

ASSESSMENT CONTEXT Speaking and listening

Student Sample: Stage S4 Standard Video 1

Student information:

The student is of Romanian background, but was born and educated in Austria, prior to coming to Australia. Romanian is her home language and she also speaks German. She has been in Australia for two years and eight months, and is in Year eight in a secondary school. The student went to school in Austria for just over six years, including primary school and some high school. German was the language of instruction although she had some English as a foreign language classes in primary school.

The task:

The task is an interview in which the students reflect on their historical research. The students report on their research on a topic of medieval history, and they respond to questions, suggestions and comments from their classmates. The aim of the task is for the students to use reflection and feedback to assist their progress with an inquiry assignment on an aspect of the Middle Ages, as well as to provide an opportunity for the students to present to peers and negotiate with them to improve their plans for their assignment.

Before undertaking this task, the students have studied various aspects of the Middle Ages over a series of ten lessons. The students have been given an inquiry task into an aspect of the Middle Ages, which requires them setting their own research questions. They have completed a lotus diagram to generate questions and have begun to research five questions using a Data Chart and a range of resources.

The students have been asked to formally present their findings to date to a group of their peers, reflect on their progress and generate a plan of action through guiding questions from the teacher. They need to respond to the questions from their classmates and then redraft their plan.

In this task the teacher was assessing how well the student performed the following listening and speaking elements:

- developing a new plan in response to the interview process
- altering the tone to suit different purposes within the task; for example speaking in more formal complete utterances in reporting academic work, with a more conversational style in answering classmates' questions
- structuring their speaking to organize their information
- using language of prediction and modality, e.g. will, could, should, might
- qualifying and justifying opinions, e.g. I think.....because....

PLEASE NOTE:

Each video sample represents one performance on a specific task within a unit of work, produced by each student with scaffolding at the level appropriate to the student's current stage of language development.

When making judgements to assign a student to a particular **ESL Stage** (A1 to S4) and a **level** within the stage (beginning, progressing towards, at standard), teachers need to consider:

- **a range of tasks.** Not all Indicators of Progress can be demonstrated within one task or activity.
- **the amount of scaffolding** provided to the student in performing these tasks, based on the type of teaching context, the texts used, and the tasks performed. Table 1: The Criteria for the differentiation between stages of the ESL standards on page 10 of *the English as a Second Language (ESL) Companion to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards*, VCAA 2005, may assist in determining the level of appropriate scaffolding.
- **the consistency of student performance.** A clustering of a number of performances over time at or around the stage and level should be collected as evidence to support the judgement.
- **the student's control of language across the four aspects** of texts and responses to texts, cultural understandings of language use, linguistic structures and features and maintaining and negotiating communication.

The ESL VELs *Learning Focus*, *Standards and Progression Profile* and *Indicators of Progress* are designed to work together and will assist in making judgements about the stage and level of a student's performance at a particular point in time.

Assignment of a student to a stage and level is an 'on balance' judgement of the student's stage at that point in time. The student should be constantly monitored to determine the ways in which she or he is making progress towards indicators consistent with a higher level or stage.

Speaking & Listening S4 Standard Indicators of Progress

Text and responses <i>At the end of Stage S4, students can routinely use spoken English to do the following things:</i>	Example
Receptive	
• demonstrate essential understanding of a wide range of mainstream spoken texts	
• extract some key information or ideas from a variety of audiovisual materials in use in mainstream classes across the curriculum using guide questions	
• obtain the gist of an unfamiliar speaker where relevant background knowledge has been provided beforehand	
Productive	
• negotiate with peers and teachers when planning work and exchanging information	2:54 – 4:45
• justify a point of view with mainstream peers with increasing independence, e.g. by rebutting, or clarifying, 'No, I mean we should keep the forests to slow down the global warming'	3:15 – 3:45
• present an extended talk organised to reflect a clear progression of ideas and information and respond appropriately to audience reaction	1:46 – 4:45
• present complex ideas and information in a sustained, organised way	ET
Linguistic structures and features <i>At the end of Stage S4, students' understanding of the linguistic structures and features of spoken English is shown when they:</i>	Example
Receptive	
• show an understanding of texts which use complex grammatical features, e.g. infinitive, gerund, conditional, passive voice, reported speech, relative clauses and question tags	
• show an understanding of how the use of modality can affect a speaker's intended meaning	
Productive	
• show sufficient control of basic structures and features of spoken English to participate effectively in a supportive mainstream classroom	ET
• identify aspects of their pronunciation that impede communication and focus on correction of them with teacher support, e.g. the articulation of final consonants, a specific vowel sound or inappropriate word stress	
• extend speech, using generally appropriate connectives and signal words, e.g. unless, in that case, however, this/that shows ...	
• plan and deliver an extended talk following an organised structure appropriate to its purpose and audience	1:46 – 2:56
• qualify opinions through modality, e.g. 'may', 'might', 'in some cases', etc. and through conditional expressions, e.g. 'but what if ...?', 'Why would ...?'	3:53 – 4:30
• use the language of prediction and hypothesis in a group problem-solving task, e.g. 'If we use this one then ...', 'That won't work because of the ...'.	3:53 – 4:30
Cultural conventions <i>At the end of Stage S4, students' understanding of the contexts and purposes of spoken texts is shown when they:</i>	Example
Receptive	
• identify simple examples of bias in speech, e.g. through emotive expressions, such as 'It's rubbish to say ...'	
• identify the overall intention of an accessible but unfamiliar speaker, e.g. identify whether the speaker was for, or against, a particular	

issue	
Productive	
• take account of purpose and context	ET
• move with ease between formal and informal register in response to purpose and context	ET
• express and qualify opinions, e.g. using expressions such as I disagree, I think that ..., in my view etc.; through modality: may, might, in some cases etc.; and through conditional expressions: but what if ...? why would ...?	2:56 - 3:46
• use intonation, volume and stress to emphasise an opinion or emotion, e.g. 'that is NOT what happened'.	3:22 – 3:25
Maintaining and negotiating communication	Example
At the end of Stage S4, students may use the following strategies to maintain and negotiate spoken communication:	
Receptive	
• take notes from a range of texts from across the curriculum, e.g. guest speaker's talk, video, audio tape	
• ask teacher or fellow student for clarification to check understanding, e.g. does that mean ...?	
Productive	
• develop speaking and listening strategies to participate effectively in a supportive mainstream class	ET
• identify problems in pronunciation specific to themselves which need attention, e.g. 'I can't tell the difference between walk and work.'	
• discuss a point of language, e.g. 'Why is it the car door and not the car's door?'	
• revise plans for a formal extended talk in response to feedback.	

NOTE: ET = Evident Throughout