		% response 2006 ('02)		% response 2006 ('02)			
		year 4	year 8	year 4	year 8		
Line 1:	capital I for "it"	88 (92)	98 (99)	Line 4:	full stop after "pool"	73 (70)	88 (88)
Number of incorrect insertions in Line 1:					Capital T for "this"	67 (64)	84 (86)
	0	86 (88)	93 (91)	Number of incorrect insertions in Line 4:			
	1	6 (6)	4 (4)		0	93 (92)	94 (95)
	2 or more	8 (6)	3 (5)		1	5 (6)	4 (5)
					2 or more	2 (2)	2 (0)
Line 2:	full stop after "shining"	78 (75)	91 (90)	Line 5:	full stop after "enjoy"	89 (89)	87 (87)
	capital C for "children"	74 (70)	90 (90)	Number of incorrect insertions in Line 5:			
Number of incorrect insertions in Line 2:					0	97 (96)	100 (99)
	0	90 (90)	94 (93)		1	3 (4)	0 (1)
	1	7 (7)	4 (7)		2 or more	0 (0)	0 (0)
	2 or more	3 (3)	2 (0)	Total score:			
Line 3:	no corrections	—	—		6	44 (35)	60 (55)
Number of incorrect insertions in Line 3:					5	9 (11)	16 (10)
	0	87 (85)	92 (92)		4	17 (16)	9 (9)
	1	5 (6)	4 (4)		2-3	15 (17)	11 (11)
	2 or more	8 (9)	4 (4)		0-1	15 (21)	4 (13)

Subgroup Analyses:



Commentary:

More than half of the students at both year levels showed good understanding of the use of full stops and capital letters. Boys and girls performed equally well, as did year 8 Pakeha, Māori and Pasifika students. There were small improvements at both year levels between 2002 and 2006.

Trend Task: Spelling List

Approach: Independent
 Focus: Conventions of spelling
 Resources: 4 individual answer sheets

Year: 4 & 8

Questions / instructions:

In this activity you are going to try to spell some words without help from anyone else. I'll give you the paper to write your words on, then I will tell you what to do.

Give one answer sheet to each student.

Now listen carefully to the instructions before we start. I will say each word on its own, then I will say a sentence with the word in it, then I will say the word on its own again. It is best that you listen to the word each time before you write it down. If you make a mistake, cross out the word and write it again on the same line.

Read out the words and sentences, allowing time for each word to be written before moving to the next.

[Read as adjacent – word, sentence, word repeated.]

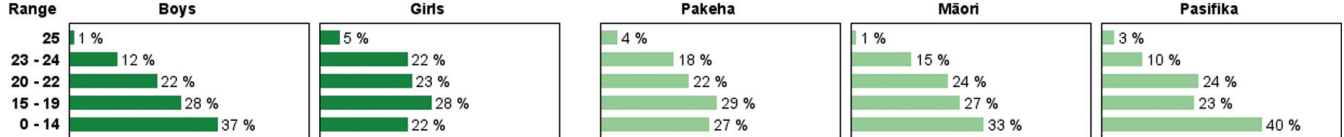
			% response 2006 ('02)	
			year 4	year 8
1. BOY	He is the oldest boy in the class.	BOY	98 (97)	99 (100)
2. WITH	Come with me to the shops.	WITH	94 (92)	99 (100)
3. MAKE	Let's make some popcorn.	MAKE	93 (92)	99 (100)
4. CAVE	There is a cave in those rocks.	CAVE	96 (92)	99 (98)
5. COOK	Who will cook dinner?	COOK	92 (90)	98 (100)
6. BABY	The baby has gone to sleep.	BABY	88 (90)	98 (98)
7. SHOW	Show me what you can do.	SHOW	92 (89)	99 (98)
8. THERE	There are 26 letters in the alphabet.	THERE	80 (73)	89 (85)
9. SCHOOL	We are at school today.	SCHOOL	94 (94)	99 (99)
10. KNOW	Do you know this story?	KNOW	75 (67)	96 (95)
11. BEING	Are you being looked after?	BEING	92 (92)	97 (97)
12. FIFTEEN	The car was fifteen years old.	FIFTEEN	45 (41)	79 (77)
13. DECEMBER	December is the last month of the year.	DECEMBER	65 (70)	90 (91)
14. USUALLY	Jack usually walks to school.	USUALLY	11 (10)	61 (57)
15. REALLY	Are you really that old?	REALLY	55 (48)	87 (82)
16. FLOOR	Sweep the floor with a broom.	FLOOR	74 (74)	93 (94)
17. MIDDLE	We sat in the middle row.	MIDDLE	61 (56)	92 (93)
18. EAR	She had a ring in her ear.	EAR	83 (81)	96 (97)
19. RIVER	The river was good for fishing.	RIVER	87 (85)	97 (97)
20. LYING	Why are you lying in bed?	LYING	37 (30)	74 (73)
21. ADVENTURE	I like to read adventure books.	ADVENTURE	40 (35)	83 (81)
22. WRONG	It was a wrong answer.	WRONG	49 (49)	91 (89)
23. QUIETLY	Walk quietly out of the room.	QUIETLY	30 (25)	74 (64)
24. STRAIGHT	Jess went straight home after school.	STRAIGHT	30 (24)	72 (71)
25. HAVING	We are having a good time.	HAVING	77 (75)	95 (93)

Total score:	25	3 (3)	37 (31)
	23-24	17 (11)	32 (28)
	20-22	23 (20)	16 (26)
	15-19	28 (37)	12 (12)
	0-14	29 (29)	3 (3)

Subgroup Analyses:

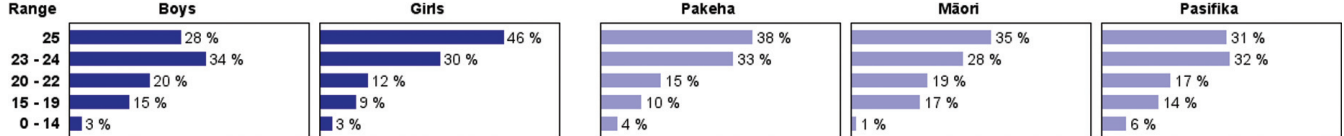
Year 4

Score Range



Year 8

Score Range



Commentary:

December was marked correct whether or not the first letter was a capital D. About 20 percent fewer students at both levels would have succeeded if a capital D was required. About 70 percent of year 8 students, compared to 20 percent of year 4 students, spelled more than 90 percent of the words correctly. Girls averaged better than boys but Pakeha, Māori and Pasifika students performed comparably.

Approach: Station
 Focus: Punctuation
 Resources: Punctuation card

Year: 8

Questions / instructions:

Imagine your friend has asked you to check this piece of writing.

Help your friend by putting in the punctuation. The first one is done for you.

T
 the two children laughed that was a
 lot of fun said hone
 do you think we should do it again
 asked shilo
 no way Im too hot said hone
 lets go to davids house

PUNCTUATION

Full stop .

Question mark ?

Comma ,

Speech marks " "

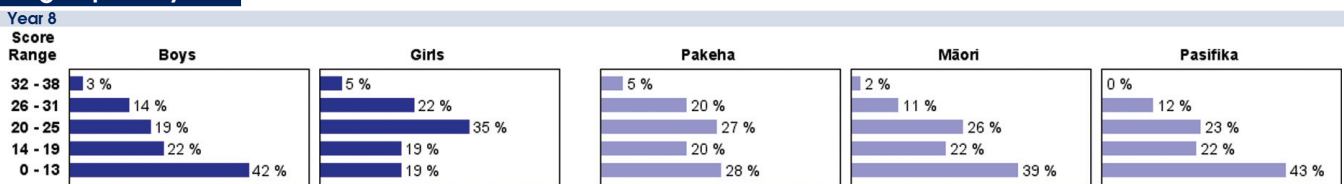
Exclamation mark !

Capital letter A

Apostrophe '

		% response 2006 ('02)	year 8
Line 1:			
- "laughed"	full stop immediately after	32 (25)	
- "that"	speech marks before	66 (66)	
	capital T	37 (29)	
Line 2:			
- immediately after "fun"	,	14 (22)	
	,	8 (5)	
	,	1 (3)	
	"	48 (43)	
- "hone"	capital H	72 (74)	
	full stop immediately after	78 (83)	
Line 3:			
- "do"	speech marks before	72 (71)	
	capital D	85 (90)	
- immediately after "again"	?"	34 (33)	
	?"	15 (19)	
	?"	11 (9)	
	"	22 (18)	
Line 4:			
- "shilo"	capital S	71 (71)	
	full stop immediately after	65 (61)	
Line 5:			
- "no way"	speech marks before	73 (76)	
	capital N	81 (77)	
	!	13 (12)	
	.	3 (0)	
	,	9 (15)	
- "Im"	apostrophe in-between I and m	32 (38)	
- "hot"	,	14 (14)	
	,	5 (7)	
	,	2 (4)	
	"	50 (46)	
- "hone"	capital H	66 (66)	
	full stop immediately after	49 (39)	
Line 6:			
- "lets"	speech marks before	52 (47)	
	capital L	51 (49)	
	apostrophe before s	9 (9)	
- "davids"	capital D	54 (61)	
	apostrophe before s	24 (22)	
- immediately after "house"	."	30 (26)	
	."	10 (9)	
	.	39 (39)	
	"	12 (13)	
Total score:			
	32-38	4 (3)	
	26-31	17 (18)	
	20-25	27 (24)	
	14-19	20 (30)	
	0-13	32 (25)	

Subgroup Analyses:



Commentary:

Many year 8 students did not handle the punctuation of spoken text correctly. Performance was similar in 2002 and 2006. Girls averaged higher than boys and Pakeha higher than Māori and Pasifika students.

% responses
y4 y8

LINK TASK: 13

Approach: One to one

Year: 4 & 8

Focus: Learning strategies

Total score:	5-8	5	10
	4	17	20
	3	27	31
	2	32	28
	0-1	19	11

LINK TASK: 14

Approach: Independent

Year: 4 & 8

Focus: Spelling

Total score:	28	6	27
	26-27	16	33
	23-25	23	19
	18-22	25	14
	0-17	30	7

LINK TASK: 15

Approach: Station

Year: 4

Focus: Punctuation

Total score:	15-18	6	
	11-14	24	
	7-10	29	
	3-6	28	
	0-2	13	

LINK TASK: 16

Approach: Station

Year: 4

Focus: Punctuation

Total score:	30-35	10	
	24-29	18	
	18-23	25	
	12-17	26	
	0-11	21	

LINK TASK: 17

Approach: Station

Year: 8

Focus: Identifying nouns, verbs, adjectives

Total score:	30-41		7
	25-29		35
	20-24		22
	15-19		17
	0-14		19