

## Year 6/7 Second Language Learners

### *Writing — Average*

#### **Content**

Students' writing includes short expressions of rehearsed language related to personal information, introducing family members, pets, friends, interests, etc., with little elaboration. Students write approximately 30 characters, or five sentences, usually with access to word lists.

#### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary includes highly familiar subject matter, for example, personal information (e.g. name and age, about self, family, and friends), using numbers (age), identifying animals (pets), etc., relying on word lists or topic-specific vocabulary lists available for particular tasks.

#### **Characters**

Character writing displays weaknesses in accuracy and neatness; characters are not well proportioned, with strokes often appearing to be inaccurate in order or direction, or characters incomplete with strokes omitted. Characters with complex, low-frequency components may cause difficulties, for example, 友善 (lack of clarity in strokes in the top component), 我有十几条鱼 (error in top component). Students' writing generally relies on word lists or stimulus texts for support. When writing on squared paper, paragraph indents or spacing for punctuation are seldom evident.

Students occasionally write in pinyin or some combination of characters, pinyin, and English, depending on the availability of textual supports (e.g. '我周末喜欢做 dance'). Students are unfamiliar with the use of squared paper for writing. They lack awareness of character spacing, often dividing a compound character into two distinct parts, or combining two characters in one square, for example, 姐姐 written in one square, or 妈 presented as 女 and 马 in two squares when using squared paper. When writing in pinyin students tend to create a longer response as they are less restricted by the complexities of character recall or writing. Pinyin writing does not generally include tone marks.

#### **Forms and Structures**

Writing contains simple ideas expressed in a series of individual sentences or phrases. Sentence patterns are often drawn directly from stimulus texts or questions. Students use verbs of identification (is/am/are 是), possession (have/has 有), and preference (like 喜欢) in rehearsed phrases. They employ personal pronouns and the plural suffix 们 and connect lists of items or activities using 和 (and), which may be overused (e.g. 我有二姐姐和一妈妈和爸爸). Errors may reflect English expression or word order, for example, 我十二(岁), adjective phrases containing the verb 是 (to be) rather than the adverb 很 (very), for example, 我的家是大, 我家是小, number phrases expressed without the measure word, or without the counting word for two, 两 (e.g. 我有二姐姐和一妈妈和爸爸). Errors may occur because of lack of knowledge of appropriate structures when trying to extend information, for example, 我的朋友有棕色 (的) 猫, or failing to convert a question into a statement effectively when referring to stimulus questions (e.g. 我几岁十二).

#### **Discourse**

Students' writing generally comprises a series of isolated sentences, with a new idea or sentence introduced on a new line. Sentences generally contain only a single idea or a list of items. There is little evidence or awareness of the text type or paragraphing.