

Year 6/7 Background Language Learners

Oral — High

Content

Students share information about a wide range of personal topics including home life, school life, and leisure time. They discuss topics of interest including preferred sports and activities on the weekend, interests shared with friends, and daily routines. They provide additional detail relating to time, place, and participants involved when requested. They talk about their linguistic and cultural identity, that is, languages used among family members, aspects of their family background such as details about their parents' country of origin, their home life, and Chinese community school experience.

Vocabulary

Students' communication reflects their range of language experiences, including their Chinese language learning experiences and their relationships within the Chinese community. Their vocabulary choices reflect their daily communication needs. They give specific details of their experiences and elaborate their meanings with terms for, for example, relatives 双胞胎弟弟, 奶奶, sports 羽毛球, places 在广州附近. They explain a range of daily activities and use modal verbs when talking about obligation, necessity, ability, desire, or intention. They readily use pronouns to refer to people and things in conversation, and use numbers in a range of contexts such as time phrases and prices, population, and counting, using specific measure words for different objects. They describe everyday items using appropriate adjectives and express more nuanced meanings using a range of adverbs of scope and degree, frequency, etc. They provide some evaluative or reflective responses when asked for opinions about their own world, including school life, Saturday school, or their use of Chinese.

Forms and Structures

Students use succinct structured expressions and respond to further requests for elaboration with little hesitation. They display complex use of language in their organisation of ideas, incorporating information relating to time, place, manner, and participants in activities into their sentences, using possessive, attributive, or prepositional clauses. They use a range of conjunctions (e.g. 但是, 可是, 和) as appropriate to link ideas in a phrase, or within a sentence, and provide reasons for opinions or actions using 因为. They place events in time and express the past and future tense using appropriate tense markers. They use verb complements to describe the direction, result, or potential of an action or event.

Fluency

Students are eager to talk, and readily converse in Chinese with others. They engage in conversation in a natural, confident manner reflecting home and daily use of the language. Responses are generally presented at natural pace with few hesitations for thinking time or for composing ideas.

Intelligibility

Pronunciation and tones are generally accurate with some evidence of home dialects (e.g. Cantonese), but this does not impede intelligibility.

Comprehension

Students respond readily to questions asked at natural speeds that contain complex information, for example, location attributives (e.g. 坐在你旁边的/对面的是谁), or requests to offer suggestions 你猜他几岁?

Communication Strategies

Students manage a range of questions and negotiate meaning effectively, reflecting a natural interactional style with little need for compensatory strategies to cope with lack of comprehension. They code switch readily to maintain the flow of conversation, inserting English words for naming local places or technology (e.g. iPhone).

Discourse

Students respond in short phrases and occasional extended or detailed responses with conjunctions used effectively to coordinate the message. The students are active conversational partners, displaying familiarity with turn-taking routines and the use of conversation fillers and gestures.

They are willing to use English if necessary in order to maintain the flow of conversation.