The student:  
**Year Level:** 7 years old; first term in Language School  
**Background:** born in China  
**Language:** Mandarin  
**Schooling:** age-equivalent schooling in China

The task – describe picture. The picture shows a family in the living room. The mother is bringing in a plate of biscuits. Other members of the family are sitting around a coffee table. Some are drinking. Two children are sitting on the floor looking at a book on the coffee table.

The text shows that the student:

- uses words from word sets related to need, interest or experience, e.g. family
- gives some basic personal information, using learned formulas or brief answers
- creates original utterances by substituting new words in learned patterns or formulas
- can expand on basic personal information when prompted, supported and given adequate time

**Student:** Is a egg (*referring to oval shaped biscuits on tray*). Is a water.  
Brother drink water. Sister in chair.  

**Teacher:** Tell me about your family  
**Student:** Four family. One is my mum, a dad and brother. My mum I like colour is yellow. My dad I like is drinking a beer. My brother play a computer. My is draw.

**Teacher:** What do you like to do as a family?  
**Student:** We is eating

This is a sample of language from a child at Stage A1 Standard. He communicates in basic English to describe a picture. He uses simple learned formulas and patterns, and creates original utterances e.g. ‘My mum I like colour is yellow’. He speaks using short ‘telegraphic’ structures, e.g. ‘sister in book’, ‘four family’, and simple subject/verb/object constructions, e.g. ‘My brother play a computer’.

Last updated 30-07-08  
(c) State of Victoria (DEECD), 2008