

# Conclusions for writing performance

## Writing scores

Year four students in Tokelau performed better in writing when compared to the region and Small Island States. For year four, students achieved 496 points, the region achieved 484 points and Small Island States achieved 481 points.

Similarly, year six students performed better in writing when compared to the region and Small Island States. Year six students in Tokelau achieved 558 points, the region achieved 507 points and Small Island States achieved 509 points.

## Gender

Year four girls performed better than boys with, on average, 515 points scored by girls and 479 points by boys.

In Year six, girls performed better than boys by 11 points. Girls scored 564 points and boys scored 553 points.

## Trends

The number of points for writing has increased across the three cycles: 394 points in 2015, 448 points in 2018 and 496 points in 2021.

Year six students have displayed the same trend as in year four, with 481 points in 2015, 511 points in 2018, and 558 points in 2021.

## Coding

In the PILNA writing assessment, for both Year four and 6, students were required to write a story based on either of two provided prompts. The prompts were provided to encourage ideas and engagement in the process. The criteria for the narrative task encompasses the two main features of writing – content and language elements – as can be seen in the writing rubric. Six writing skills are assessed in PILNA: quality of ideas, structure and organisation, grammar and syntax, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation.

Coding data allows for an interpretation of how students have performed. A code is assigned to each criterion according to how well the student has performed. A Code 0 is assigned when there is insufficient evidence to assess.

## Year four coding

**Quality of ideas (Codes 1–8):** This criterion measures the quality of the students' ideas and how well those ideas have been developed to produce an entertaining story. Around 46% of year four students in Tokelau know how to write a story that

relates to a prompt. These students were awarded Code 5 or above. Another 46% were given Code 4 or below, meaning they would have struggled to make sense of a few words when trying to form a story.

**Structure and organisation (Codes 1–5):** This measures the students' ability to shape a story, or to produce a coherent story, with ideas that relate to each other and are logically sequenced. More than 40% of year four students in Tokelau received Code 3 in this criterion. These students wrote stories that had some story elements but there were also some irrelevant details and gaps in logic. Around 27% were awarded the top two codes in this criterion, indicating that their stories were well shaped, coherently written, and had logically sequenced events. A little more than 30% (Codes 0–2) of year four students lacked the understanding of a story structure and their writing was limited to a few words and ideas.

**Grammar and syntax (Codes 1–4):** This measures the students' ability to produce a range of sentence structures with accuracy. Up to 70% of year four students in Tokelau received Code 2 or below in this criterion, indicating that they had written repetitive sentences that also had a lot of errors in grammar.

**Vocabulary (Codes 1–4):** This measures the variety of their vocabulary in telling the story. Seven out of ten (68%) year four students in Tokelau received Code 2 or below in this criterion. This indicates that they had limited vocabulary.

**Spelling (Codes 1–2):** This measures the students' ability to spell both basic and more difficult words. Nearly 70% of the year four students in Tokelau received Code 1 in this criterion, indicating that they were able to spell some basic words correctly in their writing test.

**Punctuation (Codes 1–3):** This measures the range and precision of punctuation used in telling the story. More than half of year four students in Tokelau received Code 1 in this criterion. This indicates that they mostly used commas and full stops but also made some errors using them.

## Year six coding

**Quality of ideas (Codes 1–8):** This criterion measures the quality of the students' ideas and how well those ideas have been developed to produce an entertaining story. More than 60%, or six out of ten, year six students in Tokelau received Code 8 for this criterion. This indicates that a majority of the year six students had mastered the skills of storytelling and incorporating the prompts very well into the events and ideas.

**Structure and organisation (Codes 1–5):** This measures the students' ability to shape a story, or to produce a coherent story, with ideas that relate to each other and are logically sequenced. More than half of year six students in Tokelau received Code 5, the highest level in this criterion. Their stories were introduced, developed well, had a clear conclusion, and had few gaps in logic or irrelevant details.

**Grammar and syntax (Codes 1–4):** This measures the students' ability to produce a range of sentence structures with accuracy. The largest proportion (39%) of year six students in Tokelau received Code 4, indicating accuracy in the use of a range sentence structures.

**Vocabulary (Codes 1–4):** This measures the variety of students' vocabulary in telling the story. Nearly half of year six students in Tokelau received Code 4, the highest level in in this criterion. This indicates that the students were able to express themselves well using a good range of vocabulary that allowed for clarity in their stories.

**Spelling (Codes 1–2):** This measures the students' ability to spell both basic and more difficult words. More than 60% of year six students in Tokelau received Code 2, the highest code in this criterion. This indicates that they were able to spell basic words correctly in their writing test and made a few errors with more difficult words.

**Punctuation (Codes 1–3):** This measures the range and precision of punctuation used in telling the story. Around 4% of year four students in Tokelau received Code 1 in this criterion, and 45% received Code 2, indicating that students used a variety of punctuation marks but made some minor errors in usage.