

Wānangatia te Putanga Tauira  
**National Monitoring Study  
of Student Achievement**

# Drama

## 2015 – Key Findings



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Drama

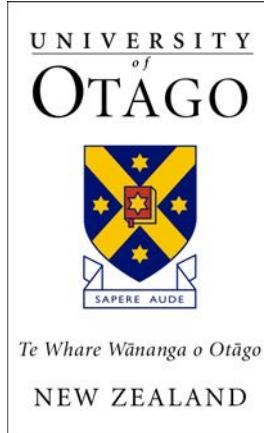
2015

Key Findings

Educational Assessment Research Unit  
and  
New Zealand Council for Educational Research



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#### Key reports for the Arts 2015

(all available online at <http://nmssa.otago.ac.nz/reports/index.htm>)

- 10.1 The Arts 2015 – Key Findings
- 10.2 Dance 2015 – Key Findings
- 10.3 Drama 2015 – Key Findings
- 10.4 Music - Sound Arts 2015 – Key Findings
- 10.5 Visual Arts 2015 – Key Findings
- 11 Technical Information 2015



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National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement  
Educational Assessment Research Unit, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand  
Tel: 64 3 479 8561 • Email: [nmssa@otago.ac.nz](mailto:nmssa@otago.ac.nz)

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2015 Project Team	EARU	NZCER
<b>Management Team</b>	Ros Allan Alison Gilmore Sharon Young Lynette Jones	Charles Darr Chris Joyce
<b>Design/Statistics/ Psychometrics/Reporting</b>	Alison Gilmore Mustafa Asil Megan Anakin	Charles Darr Hilary Ferral Jess Mazengarb Jenny Whatman
<b>Curriculum/Assessment</b>	Ros Allan Jane White	Verena Watson Sarah Beresford Juliet Twist Jenny Whatman
<b>Programme Support</b>	Lynette Jones Linda Jenkins James Rae Judith Gray Gail Morris Lee Baker	Liesje Stevens
<b>External Advisors</b>	Jeffrey Smith – University of Otago Marama Pohatu – Te Rangatahi Ltd	



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- the Ministry of Education Research Team and Steering Committee.

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

In 2015, the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) assessed student achievement at Year 4 and Year 8 in three areas of the New Zealand Curriculum<sup>1</sup> (NZC) – the arts, English: listening and English: viewing. This report presents the key findings for drama as one of the four disciplines described in the arts learning area. As well as reporting students' achievement in and attitudes towards drama, this report provides teachers' and principals' perspectives on teaching and learning drama. The report accompanies five other reports<sup>2</sup> that present results and technical information related to the NMSSA study of the arts. For an overview of findings in the arts learning area, including comparisons of findings across the arts disciplines, readers are directed towards the report *The Arts 2015 – Key Findings*.

Unlike music and visual arts, drama was not previously monitored by the National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP). This is the first time that student achievement in the discipline of drama has been assessed at a national level in New Zealand schools. The findings of the report represent an important baseline to be built on.

## The arts

The NZC describes the arts as one learning area. However, the curriculum requires that students at Year 4 and Year 8 have access to learning in each of four arts disciplines: dance, drama, music – sound arts (hereafter referred to as music), and visual arts. The arts learning area has four strands that are common to each discipline: understanding the arts in context, developing practical knowledge in the arts, developing ideas in the arts, and communicating and interpreting in the arts. In drama, students must demonstrate specific discipline-related knowledge and skills within these strands in order to make progress.

## Study features

NMSSA used a two-step sampling procedure to select 100 schools at each year level and up to 27 students within each school. The nationally representative sample at each year level was made up of about 2,200 students.

A programme was designed to gain a broad as well as a deep understanding of achievement in the arts using three assessment components. Table 1 outlines the features of each component and includes, in bold type, the number of students who participated in each one.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

<sup>2</sup> NMSSA Report 10.1: *The Arts 2015 – Key Findings*; NMSSA Report 10.2: *Dance 2015 – Key Findings*; NMSSA Report 10.4: *Music – Sound Arts 2015 – Key Findings*; NMSSA Report 10.5: *Visual Arts 2015 – Key Findings*; NMSSA Report 11: *Technical Information 2015*.

Table 1 Features of the components for assessing achievement in the arts

Assessment programme in the arts		
Component	Strands covered	Assessment approach and students participating
1. The Nature of the Arts (NoTA) assessment (all disciplines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding the arts in context</li> <li>• developing practical knowledge in the arts</li> <li>• developing ideas in the arts</li> <li>• interpreting in the arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group-administered tasks presented by computer</li> <li>• Completed by all year 4 and year 8 students (about <b>2,200</b> at each year level)</li> </ul>
2. Performance ratings frameworks in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dance</li> <li>• drama</li> <li>• music</li> <li>• visual arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing ideas in the arts</li> <li>• communicating in the arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best-fit ratings made by the teachers of the students involved in the NMSSA study using a specially prepared performance ratings framework in each discipline</li> <li>• At each year level, 25 schools were invited to assess one discipline each. Judgements were made for up to 12 students in each school (about <b>200</b> students per discipline assessed at each year level)</li> </ul>
3. Practical tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• music</li> <li>• visual arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing practical knowledge in the arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual arts: students completed a line drawing</li> <li>• Music: students completed three short, applied activities, presented by computer, related to beat, rhythm and recognising chord changes</li> <li>• Tasks were completed by six students per school (about <b>600</b> students at each year level)</li> </ul>

The Nature of The Arts (NoTA) assessment focused on achievement across the four arts disciplines and included six tasks related to drama. Scores on the individual NoTA tasks for all disciplines were combined to produce a total score. About 2,200 students at each year level took part in the NoTA assessment.

The performance ratings framework for drama was divided into four aspects: ‘working in role’; ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’; ‘making drama’; and ‘talking about role in drama’. Each aspect was represented by several described levels of achievement. For each aspect, teachers selected the descriptor that best fitted a student’s level of achievement. The judgements teachers made on each aspect were combined to create a total score. At Year 4, 24 schools completed performance ratings in drama and at Year 8, 19 schools. Best-fit ratings were made for about 200 students at each year level.

It was not considered appropriate for the NMSSA teacher assessors to administer practical tasks in drama. The performance ratings framework was considered to be a more valid way of collecting information about practical aspects of drama.

Achievement on the NoTA assessment and on the performance ratings for each discipline were reported on separate measurement scales developed using Item Response Theory that each covered both year levels (five scales in all). The performance rating scale for drama was called the Performance in Drama (PDr) scale.

Each scale was aligned to the levels of the NZC through a curriculum alignment exercise that defined the minimum scale score (cut-score) associated with achieving, on balance, the achievement objectives outlined at curriculum levels 2, 3 and 4. Students at Year 4 and Year 8 are expected to achieve, on balance, at curriculum levels 2 and 4 respectively.

Other data were collected through questionnaires for students, teachers and principals. Table 2 shows the number of respondents to the sections about drama in each of the questionnaires.

Table 2 Number of respondents to questions related to drama in the student, teacher and principal questionnaires, by year level

Year level	Questionnaires		
	Student	Teacher	Principal
4	1134	120	93
8	1139	73	85

## Key findings about achievement

### Achievement on the Nature of the Arts (NoTA)

At Year 4, 72 percent of students achieved above the minimum score on the NoTA scale associated with achieving curriculum level 2 objectives. At Year 8, 63 percent of students achieved above the minimum score associated with achieving curriculum level 4 objectives.

Girls scored higher on the NoTA, on average, than boys by 9 to 10 scale score units at both year levels.

At both Year 4 and Year 8, Māori and Pasifika students, on average, scored lower than non-Māori and non-Pasifika (by 8 and 6 scale score units at Year 4 and 10 and 7 scale score units at Year 8, respectively).

### Achievement on the performance ratings framework for drama

Year 8 students were rated higher, on average, on each aspect of the performance ratings framework for drama than Year 4 students. In addition, more girls than boys were rated at the highest level on each aspect.

At Year 4, 51 percent of students received ratings that located their achievement above the minimum score on the PDr scale associated with achieving curriculum level 2 objectives. At Year 8, 51 percent of Year 8 students were located above the minimum score on the PDr scale associated with achieving curriculum level 4 objectives.

The average achievement level for Year 8 students on the PDr scale was 23 units higher than the average for Year 4 students. This difference indicates that students make, on average, about 6 scale score units of ‘progress’ per year between Year 4 and Year 8. This figure can be used to help interpret differences between subgroups. For example, girls, on average, were located higher on the PDr scale than boys by 5 scale score units at Year 4 and by 7 scale score units at Year 8. These differences represent just over one year of instruction.

The relatively small number of students that were assessed using the performance ratings framework (about 200 at each year level) did not allow reporting across ethnicity, school type and decile band.

## Learning and teaching in drama – attitudes, opportunities and resources

### Students' attitudes to drama

Students indicated how much they agreed with statements related to their attitude to drama at school. Their responses were used to form an Attitude to Drama scale.

In general, students were relatively positive about learning drama at school and teachers reported that students engaged enthusiastically in drama at school.

Year 4 students were more positive overall than students in Year 8. Girls at both year levels were more positive, on average, than boys.

As a group, Pasifika students were more positive about learning drama than non-Pasifika students at both year levels.

Students in low decile schools had, on average, a more positive attitude to drama than students in mid or high decile schools.

Students who were less positive about learning drama scored lower, on average, on the PDr scale at both year levels, than those who were positive or very positive. These differences were statistically significant at Year 8, but not at Year 4.

## **Learning opportunities in drama**

Students were provided with a list of opportunities to learn drama at school and asked to indicate how often they were involved in each one. Out of the list of opportunities provided, students were most likely to report that they performed in a play, and took part in drama games.

Generally, girls reported more frequent involvement in drama-related learning opportunities than boys. The differences between boys and girls were more prevalent at Year 8. The proportions of Māori and Pasifika students reporting participation in cultural groups were greater than the proportions of all students in the sample at both Year 4 and Year 8.

A minority of students learned drama outside of school and only slightly more girls than boys did so. At both year levels, students who said they learned drama outside of school, on average, achieved higher levels on the PDr scale than those who indicated they didn't. The difference in average scores were not statistically significant at either year level. At both year levels, girls were more likely than boys to report making drama by themselves or with others outside of school time.

Teachers rated how frequently each of the same list of learning opportunities was made available to students in their school. Generally, Year 8 teachers were more likely than Year 4 teachers to report that opportunities for learning in drama occurred frequently at their school.

While most teachers reported that each of the opportunities for students to learn and be involved in drama took place at least once a year, students often indicated that they did not take part in these opportunities. The most notable difference between teacher and student responses was related to 'take part in cultural groups', where over 40 percent of students at both year levels reported they never took part in cultural groups. However, 50 percent of Year 4 teachers and 62 percent of Year 8 teachers reported that students had the opportunity to take part in cultural groups at least once a week.

When asked to list regular school-wide arts activities or groups that students could participate in at their school, about one quarter of principals at both year levels listed activities that were categorised as having a drama focus. Examples included theatre clubs/sports, drama and speech clubs/classes, and movie/video making.

## **Teacher confidence and engagement**

The majority of teachers indicated at least some enjoyment and confidence in teaching drama. At Year 8, the proportion of teachers indicating they didn't feel confident about teaching drama was higher than at Year 4. At both year levels, teachers were more likely to agree that they enjoyed teaching drama than they were to agree that they were confident in assessing students' progress or supporting students to self-assess and reflect on their progress.

Overall, fewer principals at Year 4 compared to Year 8 felt that teachers in their schools had appropriate pedagogical and content knowledge to identify and respond effectively to the learning needs of students in drama. Thirty six percent of principals at Year 8 indicated that specialist teachers taught all, or nearly all of the drama programme in their school. At Year 4 the corresponding figure was one percent.

## **Professional learning and development**

Over half of principals reported that drama had not been a focus area for professional development in the last five years. Many teachers also indicated that they had not received any drama-focused PLD in more than six years. Teachers at Year 4 were less likely than those at Year 8 to indicate that they had had professional learning opportunities related to drama in the last 12 months. Teachers generally lacked enthusiasm for the level of professional support they received related to teaching drama.

## **Resourcing drama**

Teachers held mixed views about the level of resourcing for drama in schools. Teachers at Year 4 indicated that they had less access to spaces to teach drama than those at Year 8.

## Final comments

Overall, the NMSSA study indicates that there is room for improvement in how well Year 4 and Year 8 students achieve in drama. This is highlighted by results from the PDr assessment, which showed that about half of the students at each year level achieved below expected curriculum levels. Girls, on average, achieved higher than boys.

The NMSSA study found that students nationally were generally positive about learning drama. As a group, Pasifika students reported higher levels of engagement and interest in drama than non-Pasifika students.

Providing more support to teachers may play a part in improving student outcomes further.

# Introduction

This introduction provides a broad overview of the purpose and features of national monitoring, introduces the focus of the study for 2015 and outlines the structure of the drama report.

## 1. Purpose and features of national monitoring

NMSSA is designed to assess student achievement at Year 4 and Year 8 in New Zealand English-medium state schools. The main purposes of NMSSA are to:

- provide a snapshot of student achievement against the NZC
- identify factors that are associated with achievement
- assess strengths and weaknesses across the curriculum
- measure change in student achievement over time
- provide high-quality, robust information for policy makers, curriculum planners and educators.

NMSSA has a particular focus on Māori students, Pasifika students and students with special education needs.

The study began in 2012 and has been carried out over a five-year cycle. During the first cycle, we are setting the baseline for measuring change in student achievement over time in subsequent cycles.

The study continues the monitoring undertaken by the National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) between 1995 and 2010. It also complements information generated by international evaluation studies, such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

In addition to designing and carrying out an assessment programme, NMSSA collects contextual information from students, teachers and principals to help understand the factors associated with students' achievement. This includes: students' attitudes to, and their opportunities to learn in, the specific learning area being investigated; teachers' confidence in teaching the specific learning area and their views on the learning opportunities provided to students in classroom programmes; teachers' and principals' views of the professional and curriculum support provided by the school and the provision in the school for the learning area.

The project is supported by advisory panels of curriculum experts<sup>3</sup>, reference groups for the priority learner groups (Māori, Pasifika and special education needs) and a technical reference group.

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<sup>3</sup> The arts advisory panel comprised arts discipline experts, advisors, teacher educators and researchers as well as classroom teachers and representatives of the Ministry of Education.

## 2. The focus of the study for 2015

In 2015, the focus for the NMSSA study was English: listening<sup>4</sup>, English: viewing<sup>5</sup>, and the arts. The assessment programme for the arts involved three major elements. Firstly, nationally representative samples<sup>6</sup> of about 2,200 students from 100 schools at each of Year 4 and Year 8 took part in a group-administered assessment that focused on the arts as a multidisciplinary learning area. It was called the Nature of the Arts (NoTA) assessment. Secondly, teachers who were employed in each school used specially prepared judgment frameworks to rate students on different aspects of their performance skills. In each school performance ratings were made for up to 12 of the students involved in the study in one arts discipline (dance, drama, music—sound arts (hereafter referred to as music) or visual arts). In total, about 200 students at each year level received teacher-assessed performance ratings in each arts discipline. Thirdly, about 600 students at each year level (six in each school) undertook a series of short practical tasks in music and visual arts. Practical tasks were not administered in dance or drama. In each school, both the short practical tasks and the NoTA were administered by specially trained, visiting teacher assessors.

Contextual data related to the arts was collected using separate questionnaires for students, teachers and principals. Half of the students answered questions related to music and drama and the other half to questions related to visual arts and dance. At least one teacher from each school completed a teacher questionnaire and at least 85 percent of principals responded to a principal questionnaire.

All data was collected during Term 3, 2015 (July to September).

## 3. Structure of the drama report

This report provides the key findings related to drama drawing on data from the 2015 NMSSA study of the arts. The report is set out in four chapters.

Chapter 1 provides a broad overview of the NMSSA programme in the arts with a focus on drama.

Chapter 2 describes the NoTA assessment and summarises the results. It includes information about the content of the NoTA that was focused on drama.

Chapter 3 presents the findings related to the performance ratings in drama. It reports achievement against the levels of the arts curriculum. It also compares achievement between Year 4 and Year 8 students, and by gender.

Chapter 4 uses the data collected from student, teacher and principal questionnaires to report on students' attitudes and opportunities to learn in drama, and the teaching and resourcing of drama.

The report also contains an appendix providing tables of results. Other background and technical information is contained in the separate report *Technical Information 2015*<sup>7</sup>.

This report complements *The Arts 2015 – Key Findings*<sup>8</sup>. The arts report provides an overview of the arts assessment programme and includes detailed results from the NoTA assessment.

Three other discipline reports<sup>9</sup> provide more detailed reporting on each of the other arts disciplines (dance, music and visual arts).

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<sup>4</sup> The findings for English: listening can be found in *NMSSA Report 8: English: Listening 2015 – Key Findings*.

<sup>5</sup> The findings for English: viewing can be found in *NMSSA Report 9: English: Viewing 2015 – Key Findings*.

<sup>6</sup> Information about the sampling process and the achieved samples can be found in Appendix 1 of *NMSSA Report 11: Technical Information 2015*.

<sup>7</sup> *NMSSA Report 11: Technical Information 2015*.

<sup>8</sup> *NMSSA Report 10.1: The Arts 2015 – Key Findings*.

<sup>9</sup> *NMSSA Report 10.2: Dance 2015 – Key Findings; NMSSA Report 10.4: Music - Sound Arts 2015 – Key Findings; NMSSA Report 10.5: Visual Arts 2015 – Key Findings*.

# 1 Drama in the NMSSA Arts Assessment Programme

This chapter provides an overview of the NMSSA assessment programme for the arts. Special attention is paid to the assessment of drama. The chapter includes four parts:

- Part 1 outlines the arts learning area in the New Zealand Curriculum<sup>10</sup> (NZC) and drama in particular.
- Part 2 describes previous monitoring in the arts by the National Educational Monitoring Project.
- Part 3 describes the NMSSA arts assessment programme.
- Part 4 provides information about how the findings are presented.

## 1. The arts as a learning area

The NZC describes the arts as one learning area. However, each of the four arts disciplines has its own distinctive body of knowledge, concepts and modes of enquiry, and its own forms or genres, styles, conventions and processes. The curriculum requires that students at Years 4 and 8 have access to learning in each of the arts disciplines. Even though each arts discipline is organised with four common strands in the curriculum, for students to make progress, they must demonstrate specific discipline-related knowledge and skills. The four common strands included: understanding the arts in context, developing practical knowledge in the arts, developing ideas in the arts, and communicating and interpreting in the arts. How the strands are incorporated in the learning process varies across disciplines and in emphasis across year levels.

### Drama

The NZC<sup>11</sup> defines drama as follows:

Drama is expressive movement that has intent, purpose, and form. In drama education, students integrate thinking, moving, and feeling. They explore and use drama elements, vocabularies, processes, and technologies to express personal, group, and cultural identities, to convey and interpret artistic ideas, and to strengthen social interaction. Students develop literacy in drama as they learn about, and develop skills in, performing, choreographing, and responding to a variety of genres from a range of historical and contemporary contexts.

Drama expresses human experience through a focus on role, action, and tension, played out in time and space. In drama education, students learn to structure these elements and to use dramatic conventions, techniques, and technologies to create imagined worlds. Through purposeful play, both individual and collaborative, they discover how to link imagination, thoughts, and feelings. As students work with drama techniques, they learn to use spoken and written language with increasing control and confidence and to communicate effectively using body language, movement, and space. As they perform, analyse, and respond to different forms of drama and theatre, they gain a deeper appreciation of their rich cultural heritage and language and new power to examine attitudes, behaviours, and values. By means of the drama that they create and perform, students reflect and enrich the cultural life of their schools, whānau, and communities (pp. 20-21).

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

<sup>11</sup> *The New Zealand Curriculum*, pp. 20-21.

## 2. Students' previous arts achievement in New Zealand

The National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) was carried out by the University of Otago for the Ministry of Education and ran from 1995 to 2010. Between 1996 and 2008, NEMP conducted monitoring every four years in music and visual arts, at Year 4 and Year 8, using NEMP frameworks based on national curriculum documents.

Unlike music and visual arts, drama was not previously monitored by the NEMP. The NMSSA study reported here is the first time that student achievement in the discipline of drama has been assessed at a national level at Year 4 and Year 8 in New Zealand schools. The findings of the report represent an important baseline to build on.

## 3. NMSSA arts programme

### Components of the arts programme

A programme was designed to address the multidisciplinary nature of the arts as a learning area. Table 1.1 outlines the five components that made up the programme and includes, in bold type, the number of participants in each one.

Table 1.1 The five components of the 2015 NMSSA arts programme

Component	Discipline and strand/focus	Assessment approach and number of participants
1. The Nature of the Arts (NoTA)	Across dance, drama, music and visual arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understanding the arts in context</li><li>• developing practical knowledge in the arts</li><li>• developing ideas in the arts (visual arts only)</li><li>• interpreting in the arts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group-administered tasks presented by computer</li><li>• Completed by all year 4 and year 8 students (about <b>2,200</b> at each year level)</li></ul>
2. Performance ratings frameworks	For dance, drama, music and visual arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• developing ideas in the arts</li><li>• communicating in the arts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teachers of a sub-sample of the students involved in the NMSSA study made best-fit judgements of student performance in each discipline using a rating scale framework</li><li>• At each year level, 25 schools were invited to assess one discipline each. Judgements were made for up to 12 students in each school (about <b>200</b> students per discipline assessed at each year level)</li></ul>
3. Practical tasks	For music and visual arts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• developing practical knowledge in the arts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visual arts: students completed a line drawing.</li><li>• Music: students completed three short, applied activities, presented by computer, related to beat, rhythm and recognising chord changes</li><li>• Tasks were completed by six students per school (about <b>600</b> students at each year level)</li></ul>
4. Student questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student attitudes to dance, drama, music and visual arts</li><li>• Student reports of opportunities and experiences at school in dance, drama, music and visual arts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Computer-based student questionnaire.</li><li>• Half of the students responded to dance and visual arts; half responded to drama and music</li><li>• About <b>1,100</b> students at each year level</li></ul>
5. Teacher and principal questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher and principal views of arts instruction in their school.</li><li>• Teacher confidence as art educators.</li><li>• Professional learning and development in the arts.</li><li>• Provision for teaching the arts in the school .</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper-based questionnaires</li><li>• Half of the teachers responded to dance and visual arts; half responded to drama and music</li><li>• About <b>100</b> teachers and <b>100</b> principals at each year level</li></ul>

To address the complexity and breadth of the arts learning area, three components focused on assessing student achievement in the arts: the Nature of the Arts assessment, performance ratings and the practical tasks. The focus of each assessment component emphasised different aspects of the strands of the NZC. In particular, the strand ‘communicating and interpreting in the arts’ was subdivided into ‘interpreting in the arts’ for the NoTA assessment and ‘communicating in the arts’ for the performance ratings. Further details about the first three components of the assessment framework for the arts can be found in Appendix 8 of the *Technical Information 2015* report. Components 1 and 2 featured assessment tasks in drama.

The two remaining components focused on collecting contextual and attitudinal information about the arts, including questions specifically about drama, from students, teachers and principals using questionnaires.

### Component 1: The Nature of the Arts (NoTA) assessment

Because the arts is a multidisciplinary learning area, achievement in the arts was assessed with a group-administered assessment that included tasks related to each of the disciplines and that primarily emphasised aspects of three strands of the curriculum: understanding the arts in context, developing practical knowledge in the arts, and interpreting in the arts (as indicated in Table 1.1 the ‘communicating’ aspect of the interpreting in the arts strand was a focus of the performance ratings rather than the NoTA). The NoTA assessment was mainly presented by computer and administered to about 2,200 students at each year level. It included a mixture of selected-response and open-ended short response questions. Students wrote their answers to the short response questions in a booklet. An example of a drama task used in the NoTA assessment is shown in Chapter 2.

Item Response Theory (IRT)<sup>12</sup> was used to locate each student’s overall combined score on the NoTA tasks on a measurement scale (the NoTA scale). A curriculum alignment exercise was used to link NoTA scale scores to curriculum expectations.

### Component 2: Performance ratings

To provide important achievement information about each of the separate arts disciplines, NMSSA constructed performance ratings frameworks for dance, drama, music and visual arts. These frameworks emphasised aspects of two strands of the curriculum: developing ideas in the arts and communicating in the arts. The performance ratings involved the teachers of the students in the NMSSA study making best-fit judgements using a series of descriptors.

Each school was asked to complete performance ratings for up to 12 students in one arts discipline only with 25 schools using each set of rating descriptors at each year level. As a result, teachers completed performance ratings for about 200 students in each arts discipline at each year level.

To develop the frameworks, a series of workshops were held where experienced teachers and curriculum specialists identified indicators of students’ progress, cross-referenced by possible contexts. Using iterative consensus moderation procedures, these indicators were validated by participating teachers in their own and other teachers’ classrooms and, subsequently, the indicators were refined in consultation with curriculum specialists.

Table 1.2 shows that the performance ratings framework for drama was divided into four aspects.

Each aspect was represented by several described levels of achievement. The descriptions outlined what teachers should be able to observe if a student was working at that level. The descriptions for drama are presented in Chapter 3.

Table 1.2 Aspects of the performance ratings framework or drama

Aspect
Working in role
Developing role outside of the dramatic action
Making drama
Talking about role in drama

<sup>12</sup> IRT is an approach to constructing and scoring assessments and surveys that measure mental competencies and attitudes. IRT seeks to establish a mathematical model to describe the relationship between people (in terms of their levels of ability or the strengths of their attitude) and the probability of observing a correct answer or a particular level of response to individual questions. IRT approaches provide flexible techniques for linking assessments made up of different questions to a common reporting scale. The common scale allows the performance of students to be compared regardless of which form of the assessment they were administered.

### **Performance rating scale construction and reliability**

IRT was used to construct measurement scales for performance ratings in dance, drama, music and visual arts. For drama, the scale constructed was Performance in Drama (PDr) and it had a reliability index of 0.93. This indicates that students are located on the scale with a satisfactory level of precision.

### **Component 3: Practical assessment tasks**

To complement the performance ratings, a small number of practical tasks was used to assess music and the visual arts. These tasks emphasised one strand of the curriculum: developing practical knowledge in the arts. Practical tasks were not administered in dance and drama. The NMSSA team considered that it was inappropriate to ask students to perform in front of an unfamiliar teacher assessor in dance and drama. The performance ratings framework was considered to be a more valid way of collecting information about practical aspects of drama.

### **Component 4: Student attitudes**

The fourth component of the NMSSA arts programme included questions about students' attitudes to dance, drama, music and visual arts.

To reduce the response burden on students, two forms of the questionnaire were created. One questionnaire covered the disciplines of dance and visual arts. The second questionnaire covered the disciplines of drama and music. Schools were randomly allocated to either dance and visual arts, or drama and music. All students responded to one of the computer-based student questionnaires. Students were asked to rate a series of statements about their attitudes. Findings about students' attitudes to drama are reported in Chapter 4.

### **Attitude scale construction and reliability**

The Rasch model was used to construct four reporting scales based on the responses to the attitude statements for each arts discipline in the main study. As with the other NMSSA scales, the Attitude to Drama scale was set to have an average of 100 scale score units and an average standard deviation of 20 scale score units for a year level. The reliability index of the Attitude to Drama scale was 0.88.

### **Component 5: Teacher and principal perspectives on the arts**

Separate questionnaires were developed for teachers and principals to ask about their perspectives on the learning and teaching of the arts.

There were two forms of the teacher questionnaire. One questionnaire covered the disciplines of dance and visual arts. The second questionnaire covered the disciplines of drama and music. As for the student questionnaires, schools were randomly allocated to either dance and visual arts, or drama and music. The questionnaire included sections asking teachers about their preparedness and support to teach the discipline, students' opportunities to learn, and their own opportunities to undertake professional learning. Up to three teachers from each school were asked to fill in a teacher questionnaire. The teachers chosen were those who had the most students participating in NMSSA assessment, and/or were specialist teachers of one of the two arts disciplines covered by their questionnaire. Classroom teachers completed the sections relating to disciplines they had at least some responsibility for teaching; specialist teachers completed their respective discipline section.

The principals' questionnaire asked principals about the school-wide programme in the arts and each of the disciplines.

In total, 120 Year 4 teachers and 73 Year 8 teachers responded to the sections of the teacher questionnaire related to drama. The total number of respondents to the principal questionnaire was 178; 93 from Year 4 and 85 from Year 8.

## 4. Presentation of the findings

This section describes how graphs and tables are used to present findings in the report, and includes an explanation of some of the statistics used.

### Box plots

Box and whisker plots (box plots) are used to summarise score distributions.

To construct a box plot, scores are ordered from low to high and then divided into four groups of equal size, called quartile groups. These are shown in Figure 1.1.

The box is used to show the range of the middle 50 percent of the scores and the whiskers the top and bottom 25 percent of scores. In this report, the whiskers of the box plot do not include outliers (scores considered to be rare and unusual) and have a maximum length of 1.5 multiplied by the inter-quartile (middle 50 percent) range.

When box plots for two or more groups are presented as part of the same graphic, the widths of the boxes are used to represent the relative sizes of the groups. For instance, a narrow box indicates that the group size is smaller than that represented by a wider box in the same plot. Box plots have not been drawn when the size of the group falls below 30 students.

The colours for the box plots have been chosen to assist with readability. Different hues have been selected to represent each of the reporting groups (for instance, gender) and two different shades of each hue chosen to represent the group at each year level (a lighter shade for Year 4 and a darker shade for Year 8). The intention behind the use of shades was to show the relationships between the year levels and the different reporting group types at the same time.

For plots involving the achievement scales, the minimum scale score associated with achieving the curriculum objectives at each of curriculum levels 2 to 4 are indicated by the grey horizontal dotted lines across the graph as shown in Figure 1.2.

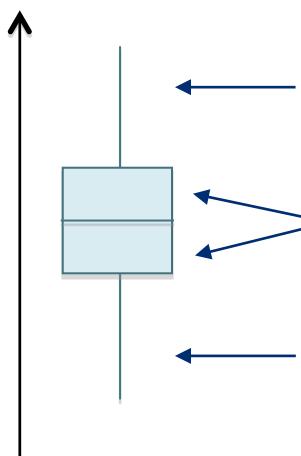


Figure 1.1 Understanding box plots

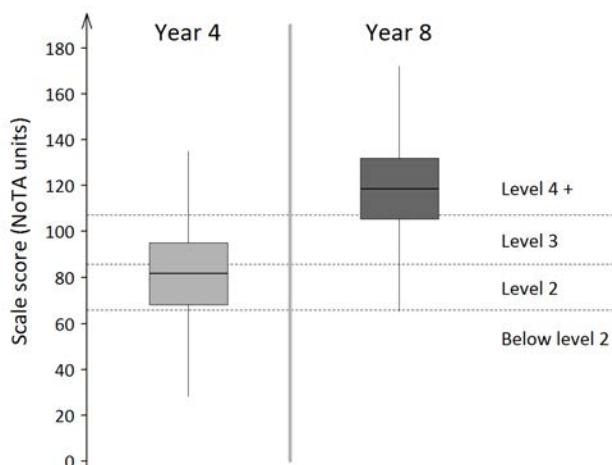


Figure 1.2 Interpreting box plots

## Line graphs of score distributions

Another type of graph used to display data is the line graph as shown in Figure 1.3. Line graphs are used to show how the distributions of scores for Year 4 and Year 8 compare with curriculum expectations. Horizontal shaded lines are used to indicate the ‘cut-scores’ used to separate achievement at one curriculum level from another. The shading around the lines provides a reminder that these lines represent the result of a judgement exercise (the curriculum alignment process).

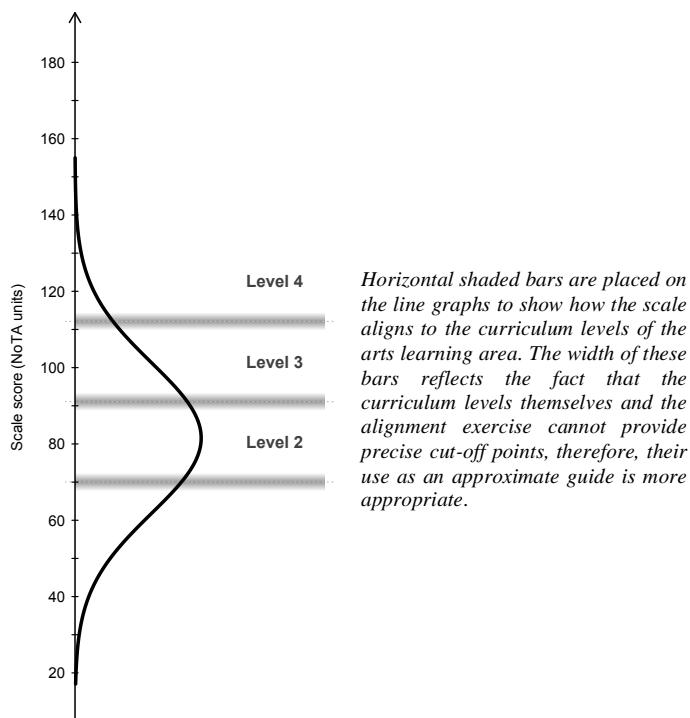


Figure 1.3 An example of a line graph

## Tables of numerical results

The scale score measures developed for the NMSSA arts study quantify achievement differences in terms of scale score units. Because the same scale has been used at both Year 4 and Year 8 it is possible to estimate how much change, on average, occurs on an annual basis. Table 1.3 shows the differences in average scale scores on the NoTA scale between Year 4 and Year 8, and how this relates to annualised change. As can be seen, scores increased, on average, by about 9 scale score units per year.

Table 1.3 Average difference in scale score units on the NoTA assessment between Year 4 and Year 8

	Nature of The Arts
Difference in average scale score (Year 8 – Year 4)	<b>37</b>
Confidence interval	(35.5, 38.5)
Average annual change	9
Average annual effect size	0.46

Table 1.3 also shows the 95 percent confidence interval associated with the difference in average scores at Year 4 and Year 8. Confidence intervals are used throughout the report and provide a range within which we can be fairly sure the population value for the reported statistic lies. The confidence intervals have been adjusted to account for any design effect created through the sampling procedure (i.e. sampling schools and then sampling students). As a general rule of thumb, when the confidence intervals for two groups overlap, any difference between the groups may reasonably be explained by the kind of random variation that occurs in sampling studies (i.e. the difference between the groups is **not** considered to be statistically significant).

In some cases, the difference in average scores between two groups has been calculated and a confidence interval for that difference presented. When a confidence interval for a difference does not include zero, this difference can be considered to be statistically significant.

Where statistically significant differences appear in tables in this report they are presented in bold font. For instance, in the table above, the Year 8–Year 4 difference of 37 scale score units is in bold font – the difference is considered to be statistically significant.

Effect sizes have been used to help interpret differences between groups. An effect size quantifies the difference between the average scores for two groups in terms of standard deviation units. The calculation of the effect sizes in this report weights the standard deviation for each group by its sample size<sup>13</sup>. Because the standard deviations for groups are often different, this can mean that the same difference in scale score units results in slightly different effect sizes for different pairs of groups. When comparing two effect sizes, it is very important to refer back to the scale score differences to make sure any interpretations are valid.

### The use of rounding

In the tables and text presented in this report, the average scores for each group and subgroup have been rounded to whole numbers. Some tables of findings report the difference between average scale scores for two groups or subgroups. These differences have been calculated using the non-rounded averages and are numerically correct. In some cases, the difference reported may not be the same as the simple difference between the pair of rounded averages shown in the table. All confidence intervals have been rounded to the nearest half scale score unit or percentage point.

---

<sup>13</sup> The formula for the effect size calculation is: 
$$\frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(n_1-1)s_1^2 + (n_2-1)s_2^2}{n_1+n_2-2}}}$$
, where  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  represent the average scores for group 1 and group 2,  $s_1$  and  $s_2$  their standard deviations and  $n_1$  and  $n_2$  the number in each group.

This chapter describes the Nature of the Arts (NoTA) assessment with particular emphasis on drama. The chapter includes two parts:

- Part 1 illustrates how drama was included as part of the NoTA assessment
- Part 2 summarises students' arts achievement on the NoTA assessment.

## 1. Drama as part of the NoTA

The NoTA assessment contained a total of 17 tasks that represented the four disciplines. Each task included a set of items based on one theme or idea. Criteria were used to mark each item. Items were scored dichotomously (0 or 1) or using scales that ranged from 0 to 1, 0 to 2, or 0 to 3. Table 2.1 shows the breakdown of the number of tasks, items and score points for each arts discipline in the NoTA assessment.

Table 2.1 Number of tasks and items in the NoTA assessment, by strand and discipline

Discipline	Number of tasks	Number of items*	Number of tasks covering each strand			
	N = 17	N = 45	Understanding the arts in context	Developing practical knowledge in the arts	Developing ideas in the arts	Interpreting in the arts
Dance	4	12	3	2	0	3
Drama	3	11	1	3	0	3
Music	6	11	1	5	0	1
Visual Arts	4	11	4	3	4	4

\* Some items covered more than one strand.

There was a balanced coverage of each discipline within the NoTA assessment in terms of the number of items asked. However, the relative emphasis of each strand varied between disciplines. For example, the strand 'understanding the arts in context' was more strongly emphasised in dance and visual arts than in drama and music. Only the tasks in visual arts represented the four strands of the curriculum. Table A8.3 of the *Technical Information 2015* report sets out the focus of each task by strand.

### The NoTA scale

An Item Response Theory (IRT) approach was used to construct a measurement scale for the NoTA assessment. The scale allowed the total score on the NoTA assessment for each Year 4 and Year 8 student to be located on the same scale. The scale was standardised so that 100 scale score units represents the combined average score for Year 4 and Year 8, and 20 scale score units is equal to the average standard deviation for a year level.

A curriculum alignment exercise was undertaken to link achievement ranges on the NoTA scale to levels of the arts curriculum. Creating this link allowed scale scores to be reported in terms of curriculum levels. In the NZC, each of the first four curriculum levels was designed to represent about two years of learning at school. In general, the expectations are that students in Year 4 will, on balance, achieve level 2 objectives by the end of the year, and that students in Year 8 will, on balance, achieve level 4 objectives by the end of the year. The alignment exercise focused on defining the minimum scores (cut-scores) on the NoTA scale associated with achieving curriculum level 2, 3 and 4 objectives. The exercise is described in Appendix 5 of *Technical Information 2015*.

## Item Map

Figure 2.1 provides an item map that shows where each of the tasks in the NoTA assessment was located on the NoTA scale. Each task is represented by a coloured rectangle, with the dots within each rectangle representing the items that made up the task<sup>14</sup>. Items located at the upper end of the scale were more difficult than items at the lower end of the scale. The item map shows that most of the tasks covered a similar range of difficulty across the different disciplines. One task in music, ‘Instruments’ was relatively less difficult than other NoTA tasks. On the other hand, another music task, ‘Up and Down’, contained one item that students found much more demanding than all other items in the NoTA assessment. As can be seen, three different tasks in the NoTA assessment were focused on drama.

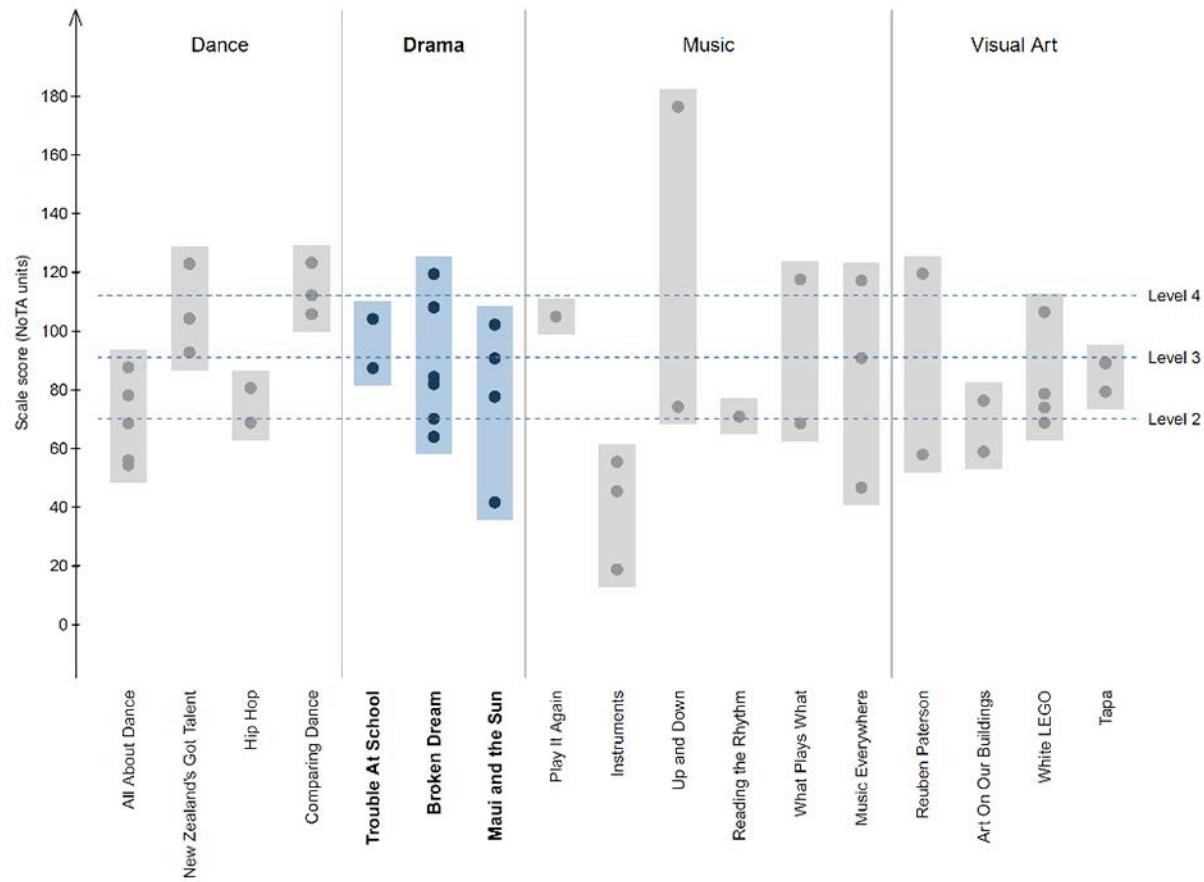


Figure 2.1 Item map for the NoTA assessment

### Example of a drama task included in the Nature of the Arts assessment

In the task called *Maui and the Sun* students were asked to respond to questions about a media clip of a shared drama performance. The *Maui and the Sun* task contained two items. The first item required students to describe and interpret a moment in a shared drama (Figure 2.2). The second item required students to identify and discuss how drama creates meaning (Figure 2.3). For each item, the focus of the item is identified along with the scoring guide and examples of students’ responses.

<sup>14</sup> Sometimes more dots representing items are shown in the item map than are recorded in Table 2.1. This is because in a small number of cases an item was ‘split’ into a Year 4 version and a Year 8 version. Both versions are shown on the item map.

**Context:** In the story *Māui and the Sun*, Māui and his brothers lay a trap to catch the sun because it travelled across the sky too quickly each day. They sneak up on the sun as it is rising; they catch it with strong ropes, holding the sun with all their strength and slowing it down.

On the computer you will see some clips showing students working in drama to tell the story of Māui and the Sun. Drama uses different conventions to help tell stories.

**Item 1.** On the computer you will see a frozen image.

- What part of the story is happening here?
- How do you know that?



**Focus:** Discusses meaning and intention, and how it is communicated

**Scoring guide**

**0:** Inappropriate response or student is unable to respond

**Student responses**

'I don't know.'

**1:** Describes what is happening in this part of the story

'Maui and his brothers are holding back the sun by pulling the ropes.'

**2:** Describes and interprets what is happening – links to how drama works (techniques and elements)

'Maui and his brothers are pulling hard on the ropes - you can tell this by their faces and the way they hold their hands.'

'They are using mime because they haven't got a rope.'

Figure 2.2 Item 1 of the NoTA task *Māui and the Sun*

**Item 2.** How does putting Māui's brother in the 'hot seat' help you to find out more about the story?



**Focus:** Identifies and discusses how drama creates meaning

**Scoring guide**

**0:** Inappropriate response or student is unable to respond

**Student responses**

'To talk about the story.'  
'A child sat on the chair.'

**1:** Basic description about why the process of hot-seating might have been used

'You can ask the character questions.'  
'The questions are about the story.'  
'The questions are answered.'

**2:** Describes and gives examples about why the process of hot-seating might have been used (the outcome of hot-seating)

'You can find out things that weren't in the story like how they felt.'  
'It tells us more about what happened.'  
'It tells us what they thought and what they did.'

Figure 2.3 Item 2 of the Nature of the Arts task *Māui and the Sun*

## NoTA scale description

Figure 2.4 provides a description of drama skills and knowledge measured by the NoTA scale. The description was developed directly from student responses to the drama tasks within the NoTA assessment. The complete description of the NoTA scale across the four disciplines is contained in the report *The Arts 2015 – Key Findings*. Readers are encouraged to refer back to the descriptions when considering the meaning of the NoTA scale scores.

To create the scale description, the scoring categories for each question (0, 1 or 2 for instance) in the NoTA assessment were located on the scale. This meant identifying where the students who scored in each category were most likely to have achieved overall on the scale. For example, the scoring category ‘1’ for item 1 of the drama task *Māui and the Sun* (shown in Figure 2.2) was located at the part of the scale where students who scored a ‘1’ on that item were most likely to have achieved overall. Once this had been done for all questions, the descriptors that defined each scoring category were examined. The NMSSA team identified the competencies expected as the scale locations associated with the different scoring categories increased, and students’ responses became more sophisticated. The result was a five-part description, providing a broad indication of what students typically know and can do in drama when achieving at different places on the scale.

The description is provided to give readers a strong sense of how the discipline of drama was assessed through the Nature of the Arts assessment. The scale descriptors have not been written to necessarily ‘line up’ with curriculum levels or achievement objectives. They are a direct reflection of what was assessed and how relatively hard or easy students found the content of the assessment.

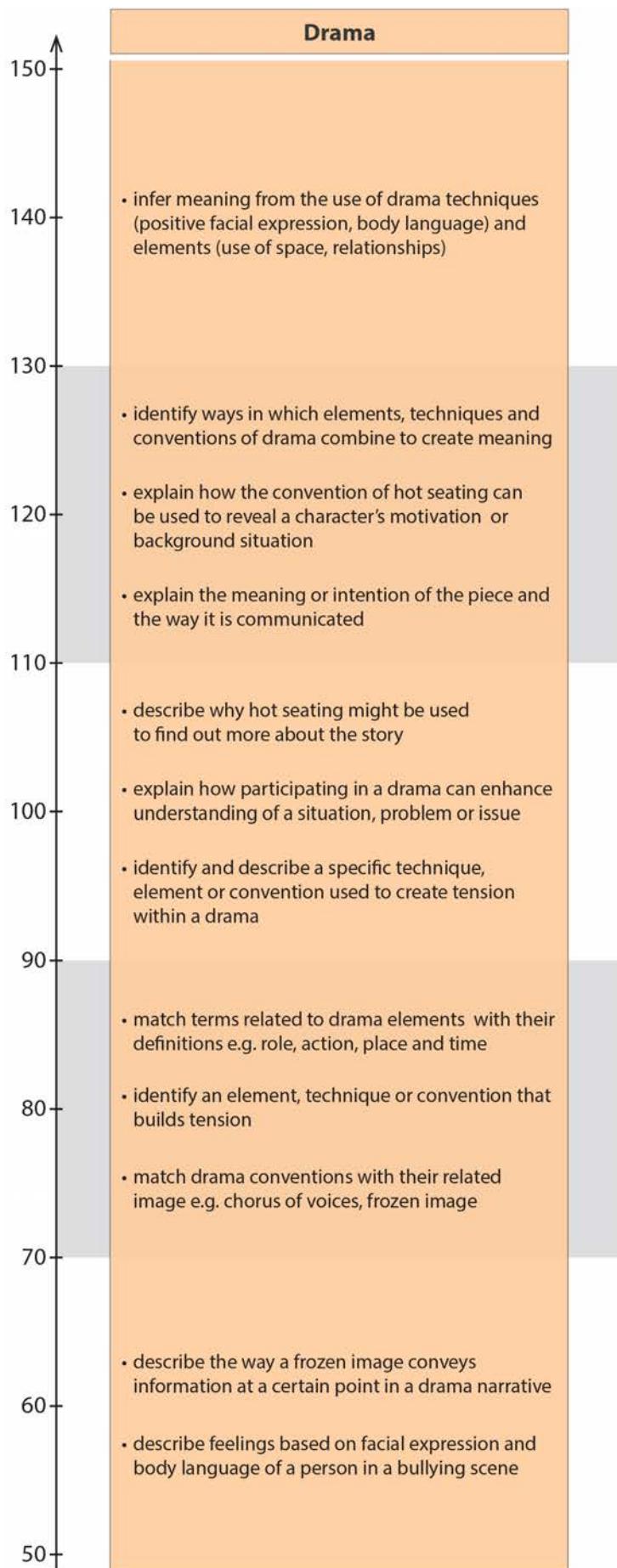


Figure 2.4 Description of drama skills and knowledge on the NoTA scale

## 2. Achievement on the NoTA scale

This section summarises how students in Year 4 and Year 8 achieved on the NoTA assessment. Readers are reminded that the NoTA included material from across the four arts disciplines and the results reported here represent achievement on the NoTA as a whole.

Figures 2.5 and 2.6 use line graphs to show the whole score distribution for Year 4 and Year 8, respectively, against the agreed alignment of curriculum levels 2, 3 and 4 with the NoTA scale. The grey horizontal lines represent the cut-scores associated with curriculum levels 2, 3 and 4.

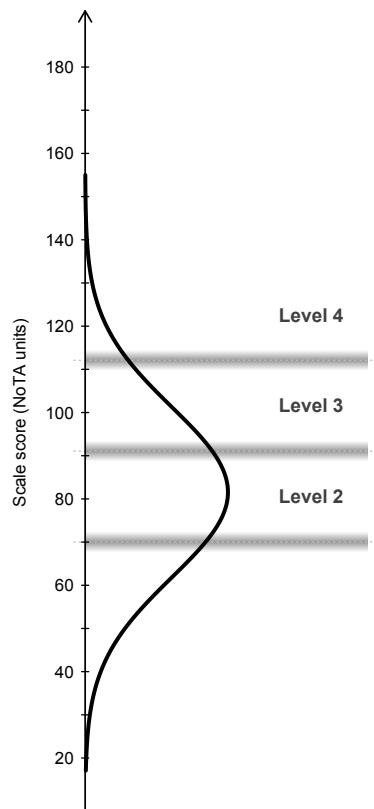


Figure 2.5 Distribution of scores for Year 4 students on the NoTA scale against the NZC levels for the arts

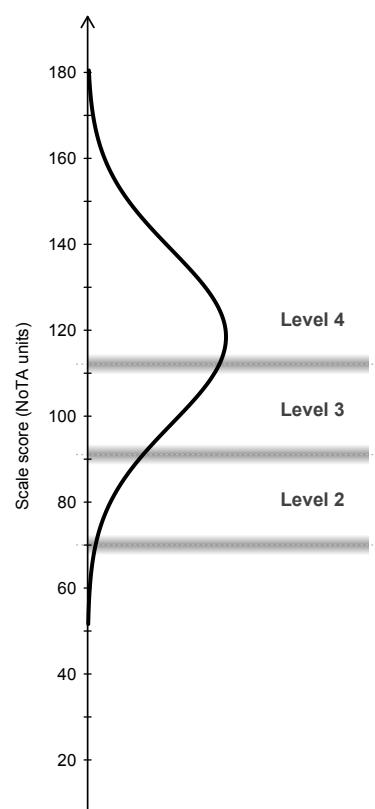


Figure 2.6 Distribution of scores for Year 8 students on the NoTA scale against the NZC levels for the arts

Table 2.2 provides summary statistics from the NoTA assessment for each year level. On average, Year 8 students scored higher than Year 4 students by 37 NoTA units. This year level difference in average scale score represents an annualised difference of about 9 NoTA units with an annualised effect size of 0.46. We can use the 9 NoTA units to represent roughly one year of instruction.

Table 2.2 Summary statistics for Year 4 and Year 8 students from the NoTA assessment

	Nature of the Arts		
	Year 4 N = 2224	Year 8 N = 2192	Difference between Year 8 and Year 4
Average scale score	82	118	<b>37</b>
Confidence interval for the average	(80.5, 82.5)	(117.5, 119.5)	(35.5, 38.5)
Standard deviation	20	20	
Average annual effect size			0.46

Figures 2.7 and 2.8 display the score distributions on the NoTA scale at Year 4 and Year 8, respectively, by gender and ethnicity<sup>15</sup>.

Girls scored higher, on average, than boys by 9-10 scale units at both year levels. The difference was statistically significant at both year levels. Based on the difference in average scores for students in Year 4 and Year 8, this difference between boys and girls is equivalent to roughly one year of instruction.

At both Year 4 and Year 8, Māori and Pasifika students, on average, scored lower than non-Māori and non-Pasifika students (by 8 and 6 NoTA scale units at Year 4, and 10 and 7 NoTA scale units at Year 8, respectively). These differences were statistically significant.

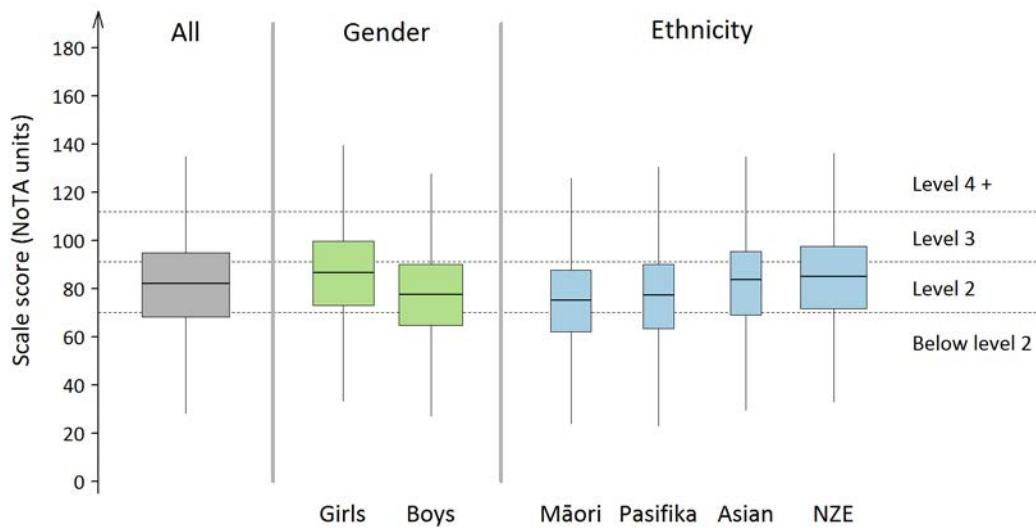


Figure 2.7 Distribution of scores for Year 4 students on the NoTA scale, by gender and ethnicity  
(NZE=NZ European)

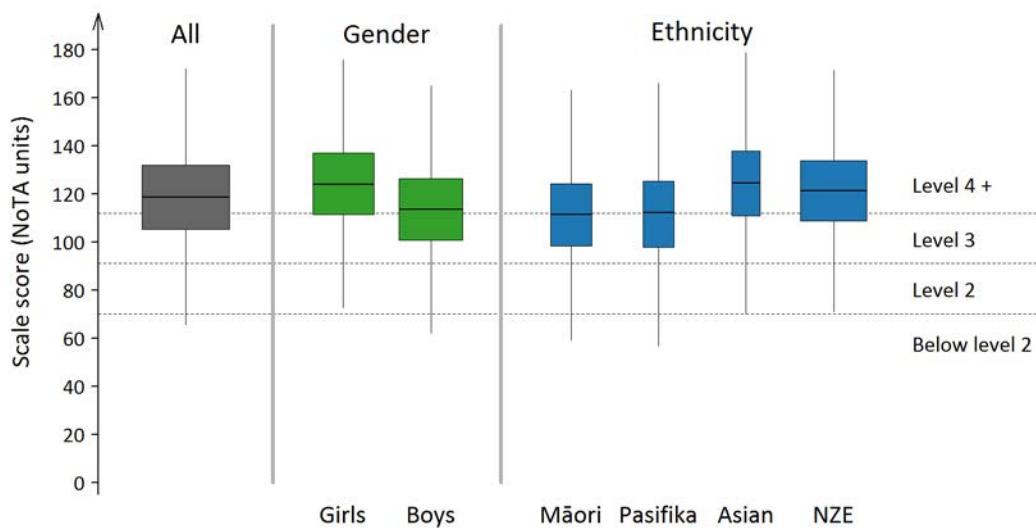


Figure 2.8 Distribution of scores for Year 8 students on the NoTA scale, by gender and ethnicity  
(NZE=NZ European)

<sup>15</sup> Non-prioritised ethnicity was used where students could identify with up to three ethnicities. This meant they could be present in multiple ethnic groups. Student ethnicity data were obtained from National Student Number information held on the Ministry of Education ENROL database. The 'NZ European' category included NZ Pākehā only. The 'Pasifika' category included Tokelauan, Fijian, Niuean, Tongan, Cook Islands Māori, Samoan and other Pacific peoples. The 'Asian' category included Filipino, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Other Southeast Asian, Indian, Chinese, Sri Lankan, Japanese, Korean, and other Asians. The 'Other' category included Australians, British/Irish, German, Dutch, Greek, Polish, South Slav, Italian and other Europeans, Middle Eastern, Latin American, African, and Not Stated.

## Achievement against the curriculum

Table 2.3 shows percentages of Year 4 and Year 8 students achieving against curriculum levels according to the NoTA scale. About 72 percent of Year 4 students scored above the minimum score on the NoTA scale associated with achieving curriculum level 2 objectives. About 63 percent of Year 8 students scored above the minimum score associated with achieving curriculum level 4 objectives.

Table 2.3 Percentage of Year 4 and Year 8 students achieving across curriculum levels according to the NoTA scale, by curriculum level

Curriculum level	Year 4 N = 2224		Year 8 N = 2192	
	%	Confidence interval (%)	%	Confidence interval (%)
Level 4 and above	6	(4.5, 7.0)	63	(60.5, 65.5)
Level 3	26	(24.0, 28.5)	28	(25.5, 30.0)
Level 2	40	(37.5, 42.5)	8	(6.5, 9.0)
Level 1	28	(25.5, 30.0)	1	(0.5, 1.5)

# 3 Performance Ratings in Drama

This chapter describes Year 4 and Year 8 achievement in drama based on results generated using the performance ratings framework for drama. As described in Chapter 2, this assessment was based on best-fit judgments made by the teachers of a sub-sample of the students who were involved in the NMSSA study. The teachers used a framework of step-level descriptors to create a rating profile for each student across four different aspects of drama: working in role, developing role outside of the dramatic action, making drama, and talking about role in drama.

The chapter begins by describing the sub-sample that was assessed using the performance ratings framework for drama. It then examines how students were rated on each of the aspects that made up the framework and describes achievement on the framework as a whole. Achievement is examined by year level and gender. The relatively small number of students that were assessed using the performance ratings framework did not allow robust reporting across ethnicity, school type and decile band.

## 1. Completion of the Performance Ratings in Drama assessment

In total, 50 schools (25 at each year level) out of the 200 schools in the NMSSA study were asked to complete the Performance Ratings in Drama assessment. Of these, 24 schools at Year 4 and 19 schools at Year 8 returned completed ratings. The schools that did not complete the assessment provided a variety of reasons for not being able to do so. This included that drama was taught in modules at set times during the year and that this had not occurred yet for the students in the study.

Table 3.1 shows the number of students in the national sample for whom performance ratings in drama were completed at each year level by gender and school decile band. Each school was asked to complete performance ratings for the first 10 students from the randomised list of students selected from their school to take part in the NMSSA study.

Table 3.1 Composition of the student samples for whom performance ratings in drama were completed

Gender	Number of students	
	Year 4 N = 240	Year 8 N = 193
Girls	114	101
Boys	126	92
School decile band		
Low	30	20
Mid	98	90
High	112	83

To provide an indication of teachers' confidence in making the judgements, the teacher who completed each rating was asked to show how much they agreed with the statement: 'I found it easy to make judgements about this student's drama profile'. They responded by selecting from: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Figure 3.1 shows how the teachers responded at each year. Overall the majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

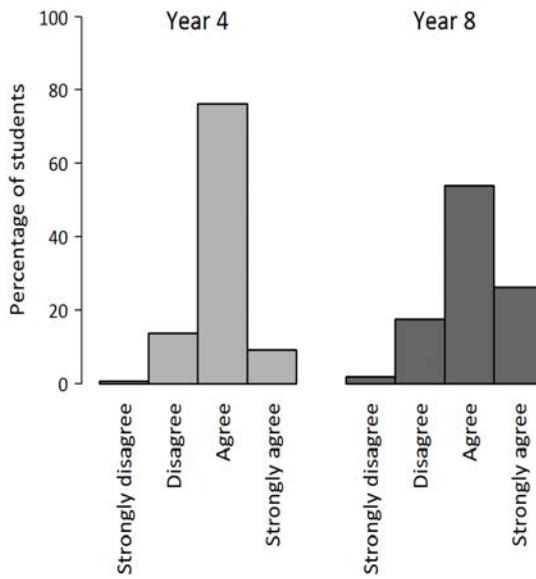


Figure 3.1 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses about how easy it was to make a drama performance rating, by year level

Teachers were also asked to respond to the question 'this student engages enthusiastically in drama learning experiences at school'. Figure 3.2 shows how the teachers responded at each year level. Overall the majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

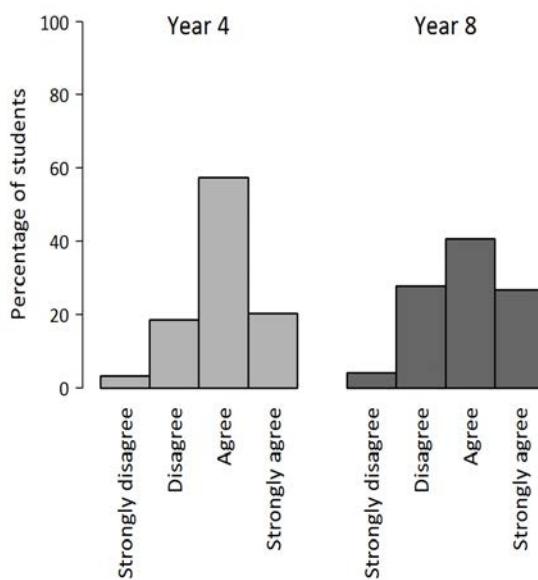


Figure 3.2 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses about student engagement in drama, by year level

## 2. Achievement by aspect

Making an assessment using the performance ratings framework for drama involved making judgments across four different aspects of drama: working in role, developing role outside of the dramatic action, making drama, and talking about role in drama. For each aspect, teachers selected the step-level in the framework that provided the best-fit descriptor of their student's achievement level. They also had the option of indicating an advanced stage of that step. For instance, teachers could indicate the best-fit step was a '1' or, if they thought the student was further advanced but not yet described by the second step, a '1A'.

To simplify the analysis all advanced steps were collapsed back into their original step-level. For instance, all '1A' step-levels were recoded back to a '1'.

### Working in role

Figure 3.3 shows the descriptors for each step of the aspect: 'working in role'.

Working in role:			
Role is fundamental to drama. This aspect is about students' ability to work in role, 'as if they are someone else'. This involves students imagining they are someone else in an imagined place. They will be seeing how things look through another's eyes, and responding to the imaginary situations as if they are there. Through working in role they will develop understandings of drama techniques (facial expression, voice, movement, gesture) and elements (role, time, space, action, tension, focus). This might happen as part of process drama activity or may be as part of a class or school production.			
Students at this step:			
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Can work in role in familiar contexts for short spaces of time with teacher guidance and encouragement. The student knows when they and others are in and out of role.	Can work in role (in a blanket or group role) in a drama with teacher guidance. The student takes part appropriately in role responding with their own opinions, feelings and characteristics.	Can sustain a group role, developing the drama and working to a conclusion. They respond in role appropriately throughout the drama.	Can initiate ideas to develop a believable role within a drama. This may be individually or within a small group.

Figure 3.3 Descriptors for the aspect, 'working in role', from the performance ratings framework for drama

Figures 3.4 and 3.5 show how students were rated on the aspect: 'working in role' by year level and gender. The average rating for all students at each year level is also provided in each figure. For instance, the average rating awarded to students at Year 4 was 1.9 and at Year 8 it was 2.8.

A greater proportion of Year 8 students compared to Year 4 students were rated higher across this aspect. Compared to girls, a larger proportion of boys were rated at step 1 in Year 4 and a smaller proportion were rated at step 4 in Year 8.

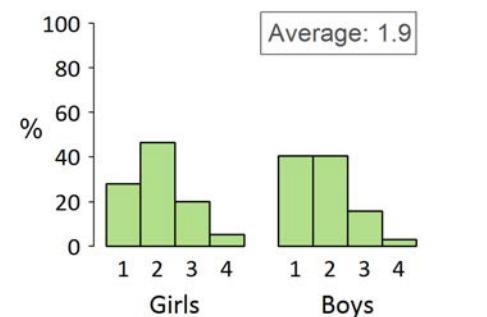


Figure 3.4 Percentage of Year 4 students rated on the aspect, 'working in role', by gender and step

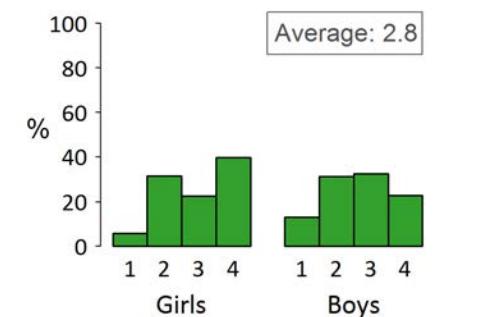


Figure 3.5 Percentage of Year 8 students rated on the aspect, 'working in role', by gender and step

## Developing role outside of the dramatic action

Figure 3.6 shows the descriptors for each step of the aspect: ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’.

<b>Developing role outside the dramatic action:</b> Work on developing a role happens not only within the dramatic action but outside as well, as students and teachers negotiate and explore the role. This might happen as part of process drama activity or may be as part of a class or school production. The student reflects ‘in action’. Drama conventions are used at all steps but their use increases in depth and complexity.			
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
<i>Students at this step:</i>			
Can work outside the dramatic action with teacher guidance or prompting and may contribute ideas about roles to the drama.	Can work outside the dramatic action to contribute ideas that increase the depth of understanding of the role.	Can work outside the dramatic action independently and/or collaboratively in a small group to create and develop role.	Will independently and/or collaboratively research and develop a role to contribute to the specific intention of the drama, selecting a variety of appropriate conventions.

Figure 3.6 Descriptors for the aspect, ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’, from the performance ratings framework for drama

Figures 3.7 and 3.8 show how students were rated on the aspect: ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’ by year level and gender.

As for the ‘working in role’ aspect, a greater proportion of Year 8 students compared to Year 4 students were rated higher on the ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’ aspect. Compared to girls, a smaller proportion of Year 8 boys than girls were rated as performing at the highest step level.

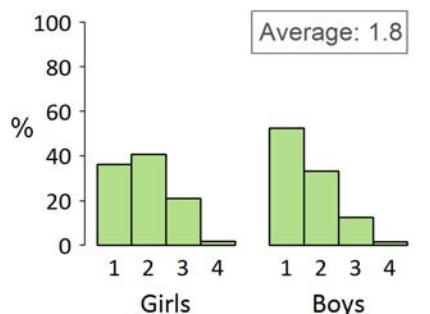


Figure 3.7 Percentage of Year 4 students rated on the aspect, ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’, by gender and step

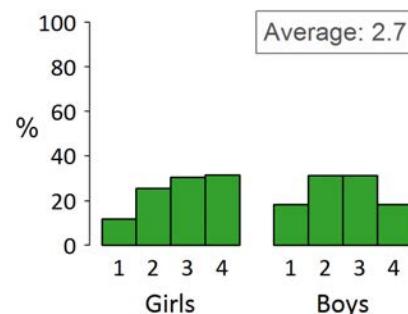


Figure 3.8 Percentage of Year 8 students rated on the aspect, ‘developing role outside of the dramatic action’, by gender and step

## Making drama

Figure 3.9 show the descriptors for each step of the aspect: ‘making drama’.

Making Drama:				
This aspect is about dramatic structuring (using conventions such as Frozen Image, Fast Forward, Chorus) and creating dramatic space. It is about students' abilities to generate ideas for structuring drama and using dramatic space, and accepting and extending on the ideas of others. The steps of this aspect describe students' improving ability to take these ideas and refine and craft them. This might happen as part of process drama activity or may be a devised or scripted class or school production.				
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
<b>Students at this step:</b>				
Can recognise the differences between the imagined/dramatic space and the actual classroom. The student will respond within a whole group role play in an imagined space, for short periods of time with the guidance and support of the teacher.	Can recognise imagined boundaries and obstacles within the imagined/dramatic space.	Can work collaboratively in a small group contributing and discussing ideas about the imagined/dramatic space. They can work within a given convention.	Can work collaboratively within a small group to select conventions, strategies and props to portray a specific effect in the imagined/dramatic space.	Can work collaboratively to contribute and trial ideas, conventions, and strategies, to structure drama work. They will critically reflect on their trials, refining the work to a level that is believable and evokes emotion. They will enhance the dramatic space with selective choices, including use of technologies and symbolic representation. As well, the student at this step can take responsibility for decision making and can effectively combine strategies to bring impact to their work.

Figure 3.9 Descriptors for the aspect, ‘making drama’, from the performance ratings framework for drama

Figures 3.10 and 3.11 show how students were rated on the aspect: ‘making drama’ by year level and gender.

This aspect had the highest average ratings at both year levels. As with the two previous aspects, a greater proportion of Year 8 students compared to Year 4 students were rated higher on this aspect. A greater proportion of Year 4 students were rated at step 1, whereas, a greater proportion of Year 8 students were rated at step 4. At both year levels, a smaller proportion of boys than girls were rated to be performing at the step levels 4 and 5.

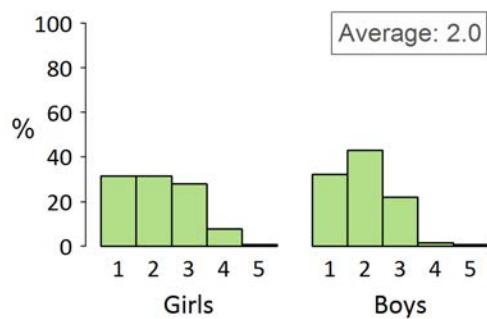


Figure 3.10 Percentage of Year 4 students rated on the aspect, ‘making drama’, by gender and step

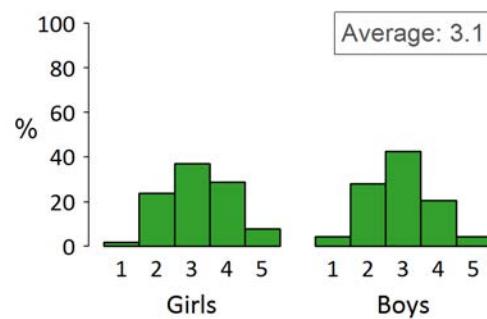


Figure 3.11 Percentage of Year 8 students rated on the aspect, ‘making drama’, by gender and step

## Talking about role in drama

Figure 3.12 show the descriptors for each step of the aspect: ‘talking about role in drama’.

Talking about role in drama:			
Students show their understanding of role and their own and others' work by describing the impact of what they have seen and participated in. Students reflect on action. This might happen as part of process drama activity or may be as part of a class or school production. Students might use journals to record their work and reflect on it.			
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	
<b>Students at this step:</b>			
Can take part in a teacher guided discussion to describe the different roles, and how the role might feel at different times. With teacher guidance they can discuss why this might be.	Can identify feelings experienced by roles, describe the relationships between roles and the effect they have on one another. The student reflects on action.	Can critically discuss how the roles contribute to the drama. The student can independently and with insight reflect on action.	

Figure 3.12 Descriptors for the aspect, ‘talking about role in drama’, from the performance ratings framework for drama

Figures 3.13 and 3.14 show how students were rated on the aspect: ‘talking about role in drama’ by year level and gender.

A greater proportion of Year 8 students compared to Year 4 students were rated higher on this aspect. Compared to girls, a larger proportion of boys were rated at step 1 at both year levels. Similar proportions of boys and girls were rated to be performing at the highest step at both year levels.

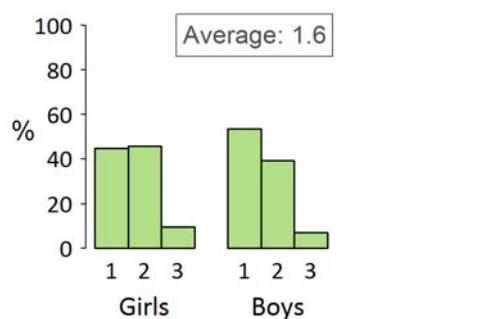


Figure 3.13 Percentage of Year 4 students rated on the aspect, ‘talking about role in drama’, by gender and step

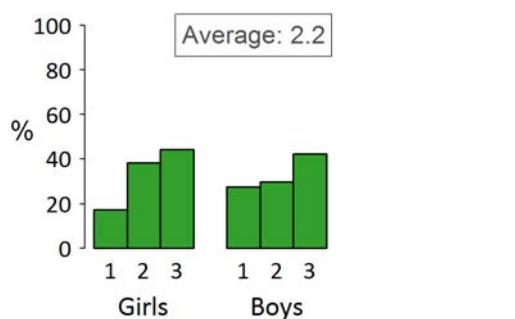


Figure 3.14 Percentage of Year 8 students rated on the aspect, ‘talking about role in drama’, by gender and step

## 3. Performance in Drama Scale

Item response theory (IRT) was used to create an overall measure for the performance ratings in drama based on the step levels students had been awarded for each of the aspects. The scale was called the Performance in Drama (PDr) scale.

### Curriculum alignment

A curriculum alignment exercise was used to link the Performance in Drama scale to curriculum expectations. In the exercise a panel of drama education experts identified the minimally sufficient ratings across the aspects for students to be considered achieving at curriculum levels 2, 3 and 4. This allowed us to draw lines across the scale to indicate the achievement levels associated with curriculum level 2, 3 and 4 achievement objectives. Refer to Appendix 5 of the *Technical Information 2015* report for a description of the curriculum alignment procedure.

## 4. Achievement on the Performance in Drama scale

Figure 3.15 uses box plots to show the distributions of scores on the PDr scale for Year 4 and Year 8 students. Table 3.2 provides summary statistics for each year level. On average, Year 8 students scored 23 units higher on the Performance in Drama scale than Year 4 students (an average difference of just under 6 scale score units per year). The annualised difference represents an effect size of 0.29. This effect size is lower than that found for the NoTA assessment, which was 0.46.

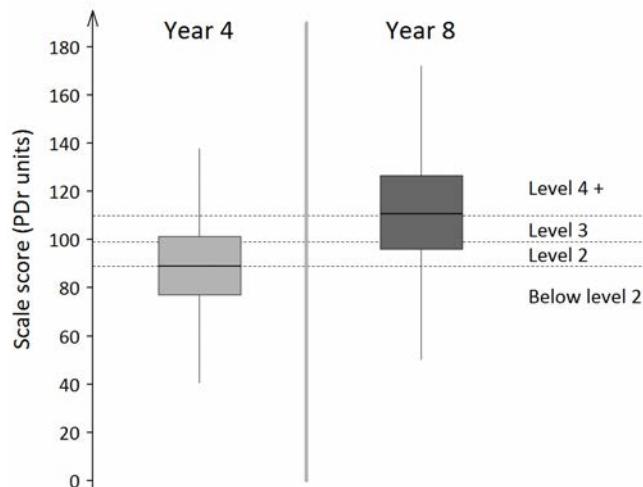


Figure 3.15 Distribution of scores for Year 4 and Year 8 students on the PDr scale

Table 3.2 Summary statistics for Year 4 and Year 8 student achievement on the PDr scale

	Year 4	Year 8	Difference between Year 8 and Year 4
	N = 240	N = 193	
Average scale score	88	112	23
Confidence interval for the average	(85.5, 91.5)	(108.0, 115.0)	(18.5, 28.0)
Standard deviation	19	21	
Average annual effect size			0.29

Table 3.3 shows how Year 4 and Year 8 students achieved against curriculum levels. At Year 4, 51 percent of students scored above the minimum score on the PDr scale associated with achieving curriculum level 2 objectives. At Year 8, 51 percent of students scored above the minimum score associated with achieving curriculum level 4 objectives. The curriculum expectation at Year 4 is that students will have achieved, on balance, level 2 objectives by the end of the school year. In Year 8 they will have achieved, on balance, level 4 objectives by the end of the school year. NMSSA assessment was carried out in Term 3. Therefore, we could expect a larger proportion of students at each year level to have met or exceeded the minimum score on the PDr scale for the appropriate curriculum level by the end of the year.

Table 3.3 Percentage of Year 4 and Year 8 students achieving across curriculum levels according to the PDr scale

Curriculum level	Year 4		Year 8	
	%	Confidence interval (%)	%	Confidence interval (%)
Level 4 and above	12	(7.5, 17.5)	51	(43.0, 59.5)
Level 3	17	(11.0, 22.5)	18	(11.0, 24.0)
Level 2	22	(15.5, 28.0)	18	(11.5, 24.5)
Level 1	49	(41.5, 56.5)	13	(7.5, 18.5)

Smaller proportions of students achieved at expected curriculum levels using the PDr scale compared to using the NoTA assessment (see Chapter 2). This difference is not necessarily surprising given the different focus of each assessment. Because it relied on what teachers had observed in authentic classroom settings, the performance rating assessment was able to focus on students demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of drama in practical applications, for instance when working in role. The NoTA assessment on the other hand was interested in all four art disciplines and less directly focused on practical applications of knowledge and skills. Compared to the performance ratings it involved a greater emphasis on understanding the arts in context.

## Achievement by gender

Figures 3.16 and 3.17 display the score distributions on the PDr scale at each year level by gender, respectively. Girls, on average, were located higher on the PDr scale than boys by 5 scale score units at Year 4 and by 7 scale score units at Year 8.

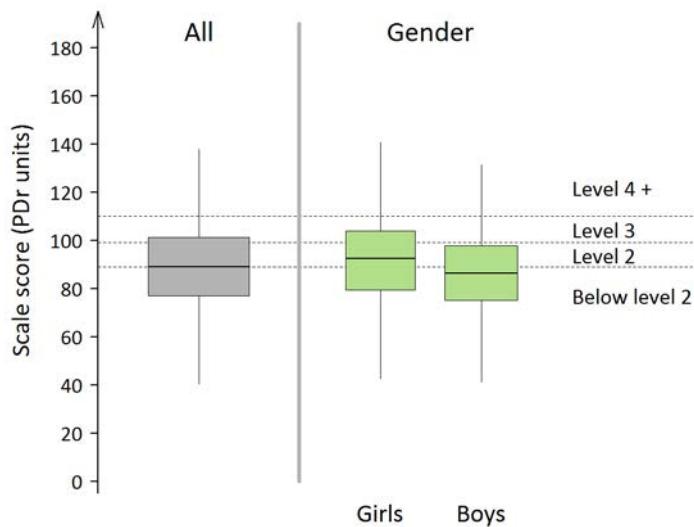


Figure 3.16 Distribution of scores for Year 4 students on the PDr scale, by gender

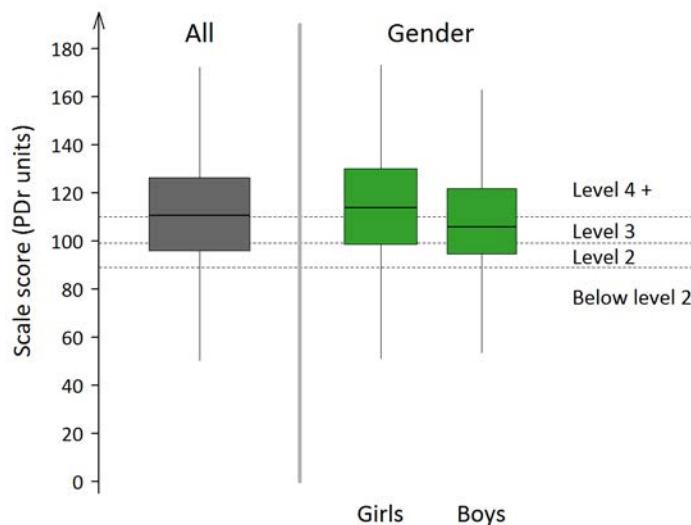


Figure 3.17 Distribution of scores for Year 8 students on the PDr scale, by gender

# 4 Contextual Factors in Drama: Attitudes, Learning Opportunities, Teaching and Resourcing

This chapter uses data collected from student, teacher and principal questionnaires to describe a range of contextual factors associated with learning in drama. The chapter is organised thematically, combining insights from the student, teacher and principal data as appropriate. The themes are: students' attitudes to drama; learning opportunities in drama; the teaching of drama; and the resourcing of drama. After a brief description of who completed the questionnaires, the chapter focuses on each theme in turn.

## 1. Completion of the questionnaires

### The student questionnaire

All students completed a computer-based questionnaire. To reduce the response burden, half of the students completed a questionnaire related to music and drama and the other half responded to a questionnaire related to visual arts and dance. The two questionnaires were carefully allocated to schools to ensure a representative subsample of students completed each version. About 1,100 students at each of Year 4 and Year 8 responded to the questionnaire that included sections related to learning in drama. These sections focused on students' attitudes to drama and their opportunities to learn drama within and outside of school.

### The teacher questionnaire

Up to three teachers in each school completed a teacher questionnaire. As for the student questionnaire, teachers in half of the schools responded to questions about visual arts and dance; the other half responded to questions about music and drama. In total, 120 Year 4 teachers and 73 Year 8 teachers responded to the questions about drama. These represented response rates of 99 percent at Year 4 and 87 percent at Year 8, respectively. Table 4.1 shows the percentage of teachers responding to the drama questionnaire at each year level, by school decile band.

Table 4.1 Percentage of responses to the teacher questionnaire for drama, by year level and school decile

School decile	Drama	
	Year 4 %	Year 8 %
	N = 120	N = 73
Low	24	19
Mid	33	43
High	43	38

Both classroom teachers and specialist teachers of drama were asked to respond to the questionnaire. Of the Year 4 teachers, 4 percent reported that they were drama specialists. At Year 8, 15 percent of respondents reported being specialist teachers of drama.

Teachers were asked about their qualifications, experiences and confidence in teaching drama, their pedagogical approaches to teaching drama and the resources available to them for teaching drama. Teachers also identified the frequency of opportunities their students had to learn drama at school and the professional support and development they experienced in relation to teaching drama.

## The principal questionnaire

In total, 178 principals from 200 schools completed the principal questionnaire; 93 from Year 4 and 85 from Year 8. These represented response rates of 93 percent and 85 percent, respectively. Table 4.2 shows the percentage of principals who responded by school decile band for each year level.

Table 4.2 Number of principals who responded to the questionnaire, by school decile

School decile	Number of principals	
	Year 4 N = 93	Year 8 N = 85
Low	24	15
Mid	33	35
High	36	35

Principals were asked to identify the extent to which the school focused on or prioritised drama in the school curriculum; the extent to which teachers could access specialist support and professional learning and development in drama; and opportunities students had to learn drama through school-wide activities or groups. Principals were also asked to indicate how well teachers taught, assessed and reported on drama.

## 2. Students' attitudes to drama

Students were asked how much they agreed with each of a series of statements about their attitudes to drama. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the statements and how students responded, by gender, at Year 4 and Year 8, respectively.

In general, students were relatively positive about drama, with students in Year 4 more positive overall than those in Year 8. For each statement, at both year levels, girls were more likely than boys to respond using 'agree a lot' or 'totally agree', while boys were more likely to disagree. A notable proportion of girls and boys disagreed that drama was their favourite subject at school. This was stronger for boys at Year 8 than at Year 4.

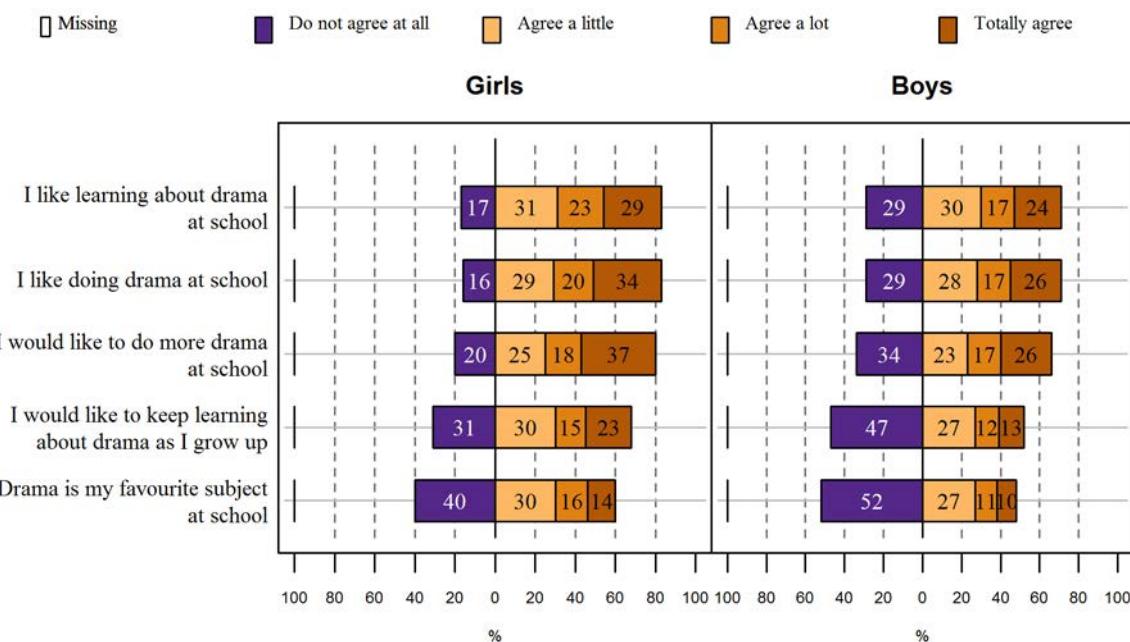


Figure 4.1 Percentage frequency of responses by Year 4 students to statements about their attitudes to drama, by gender

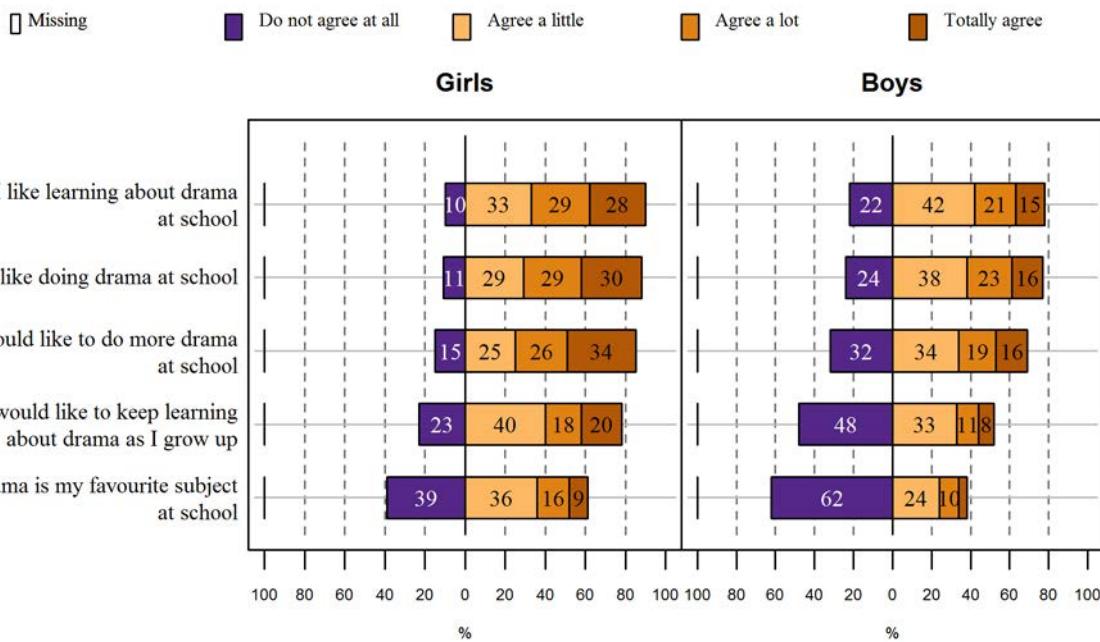


Figure 4.2 Percentage frequency of responses by Year 8 students to statements about their attitudes to drama, by gender

### Attitude to Drama scale

An IRT scale was constructed based on the students' responses to statements about their attitudes to drama. The scale was called the Attitude to Drama scale. The scale was divided into three broad regions to indicate the locations on the scale where students were typically less positive, positive and very positive in their responses.

Figure 4.3 shows the distributions of the Attitude to Drama scale scores for students in Year 4 and Year 8. On average, Year 8 students were slightly less positive about drama than Year 4 students by about 1 scale score unit. However, this difference was not statistically significant.

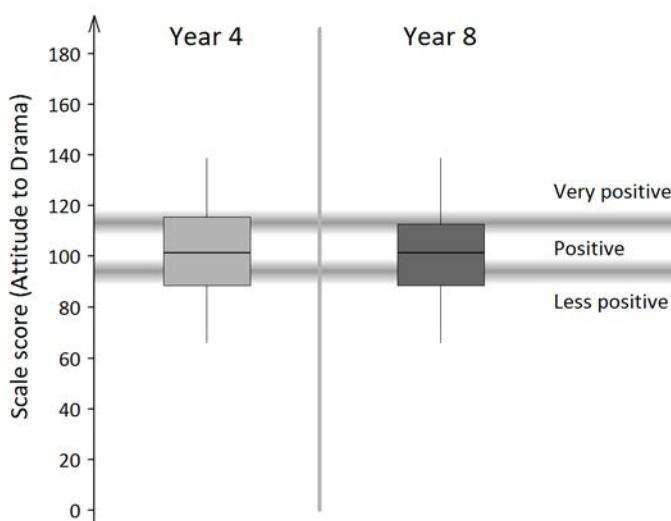


Figure 4.3 Distribution of Attitude to Drama scale scores for Year 4 and Year 8 students

## Attitude to drama by gender and ethnicity

Figures 4.4 and 4.5 show the distributions of scores on the Attitude to Drama scale by gender and ethnicity for Year 4 and Year 8 students, respectively.

Similar to girls' and boys' responses to the individual attitude statements, on the Attitude to Drama scale girls at both year levels were more positive, on average, than boys. The difference was about 7 scale score units for Year 4 and 11 scale score units for Year 8. The difference was statistically significant for both year levels.

Pasifika students, on average, scored 5 scale score units higher than non-Pasifika students at both year levels. At Year 8, Māori students, on average, scored 5 scale score units lower than non-Māori students. These differences were statistically significant.

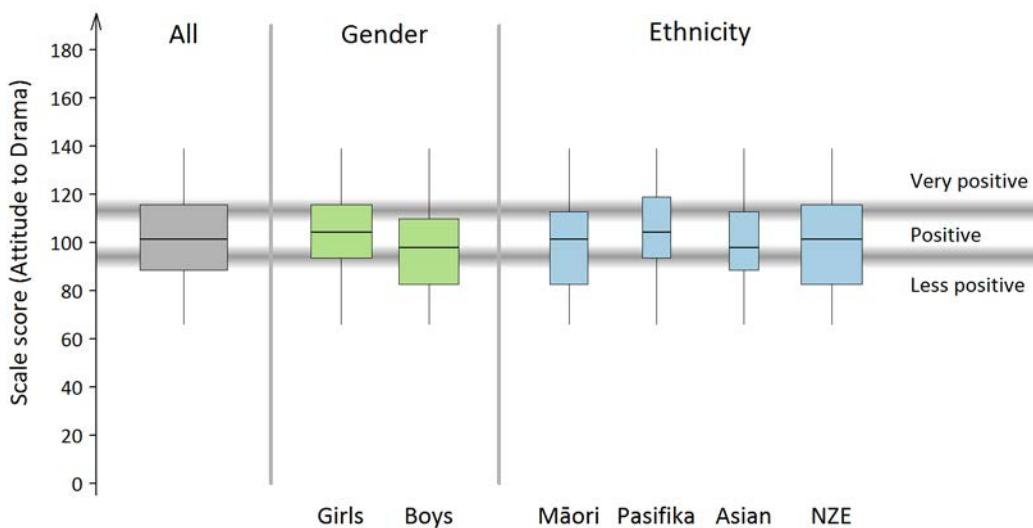


Figure 4.4 Distribution of Attitude to Drama scale scores for Year 4 students, by gender and ethnicity  
(NZE = NZ European)

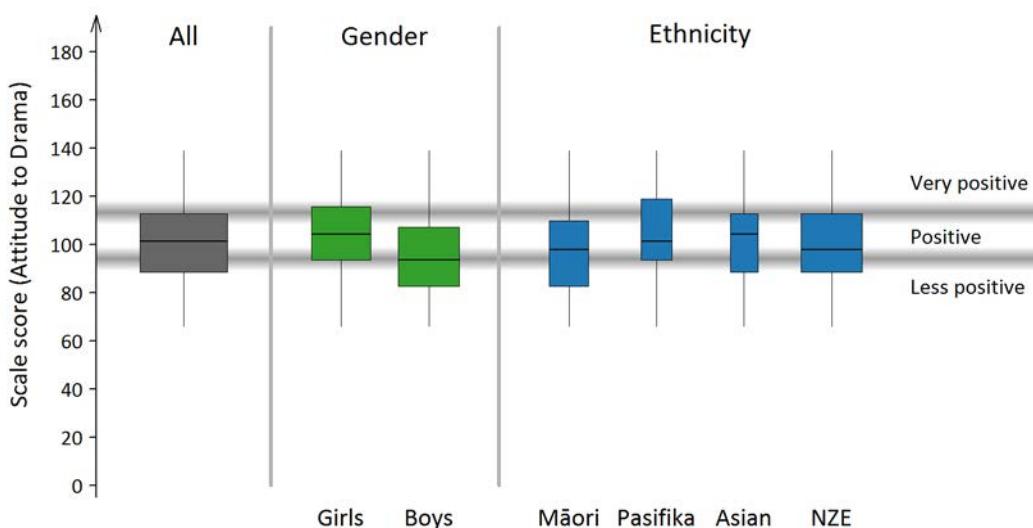


Figure 4.5 Distribution of Attitude to Drama scale scores for Year 8 students, by gender and ethnicity  
(NZE = NZ European)

## Attitude to drama by decile band

At each year level, students in low decile schools had, on average, a more positive attitude to drama than students in mid or high decile schools. The difference in the average score on the Attitude to Drama scale for Year 4 students in high decile schools compared to low decile schools was 3 scale score units, and at Year 8 the difference was 4 scale score units. The differences were statistically significant at Year 8 only.

### Attitude to drama for students with special education needs

At Year 8, there was no difference between the Attitude to Drama scale scores, on average, between students with special education needs and students without special education needs. At Year 4, the latter were slightly more positive than the former but difference in average scores was not statistically significant.

### Relationship between attitudes and performance ratings in drama

Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show the relationship between achievement on the PDr scale and the Attitude to Drama scale scores by using the ‘very positive’, ‘positive’ and ‘less positive’ regions of the Attitude to Drama scale to form three attitude groupings. The figures show very similar distributions of achievement for students at Year 4 who were positive or very positive about drama. The achievement of students who were less positive about drama is somewhat lower on average at both year levels. The correlation between PDr scale scores and Attitude to Drama scale scores was statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ) only at Year 8. The correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was 0.03 at Year 4 and 0.33 at Year 8.

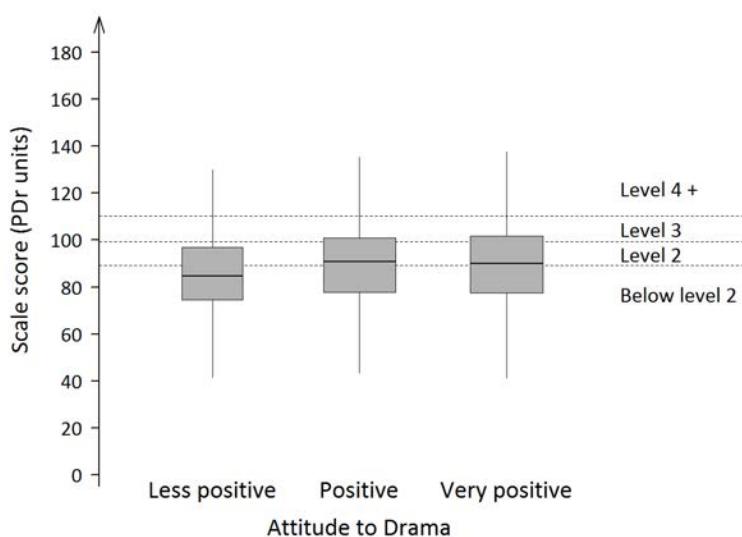


Figure 4.6 Distribution of PDr scale scores for Year 4 students, by level on the Attitude to Drama scale

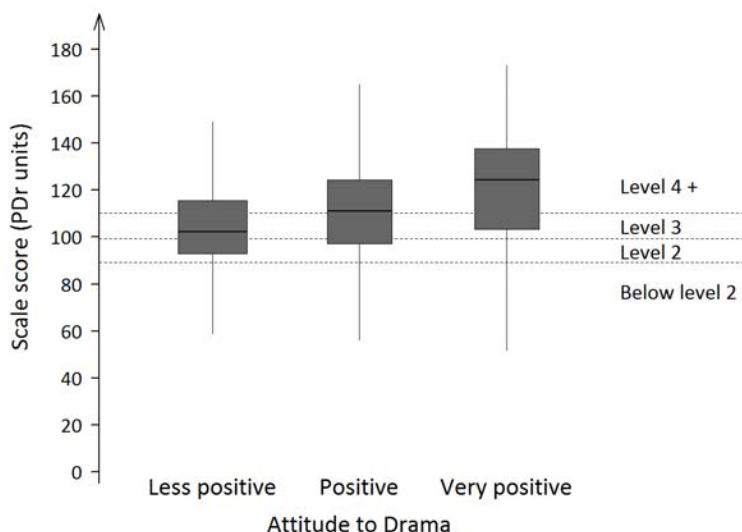


Figure 4.7 Distribution of PDr scale scores for Year 8 students, by level on the Attitude to Drama scale

### 3. Learning opportunities in drama

We asked students, teachers and principals about the opportunities students had to learn drama in and out of school. This section reports their responses.

#### Students' views about opportunities to learn drama

##### Learning opportunities in school

Students were asked to rate how often they were involved in a list of opportunities and experiences to learn drama at school. Figure 4.8 shows the opportunities that were rated and how students responded, by year level.

Overall, students reported that they were most likely to 'perform in a play' or 'take part in drama games'. At Year 4, students were least likely to 'go to a drama performance'; whereas, at Year 8, students were least likely to 'make up plays' or 'take part in cultural groups'.

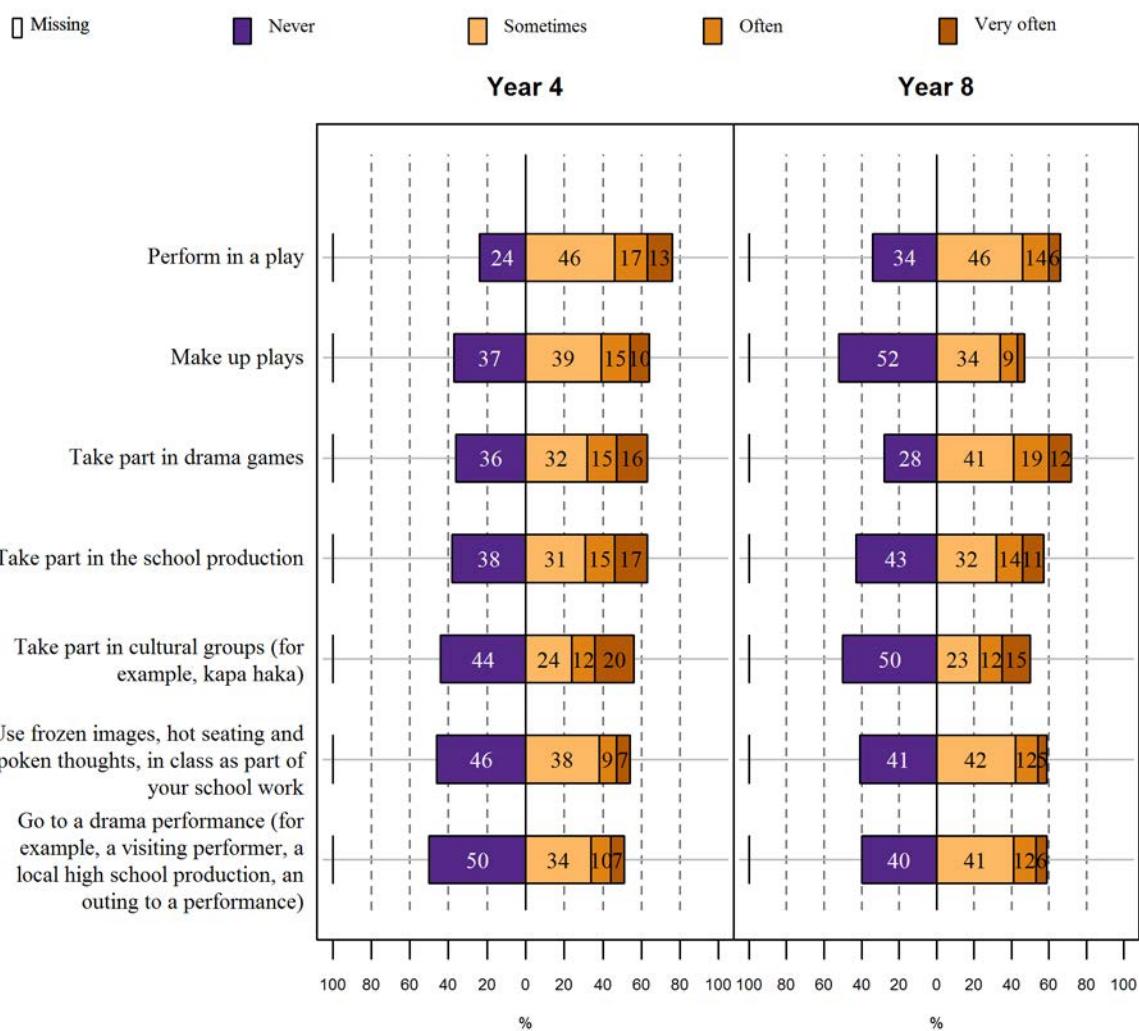


Figure 4.8 Percentage frequency of students' responses to statements about learning opportunities in drama, by year level

Figures 4.9 and 4.10 show how girls and boys responded at Year 4 and Year 8, respectively.

At both year levels boys, on average, indicated less frequent involvement in each drama opportunity. The differences between boys and girls were more prevalent at Year 8.

At Year 8 a notably larger proportion (greater than 20 percent difference) of boys than girls indicated they never ‘make up plays’, ‘take part in the school production’, or ‘take part in cultural groups’. Similar proportions of girls and boys at Year 4 were involved in taking part in the school production.

The pattern of responses for Māori students to the statements about learning opportunities was very similar to the responses for all students at both year levels with the exception of ‘take part in cultural groups’. About 73 percent of Māori students in Year 4 and 72 percent of Māori students in Year 8 indicated they took part in these groups at least sometimes compared to 56 and 50 percent of all students in the samples at each year level, respectively.

Pasifika students in Year 4 and Year 8 responded to the opportunity statements similarly to all students in the sample with the exception of ‘taking part in cultural groups’. About 76 percent of Pasifika students at both year levels indicated they took part in these groups at least sometimes.

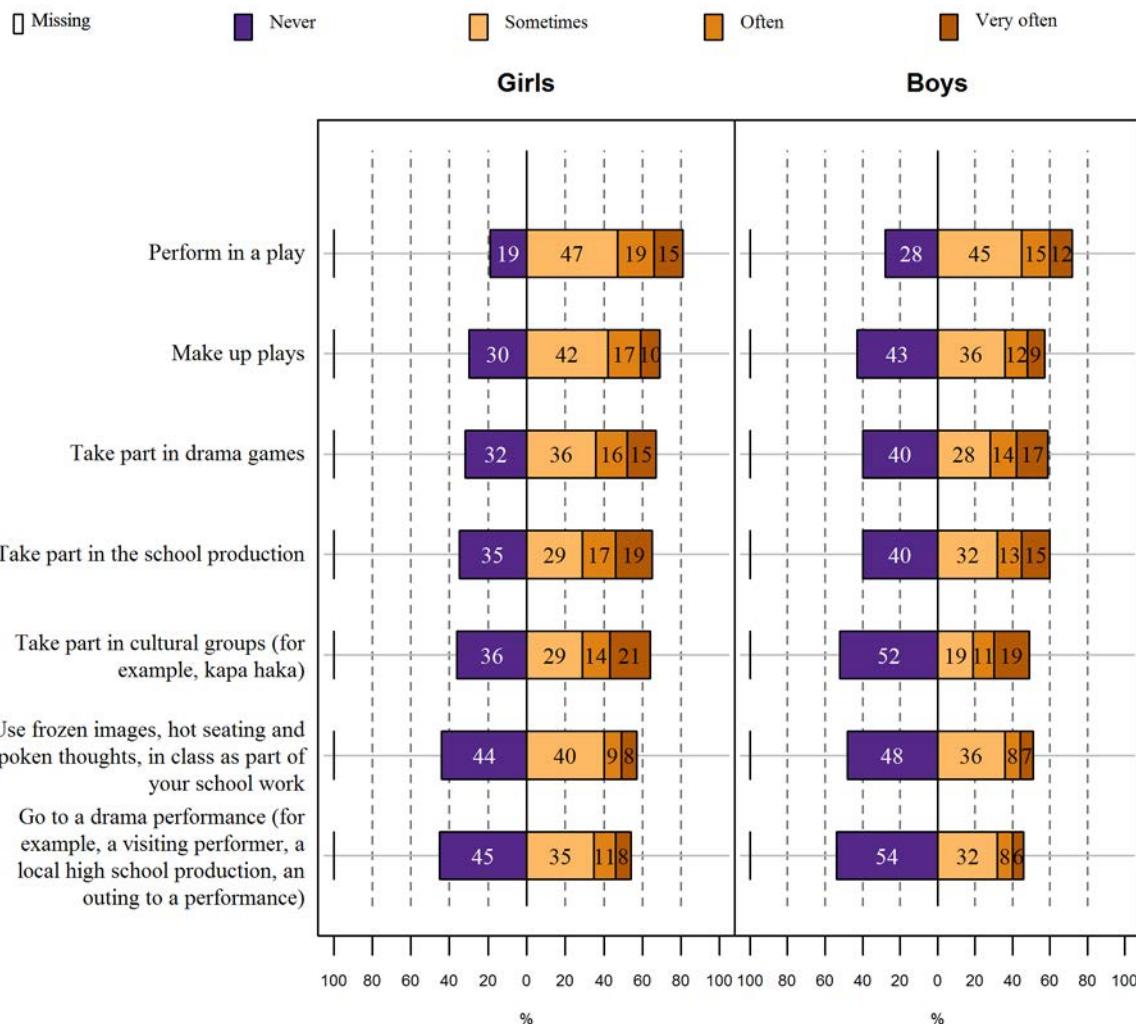


Figure 4.9 Percentage frequency of responses by Year 4 students about learning opportunities in drama, by gender

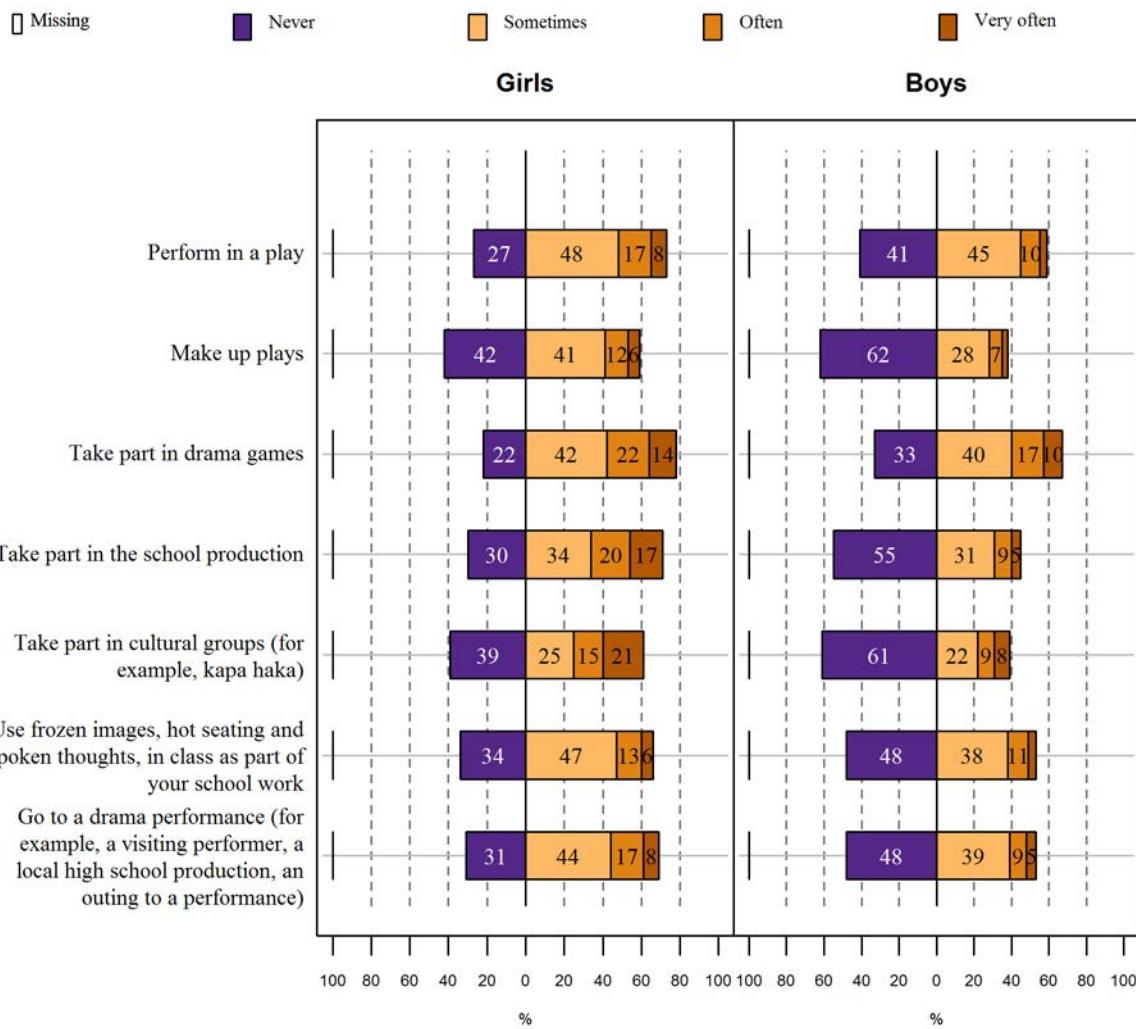


Figure 4.10 Percentage frequency of responses by Year 8 students about learning opportunities in drama, by gender

### Learning opportunities outside of school

Students were also asked two questions about their opportunities to learn drama outside of school. The first asked whether they went to drama lessons, classes or clubs and the second asked about the extent to which they had opportunities to learn drama by themselves or with others.

Figure 4.11 shows the percentage of students who indicated they went to drama lessons, classes or clubs outside of school at Year 4 and 8, by gender. Between 10 to 20 percent of students learned drama outside of school and were more likely to be girls than boys.

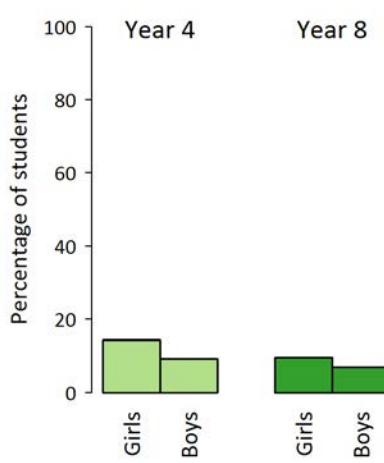


Figure 4.11 Percentage of students who go to drama classes or clubs outside of school time, by year level and gender

Figures 4.12 and 4.13 show the relationship between achievement on the PDr scale and learning drama outside of school at Year 4 and Year 8, respectively. On average and at both year levels, students who said that they learned drama outside of school achieved at higher levels on the PDr scale than those who indicated they did not (by about 5 and 8 scale score units at Year 4 and Year 8, respectively). The difference in average scores were not statistically significant at either year level.

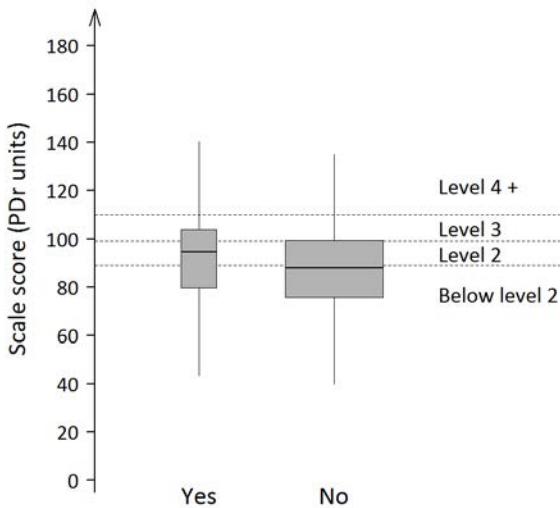


Figure 4.12 Distribution of PDr scale scores for Year 4 students who go to drama classes or clubs outside of school time

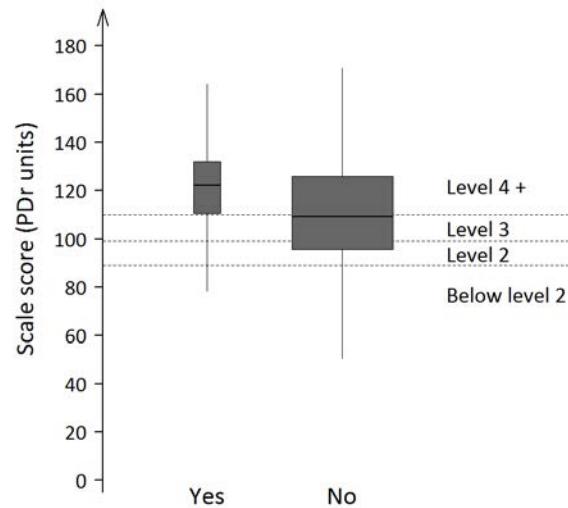


Figure 4.13 Distribution of PDr scale scores for Year 8 students who go to drama classes or clubs outside of school time

Figures 4.14 and 4.15 show how students responded to the question: ‘Do you perform drama by yourself or with others outside of school time?’ by gender for Year 4 and Year 8, respectively. At both year levels, about 50 percent of girls indicated that they were involved in making drama outside of school at least sometimes. However, a sizeable proportion of students responded with ‘never’ at both year levels. At each year level a greater proportion of boys compared to girls responded that they ‘never’ performed drama outside of school time.

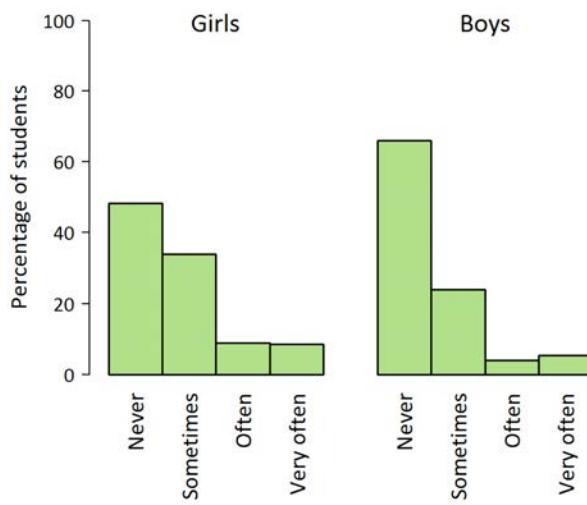


Figure 4.14 Percentage frequency of Year 4 students performing drama by themselves or with others outside of school

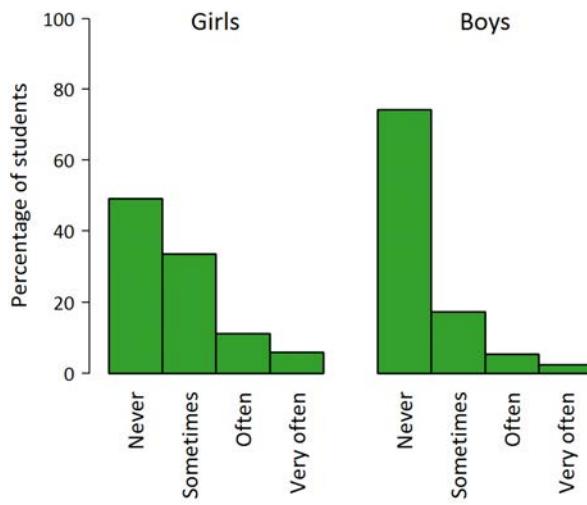


Figure 4.15 Percentage frequency of Year 8 students performing drama by themselves or with others outside of school

## Teachers' views of opportunities to learn drama

Teachers were asked to indicate how often students in their class had the opportunity to take part in each of a list of opportunities to learn drama as part of their school's drama programme. Figure 4.16 shows the statements and how teachers responded at Year 4 and Year 8, respectively. The opportunities were the same as those for students with some slight rewordings. However, the response scale teachers used to respond was different from the scale used by students (see Figure 4.8 for the student response scale).

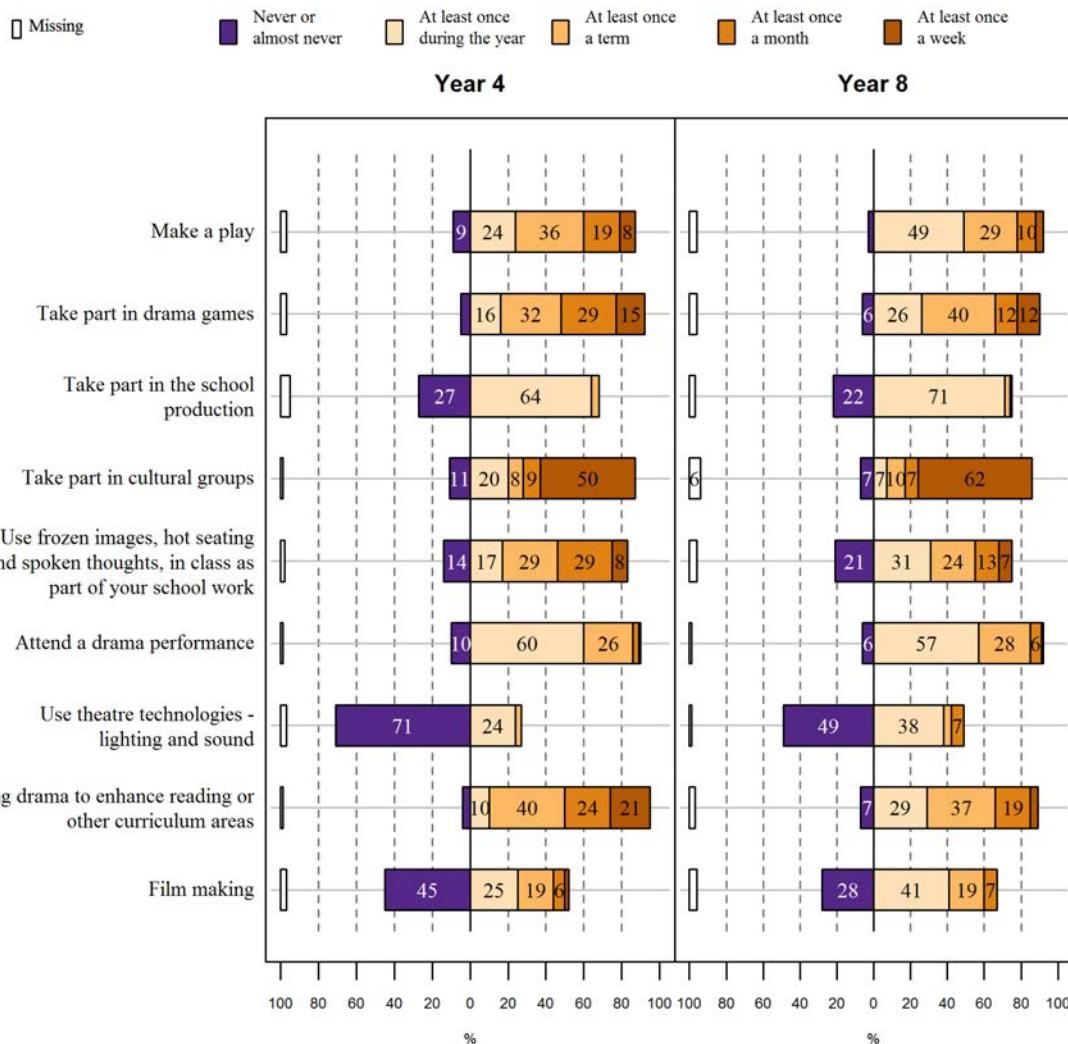


Figure 4.16 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses to statements about learning opportunities for students in drama, by year level

For most of the learning opportunities a sizeable majority of teachers indicated that they were offered 'at least once during the year'. One exception was that over half of teachers reported that students 'never or almost never' used theatre technologies-lighting and sound.

The percentage of teachers reporting that students had the opportunity to 'take part in cultural groups' at least once a week was 50 percent at Year 4 and 62 percent at Year 8.

There was some indication that teachers used drama in cross-curricular contexts. The percentage of teachers reporting that students had the opportunity to 'use drama to enhance reading or other curriculum areas' at least once a term, once a month or once a week was over 90 percent at both year levels. However, in terms of the impact on teaching and learning, it is important to note that there is a substantial difference between offering this opportunity once a week compared to once a month or once a term.

Overall, there was some contrast between how teachers' and students' responded to the list of opportunities to learn drama at school. While most teachers recognised opportunities for students to learn and be involved in drama, students often indicated that they did not take part in these opportunities. The most notable difference was related to 'take part in cultural groups', where over 40 percent of students at both year levels reported they never took part in cultural groups despite about 90 percent of teacher saying that the opportunity existed.

### **Principals' views on learning opportunities in drama**

Principals were asked to rate the priority given to drama compared to other learning areas. They responded by choosing from: 'Relatively low priority', 'Some priority' and 'High priority'. Sixty-seven percent of principals at Year 4 and 79 percent at Year 8 responded that drama was given at least some priority. A greater proportion of principals at Year 8 than at Year 4 indicated drama had a high priority (36 percent at Year 8 compared to 6 percent at Year 4.)

Principals were also asked to list regular school-wide arts activities or groups that students could participate in at their schools. The responses were coded into a number of different types of activities.

About 25 percent of principals at both year levels reported activities that were categorised as having a drama focus. Examples of the activities and groups that principals listed included theatre clubs/sports, drama and speech clubs/classes, movie/video making.

## **4. Teaching and learning drama**

This section describes how teachers and principals responded to questions about teaching and learning in drama. The section begins by exploring who teaches drama at Year 4 and Year 8 and their qualifications and experiences. It then goes on to look at teachers' confidence and engagement in drama, school-wide policies and practices in drama, professional interactions related to drama, and the amount and quality of professional learning and development and professional support.

### **Responsibility for the teaching programme**

Principals were asked the extent to which a specialist teacher was used within their school's drama teaching and learning programme. Table 4.3 shows how principals responded by year level. At Year 8, specialists taught all or nearly all of the drama programme in one third of schools. In contrast, at Year 4, classroom teachers taught drama with little or no added support in over three quarters of schools.

**Table 4.3 Percentage frequency of principals reporting who delivers the teaching and learning programme for drama, by year level**

Response	Percentage of principals	
	Year 4 %	Year 8 %
A specialist teacher teaches all or nearly all the programme	1	36
Mainly taught by specialist with some teaching by classroom teacher	7	10
Mainly taught by classroom teacher with some support from specialist	13	18
Programme taught by classroom teacher with little or no added support	79	36

## Training and qualifications

Teachers were asked to indicate the qualifications, training and/or practical experience they had in drama by ticking all that applied from a list of possible qualifications. Figure 4.17 shows how teachers responded.

A slightly greater proportion of Year 8 teachers reported each form of qualification, training or experience than Year 4 teachers; otherwise, there were no notable differences between the responses of Year 4 and Year 8 teachers.

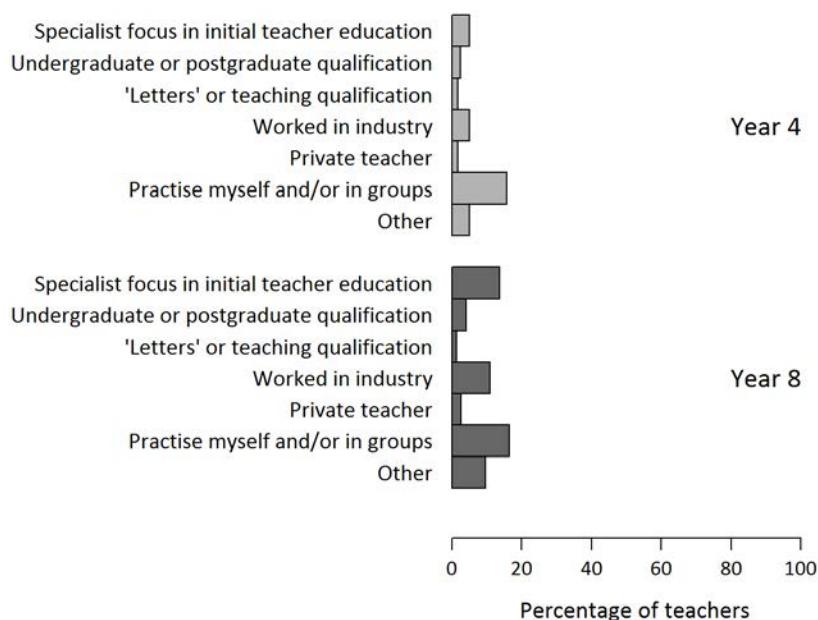


Figure 4.17 Percentage frequency of teachers' qualifications, training and/or practical experience in drama, by year level

Teachers were also able to indicate that they had other qualifications, training and/or practical experience in drama not provided in the list of qualifications. Some examples of 'other' responses from teachers were:

- During teacher career was offered a Drama Specialisation course for 6 months
- TV, productions, backstage
- University course
- Involved in stage productions.

## Teacher confidence and engagement in teaching drama

Teachers were asked to indicate how true each of a series of statements was for them regarding their confidence and engagement with drama. Figure 4.18 shows the statements and how teachers responded. A greater proportion of teachers liked teaching drama than feeling confident in assessing students' progress or supporting students' to self-assess and reflect on their progress in drama.

Compared to the Year 4 teachers, greater proportions of Year 8 teachers responded to each statement using the highest response category, 'very true for me'.

There were only 16 specialist teachers who responded to the drama section of the questionnaire (5 taught at Year 4 and 11 at Year 8). This number of drama specialists was too small to allow for a meaningful comparison between specialist and general classroom teachers' statements about their confidence and engagement in drama.

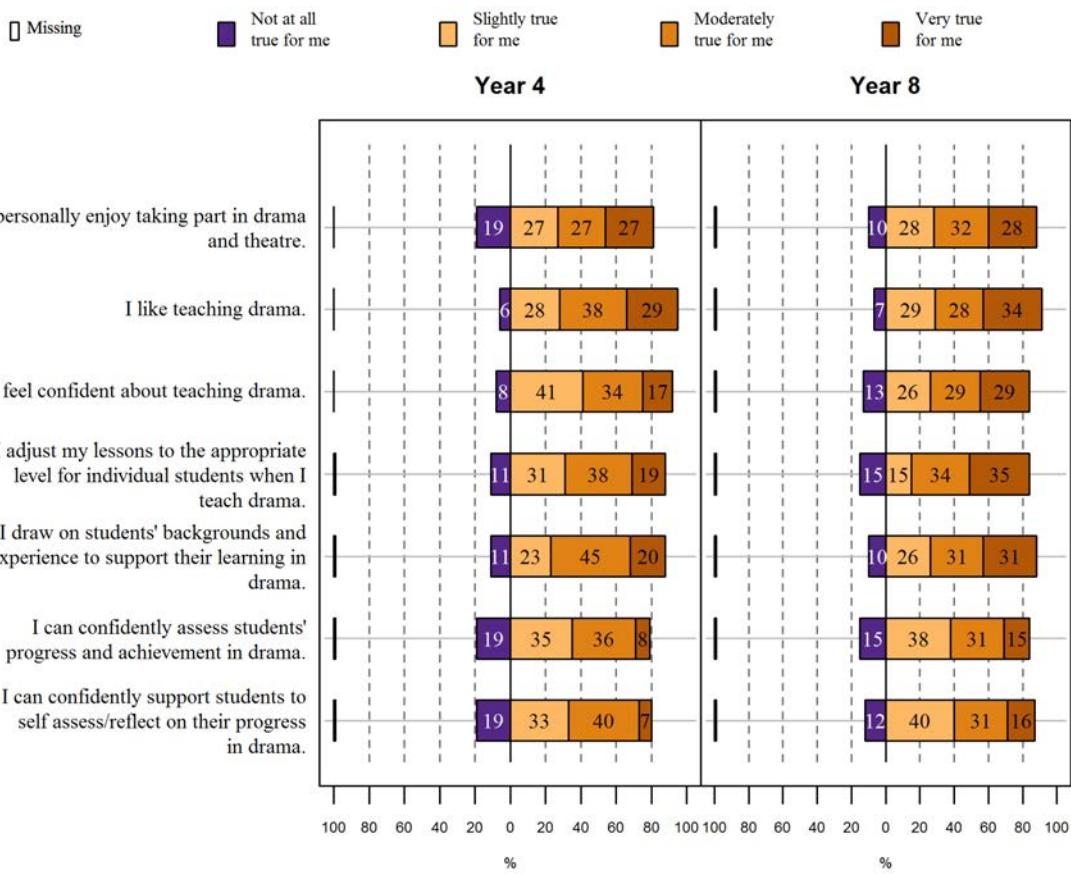


Figure 4.18 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses to statements about confidence and engagement in drama, by year level

### Principals' views of teachers' knowledge and practices

Principals were asked to rate how much two statements describing teachers' levels of knowledge and practices resembled what happened in their schools. Figure 4.19 shows the statements and how principals responded.

Only about 36 percent of principals at Year 4 rated the statement 'teachers are implementing strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners in their class' for drama as either moderately like or very like their school. The corresponding figure was 59 percent for Year 8.

Fewer Year 4 principals than Year 8 felt that teachers in their schools had appropriate pedagogical and content knowledge to identify and respond effectively to the learning needs of students in drama. About 23 percent of Year 4 and 61 percent of Year 8 principals considered that the statement was either moderately like or very like their school.

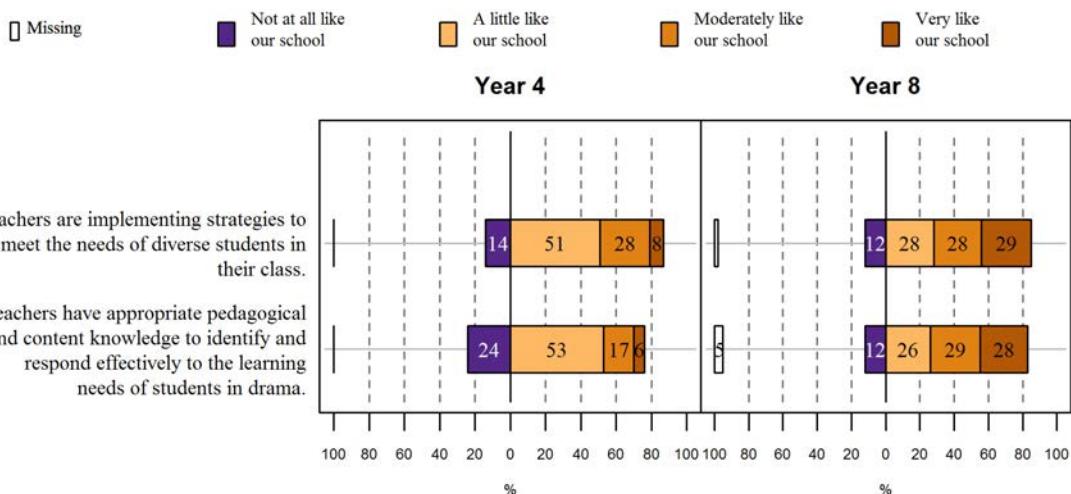


Figure 4.19 Percentage frequency of principals' responses to statements about their teachers' strategies and knowledge related to teaching drama, by year level

## School policies and practices around curriculum, assessment and reporting

The principals also rated four statements related to curriculum, assessment and reporting. These statements related to comprehensive guidelines for teaching drama, coherent frameworks for assessment, systematic processes for data collection and analysis, and the provision of comprehensive information for parents about their child's progress in drama. Figure 4.20 shows how principals responded to the statements.

There was a marked difference between how Year 4 and Year 8 principals responded for each of the four statements. Principals in Year 8 were much more convinced than those in Year 4 that the policies and practices outlined in each statement represented what happened in their schools. Principals in Year 4 were particularly negative about two of the statements, with a majority using 'not at all like our school' to respond to the statements describing clear assessment guidelines, and systematic collation and analysis of achievement data.

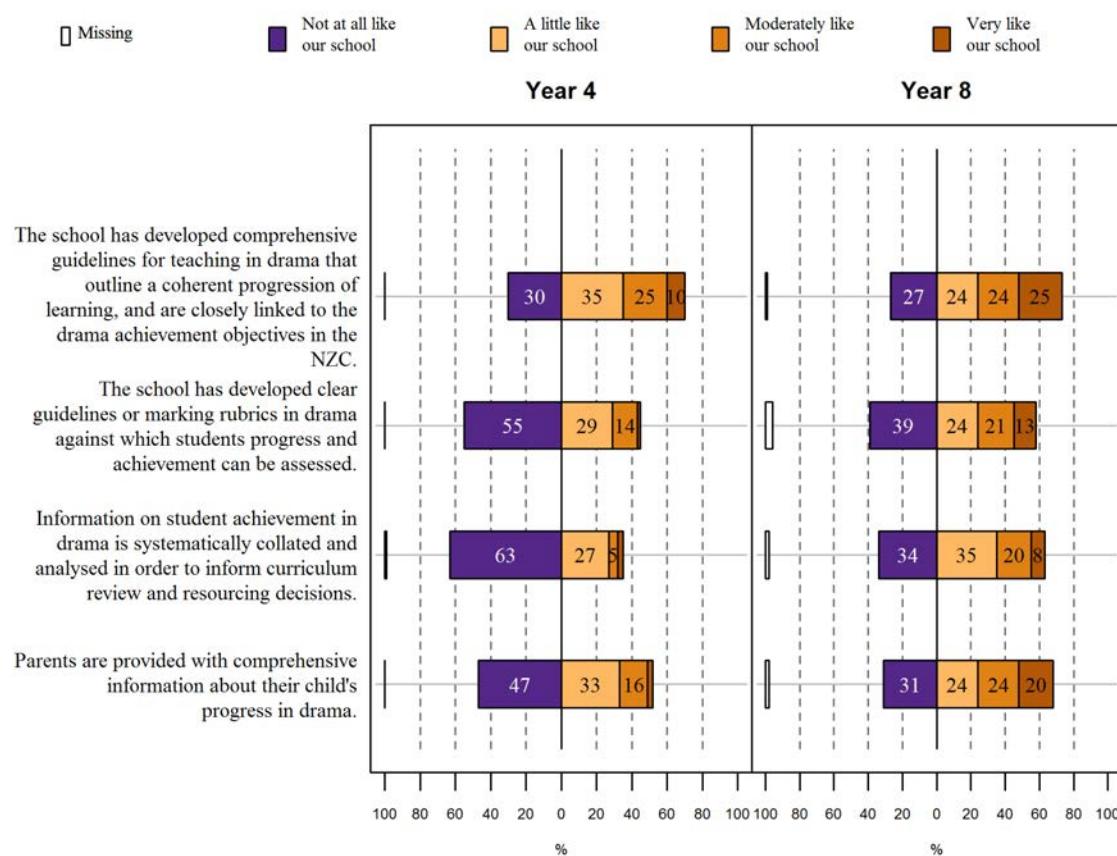


Figure 4.20 Percentage frequency of principals' responses to statements about curriculum, assessment and reporting policies and practices in drama, by year level

## Strategies for instruction

Teachers were asked to indicate how often they used a range of instructional strategies to meet the different needs of students in their classes. Figure 4.21 presents a series of bar plots showing how teachers responded regarding each strategy at Year 4 and Year 8.

At Year 4, about 50 percent of teachers indicated that they often used whole class activities, while about 40 percent indicated they often used group-based activities. Very few Year 4 teachers reported often using ability groups or individualised programmes. At Year 8 about 40 percent of teachers often used whole class and about 50 percent indicated they often used group-based activities. About 10 percent often used ability groups and very few teachers often used individualised programmes.

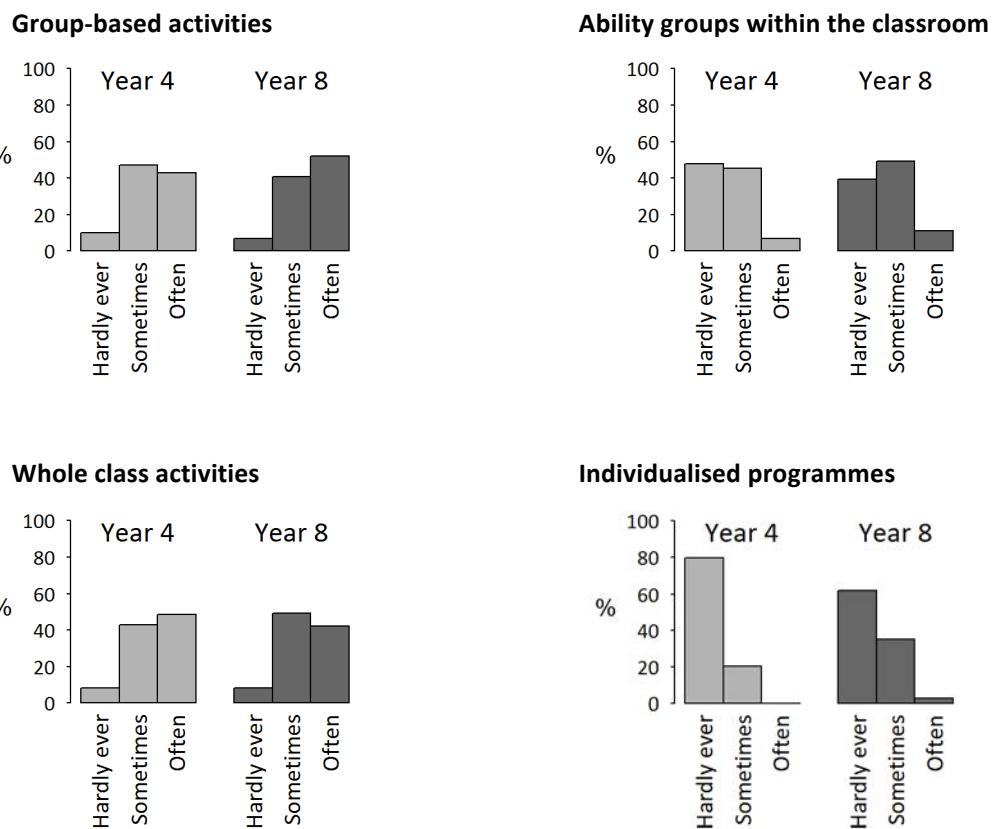


Figure 4.21 Percentage frequencies of different strategies for teachers meeting the differentiated needs of students in drama

## Professional support for teaching and learning in drama

Teachers were presented with a range of professional interactions involving teaching and learning in drama and asked to indicate how often they occurred. Figure 4.22 shows how teachers responded to each of the interactions.

For each interaction, and at both year levels, the majority of teachers who responded indicated that the professional interaction ‘never or almost never’ happened. Year 8 teachers were more likely than Year 4 teachers to receive feedback from a colleague on their teaching of drama. Year 4 teachers were more likely than Year 8 teachers to report working with colleagues to prepare resources or develop long term plans using the drama curriculum documents.

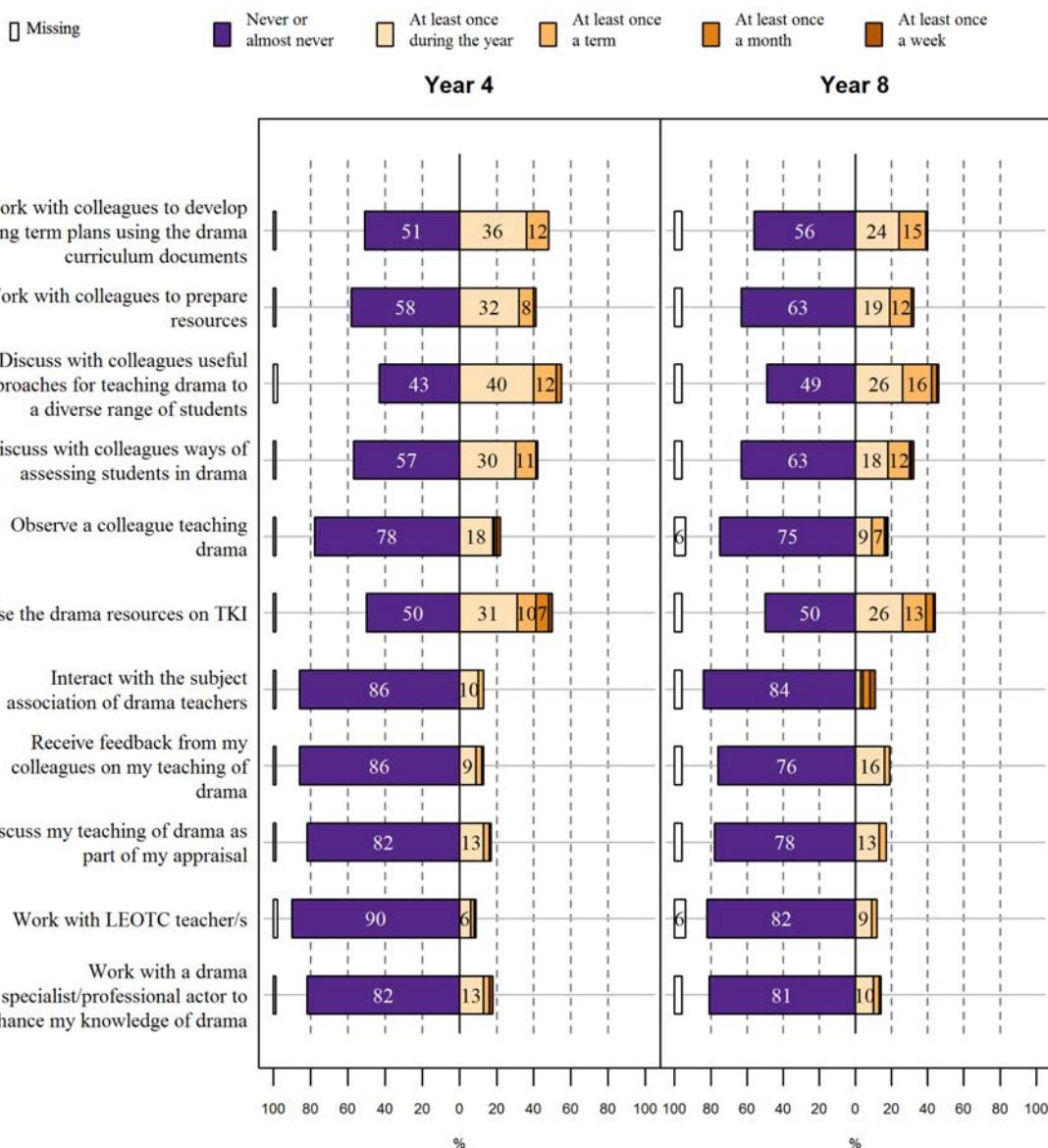


Figure 4.22 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses to statements about professional interactions related to teaching drama, by year level

On the basis of these professional interactions, teachers were asked to rate the level of professional support they received for teaching drama. Figure 4.23 shows that about 60 percent of teachers rated the support as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ at both year levels. The support was rated ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ by very few teachers at Year 4 and Year 8, with around 10 percent each.

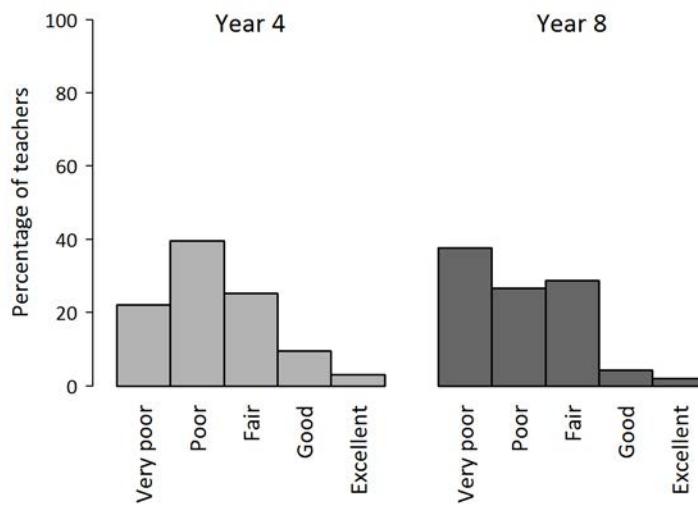


Figure 4.23 Percentage frequency of ratings by teachers about professional support they received for teaching drama

### Professional learning and development

Teachers were asked if they had any opportunities for professional learning and development (PLD) focused on drama in the last 12 months. About 15 percent of Year 4 teachers and 25 percent of Year 8 teachers indicated that they had received PLD in drama. Since there were only 36 teachers (19 taught at Year 4 and 17 at Year 8) who could report on the impact the PLD had on their development as a teacher, this number of drama teachers was deemed too small to allow for a meaningful interpretation of their responses.

Teachers who had not received any drama-focused PLD in the last 12 months were asked how long ago they had received PLD. Figure 4.24 shows that over 50 percent had either received drama-focused PLD more than six years ago or never at both year levels.

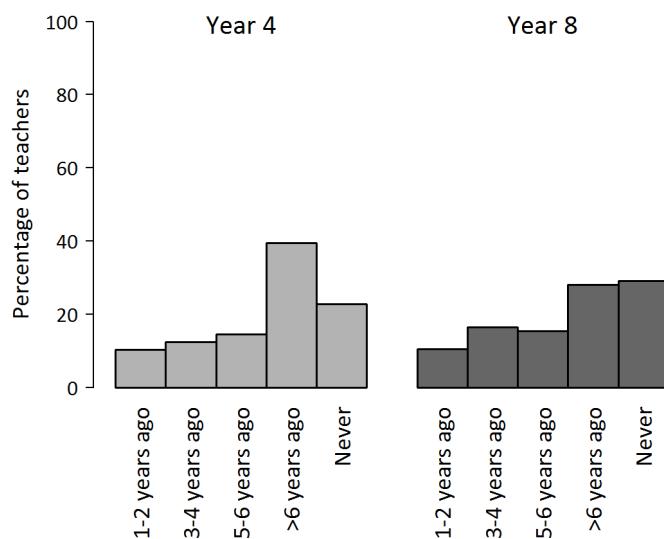


Figure 4.24 Percentage frequencies of teachers' responses regarding the last time they received PLD for drama if no PLD had occurred in the last 12 months, by year level

Principals were asked whether the school could access external professional support/PLD in drama for teachers. They responded by selecting from: ‘not at all or to a very limited extent’, ‘to a small extent’, ‘to a moderate extent’ and ‘to a large extent’. About 39 percent of Year 4 principals and 35 percent of Year 8 principals selected ‘not at all or to a very limited extent’. However, 25 percent of Year 4 principals and 36 percent of Year 8 principals indicated that they could access external support in drama to a moderate or large extent.

Principals were asked to indicate how well two statements about professional support for teachers described their school. Figure 4.25 shows the statements and how principals responded.

The majority of Year 4 principals and almost half of Year 8 principals rated the statement ‘the school has a comprehensive programme of professional development in drama’ as ‘not at all like our school’.

Only 25 percent of Year 4 principals and 52 percent of Year 8 principals rated the statement ‘teachers with the responsibility for drama are given appropriate support, including release time’ as either moderately like or very like their school.

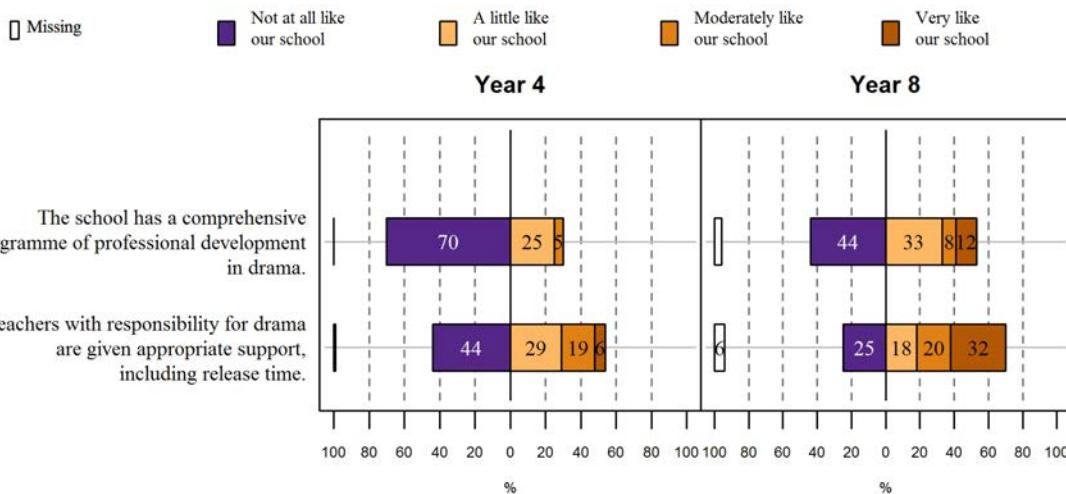


Figure 4.25 Percentage frequencies of principals' responses to statements about the professional support for teachers in drama, by year level

Principals were asked whether drama had been a focus area for development in their school in the last five years. Figure 4.26 shows how they responded. Over 50 percent of all principals indicated that drama was not a focus for development in the last five years. This proportion was greater at Year 4 than Year 8. At Year 8, 17 percent of the principals said that drama had been a major focus for development, while at Year 4 the corresponding figure was 5 percent.

Principals were asked to rate the priority given to drama compared to other learning areas. They responded by choosing from: ‘relatively low priority’, ‘some priority’ and ‘high priority’. Drama was given at least some priority by 66 percent of principals at Year 4 and 79 percent of principals at Year 8. A greater proportion of principals at Year 8 than at Year 4 indicated drama had a high priority (36 percent at Year 8 compared with 7 percent at Year 4).

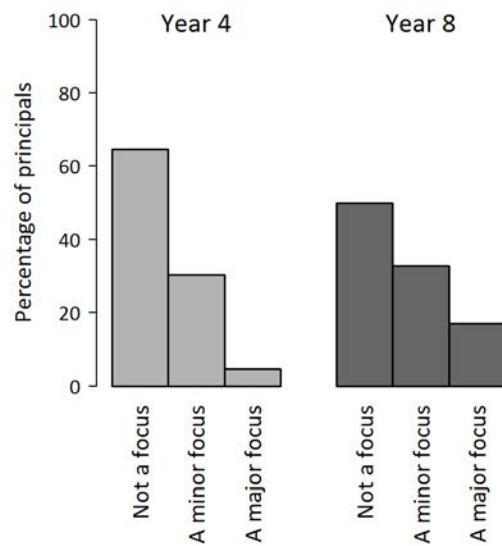


Figure 4.26 Percentage frequency of principals' responses regarding whether drama had been a focus area for development in the last five years, by year level

## 5. Resourcing drama

This section describes how principals and teachers responded to questions about the resourcing of the drama programme in their school.

### Teachers' responses

#### Availability of teaching spaces

Figure 4.27 shows how teachers responded when asked to select, from a list, the specialist spaces that were available to them for teaching drama.

With the exceptions of the school hall and empty classroom, a greater proportion of Year 8 than Year 4 teachers reported having access to each of the listed spaces. No Year 4 teachers reported having access to a theatre; whereas, about 7 percent of Year 8 teachers did. Over 40 percent of Year 8 teachers reported having access to a specified drama room whereas it was only 2 percent for Year 4.

#### Availability of equipment

Teachers were also asked to select, from a list, the equipment that they had access to for teaching drama. Figure 4.28 shows how they responded. Year 4 and Year 8 teachers reported similarly in terms of access to sound systems, lighting, and camera/recorders. Year 8 teachers reported greater access to props and costumes than Year 4 teachers. ‘Other’ equipment that was not listed was specified by less than 3 percent of teachers at both year levels. Data projectors, iPads and tablets, and YouTube were mentioned by teachers.

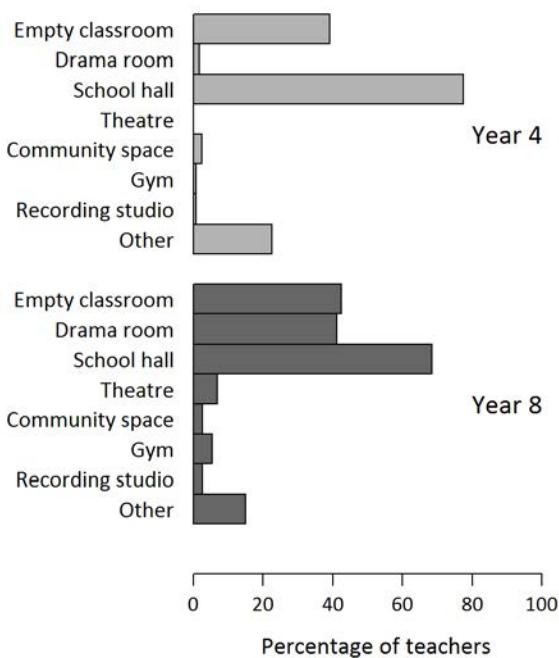


Figure 4.27 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses to which specialist spaces were available for teaching drama, by year level

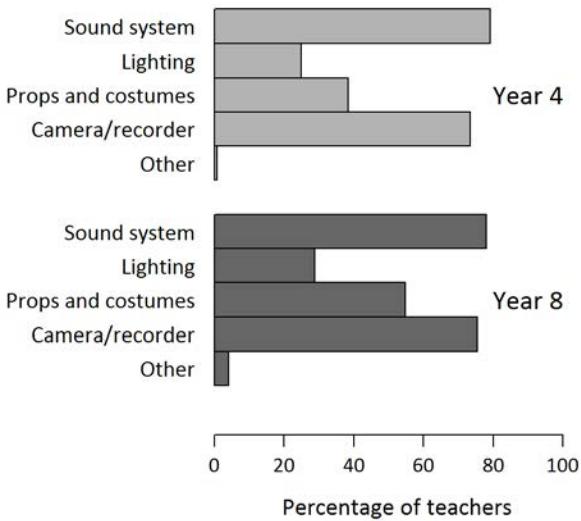


Figure 4.28 Percentage frequency of teachers' responses to what specialist equipment was available for teaching drama, by year level

### Principals' responses

Principals were asked to rate how well the statement ‘the school has sufficient facilities, equipment and resources to allow full involvement of all students in learning drama’ described their school. They responded by selecting from: ‘not at all like our school’, ‘a little like our school’, ‘moderately like our school’ and ‘very like our school’. About 55 percent of Year 4 principals and 74 percent of Year 8 principals responded using ‘moderately’ or ‘very’ like their school.

About 40 percent of Year 4 principals and 67 percent of Year 8 principals indicated that the statement ‘the teachers responsible for delivering the classroom drama programme are highly effective in their use of teaching and learning resources to facilitate learning in drama’ was moderately or very like their school.

# Appendix: Summary Statistics

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### Note about the tables contained in Appendix 1

The structure of the NMSSA sample is complex: first schools are selected for the sample, and then clusters of students are selected from within those schools. While this is a practical solution to the challenge of drawing a representative sample of students from across New Zealand, it means that the width of confidence intervals around estimates of average scores will be underestimated if they are calculated using formulae that assume the sample was a simple random sample. To adjust for the clustering effect, NMSSA has determined an ‘effective sample size’ for each reporting group and used these to calculate all confidence intervals. The effective sample size is smaller than the actual sample size, and has the effect of increasing the width of the confidence intervals by about the right amount. The tables in this appendix provide the actual sample size and the adjusted sample size for each group reported on.

Table A1.1 Achievement on the Performance in Drama (PDr score units):  
Summary statistics for Year 4 and Year 8 students

Group	Actual sample size	Effective sample size	Mean	Confidence interval for the average	Standard deviation
<b>Year 4</b>					
All	240	168	88	(85.5, 91.5)	19
Girls	114	80	91	(86.5, 95.0)	19
Boys	126	88	86	(82.0, 90.0)	18
<b>Year 8</b>					
All	193	135	112	(108.0, 115.0)	21
Girls	101	71	115	(110.0, 120.0)	21
Boys	92	64	108	(103.0, 113.0)	20

Table A1.2 Achievement on the Performance in Drama (PDr score units):  
Differences between subgroup averages for Year 4 and Year 8 students

Subgroup 1	Subgroup 1 effective sample size	Subgroup 2	Subgroup 2 effective sample size	Difference in averages	Confidence interval for difference in averages	Effect size
<b>Year 4</b>						
Girls	80	Boys	88	5	(-1.0, 10.5)	0.26
<b>Year 8</b>						
Girls	71	Boys	64	7	(0.0, 14.0)	0.34

Table A1.3 Achievement on the Performance in Drama (PDr score units):  
Differences between Year 4 and Year 8 by subgroup

Subgroup 1	Year 8 effective sample size	Year 4 effective sample size	Difference in Year 8-Year 4 averages	Confidence interval for difference in averages	Effect size
All	135	168	23	(18.5, 28.0)	1.16
Girls	71	80	24	(17.5, 30.5)	1.18
Boys	64	88	22	(15.5, 28.0)	1.13

Table A1.4 Achievement on the Attitude to Drama (scale score units):  
Summary statistics for Year 4 students

Group	Actual sample size	Effective sample size	Average	Confidence interval for the average	Standard deviation
All	1134	794	101	(99.0, 102.0)	20
<b>Gender</b>					
Girls	579	405	104	(102.0, 106.0)	20
Boys	895	626	101	(99.0, 102.5)	20
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Māori	239	167	99	(96.0, 102.5)	21
Non-Māori	895	626	101	(99.0, 102.5)	20
Pasifika	141	99	105	(100.5, 109.0)	20
Non-Pasifika	993	695	100	(98.5, 101.5)	20
NZE	638	447	100	(98.0, 102.0)	20
Non-NZE	496	347	101	(99.0, 103.5)	20
Asian	146	102	100	(96.0, 103.0)	19
Non-Asian	988	692	101	(99.0, 102.0)	21
<b>School decile</b>					
Low decile	278	195	102	(99.0, 105.0)	21
Mid decile	366	256	101	(98.5, 104.0)	21
High decile	490	343	99	(97.0, 101.0)	19
<b>Special education needs (SEN)</b>					
No SEN	1064	745	101	(99.0, 102.0)	20
SEN (combined)	70	49	99	(92.0, 106.0)	25

Table A1.5 Achievement on the Attitude to Drama (scale score units):  
Summary statistics for Year 8 students

<b>Group</b>	<b>Actual sample size</b>	<b>Effective sample size</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Confidence interval for the average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
All	1139	797	99	(98.0, 101.0)	20
<b>Gender</b>					
Girls	551	386	105	(103.5, 107.0)	19
Boys	588	412	94	(92.5, 96.0)	19
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Māori	260	182	96	(93.0, 98.5)	20
Non-Māori	879	615	101	(99.0, 102.0)	19
Pasifika	156	109	104	(100.0, 107.5)	20
Non-Pasifika	983	688	99	(97.5, 100.5)	20
NZE	635	444	99	(97.0, 100.5)	20
Non-NZE	504	353	100	(98.5, 102.5)	19
Asian	132	92	101	(98.0, 104.5)	16
Non-Asian	1007	705	99	(98.0, 100.5)	20
<b>School decile</b>					
Low decile	189	132	104	(101.0, 107.5)	19
Mid decile	474	332	97	(95.0, 99.5)	20
High decile	476	333	100	(98.0, 102.0)	19
<b>Special education needs (SEN)</b>					
No SEN	1090	763	100	(98.0, 101.0)	20
SEN (combined)	49	34	99	(91.5, 106.0)	21

Table A1.6 Achievement on the Attitude to Drama (scale score units): Differences between subgroup averages for Year 4 students

Subgroup 1	Subgroup 1 effective sample size	Subgroup 2	Subgroup 2 effective sample size	Difference in averages	Confidence interval for difference in averages	Effect size
<b>Gender</b>						
Girls	405	Boys	388	7	(4.5, 10.0)	0.37
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Māori	167	Non-Māori	626	-1	(-5.0, 2.0)	-0.07
Pasifika	99	Non-Pasifika	695	5	(0.5, 9.0)	0.24
Asian	102	Non-Asian	692	-1	(-5.0, 3.0)	-0.06
NZE	447	Non-NZE	347	-1	(-4.0, 1.5)	-0.07
<b>Decile band</b>						
High decile	343	Mid decile	256	-2	(-5.5, 1.0)	-0.11
High decile	343	Low decile	195	-3	(-6.5, 1.0)	-0.14
Mid decile	256	Low decile	195	-1	(-4.5, 3.5)	-0.03
<b>Special education needs (SEN)</b>						
No SEN	745	SEN (combined)	49	2	(-5.5, 9.0)	0.09

Table A1.7 Achievement on the Attitude to Drama (scale score units): Differences between subgroup averages for Year 8 students

Subgroup 1	Subgroup 1 effective sample size	Subgroup 2	Subgroup 2 effective sample size	Difference in averages	Confidence interval for difference in averages	Effect size
<b>Gender</b>						
Girls	386	Boys	412	11	(8.5, 13.5)	0.58
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Māori	182	Non-Māori	615	-5	(-8.0, -1.5)	-0.25
Pasifika	109	Non-Pasifika	688	5	(1.0, 8.5)	0.24
Asian	92	Non-Asian	705	2	(-1.5, 5.5)	0.11
NZE	444	Non-NZE	353	-2	(-4.0, 1.0)	-0.08
<b>Decile band</b>						
High decile	333	Mid decile	332	3	(-0.0, 5.5)	0.14
High decile	333	Low decile	132	-4	(-8.0, -0.0)	-0.22
Mid decile	332	Low decile	132	-7	(-11.0, -3.0)	-0.34
<b>Special education needs (SEN)</b>						
No SEN	763	SEN (combined)	34	1	(-6.5, 8.0)	0.04

Table A1.8 Achievement on the Attitude to Drama (scale score units): Differences between Year 4 and Year 8 by subgroup

<b>Subgroup 1</b>	<b>Year 8 effective sample size</b>	<b>Year 4 effective sample size</b>	<b>Difference in Year 8-Year 4 averages</b>	<b>Confidence interval for difference in averages</b>	<b>Effect size</b>
All	797	794	-1	(-3.0, 1.0)	-0.05
<b>Gender</b>					
Girls	386	405	1	(-1.5, 3.5)	0.05
Boys	412	388	-2	(-5.0, 0.5)	-0.13
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Māori	182	167	-4	(-8.0, 0.5)	-0.18
Pasifika	109	99	-1	(-6.5, 4.5)	-0.06
Asian	92	102	2	(-3.0, 7.0)	0.10
NZE	444	447	-1	(-3.5, 1.5)	-0.05
<b>Decile band</b>					
Low decile	132	195	2	(-2.0, 6.5)	0.11
Mid decile	332	256	-4	(-7.5, -0.5)	-0.20
High decile	333	343	1	(-2.0, 3.5)	0.04
<b>Special education needs (SEN)</b>					
SEN (combined)	34	49	0	(-10.0, 10.0)	-0.01





