Diploma Programme

Language A: language and literature guide

First assessment 2026

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IB mission statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS
We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE
We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS
We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS
We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED
We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED
We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING
We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS
We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED
We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE
We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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Purpose of this document

This publication is intended to guide the planning, teaching and assessment of the subject in schools. Subject teachers are the primary audience, although it is expected that teachers will use the guide to inform students and parents about the subject.

This guide can be found on the subject page of the Programme Resource Centre at resources.ibo.org, a password-protected IB website designed to support IB teachers. It can also be purchased from the IB store at store.ibo.org.

Additional resources

Additional publications such as specimen papers and markschemes, teacher support materials, subject reports and grade descriptors can also be found on the Programme Resource Centre. Past examination papers as well as markschemes can be purchased from the IB store.

Teachers are encouraged to check the Programme Resource Centre for additional resources created or used by other teachers. Teachers can provide details of useful resources, for example: websites, books, videos, journals or teaching ideas.

Acknowledgement

The IB wishes to thank the educators and associated schools for generously contributing time and resources to the production of this guide.

First assessment 2026

The Diploma Programme

The Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous pre-university course of study designed for students in the 16 to 19 age range. It is a broad-based two-year course that aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable and inquiring, but also caring and compassionate. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging students to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness, and the attitudes necessary for them to respect and evaluate a range of points of view.

The Diploma Programme model

The course is presented as six academic areas enclosing a central core (see figure 1). It encourages the concurrent study of a broad range of academic areas. Students study two modern languages (or a modern language and a classical language), a humanities or social science subject, an experimental science, mathematics and one of the creative arts. It is this comprehensive range of subjects that makes the Diploma Programme a demanding course of study designed to prepare students effectively for university entrance. In each of the academic areas students have flexibility in making their choices, which means they can choose subjects that particularly interest them and that they may wish to study further at university.

Figure 1

The Diploma Programme model



Choosing the right combination

Students are required to choose one subject from each of the six academic areas, although they can, instead of an arts subject, choose two subjects from another area. Normally, three subjects (and not more than four) are taken at higher level (HL), and the others are taken at standard level (SL). The IB recommends 240 teaching hours for HL subjects and 150 hours for SL. Subjects at HL are studied in greater depth and breadth than at SL.

At both levels, many skills are developed, especially those of critical thinking and analysis. At the end of the course, students' abilities are measured by means of external assessment. Many subjects contain some element of coursework assessed by teachers.

The core of the Diploma Programme model

All Diploma Programme students participate in the three elements that make up the core of the model.

Theory of knowledge (TOK) is a course that is fundamentally about critical thinking and inquiry into the process of knowing rather than about learning a specific body of knowledge. The TOK course examines the nature of knowledge and how we know what we claim to know. It does this by encouraging students to analyse knowledge claims and explore questions about the construction of knowledge. The task of TOK is to emphasize connections between areas of shared knowledge and link them to personal knowledge in such a way that an individual becomes more aware of their own perspectives and how they might differ from others.

Creativity, activity, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. CAS enables students to live out the IB learner profile in real and practical ways, to grow as unique individuals and to recognize their role in relation to others. Students develop skills, attitudes and dispositions through a variety of individual and group experiences that provides students opportunities to explore their interests and express their passions, personalities and perspectives. CAS complements a challenging academic programme in a holistic way, providing opportunities for self-determination, collaboration, accomplishment and enjoyment.

The three strands of CAS are:

- creativity—exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance
- activity—physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle
- service—collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need.

The extended essay, including the world studies extended essay, offers the opportunity for IB students to investigate a topic of special interest, in the form of a 4,000-word piece of independent research. The area of research undertaken is chosen from one of the students' six Diploma Programme subjects, or in the case of the inter-disciplinary World Studies essay, two subjects, and acquaints them with the independent research and writing skills expected at university. This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject or subjects chosen. It is intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. An authentic learning experience, it provides students with an opportunity to engage in personal research on a topic of choice, under the guidance of a supervisor.

Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching

The approaches to learning and approaches to teaching across the Diploma Programme refers to deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes which permeate the learning and teaching environment. These approaches and tools, intrinsically linked with the learner profile attributes, enhance student learning and assist student preparation for the Diploma Programme assessment and beyond. The aims of the approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in the Diploma Programme are to:

- empower teachers as teachers of learners as well as teachers of content
- empower teachers to create clearer strategies for facilitating learning experiences in which students are more meaningfully engaged in structured inquiry and greater critical and creative thinking
- promote both the aims of individual subjects (making them more than course aspirations) and linking previously isolated knowledge (concurrency of learning)
- encourage students to develop an explicit variety of skills that will equip them to continue to be actively engaged in learning after they leave school, and to help them not only obtain university admission through better grades but also prepare for success during tertiary education and beyond
- enhance further the coherence and relevance of the students' Diploma Programme experience
- allow schools to identify the distinctive nature of an IB Diploma Programme education, with its blend of idealism and practicality.

The five approaches to learning (developing thinking skills, social skills, communication skills, self-management skills and research skills) along with the six approaches to teaching (teaching that is inquiry-based, conceptually focused, contextualized, collaborative, differentiated and informed by assessment) encompass the key values and principles that underpin IB pedagogy.

For further guidance on approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in language A: language and literature please see the section "Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in studies in language and literature" of this guide.

The IB mission statement and the IB learner profile

The Diploma Programme aims to develop in students the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to fulfil the aims of the IB, as expressed in the organization's mission statement and the learner profile. Teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme represent the reality in daily practice of the organization's educational philosophy.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity in the DP is a set of values and behaviours informed by the attributes of the learner profile. In learning, teaching and assessment, academic integrity serves to promote personal integrity, engender respect for the integrity of others and their work, and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies.

All coursework—including work submitted for assessment—is to be authentic, based on the student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Assessment tasks that require teachers to provide guidance to students or that require students to work collaboratively must be completed in full compliance with the detailed guidelines provided by the IB for the relevant subjects.

For further information on academic integrity in the IB and the DP, please consult the IB publications *Academic integrity policy*, *Effective citing and referencing*, *Diploma Programme: From principles into practice*, and section "B1 General regulations: Diploma Programme" in the *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures* (updated annually). Specific information regarding academic integrity as it pertains to external and internal assessment components of this DP subject can be found in this guide.

Acknowledging the ideas or work of another person

Coordinators and teachers are reminded that candidates must acknowledge all sources used in work submitted for assessment. The following is intended as a clarification of this requirement.

Diploma Programme candidates submit work for assessment in a variety of media that may include audiovisual material, text, graphs, images and/or data published in print or electronic sources. If a candidate uses the work or ideas of another person, the candidate must acknowledge the source using a standard style of referencing in a consistent manner. A candidate's failure to acknowledge a source will be

investigated by the IB as a potential breach of regulations that may result in a penalty imposed by the IB final award committee.

The IB does not prescribe which style(s) of referencing or in-text citation should be used by candidates; this is left to the discretion of appropriate faculty/staff in the candidate's school. The wide range of subjects, three response languages and the diversity of referencing styles make it impractical and restrictive to insist on particular styles. In practice, certain styles may prove most commonly used, but schools are free to choose a style that is appropriate for the subject concerned and the language in which candidates' work is written. Regardless of the reference style adopted by the school for a given subject, it is expected that the minimum information given includes: name of author, date of publication, title of source, and page numbers as applicable.

Candidates are expected to use a standard style and use it consistently so that credit is given to all sources used, including sources that have been paraphrased or summarized. When writing text candidates must clearly distinguish between their words and those of others by the use of quotation marks (or other method, such as indentation) followed by an appropriate citation that denotes an entry in the bibliography. If an electronic source is cited, the date of access must be indicated. Candidates are not expected to show faultless expertise in referencing, but are expected to demonstrate that all sources have been acknowledged. Candidates must be advised that audiovisual material, text, graphs, images and/or data published in print or in electronic sources that is not their own must also attribute the source. Again, an appropriate style of referencing/citation must be used.

Learning diversity and learning support requirements

Schools must ensure that equal access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided to candidates with learning support requirements that are in line with the IB documents *Access and inclusion policy* and *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes: Removing barriers to learning.*

The publications *Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom, The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development* and *Using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in the IB classroom* are available to support schools in the ongoing process of increasing access and engagement by removing barriers to learning.

Nature of the subject

Studies in language and literature in the Diploma Programme

All three courses in studies in language and literature are designed for students from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, who have experience of using the language of the course in an educational context. The focus of the study developed in each of the subjects varies depending on their individual characteristics.

The language profile of students taking these courses will vary, but their receptive, productive and interactive skills should be strong and the expectation is that the course will consolidate them further. Students are expected to develop their proficiency, fluency and linguistic range, and in particular to acquire the vocabulary appropriate to the analysis of texts. They will also deepen their understanding of a wide variety of concepts explored through literary and non-literary texts in order to interpret, analyse, evaluate and then communicate this understanding in clear, organized and developed products.

The three studies in language and literature courses each have their own identity and are designed to support future academic study or career-related paths by developing social, aesthetic and cultural literacy, as well as improving language competence and communication skills. For each course, the syllabus and assessment requirements are identical for all languages offered. The teaching and assessment of any particular studies in language and literature course will be conducted in that language.

All three studies in language and literature courses explore elements of language, literature and performance. Each also focuses on the relationships between texts, readers and writers; on the range and functions of texts across geographical space and historical time; and on aspects of intertextuality. Within this framework, each course has its own emphases.

Language is crucial to all three courses, but is treated more broadly in the language A: language and literature course. Literary texts are the sole focus of the language A: literature course and the literature and performance course, while the language A: language and literature course examines both literary and non-literary texts. Finally, while performance is an explicit component of the literature and performance course, student production and the performativity of textual creation, analysis and response are elements in all three courses.

The study of literary, non-literary, visual and performance texts provides a focus for understanding how meaning is constructed within belief or value systems, and how it is negotiated across multiple perspectives generated by single or multiple readers. Thinking critically about texts, as well as responding to, producing or performing them, leads to an understanding of how language sustains or challenges ways of thinking and being. The study additionally builds an awareness that all texts may be understood in relation to their form, content, purpose, audience and their associated contexts, such as social, historical and cultural circumstances.

Note: Expectations of language usage, of level of analysis and of critical reflection are the same across the three courses.

All three studies in language and literature courses emphasize the centrality of performance, encouraging teachers and students to consider the range of ways in which literary texts in different forms can be performed. In doing so, they will explore the dramatic nature of literary texts in different forms, and the way writers employ voices, speech and sound in them, as well as dramatic structures. Teaching and learning activities could involve embracing live and recorded performances of texts, or adaptation of texts, as well as employing performance approaches in the classroom where appropriate.

Some ways in which performance may be applied to literary forms other than drama include examining:

- the performative nature of narrative and dialogue in the novel, and of voices and speakers in poetry
- the use of rhythm and sound in many texts in different forms, and in poetry in particular
- the relationships between written and oral forms in literature; between the drama script and the performed play, between poetry and music, and between fiction and storytelling
- the relationship between written texts and dramatic adaptations and transformations of those texts, for instance in the adaptation of narrative texts of all kinds to film, television and the stage, and in live readings of poetry and fiction.

To fulfil the requirements of the DP, students must study one of the three courses in the studies in language and literature group. To be awarded a bilingual diploma, two studies in language and literature courses can be taken, each in a different language.

Both the language A: literature course and the language A: language and literature course are offered at standard level (SL) and higher level (HL). Literature and performance, which is an interdisciplinary subject that links studies in language and literature and The arts, is only available as an SL course.

Language A: literature

Students will focus exclusively on literary texts, adopting a variety of approaches to textual criticism. Students explore the nature of literature, the aesthetic function of literary language and literary textuality, and the relationship between literature and the world.

Language A: language and literature

In this course, students study a wide range of literary and non-literary texts in a variety of media. By examining communicative acts across literary form and textual type alongside appropriate secondary readings, students will investigate the nature of language itself and the ways in which it shapes and is influenced by identity and culture. Approaches to study in the course are meant to be wide ranging and can include literary theory, sociolinguistics, media studies and critical discourse analysis among others.

Literature and performance

Students will study essential elements of literature and performance and explore their dynamic relationship. In the course, students synthesize conventional literary analysis with the practical, aesthetic and symbolic elements of performance.

Distinction between SL and HL

The model for language A: language and literature is the same at SL and HL but there are significant quantitative and qualitative differences between the levels.

SL students are required to study four literary works and a number of non-literary texts that is equivalent in learning and teaching time, whereas HL students are required to study six literary works and a number of non-literary texts that is equivalent in learning and teaching time.

In paper 1, both SL and HL students are presented with two previously unseen non-literary extracts or texts from different text types, each accompanied by a guiding question. SL students are required to write a guided analysis of one of these, while HL students must write guided analyses of both non-literary extracts and texts.

In addition, HL students will have a fourth assessment component, the higher level (HL) essay, a written coursework task that requires students to explore a line of inquiry in relation to a studied non-literary body of work, or a literary work. The outcome of this exploration is a 1,200–1,500-word essay in which HL students are expected to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the nature of linguistic or literary study.

The distinction between SL and HL is summarized below.

Works read	SL	HL
Works in translation written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*	Study of a minimum of one work	Study of a minimum of two works
Works originally written in the language studied, by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*	Study of a minimum of one work	Study of a minimum of two works
Free choice works	Study of two works freely chosen	Study of two works freely chosen
Total works studied	4	6
External assessment	**SL**	**HL**
Paper 1: Guided textual analysis	A guided analysis of a previously unseen non-literary extract or text from a choice of two	Two guided analyses of previously unseen non-literary extracts or texts
HL essay		A 1,200–1,500-word essay exploring a line of inquiry in connection with a studied body of work or work

Studies in language and literature and the core

Studies in language and literature and theory of knowledge

The theory of knowledge (TOK) course engages students in reflection on the nature of knowledge and on how it is constructed and represented. Studies in language and literature similarly engages students in an exploration of the nature of the human experience and of the ways in which personal views are constructed and communicated. In relating their studies to TOK, students become aware of the fact that although language and literature offer a powerful means of access to knowledge, they are nonetheless a construction rather than a perfectly mimetic representation of life and reality.

Additionally, in becoming more aware of the perspectives of others through their studies, students develop a stronger sense of their own individual viewpoints, such as their position in time and place. The reflection this prompts creates strong links with TOK.

In language A courses students are constantly engaged with inquiry, critical thinking and reflection as they explore how meaning is generated in texts. Studies in language and literature therefore enhance the students' ability to examine diverse ways of knowing and different knowledge questions. For example, questions regarding the extent to which the reader shapes the meaning of a text, the impact of translation on a text, or the way texts influence understanding of the self and the world are continuously raised in these courses and constitute an important part of the focus of inquiry in them. Further examples of TOK questions can be found within the description of each the of the areas of exploration of the syllabus.

Studies in language and literature and creativity, activity, service

Studies in language and literature courses offer significant potential to complement creativity, activity, service (CAS). In their engagement with the characters or the situations portrayed in the texts, students achieve a better understanding of others and of themselves while developing the capacity for empathy. The tasks involved in these courses are also instrumental in developing critical thinking skills. As students interact with the texts and with each other, they continuously check their hypotheses against the evidence in the texts and against other readers' interpretations to reflect and evaluate how their own assumptions and beliefs frame possible textual meanings. As a result, they acquire the ability to take a critical distance

and inspect a statement or hypothesis to determine the extent to which it is supported by fact. These skills are useful for CAS as students reflect on the effect their experiences and projects had and subsequently plan for future action.

An important aim of studies in language and literature courses is to relate the reading experience to aspects of the students' contexts. The internal assessment, for example, with its emphasis on the connection between themes and attitudes in the texts and current global issues, encourages students to meaningfully apply and transfer the understanding gained in the classroom to the reality of their world. This might translate into a willingness to commit themselves to a CAS experience or project which addresses a global issue in a local context. Embarking on a CAS experience or project might at the same time feed back into the course in the form of an enriched understanding of the situations portrayed in the texts.

A wide range of connections can be made between CAS experiences and projects and studies in language and literature courses. Some examples are:

- Create or participate in a literary walking tour, in which the milestones of a particular author's biography or the most significant places in the setting of a text read are visited, described and discussed. The three strands—creativity, service and activity—would be involved if the students actually created the tour, while activity and creativity would be involved if the student participated in the walking tour and then produced some kind of creative response to it. Simple participation in the tour would just constitute activity.
- Plan and host an event to raise awareness about a global issue explored in a text being studied, which would involve creativity and service.
- Create audiobooks of a text being studied for the vision-impaired, or make a critical review of existing audiobooks for the school librarian in terms of the performance of the actor or reader. This would involve creativity and service.
- Develop and run book clubs or literary circles with younger students in the school. This would constitute creativity and service.

The connections between a subject and CAS can result in a single experience or may be developed into a project.

No matter what final shape this connection takes, CAS experiences and projects must be distinct from, and may not be included or used in, the student's DP course requirements.

Studies in language and literature and the extended essay

An extended essay in studies in language and literature provides students with an opportunity to undertake independent research into a literary or linguistic topic of special interest. It also allows students the freedom to explore their preferred texts and authors, applying and transferring the analytical and interpretative skills acquired in studies in language and literature courses. It is intended to promote advanced research and writing skills, intellectual discovery, critical thinking and creativity.

The extended essay in studies in language and literature cannot be based on a text or work studied in class.

It must aim at identifying a valid approach to the analysis of language or literature. The treatment of the topic must be analytical. Although the student may research secondary sources, the extended essay must consist primarily in an independent response to the topic.

There are four types of extended essay:

1. It could have a literary focus. The student would choose between: category 1, which is based on a literary text or texts originally written in the language A studied and category 2, which is a comparative essay, with at least one of the literary texts being a translation.
2. It could have a linguistic focus, which would be a category 3 essay. This approach should emphasize the production and reception of non-literary texts or an academic study of an issue related to the understanding of language as an area of investigation. Although the extended essay may involve comparison and contrast with different languages and cultures, the main focus must be on the language A studied and its culture(s).

3. It could examine the relationship between a literary text and its performance, examining the creative and critical relationship that exists between both. Students interested in this option would choose a literature and performance extended essay and would therefore focus on an exploration of both the text and the transformation that gives rise to its performance. This is one of the two kinds of interdisciplinary extended essay a student can write involving a studies in language and literature course. Although an extended essay in literature and performance may involve an element of creativity, analysis and reasoned argument are fundamental to success.
4. It could be a world studies extended essay, an interdisciplinary research project which examines an issue of contemporary global significance, drawing on the methods, concepts and theories of two DP subjects. The topic must be taken from one of the six prescribed areas of study.
    - Culture, language and identity
    - Science, technology and society
    - Equality and inequality
    - Conflict, peace and security
    - Environmental and/or economic sustainability
    - Health and development

    This is an option available to all DP subjects. However, key elements of studies in language and literature such as cultural linguistics, aesthetics, discourse analysis, and critical perspectives could find broad application across the six global themes and play a significant role in advancing students' global consciousness.

Studies in language and literature and international-mindedness

International-mindedness is at the heart of the IB. It is central to its philosophy, and inspires and informs its pedagogical principles and practices.

The study of language and literature is instrumental in developing an awareness and understanding of the self and how it relates to others. Through the study of texts written originally in the language studied and in translation, students gain an understanding of the ways in which different languages and literatures represent the world and how these can reflect and help create diverse identities. Students also become aware that representations of the world vary across cultures and are encouraged to consider the reasons why, attaining a better understanding of the different ways in which people experience and represent the world.

The syllabuses of studies in language and literature require that a set number of texts be read in translation and recommend that the texts chosen should be representative of a variety of perspectives. In the creation of the *Prescribed reading list*, the IB has aimed at including a wide variety of writers and at trying to attain as equitable a balance as possible between canonical and more contemporary writers, male and female writers and writers from different regions and countries in the cases in which a language is spoken in a variety of places. The *Prescribed reading list* is aimed at inspiring and encouraging teachers to make choices that will result in a collection of texts for class study that will strike a similar balance and that will therefore allow students to be able to fully appreciate the diversity of forms the human experience can take.

The way that studies in language and literature courses contribute to the development of international-mindedness in students is linked to the way that they contribute to the development of the attributes of the IB learner profile. By reading texts which offer perspectives which may be different from their own, students will:

- use critical thinking skills to be able to understand the nature of the experience that is communicated in a text and the ways in which such an experience is communicated (thinkers)
- nurture their curiosity in connection with the different views and experiences of life present in a text (inquirers)

- engage with issues and ideas of global significance of which they might have been unaware (knowledgeable)
- be encouraged to appreciate the ideas, values and traditions of others in an inquiring way (open-minded)
- understand that the dignity and rights of people everywhere must be respected (principled)
- show empathy, compassion and respect for other people (caring)
- recognize interdependence among people and between people and the world in which they live (balanced)
- listen carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups and express as articulately as possible their own perspectives (communicators)
- question their own views about the world (reflective)
- be open to transforming such views and consider how this transformation can lead to action (risk-takers).

Studies in language and literature courses offer various opportunities for students to examine the ways in which their personal world, identities and relationships are represented in texts and how these relate to their own perspectives of the reality around them. They also enable students to experience representations of other realities and other people, allowing them to get acquainted with perspectives of the world that might be different from their own. In this way, studies in language and literature courses provide fertile ground for a deep reflection on the interaction between the local and the global and are a pathway to intercultural critical thinking and consciousness.

Engaging with sensitive topics

All studies in language and literature courses will provide the opportunity to engage with a broad range of texts, approaches, ideas, stimuli and interpretations that address topics of personal, local and global significance. These works may challenge learners intellectually, personally and culturally, and involve sensitive and mature topics. The courses studied may explicitly address sensitive topics through texts and issues discussed while inviting students to critically reflect on various perspectives offered.

Engaging with sensitive topics in these courses—whether receptively or productively—must be done with every reasonable effort to encourage students to respond with respect for their peers and larger learning communities. Providing a safe environment in which discussion may be facilitated is an important role of the teacher. In general, approaching sensitive topics in studies in language and literature courses must be done through an intellectually critical lens avoiding gratuitous excess and/or glib treatment and bearing in mind the IB's commitment to international-mindedness and intercultural respect.

Prior learning

There are no formal requirements for students undertaking the studies in language and literature courses. Students who take these courses will often have varied language profiles and may be multilingual. While it is recommended that students have had experience of writing critical essays about texts, not having done so should not exclude them from studies in language and literature. Schools should refer to the IB document, *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes*, available on the Programme Resource Centre, for support. Each course offers the opportunity for continued language development and the acquisition of a range of skills including, for example, textual analysis and the expression of literary appreciation. The choice of the specific course will depend on the students' and teacher's interests and the students' future educational goals.

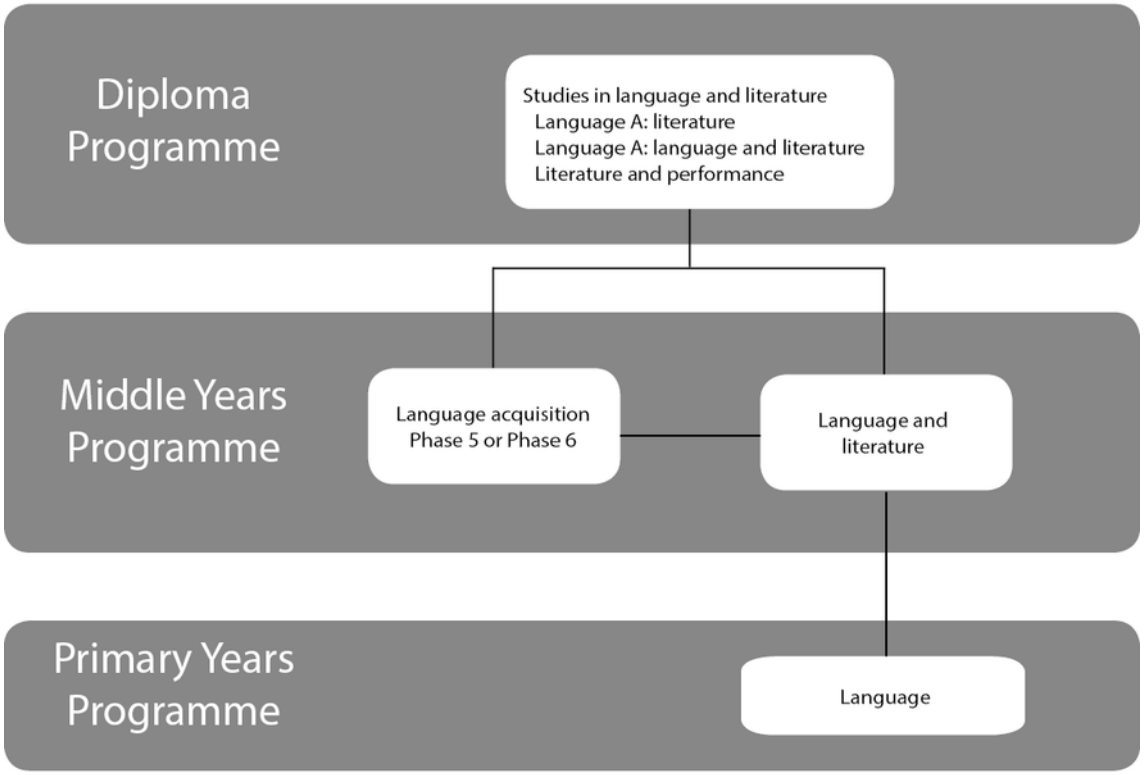
Links to the Middle Years Programme

The MYP is designed for students aged 11 to 16 and, as an integral part of the IB continuum, can directly lead into the DP. MYP language and literature provides students with opportunities that prepare them for a DP studies in language and literature course.

The MYP *Language and literature guide* indicates the following IB continuum pathway for MYP language and literature students continuing their studies in the DP:

Figure 2

IB continuum pathway to Diploma Programme studies in language and literature



The appropriate pathway for a student who has studied an MYP language and literature course is a DP studies in language and literature course, which would guarantee that the level of challenge is suitable to the student's linguistic proficiency and to their previous experience with language and literature. The choice of course among the three studies in language and literature courses would depend on matters of individual preference. The choice of level would be dictated by the students' previous performance in the MYP language and literature course and on their overall decisions about the distribution of SL and HL subjects across the six academic areas.

An MYP student who has achieved a phase 5 or phase 6 in a language acquisition course could also potentially proceed to take a DP studies in language and literature course and perform successfully, though as the MYP *Language acquisition guide* indicates, it is recommended they have at least one semester in MYP language and literature before starting these DP courses. This will guarantee a smoother transition between the courses of both programmes. In these cases, decisions about the most appropriate studies in language and literature course and level should be made in consultation with teachers.

The MYP language and literature course allows students to develop an appreciation and understanding of language and literature through key concepts such as communication, connections, creativity and perspective, and through the more discipline-specific related concepts.

The conceptual focus is maintained in studies in language and literature courses, which build on the foundations established by the four key concepts chosen by the MYP language and literature course by studying them in greater depth, redefining them in more specific ways and complementing them with others which are suitable for study at this stage in the students' academic development.

Having gained an understanding of language and literature through oral, written and visual communication, students develop analytical and organizational skills in creative, personal and imaginative

ways. The six skill areas in the MYP language and literature subject group—listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting—are developed as both independent and interdependent skills.

The studies in language and literature courses continue to encourage the cultivation of these skills, along with intercultural understanding and engagement, from local, national and global communities. The courses further develop linguistic and literary understanding through the study of a broad range of texts, as well as through learning language in context in order to promote international-mindedness.

The DP studies in language and literature courses build on the foundation provided by the MYP. They aim to ensure the continuing development of a student's powers of expression and understanding in a variety of language domains.

Links to the IB Career-related Programme

The IB Career-related Programme (CP) is a framework of international education that incorporates the vision and educational principles of the IB into a unique programme specifically developed for students who wish to engage in career-related learning. The CP's flexible educational framework allows schools to meet the needs, backgrounds and contexts of students.

The aim of the CP is to provide students with both an academic and practical foundation to support both their further studies and specialized training, thereby ensuring their success in the workforce. Taking a course in studies in language and literature will support this aim by developing linguistic, analytical and creative skills through a variety of written and oral tasks.

The studies in language and literature courses provide opportunities for students to collaborate and be better prepared for an effective participation in an ever-changing world of work. Through approaches to learning skills, CP students are encouraged to become reflective, creative and critical thinkers and confident communicators. Through the study of a wide range of texts, students are encouraged to think about the needs, perspectives, values and attitudes of other people. The requirements of the courses in general terms encourage them to be independent learners and global citizens through the study of a variety of texts and perspectives.

Aims

Studies in language and literature aims

The aims of all subjects in studies in language and literature are to enable students to:

1. engage with a range of texts, in a variety of media and forms, from different periods, styles, and cultures
2. develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting and performing
3. develop skills in interpretation, analysis and evaluation
4. develop sensitivity to the formal and aesthetic qualities of texts and an appreciation of how they contribute to diverse responses and open up multiple meanings
5. develop an understanding of relationships between texts and a variety of perspectives, cultural contexts, and local and global issues and an appreciation of how they contribute to diverse responses and open up multiple meanings
6. develop an understanding of the relationships between studies in language and literature and other disciplines
7. communicate and collaborate in a confident and creative way
8. foster a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of language and literature.

Assessment objectives

Know, understand and interpret:

- a range of texts, works and/or performances, and their meanings and implications
- contexts in which texts are written and/or received
- elements of literary, stylistic, rhetorical, visual and/or performance craft
- features of particular text types and literary forms.

Analyse and evaluate:

- ways in which the use of language creates meaning
- uses and effects of literary, stylistic, rhetorical, visual or theatrical techniques
- relationships among different texts
- ways in which texts may offer perspectives on human concerns.

Communicate:

- ideas in clear, logical and persuasive ways
- in a range of styles, registers and for a variety of purposes and situations
- (for literature and performance only) ideas, emotion, character and atmosphere through performance.

Assessment objectives in practice

Assessment objective	Which component addresses this assessment objective?	How is the assessment objective addressed?
Know, understand and interpret	Paper 1	The response to a previously unseen non-literary passage requires students to show their knowledge and understanding of texts and text types and their ability to establish their own interpretation from the text and to come to conclusions about it.
	Paper 2	The essay on two literary works requires students to show their knowledge and understanding of the works and interpret their implications, and their similarities and differences, in connection with a given focus.
	Internal assessment	Students are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of one non-literary body of work and one work in their course of studies and interpret them in relation to a global issue.
	HL essay	Students are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of one of the bodies of work or works studied in relation to a line of inquiry they have selected.
Analyse and evaluate	Paper 1	Students are required to explore a previously unseen non-literary passage and write a response to it analysing and evaluating how the writer's choices have contributed to meaning.
	Paper 2	Students are required to write a comparative analysis and evaluation of two of the works studied in terms of the demands of a given question.
	Internal assessment	Students are required to evaluate one non-literary body of work and

Assessment objective	Which component addresses this assessment objective?	How is the assessment objective addressed?
		one work studied in terms of a global issue present in both of them, and analyse and evaluate how their unique perspectives are constructed by means of the authors' choices.
	HL essay	Students are required to analyse and evaluate one of the bodies of work or works studied in relation to a line of inquiry of their own choice.
Communicate	Paper 1	Students are required to write a formal, well-organized and well-focused response using language appropriate to a formal essay.
	Paper 2	Students are required to write a formal essay which is well organized, which offers a balanced comparison between two works, and which is clearly focused on a given question.
	Internal assessment	Students are required to deliver a well-organized, coherent, convincing and balanced oral which focuses on a global issue of their own choice.
	HL essay	Students are required to write a formal essay exploring a line of inquiry in relation to a body of work or work. The essay should be formal, well structured and should evidence good citation and referencing skills.

Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Teaching hours*	
	SL	HL
Readers, writers and texts Non-literary texts are chosen from a variety of sources and media to represent as wide a range of text types as possible, and literary works are chosen from a variety of literary forms. The study of the non-literary texts and literary works focuses on the nature of language and communication and the nature of literature and its study. This study includes the investigation of how texts themselves operate as well as the contexts and complexities of production and reception. Focus is on the development of personal and critical responses to the particulars of communication.	50	80
Time and space Non-literary texts and literary works are chosen from a variety of sources, literary forms and media that reflect a range of historical and/or cultural perspectives. Their study focuses on the contexts of language use and the variety of ways literary and non-literary texts might both reflect and shape society at large. The focus is on the consideration of personal and cultural perspectives, the development of broader perspectives, and an awareness of the ways in which context is tied to meaning.	50	80
Intertextuality: connecting texts Non-literary texts and literary works are chosen from a variety of sources, literary forms and media in a way that allows students an opportunity to extend their study and make fruitful comparisons. Their study focuses on intertextual relationships with possibilities to explore various topics, thematic concerns, generic conventions, modes or literary traditions that have been introduced throughout the course. The focus is on the development of critical response grounded in an understanding of the complex relationships among texts.	50	80
Total teaching hours	**150**	**240**

* The number of hours indicated for each area of exploration should not be taken as either prescriptive or restrictive, since these areas will many times overlap in the study of a text. Careful planning of class activities is necessary to ensure that there will be a balance between the types of approaches to texts favoured by each of the areas. There should also be a balance between the time of study allotted to non-literary texts and literary works within each area.

The recommended teaching time is 240 hours to complete HL courses and 150 hours to complete SL courses as stated in section "B1 General regulations: Diploma Programme" of the publication *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures* (updated annually).

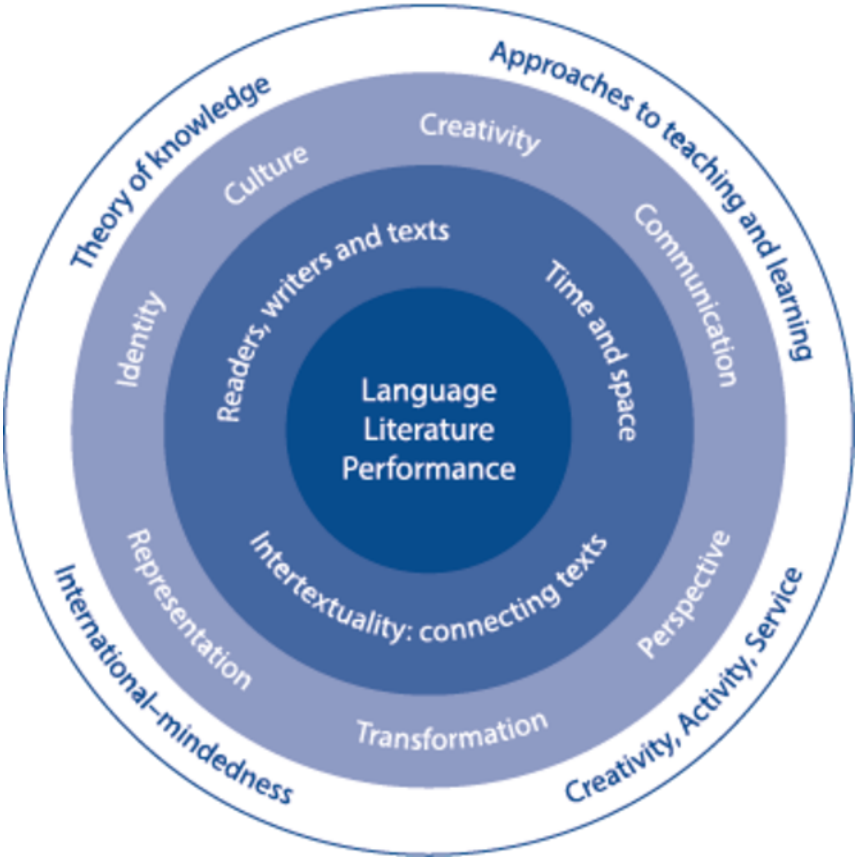
Syllabus content

Model for studies in language and literature

Studies in language and literature are built on the notion of conceptual learning in which students engage with central concepts of the discipline in order to become flexible, critical readers of all types of texts. The model below represents the relationship between the three courses in studies of language and literature, their main topics of study, their central concepts, and the way they relate to the principles at the core of the DP.

Figure 3

Studies in language and literature model



At the heart of the study of all three courses are the domains of language, literature and performance. Each course stresses these elements to a different degree, but all engage with them to some extent.

The study of language, literature and performance, and the development of the relevant skills, is divided into three areas of exploration—the exploration of the nature of the interactions between **readers, writers and texts**; the exploration of how texts interact with **time and space** and the exploration of **intertextuality** and how texts connect with each other. Although these three areas seem to offer an ordered approach to progression through the course, they are, as represented in the diagram, inherently over-lapping, iterative or circular and allow for flexibility in course design.

The entire pursuit of studies in language and literature is tied to core elements of the DP and to the overarching principles of IB learning, theory of knowledge (TOK), creativity, activity, service (CAS), the extended essay, the approaches to learning and approaches to teaching, and international-mindedness.

What students will learn in the language A: language and literature course

In the language A: language and literature course students will learn about the complex and dynamic nature of language and explore both its practical and aesthetic dimensions. They will explore the crucial role language plays in communication, reflecting experience and shaping the world. Students will also learn about their own roles as producers of language and develop their productive skills. Throughout the course, students will explore the various ways in which language choices, text types, literary forms and contextual elements all effect meaning. Through close analysis of various text types and literary forms, students will consider their own interpretations, as well as the critical perspectives of others, to explore how such positions are shaped by cultural belief systems and to negotiate meanings for texts. Students will engage in activities that involve them in the process of production and help shape their critical awareness of how texts and visual and audio elements work independently or together to influence the audience/reader and how audiences/readers open up the possibilities of texts. With its focus on a wide variety of communicative acts, the course is meant to develop sensitivity to the foundational nature, and pervasive influence, of language in the world at large.

"Text" in this subject, and in the published guide, is defined as anything from which information can be extracted, and includes the widest range of oral, written and visual materials present in society. This range will include single and multiple images with or without text, literary and non-literary written texts and extracts, media texts (for example, films), radio and television programmes and their scripts, and electronic texts that share aspects of a number of these areas (for example, video-sharing websites, web pages, social media messages, blogs, wikis and tweets). Oral texts will include readings, speeches, broadcasts and transcriptions of recorded conversation.

Course requirements

Across the three areas of exploration at least four literary works must be studied in the SL course and at least six literary works must be studied in the HL course.

The IB has created an extensive *Prescribed reading list* of authors in a wide range of languages to accompany studies in language and literature courses. This searchable online list provides teachers with a resource from which they will be able to select a group of authors that guarantees diversity and compliance with course requirements. Six authors have been suggested as a starting point in the exploration of the literature of each language. Teachers can decide whether to follow this recommendation or not.

Each area of exploration must involve the study of both literary works and non-literary texts, with equal time devoted to the study of each. Texts and works must be chosen from a variety of cultures and languages. In selecting them, teachers should attempt to achieve a balance in relation to text type, literary form, period and place, and endeavour to include a variety of forms the human and artistic experience can take.

Selection of literary works

SL students must study at least four works of which:

- a minimum of one must be written originally in the language studied, by an author on the *Prescribed reading list*
- a minimum of one must be a work that has been translated into the language of the course (this work needs to have been written by an author on the *Prescribed reading list* in a language different from the one studied)
- two can be chosen freely—from the *Prescribed reading list* or elsewhere—and may be in translation.

There must be a minimum of one work for each area of exploration. Works must be selected to cover two literary forms, two periods and two places as defined on the *Prescribed reading list* covering at least two continents.

HL students must study at least six works of which:

- a minimum of two must be written originally in the language studied, by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- a minimum of two must be works that have been translated into the language of the course (these need to have been written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list* in a language different from the one studied)
- two can be chosen freely—from the *Prescribed reading list* or elsewhere—and may be in translation.

There must be a minimum of two works for each of the areas of exploration. Works must be selected to cover three literary forms, three periods and three places as defined on the *Prescribed reading list* covering at least two continents.

A work is defined for studies in language and literature courses as one single literary text, such as a novel, autobiography or biography; two or more shorter literary texts such as novellas; 5–10 short stories; 5–8 essays; 10–15 letters; or a substantial section or the whole of a long poem (at least 600 lines) or 15–20 shorter poems.

Where more than one text is studied as part of a work, texts must be from the same author and belong to the same subcategory within one literary form.

The ideas and skills introduced in each of the areas are integral to and embedded throughout the course, and there is a significant overlap. Teachers should take into account the type and range of works to be studied, the time required for each area of the course, the development of student skills, learning outcomes, performance work to be undertaken and assessment deadlines when making decisions regarding teaching sequence. More guidance on course construction models is provided in the teacher support material (TSM).

Authors

One same author cannot be studied twice within a language A: language and literature course. Additionally, a language A: language and literature candidate may not study:

- an author that they may already be studying as part of another studies in language and literature course
- an author that they may already be studying as part of a language B course

A language A: language and literature candidate may write their extended essay on an author studied as part of the course provided they choose a different work by that author.

Literary forms

The *Prescribed reading list* includes four literary forms. At SL two of the literary forms must be selected for the study of works. At HL three literary forms must be studied. An author on the *Prescribed reading list* can be studied in any of the forms in which they wrote, even if those forms are not mentioned in relation to them.

Period

The *Prescribed reading list* contains different periods, which classify authors according to the century/centuries in which they lived. The language A: language and literature syllabus at standard level must include works by authors from at least two different periods. At HL, the syllabus must include works by authors from at least three different periods.

Place

The *Prescribed reading list* indicates the countries or regions with which authors are closely associated. The language A: language and literature syllabus at SL must include works by authors from at least two different countries or regions and must cover at least two continents. At HL, the syllabus must include works by authors from at least three different countries or regions and must cover at least two continents.

Selection of non-literary texts

To prepare themselves for some of the assessment components where non-literary texts can or must be used, students will need to study extended, full-length major non-literary texts or groups of shorter non-literary texts that share the same text type and authorship in order to be able to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the characteristics of a specific author or creator. In this guide, an extended, full-length non-literary text or a group of shorter non-literary texts that are of one same text type and that share the same authorship is called a "body of work".

Teachers should ensure there is a balance between the time of study allotted to non-literary texts and literary works within each area or in the course as a whole.

The selection of non-literary texts must include as wide a range of non-literary text types as possible.

The authors or creators of the non-literary texts studied must not be authors included in the *Prescribed reading list* or authors widely recognized as literary.

Non-literary texts which were originally written or created in a language different from the language studied can be included in the course and used in assessment components provided they are studied in translation. The translation studied must be professional and must be an officially published translation of the text.

Distinction between literary and non-literary texts

The following table indicates, for language A courses, which text types must be considered literary, which must be considered non-literary and which text types could be considered literary or non-literary depending on the specific characteristics of the text being considered. Please bear in mind that the lists below are not necessarily exhaustive.

Literary text types

Graphic novel	Poem
Novella	Short story
Novel	Song lyrics
Play	

Non-literary text types

Advertisement	Infographic
Appeal	Interview
Blog	Music video
Brochure/leaflet	Photograph
Cartoon	Radio broadcast
Diagram	Report
Electronic text (for example, social media posts)	Screenplay for TV or film
Encyclopaedia entry	Set of instructions
Film/television	Textbook
Guide book	Work of art

Text types that could be literary or non-literary depending on the specific text*

Autobiography / biography	Memoir
Diary entry	Opinion column

Essay	Parody
Letter	Pastiche
Magazine article	Speech
Manifesto	Travelogue

* Some of the manifestations of these text types are literary, usually within the category of prose: non-fiction. The decision about whether a given text belonging to these text types is literary or non-literary must consider whether its author is on the *Prescribed reading list* or recognized for being a literary writer, or whether the text has a clear aesthetic purpose. In any of these cases, the text cannot be considered non-literary and must be studied as part of a literary work.

Area of exploration—readers, writers and texts

> A word after a word after a word is power.
>
> Margaret Atwood

This area introduces students to the nature of language and literature and its study. The investigation undertaken involves close attention to the details of texts in a variety of types and literary forms so that students learn about the choices made by creators and the ways in which meaning is communicated through words, image, and sound. At the same time, study will focus on the role receivers play in generating meaning as students move from personal response to understanding and interpretation influenced by the classroom community. Students will learn to understand the creativity of language, the relationship between language and thought and the aesthetic nature of literature. Students will see that texts are powerful means to express individual thoughts and feelings, and that their own perspectives as experienced users of language are integral to the effect and success of a communicative act.

Study in this area should be structured to allow students to become more confident in their ability to recognize key textual and rhetorical features and how they create or affect meaning. Non-literary texts and literary works can be chosen that lend themselves to close reading and give students a sense of stylistic, rhetorical and literary elements across a variety of text types and literary forms. The aim is not to enumerate or define various features and study will move beyond the identification of elements or the consideration of individual effects to see the complex constructed nature of texts. While conducting detailed study, learning activities can be structured to introduce students to the ways in which linguistic and literary professionals attend to communicative acts and their concerns. Student writing and response can involve moving between personal and academic response or between the creative and the expository.

Readers, writers and texts aims to introduce students to the skills and approaches required to closely examine texts as well as to introduce metacognitive awareness of the nature of the discipline by considering the following guiding conceptual questions:

1. Why and how do we study language and literature?
2. How are we affected by texts in various ways?
3. In what ways is meaning constructed, negotiated, expressed and interpreted?
4. How does language use vary among text types and among literary forms?
5. How does the structure or style of a text affect meaning?
6. How do texts offer insights and challenges?

Possible links to TOK

Links to TOK in this area revolve around the question of what kind of knowledge can be constructed from a text, how that knowledge is constructed and the extent to which the meaning of a text can be considered to be fixed. Examples of links to TOK include:

- What do we learn about through the study of a literary text? How is this different from what we learn through the study of a non-literary text?

- In what ways is the kind of knowledge we gain from the study of language and literature different from the kind we gain through the study of other disciplines? Can the study of language and of literature be considered scientific?
- How much of the knowledge we construct through reading a text is determined by authorial intention, by the reader's cultural assumptions and by the purpose valued for a text in a community of readers?
- Are some interpretations of a text better than others? How are multiple interpretations best negotiated?
- In what ways do interpretive strategies vary when reading a literary work and when reading a non-literary text?

Area of exploration—time and space

> I think the use of language is a very important means by which this species, because of its biological nature, creates a kind of social space, to place itself in interactions with other people.
>
> Noam Chomsky

This area of exploration focuses on the idea that language is a social capacity and as such is intertwined with community, culture and history. It explores the variety of cultural contexts in which texts are produced and read across time and space as well as the ways texts themselves reflect or refract the world at large. Students will examine how cultural conditions can affect language and how these conditions are a product of language. Students will also consider the ways culture and identity influence reception.

Students will investigate ways in which texts may represent, and be understood from, a variety of cultural and historical perspectives. Through this exploration students will recognize the role of relationships among text, self and other, and the ways in which the local and the global connect. These relationships are complex and dynamic. The background of an author and the make-up of an audience are not necessarily clear or easily described. Texts are situated in specific contexts and deal with or represent social, political and cultural concerns particular to a given time and place. For example, a text written to address the concerns of an author in contemporary society can be set in ancient times. Cultures that are geographically separated can share mores or ideas, while people living in proximity can embrace disparate traditions. Students will consider the intricacies of communication within such a complex societal framework and the implications that language and text take on when produced and read in shifting contexts.

Study and work selection in this area should allow students to explore texts and issues from a variety of places, cultures and/or times. The culture, biography of an author, historical events or narratives of critical reception will be considered and may be researched, but the focus of study will be on the ideas and issues raised by the texts themselves and a consideration of whether these are best understood in relation to an informed consideration of context. In this area of exploration, students examine the ways in which a text may illuminate some aspect of the political or social environment, or the ways in which a more nuanced understanding of events may affect their understanding or interpretation of a text. The study of contexts does not imply a static, one-to-one relationship between a text and the world, but sees the former as a powerful "non-human actor" across time and space.

Time and space aims to broaden student understanding of the open, plural, or cosmopolitan nature of texts ranging from advertisements to poems by considering the following guiding conceptual questions:

1. How important is cultural or historical context to the production and reception of a text?
2. How do we approach texts from different times and cultures to our own?
3. To what extent do texts offer insight into another culture?
4. How does the meaning and impact of a text change over time?
5. How do texts reflect, represent or form a part of cultural practices?
6. How does language represent social distinctions and identities?

Possible links to TOK

Links to TOK are related to the questions of how far the context of production of a text influences or informs its meaning and the extent to which the knowledge a reader can obtain from a text is determined by the context of reception. Examples of such links to TOK include:

- How far can a reader understand a text that was written in a context different from their own and which may have addressed a different audience?
- Is not sharing a world view with an author an obstacle to understand their text?
- What is lost in translation from one language to another?
- How might the approaches to a given time and place of a poet, a cartoonist or a diary-writer and a historian differ?
- Is the notion of a canon helpful in the study and understanding of literature? How does a canon get established? What factors influence its expansion or change over time?

Area of exploration—intertextuality: connecting texts

> I will not deny that language is based on difference; rather I will argue that it is also based on reference.
>
> Robert Scholes

This area of exploration focuses on the concerns of intertextuality, or the connections between and among media, text and audience involving diverse traditions and ideas. It focuses on the comparative study of texts so that students may gain deeper appreciation of both unique characteristics of individual texts and complex systems of connection. Throughout the course, students will be able to see similarities and differences among diverse texts. This area allows for a further exploration of literary and linguistic concerns, examples, interpretations and readings by studying a grouping of texts set by the teacher or set in close conversation with a class or groups of students. Students will gain an awareness of how texts can provide critical lenses to reading other texts and of how they can support a text's interpretation by expanding on it or question it by providing a different point of view.

Intertextuality: connecting texts can be approached in a variety of ways, such as:

- through the study of a group of texts from the same text type or literary form (for example, advertisements, drama or short stories respectively)
- a study of chronological development (for example, the tale, the elegy, political oration, the newspaper)
- a consideration of mode (for example, satire, action-adventure, parody)
- an exploration of a topic or concept (for example, fame, gender, power, social code, values, the hero)
- an investigation into a theoretical perspective or debate in language or literature (for example literary value, feminism, cognitive theory, critical discourse theory).

This area of exploration aims to give students a sense of the ways in which texts exist in a system of relationships with other communicative acts past and present. Students will further engage with literary and linguistic traditions and new directions by considering the following guiding conceptual questions:

1. How do texts adhere to and deviate from conventions associated with literary forms or text types?
2. How do conventions and systems of reference evolve over time?
3. In what ways can diverse texts share points of similarity?
4. How valid is the notion of a classic text?
5. How can texts offer multiple perspectives of a single issue, topic or theme?
6. In what ways can comparison and interpretation be transformative?

Possible links to TOK

Links to TOK in this area are related to the question of how the interaction of a text with other texts, brought about explicitly by the author or established by the reader in the act of reception, influence the perception of them and their meaning.

- What are the boundaries between a literary text and a non-literary text, and how are these boundaries determined?
- What kind of knowledge about a text is gained when compared and contrasted with other texts?
- Does knowledge of conventions of form, text type and of literary and rhetorical techniques allow for a better and deeper understanding of a text?
- How are judgements made about the merit of a text? What makes a text better than others?
- Is the study of texts better approached by means of a temporal perspective, grouping texts according to when they were written, or by means of a thematic approach, grouping them according to the theme or concern they share? What impact does each one of them have on knowledge of the discipline?
- How useful are classifications of texts according to form, text type and period? How do they contribute to the understanding of communication and its development?

The learner portfolio

The learner portfolio is a central element of the language A: language and literature course, and is mandatory for all students. It is an individual collection of student work done throughout the two years of the course.

The work carried out for the learner portfolio forms the basis of preparation for the assessment, although the portfolio itself will not be directly assessed or moderated by the IB. However, it is a fundamental element of the course, providing evidence of the student's work and a reflection of their preparation for the assessment components. Schools may be required to submit these learner portfolios in cases in which it is necessary to determine the authenticity of student's work in a component, to certify that the principles of academic integrity have been respected or to evaluate the implementation of the syllabus in a school.

The learner portfolio is a place for a student to explore and reflect upon literary and non-literary texts, and to establish connections among them and with the areas of exploration and the central concepts in the subject. In the learner portfolio, students will be expected to reflect on their responses to the works being studied in the corresponding area of exploration. They will also be expected to establish connections between these works and previous ones they have read, and between their perspectives and values as readers and those of their peers. As they progress through the syllabus, it is expected that these connections will be drawn between works within and across areas of exploration, and that they will provide a foundation for the construction of broader knowledge about the transactions between texts, culture and identity.

The learner portfolio is also a space in which students can prepare for assessment. They will use the portfolio to make decisions about the most appropriate and productive connections between the works they have studied and the assessment components. It should be introduced at the beginning of the course and become increasingly important as students progress, and prepare for external and internal assessment.

The learner portfolio must consist of a diversity of formal and informal responses to the literary and non-literary texts studied, which may come in a range of critical and/or creative forms, and in different media. It is the student's own record of discovery and development throughout the course. It could be used to document:

- reflections related to the guiding conceptual questions of the course
- reflections on the assumptions, beliefs, and values that frame a response to texts
- explorations of texts and the insights they offer into social, global and real-world issues
- detailed evaluations and critical analysis of texts or extracts which explore the potential meanings for language used in them

reflections on the connections across a range of texts studied

- experiments with form, media and technology
- creative writing tasks for exploration of different literary forms and text types, and development of the students' personal responses to texts
- reading, research and inquiry carried out beyond the classroom experience
- records of valued feedback received
- reports of classroom or group activities or discussions that explore the diverse values and perspectives negotiated and the process of negotiation in itself
- challenges faced and achievements
- selections of suitable extracts that could form the basis of the individual oral
- instances of self-assessment to evaluate the student's own progress.

Teachers are free to monitor and set guidelines for the learner portfolios, but students should be encouraged to shape them in ways that allow them to independently record their personal development. The type of portfolio the students keep—digital or non-digital, traditional or multimodal—will be dictated by individual learning preferences. Students should be allowed to explore different options freely.

It is expected that the work necessary to meet the requirements in all assessment components will have evolved and been drawn from the contents of the portfolio. To that effect, each student's portfolio should include at the end the "Works studied form" detailing the works that have been selected as part of the course and how they have been made to interact with the assessment components. The assessment section contains suggestions on how to make use of the learner portfolio in the preparation for each assessment component.

Examples of the kind of work that could be included in the portfolio are provided in the teacher support materials (TSM).

Development of linguistic skills

Students will use and develop the following linguistic skills at all levels in the three studies in language and literature courses.

Receptive skills

Students will understand and evaluate a wide range of texts, attending to textual detail, applying knowledge of textual conventions and making informed interpretations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations. They will consider arguments, distinguishing the main points from relevant supporting details and explanations. They will use a variety of strategies to deduce meaning and move beyond the literal level to broader implications.

Productive skills

Students will present and develop their ideas and opinions on a variety of topics, orally and in writing. They will construct and support complex arguments with explanations and examples. They will experiment with form by carrying out, as part of their class activities, transformative and re-creative activities either in writing or as performance. They will speak and write at length and with purpose in order to meet a wide range of communicative needs; describing, narrating, comparing, explaining, persuading and evaluating.

Interactive skills

Students will begin, maintain and close oral exchanges, displaying the ability to adjust style or emphasis; using a variety of strategies to maintain the flow of discussions; attending to diverse perspectives and opinions. They will take into account audience and purpose employing appropriate language, tone of voice, body language and gesture. They will also be able to interact with texts and maintain written conversation in various registers and on various platforms.

Conceptual understanding

The document *What is an IB education?* states: "IB programmes offer students access to a broad and balanced range of academic studies and learning experiences. They promote conceptual learning, focusing on powerful organizing ideas that are relevant across subject areas, and that help integrate learning and add coherence to the curriculum" (see the "Broad, balanced, conceptual and connected" section).

All DP language programme subject groups promote a vision of learning in which the development of language skills and conceptual understandings of language are complementary to each other, so that the total learning experience of the student is as robust as possible. As a result, DP students become more accomplished communicators in the languages they study when their abilities to read, write and speak about course content are reinforced and extended by an understanding of why and how people use language to communicate.

In particular, the approach to developing conceptual understandings of language in the DP languages programme is designed using the following guiding principles.

- DP students with experience of the PYP or the MYP are provided with frequent opportunities to develop further their conceptual understandings of language (PYP) or their understanding of the key and related concepts in the MYP language and literature and language acquisition courses.
- DP students are encouraged to apply what they already know about other languages and cultures—through formal study or personal experience—in order to enhance their overall learning process.
- DP students are encouraged to consider broad questions about language and culture as appropriate to their course of study in order to develop international-mindedness and increase self-awareness as inquirers in their own learning process.

Conceptual understanding in studies in language and literature courses

Concepts are vital in studies in language and literature courses since they help to organize and guide the study of texts across the three areas of exploration. The concepts interact with the three areas of exploration in numerous ways and contribute a sense of continuity in the transition from one area to the next. They also facilitate the process of establishing connections between texts, making it easier for students to identify different ways in which the texts they study relate to one another. Although they are not explicitly assessed in any component, the concepts constitute an essential part of a student's investigation and should therefore be included in the discussion of each of the texts studied.

The seven concepts which structure the learning and teaching of these courses have been selected because of the central position they occupy in the study of both language and literature. They foreground aspects of linguistic and literary study that have been the focus of attention and inquiry. Brief explanations of the seven concepts are provided. These explanations are not meant to be exhaustive, although they will serve as a guiding set of ideas for the course.

For ideas on how to approach these concepts through class activities, please consult the "Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in studies in language and literature" section in this guide or the *Language A teacher support material*.

Identity

When reading texts, students will encounter and interact with a multiplicity of perspectives, voices and characters. It is usual when reading and interpreting a text to assume that the views are to some extent representative of the writer's identity. However, the relationship between an author and the different perspectives and voices they assume in the texts is frequently complex, and this makes the concept of identity an elusive one. The figure that emerges from the reading of various texts by the same author adds to the complexity of the discussion. Conversely, the ways in which the identity of a reader comes into play at the moment of reading a text are equally central to the analysis of the act of reading and interpretation.

Culture

The concept of culture is central to the study of language and literature. It raises the question of how a text relates to the context of its production and reception, and to the respective values, beliefs and attitudes

prevalent in them. This concept also plays an important role with regards to the relationship that is established between an individual text and the writing tradition that precedes it. In both senses, the application of this concept to the study of a text should prompt reflection on the extent to which it is the product of a particular cultural and literary context and how it interacts with it.

Creativity

Creativity plays an important part in the experience of reading and writing. The concept is fundamental to analyse and understand the act of writing, and the role that imagination plays. When applied to the act of reading, creativity highlights the importance of the reader being able to engage in an imaginative interaction with a text which generates a range of potential meanings from it, above and beyond established interpretations. Creativity is also related to the notion of originality and to the question of the extent to which it is important or desirable in the production and reception of a text.

Communication

The concept of communication revolves around the question of the relationship that is established between a writer and a reader by means of a text. The extent to which writers facilitate communication through their choices of style and structure may be an aspect to analyse in this exploration. The writer may also have a particular audience in mind which may mean assumptions have been made about the reader's knowledge or views which might make communication with some readers easier than with others. Alternatively, the amount of cooperation that a text demands from a reader for communication to take place, and the readiness of the reader to engage is also important as a topic for discussion. Even with cooperative readers, the meaning of a text is never univocal, which makes the concept of communication a particularly productive, and potentially problematic one in relation to both literary and non-literary texts.

Perspective

A text may offer a multiplicity of perspectives which may, or may not, reflect the views of its author. Readers have also their own perspectives which they bring to their interaction with the text. This variety of perspectives impacts on the interpretation of a text and therefore deserves critical attention and discussion. The fact that the acts of reading and writing happen in a given time and place poses the additional question of how far the contexts of production and reception have influenced and even shaped those perspectives.

Transformation

The study of the connections among texts constitutes the focus of one of three areas of exploration, namely intertextuality: connecting texts. The complex ways in which texts refer to one another, appropriate elements from each other and transform them to suit a different aesthetic or communicative purpose, are evidence of the importance of transformation in the process of creating a text. Additionally, the act of reading is potentially transformative in itself, both for the text and the reader. Different readers may transform a text with their personal interpretation. The text can also have an impact on the reader which potentially might lead to action and to the transformation of reality.

Representation

The way in which language and literature relate to reality has been the subject of long running debate among linguists and literary theorists. Statements and manifestos by writers have made claims about this relationship which range from affirming that literature should represent reality as accurately as possible, to claiming art's absolute detachment and freedom from reality and any duty to represent it in the work of art. Irrespective of such a discussion, the concept is a central one to the subject in connection with the way in which form and structure interact with, and relate to, meaning.

Principles of course design

The language A: language and literature course allows teachers significant freedom in organizing and structuring their courses. The three areas of exploration focus on different approaches to the study of texts and do not establish any requirements about the text types or literary forms to be studied in each one of areas individually. The requirements on the provenance of the works—whether they are studied in the original language they were written in or are studied in translation; whether authors are on the *Prescribed*

reading list or freely chosen—must be met throughout the course. There is no prescribed method of how they should be distributed across the areas of exploration.

Additionally, as the syllabus does not bind the areas of exploration to particular assessment components, there is room for individual decisions to be made by students about the works for each of their assessment tasks. The freedom to make course design decisions requires careful planning to guarantee that requirements are met throughout the teaching of the syllabus material.

The central principles of variety, integration, autonomy and accountability are aimed at providing guidance for teachers in structuring their courses and advising students how to make sensible and careful decisions.

Variety

Teachers must ensure that:

- the choice of texts represents as wide a variety of text types, literary forms, places, times and voices as possible
- the organization of the texts into the three areas of exploration allows for sufficient opportunities in each area to connect, compare and contrast texts written originally in the language studied with those studied in translation, texts from different literary forms and text types and texts from diverse times and places
- the texts that are chosen represent a balance between canonical voices and newer, less traditional, voices (this is so that students are exposed to different conceptions of language and literature, and have a sense of the current linguistic and literary developments and of the accompanying theoretical constructs)
- whenever possible, student involvement is encouraged in the selection of texts, so that individual preferences can be considered and hopefully catered for.

Integration

The three areas of exploration should not be thought of as isolated compartments, but as complementary approaches in the study of the selected texts. While each will propose a specific lens through which to explore a text, it is expected that teachers will take advantage of opportunities to make consistent references to the immanent, the contextual and the comparative study of texts, and attempt to integrate them throughout the course.

The syllabus offers various other ways of integrating the three areas of exploration.

- The learner portfolio is a space in which students will be expected to reflect on the texts being studied in the corresponding area of exploration and establish connections between these texts and previous ones read. As they progress through the syllabus, it is to be expected that these connections will be drawn between texts within and across areas of exploration.
- Assessment components like the individual oral or paper 2 will prompt students to elaborate on points of contact between texts as they think of possible options to choose for these assessments. Teachers should encourage students to take advantage of the flexibility the syllabus allows and not to limit themselves in their choice of texts to individual areas of exploration.
- The seven central concepts in studies in language and literature courses provide sustained lines of inquiry that run through the three areas of exploration.

Autonomy

For students to be able to make careful decisions about the choice of texts to use for assessment components, they need to be encouraged to think of their learning in a more autonomous way. Teachers should foster this by initially ensuring students have access to information about course aims, syllabus requirements, assessment components and criteria as early as possible. Studies in language and literature courses require a high level of agency on the part of the students regarding the preparation of their work for the assessment components. For that to be successful, students must be made aware of what is expected of them in each area of exploration, and for each assessment component.

It is also important that there should be ongoing assessment of the students' progress towards their goals. It is likely that students will elaborate and follow individual routes in their preparation for the assessment components. They will, however, require guidance on the part of the teacher with regards to the

appropriateness of their choice of texts, and the associated concept or global issue. Regular instances of self-assessment and peer-assessment will also help students to carry out an evaluation of their progress towards the objectives the course sets for them.

Accountability

A prominent feature of the structure of studies in language and literature courses is the amount of latitude it permits to both teachers and students in their choice of pathways to comply with syllabus requirements. The syllabus is not prescriptive and this means there is plenty of room for individual choice.

Both teachers and students should be aware that this flexibility does not imply leniency in relation to compliance with the requirements of the course. Teachers must make sure that:

- the requirements of the course are met by the whole class
- each student has a clearly laid-out plan for addressing the demands of all assessment components which guarantees that all the necessary texts will have been read and studied
- to the best of their knowledge, no work will be used for two different assessment components
- the principles of academic integrity are respected.

Assessment in the Diploma Programme

General

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. The most important aims of assessment in the Diploma Programme are that it should support curricular goals and encourage appropriate student learning. Both external and internal assessments are used in the Diploma Programme. IB examiners mark work produced for external assessment, while work produced for internal assessment is marked by teachers and externally moderated by the IB.

There are two types of assessment identified by the IB.

- Formative assessment informs both learning and teaching. It is concerned with providing accurate and helpful feedback to students and teachers on the kind of learning taking place and the nature of students' strengths and weaknesses in order to help develop students' understanding and capabilities. Formative assessment can also help to improve teaching quality, as it can provide information to monitor progress towards meeting the course aims and objectives.
- Summative assessment gives an overview of previous learning and is concerned with measuring student achievement.

The Diploma Programme primarily focuses on summative assessment designed to record student achievement at, or towards the end of, the course of study. However, many of the assessment instruments can also be used formatively during the course of learning and teaching, and teachers are encouraged to do this. A comprehensive assessment plan is viewed as being integral with teaching, learning and course organization. For further information, see the IB *Programme standards and practices* document.

The approach to assessment used by the IB is criterion-related, not norm-referenced. This approach to assessment judges students' work by their performance in relation to identified levels of attainment, and not in relation to the work of other students. For further information on assessment within the Diploma Programme please refer to the publication *Assessment principles and practice—Quality assessments in a digital age*.

To support teachers in the planning, delivery and assessment of the DP courses, a variety of resources can be found on the Programme Resource Centre or purchased from the IB store (store.ibo.org). Additional publications such as specimen papers and markschemes, teacher support materials, subject reports and grade descriptors can also be found on the Programme Resource Centre. Past examination papers as well as markschemes can be purchased from the IB store.

Methods of assessment

The IB uses several methods to assess work produced by students.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are used when the assessment task is open-ended. Each criterion concentrates on a particular skill that students are expected to demonstrate. An assessment objective describes what students should be able to do, and assessment criteria describe how well they should be able to do it. Using assessment criteria allows discrimination between different answers and encourages a variety of responses. Each criterion comprises a set of hierarchically ordered level descriptors. Each level descriptor is worth one or more marks. Each criterion is applied independently using a best-fit model. The maximum marks for each criterion may differ according to the criterion's importance. The marks awarded for each criterion are added together to give the total mark for the piece of work.

Markbands

Markbands are a comprehensive statement of expected performance against which responses are judged. They represent a single holistic criterion divided into level descriptors. Each level descriptor corresponds to a range of marks to differentiate student performance. A best-fit approach is used to ascertain which particular mark to use from the possible range for each level descriptor.

Analytic markschemes

Analytic markschemes are prepared for those examination questions that expect a particular kind of response and/or a given final answer from students. They give detailed instructions to examiners on how to break down the total mark for each question for different parts of the response.

Marking notes

For some assessment components marked using assessment criteria, marking notes are provided. Marking notes give guidance on how to apply assessment criteria to the particular requirements of a question.

Inclusive assessment arrangements

Inclusive assessment arrangements are available for candidates with access requirements. These arrangements enable candidates with diverse needs to access the examinations and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the constructs being assessed.

The IB *Access and inclusion policy* provides details on all the inclusive assessment arrangements available to candidates with learning support requirements. The IB document *Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes* outlines the position of the IB with regard to candidates with diverse learning needs in the IB programmes. For candidates affected by adverse circumstances, section "B1 General regulations: Diploma Programme" of the *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures* (updated annually) provides details on access consideration.

Responsibilities of the school

Schools must ensure that equal access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided to candidates with learning support requirements, in line with the IB documents *Access and inclusion policy* and *Learning diversity within the IB programmes*.

The documents *Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom* and *The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development* are available to support schools in the ongoing process of increasing access and engagement by removing barriers to learning.

Assessment outline—SL

First assessment 2026

Assessment component	Weighting
External assessment (3 hours)	**70%**
Paper 1: Guided textual analysis (1 hour 15 minutes) The paper consists of two non-literary passages, from two different text types, each accompanied by a question. Students choose one passage and write an analysis of it. (20 marks)	**35%**
Paper 2: Comparative essay (1 hour 45 minutes) The paper consists of four general questions. In response to one question students write a comparative essay based on two literary works studied in the course. (25 marks)	**35%**
Internal assessment This component consists of an individual oral which is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course. **Individual oral (15 minutes)** Supported by an extract from one non-literary body of work and one from a literary work, students will offer a prepared response of 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions by the teacher, to the following prompt: Examine the ways in which the global issue of your choice is presented through the content and form of one of the works and one of the bodies of work that you have studied. (40 marks)	**30%**

Assessment outline—HL

First assessment 2026

Assessment component	Weighting
External assessment (4 hours)	**80%**
Paper 1: Guided textual analysis (2 hours 15 minutes) The paper consists of two non-literary passages, from two different text types, each accompanied by a question. Students write an analysis of each of the passages. (40 marks)	**35%**
Paper 2: Comparative essay (1 hour 45 minutes) The paper consists of four general questions. In response to one question students write a comparative essay based on two literary works studied in the course. (25 marks)	**25%**
HL essay Students submit an essay on one non-literary body of work, or a literary work studied during the course. (20 marks) The essay must be 1,200–1,500 words in length.	**20%**
Internal assessment: Individual oral (15 minutes) This component consists of an individual oral which is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course. **Individual oral (15 minutes)** Supported by an extract from both one non-literary body of work and one from a literary work, students will offer a prepared response of 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions by the teacher, to the following prompt: Examine the ways in which the global issue of your choice is presented through the content and form of one of the works and one of the bodies of work that you have studied. (40 marks)	**20%**

External assessment

Assessment criteria are used to assess students for all assessment tasks. The assessment criteria are published in this guide.

There are four criteria for each of the assessment components: an attempt has been made to make these criteria mirror the assessment objectives closely. The criteria and descriptors are the same for SL and HL in the shared components.

The external components contribute 70% to the final assessment at SL and 80 % at HL.

External assessment details—SL

Paper 1: Guided textual analysis

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

Weighting: 35%

Paper 1 contains two previously unseen non-literary passages. Students write a guided analysis of one of these passages. A guided analysis in this context refers to an exploration of the passage supported by a guiding question which asks the students to consider a technical or formal aspect of the passage. The passages could be taken from any of the text types listed in "Course requirements". Each of the passages will be from a different text type.

The passages for analysis may be either complete pieces of writing or extracts from longer pieces.

One guiding question will be provided for each passage on a central technical or formal element that may provide an interesting point of entry into the text. Although it is not compulsory to answer this question, students should be aware that it is expected that the analysis will be focused on a particular aspect of the text. Students may propose an alternative point of entry about any other technical or formal element of the text they feel important in order to provide such a focus.

The paper is assessed according to the assessment criteria published in this guide. The maximum mark for paper 1 is 20.

The learner portfolio and paper 1

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a place for students to practise and develop the skills necessary for performing successfully in paper 1.

In relation to the preparation of paper 1, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- record responses to a passage or text read for the first time
- formulate guiding questions for different passages, using them as a lens through which to view those passages
- assess which of the skills involved in paper 1 they feel less confident in and use the portfolio to track their progress in the development of those skills
- keep a record of the text types covered in their practice of paper 1 skills, make sure that they have covered as many text types as possible from those that might appear in paper 1, and assess how much of a challenge each one presents to them
- compare their successive practices of paper 1 to the first one they have done and monitor the evolution of their overall performance in the paper.

Paper 2: Comparative essay

Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

Weighting: 35%

Paper 2 contains four questions of a general nature which require students to write a comparative essay referring to two literary works studied during the course. Students are required to answer **one** question only.

The format of paper 2 and the four questions are the same for both SL and HL students, and for both the literature and language and literature courses. The assessment criteria will also be shared by both levels and both courses.

The essay is written under examination conditions, without access to the studied works. Students will be expected to compare and/or contrast two of the works studied in relation to the question chosen. Attention should be paid to the relevance of the argument to the question chosen and to the appropriateness of the works selected by the student to address the question. Students are expected to make detailed reference to the works in their answer, but they are not expected to include quotations from them.

Under no circumstances can students use for paper 2 a work that has been already used for another assessment component, be it the Internal Assessment for both SL and HL, or the HL essay for HL.

The paper is assessed according to the assessment criteria published in this guide. The maximum mark for paper 2 is 25.

The learner portfolio and paper 2

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a place for students to practise and develop the skills necessary for performing successfully in paper 2.

In relation to the preparation of paper 2, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- group the works studied according to a common theme or issue and explore their similarities and differences
- develop an awareness of the differences between literary forms, and of the bearing these differences may have on how different works approach one theme or issue
- consider which combinations of works might be the most productive ones to address the variety of questions they might encounter in the actual paper
- inquire into the connections between the works studied, the areas of exploration and the central concepts of the course to gain an awareness of the multiplicity of lenses that can be used when studying a work and the essay questions that these might potentially lead to
- compare their successive practices of paper 2 to the first one they have done and monitor the evolution of their overall performance in the paper.

External assessment criteria—SL

Paper 1: Guided textual analysis

There are four assessment criteria at both SL and HL.

Criterion A	Understanding and interpretation	5 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	5 marks
Criterion C	Focus and organization	5 marks
Criterion D	Language	5 marks
Total		**20 marks**

Criterion A: Understanding and interpretation

- How well does the candidate demonstrate an understanding of the text and draw reasoned conclusions from implications in it?
- How well are ideas supported by references to the text?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The response demonstrates little understanding of the literal meaning of the text. References to the text are infrequent or are rarely appropriate.
2	The response demonstrates some understanding of the literal meaning of the text. References to the text are at times appropriate.
3	The response demonstrates an understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a satisfactory interpretation of some implications of the text. References to the text are generally relevant and mostly support the candidate's ideas.
4	The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a convincing interpretation of many implications of the text. References to the text are relevant and support the candidate's ideas.
5	The response demonstrates a thorough and perceptive understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a convincing and insightful interpretation of larger implications and subtleties of the text. References to the text are well-chosen and effectively support the candidate's ideas.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how textual features and/or authorial choices shape meaning?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The response is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices.
2	The response demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices, but is reliant on description.
3	The response demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices.
4	The response demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices. There is a good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.
5	The response demonstrates an insightful and convincing analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices. There is a very good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.

Criterion C: Focus and organization

- How well organized, coherent and focused is the presentation of ideas?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little organization is apparent in the presentation of ideas. No discernible focus is apparent in the response.
2	Some organization is apparent in the presentation of ideas. There is little focus in the response.
3	The presentation of ideas is adequately organized in a generally coherent manner. There is some focus in the response.
4	The presentation of ideas is well organized and mostly coherent. The response is adequately focused.
5	The presentation of ideas is effectively organized and coherent. The response is well focused.

Criterion D: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the analysis.)

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

Paper 2 Comparative essay

There are four assessment criteria at SL.

Criterion A	Knowledge, understanding and interpretation	5 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	10 marks
	Analysis and evaluation of textual features and/or authorial choices (B1)	(5 marks)
	Comparative analysis (B2)	(5 marks)
Criterion C	Focus and organization	5 marks

Criterion D	Language	5 marks
Total		**25 marks**

Criterion A: Knowledge, understanding and interpretation

- How much knowledge and understanding does the candidate demonstrate of the works in relation to the question?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little knowledge and understanding of the works in relation to the question.
2	There is some knowledge and understanding of the works in relation to the question.
3	There is satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the works and an interpretation of their implications in relation to the question.
4	There is good knowledge and understanding of the works and a sustained interpretation of their implications in relation to the question.
5	There is perceptive knowledge and understanding of the works and a persuasive interpretation of their implications in relation to the question.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

Criterion B1: Analysis and evaluation of textual features and/or authorial choices (5 marks)

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how meaning is shaped by the choices of language, technique and style, and/or broader authorial choices?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The essay is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and/or the broader authorial choices.
2	The essay demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices, but is reliant on description.
3	The essay demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices.
4	The essay demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is a good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.
5	The essay demonstrates a consistently insightful and convincing analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is a very good evaluation of how such features and/or choices contribute to meaning.

Clarification for "and/or"

The use of **and/or** recognizes that a candidate's choice of literary works may be better suited for the analysis of textual features, broader authorial choices, or a combination of the two.

Marks must be awarded based on the overall quality of the analysis and the extent to which students evaluate how textual features and/or broader authorial choices shape meaning. Marks should not be based on the quantity of textual features or broader authorial choices discussed in the response.

Criterion B2: Comparative analysis (5 marks)

- How effectively does the candidate analyse similarities and/or differences between the two works studied?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little meaningful analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
2	There is a superficial analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
3	There is an adequate analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
4	There is a good analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
5	There is a very good analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.

Clarification for "and/or"

The use of **and/or** recognizes that a candidate's choice of literary works may be better suited for the analysis of similarities, or differences, or a combination of the two.

Marks must be awarded based on how the similarities or differences (or both) contribute to the depth of analysis of the selected works. Marks should not be based on the quantity or on the relative balance between the similarities and differences discussed in the response.

Criterion C: Focus and organization

- How well structured, balanced and focused is the presentation of ideas?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The essay rarely focuses on the task. There are few connections between ideas.
2	The essay only sometimes focuses on the task, and treatment of the works may be unbalanced. There are some connections between ideas, but these are not always coherent.
3	The essay maintains a focus on the task, despite some lapses; treatment of the works is mostly balanced. The development of ideas is mostly logical; ideas are generally connected in a cohesive manner.
4	The essay maintains a mostly clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the works is balanced. The development of ideas is logical; ideas are cohesively connected.

Mark	Level descriptor
5	The essay maintains a clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the works is well-balanced. The development of ideas is logical and convincing; ideas are connected in a cogent manner.

Criterion D: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the essay.)

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

External assessment details—HL

Paper 1: Guided textual analysis

Duration: 2 hours 15 minutes

Weighting: 35%

Paper 1 contains two previously unseen non-literary passages and students are instructed to write a separate guided analysis of each of these passages. A guided analysis in this context refers to an exploration of the passage supported by a guiding question which asks the students to consider a technical or formal aspect of the passage. The passages could be taken from any of the text types listed in "Course requirements". Each of the passages will be from a different text type.

The passages for analysis may be either a complete piece of writing or an extract from a longer piece.

One guiding question will be provided for each passage on a central technical or formal element that may provide an interesting point of entry into the text. Although it is not compulsory to answer this question, students should be aware that it is expected that the analysis will be focused on a particular aspect of the text. Students may propose an alternative point of entry about any other technical or formal element of the text they feel important in order to provide such a focus.

The assessment criteria for this paper are the same at HL and SL. 20 marks will be allotted to each answer. The maximum mark for paper 1 is 40.

The learner portfolio and paper 1

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a place for students to practise and develop the skills necessary for performing successfully in paper 1.

In relation to the preparation of paper 1, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- record responses to a passage or text read for the first time
- formulate guiding questions for different passages, using them as a lens through which to view those passages
- assess which of the skills involved in paper 1 they feel less confident in and use the portfolio to track their progress in the development of those skills
- keep a record of the text types covered in their practice of paper 1 skills, make sure that they have covered as many text types as possible from those that might appear in paper 1, and assess how much of a challenge each one presents to them
- compare their successive practices of paper 1 to the first one they have done and monitor the evolution of their overall performance in the paper.

Paper 2: Comparative essay

Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

Weighting: 25%

Paper 2 contains four questions of a general nature which require students to write a comparative essay referring to two works studied during the course. Students are required to answer **one** question only.

The format of paper 2 and the four questions are the same for both SL and HL students, and for both the literature and language and literature courses. The assessment criteria will also be shared by both levels and both courses.

The essay is written under examination conditions, without access to the studied works. Students will be expected to compare and/or contrast two of the works studied in relation to the question chosen. Attention should be paid to the relevance of the argument to the question chosen and to the appropriateness of the works selected by the student to address the question. Students are expected to make detailed reference to the works in their answer, but they are not expected to include quotations from them.

Given the open and flexible nature of the course, potentially any work studied can be used by students for paper 2. It is highly recommended, however, that three of the works studied should be preselected by students in preparation for this paper, either individually or in conjunction and in consultation with the teacher. This will make it more manageable for students, at the moment of the examination, to select both the essay question and the two works to answer it with.

Under no circumstances can students use for paper 2 a work that has been already used for another assessment component, be it the internal assessment for both SL and HL, or the HL essay for HL.

The paper is assessed according to the assessment criteria published in this guide. The maximum mark for paper 2 is 25.

The learner portfolio and paper 2

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a place for students to practise and develop the skills necessary for performing successfully in paper 2.

In relation to the preparation of paper 2, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- group the works studied according to a common theme or issue and explore their similarities and differences

- develop an awareness of the differences between literary forms, and of the bearing these differences may have on how different works approach one theme or issue
- consider which combinations of works might be the most productive ones to address the variety of questions they might encounter in the actual paper
- inquire into the connections between the works studied and the areas of exploration of the course to gain an awareness of the multiplicity of lenses that can be used when studying a work and the essay questions that these might potentially lead to
- compare their successive practices of paper 2 to the first one they have done and monitor the evolution of their overall performance in the paper.

Higher level essay

Weighting: 20%

The nature of the task

At HL, students are required to write a 1,200 –1,500-word formal essay which develops a particular line of inquiry of their own choice in connection with a non-literary body of work or a literary work studied during the course.

The HL essay offers students an opportunity to develop as independent, critical and creative readers, thinkers and writers by exploring a literary or language line of inquiry over an extended period of time, refining their ideas by means of a process of planning, drafting and re-drafting. The essay requires students to construct a focused, analytical argument examining the work from a broad literary or linguistic perspective. It also requires them to adhere to the formal framework of an academic essay, using citations and references.

Explanation of the task

The HL essay is based on the exploration the student has carried out in the learner portfolio. During this exploration process, the student will have investigated a number of texts from a variety of different perspectives. In the lead-up to the drafting of the essay, the student must decide which work or body of work to focus on for further investigation, and which line of inquiry to write about in connection with it. In choosing the line of inquiry, the student can consult the course's seven central concepts. Any work or body of work previously studied in class may be selected, with the exception of the texts used for the internal assessment and the works the student plans to use in paper 2.

Selection of work or body of work

Candidates must select the texts and line of inquiry for their essay independently; however, consultation with the teacher is essential in this process. Care must be taken to make sure that the chosen work or body of work is rich enough to support a developed, focused, and analytical argument.

Students and teachers should remember that the assignment is a broad literary or non-literary investigation rather than a more narrowly focused stylistic commentary task. Students should not limit the exploration of their chosen line of inquiry to a particular section or part of the work or body of work. They should aim to demonstrate in their essays their knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work as a whole. Referring to the work or body of work more broadly will make it easier for them to demonstrate such a knowledge and understanding.

In the case of a collection of short stories, poems, song lyrics or any short literary text, candidates should refer to more than one literary text from the work chosen in order to achieve a broad focus. In this instance, it is possible for a student to also explore texts from the author of the work that were not studied in class, provided at least one of the texts was covered in class.

In the case of short non-literary texts, candidates should refer to more than one non-literary text from the same body of work by the same authorship, for example the same creative advertising agency, cartoonist, photographer or social media user. In this instance, at least one of the texts must be studied in class. If using non-literary texts in translation, these must be professional and published translations of the text.

Candidates must explicitly state, at the beginning of the essay:

- **The line of inquiry**, which may be expressed as a question.
- **The work or body of work focused upon.** This must be identified in terms of text type and author or creator, for example, "Short stories, Katherine Mansfield" or "Photographs, Vivian Maier". When the work or body of work consists of only one extended text, the title must be provided, for example, "Graphic novel, Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*".

Determining the line of inquiry

The chosen line of inquiry should enable a broad literary or linguistic focus for the essay. In achieving this, the course's seven central concepts may be a helpful starting point for students in generating or determining a line of inquiry for the essay. While students do not have to trace their essay back to one of the seven concepts and the assessment criteria do not require it, working with one of the seven concepts will allow students to begin thinking about their line of inquiry as they refine their ideas and arguments. The seven concepts are briefly discussed here in relation to the assignment. The TSM has more specific examples for further guidance.

Identity

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of identity of a particular character or group of characters in the text, or on the way in which the text relates to the identity of the writer.

Culture

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of the culture of a particular place, institution or group of people, or on the way in which the text itself relates to a particular culture.

Creativity

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of individual or collective creativity, or lack of creativity, within the text, or on the way in which the text represents the creativity of the writer.

Communication

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of acts of communication, or failures in communication, in the text, or on the way in which the text itself represents an act of communication.

Transformation

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of transformation or transformative acts in the text, or on the way in which the text itself is a transformative act either of other texts through intertextual reference to them or of reality by means of a transformative effect on the reader's identity, relationships, goals, values, and beliefs.

Perspective

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of a particular perspective or perspectives within the text, or on the way in which the text represents the writer's perspective.

Representation

The student might be interested in an aspect of the way in which the text represents different themes, attitudes and concepts, or in the extent to which language and literature can actually represent reality.

For examples of how the line of inquiry can be generated from the central concepts and for examples of possible approaches to the exploration of a line of inquiry, please consult the TSM.

The learner portfolio and the higher level essay

The learner portfolio is **not** specifically assessed but it is an important tool in helping students prepare for formal assessment. It provides a platform for students to develop independent thinking when studying texts, reflecting on the ways their texts and responses explore cultural values, identities, relationships, and issues across a variety of topics.

In relation to the preparation of the HL essay, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- reflect on the ways in which each text they read relates to the seven central concepts of the course

- keep an ongoing record of themes and issues they find interesting in relation to each of the texts they read
- explore how key passages in the texts they have studied are significant in relation to those themes and issues
- trace the evolution of their thinking and planning in connection with their chosen line of inquiry
- record references for, and ideas and quotations from, secondary sources they might want to mention in their essay
- reflect on the challenges that the HL essay poses for them as individual learners.

Guidance and authenticity

Teachers are expected to guide students throughout the HL essay; from choice of line of inquiry to submission of the essay, monitoring and advising them on the process, giving feedback on plans, and helping them to stay on task by setting timelines and stages for the essay's development. Help, guidance and support at the beginning of this process cannot be emphasized enough.

At the same time, the student must have autonomy throughout; teachers should not assign works or lines of inquiry, but should give advice on the appropriateness of ideas, question students to clarify them and make suggestions for avenues which could be explored or ways in which they might adjust their approach.

Teachers are expected to ensure that essays are students' own work and address any academic integrity issues arising before submission of the assessment. It is the teachers' responsibility to make sure that all students understand the importance of academic integrity, in particular in relation to the authenticity of their work and the need to acknowledge other people's ideas. Teachers must ensure students understand that the essay they submit for this externally assessed component must be entirely their own work.

While teachers should give regular feedback on students' work, they should not edit or correct their work directly. As students draw close to the end of the writing process, teachers are allowed to give advice to students on a first complete draft in terms of suggestions as regards the way the work could be improved. This could be done by annotating the draft through comments on the margin. These comments could consist in questions or prompts for further reflection and improvement. Under no circumstances can a teacher edit or rewrite the draft. The next version handed to the teacher after the first draft must be the final one.

Students should make detailed references to their primary source, using such references to support their broader argument about the text. The use of secondary sources is not mandatory. Any sources used must be appropriately cited. Essays must be students' own work, adhering consistently to the IB policy on academic integrity.

For further guidelines about the HL essay and the role of the teacher in it, please consult the TSM.

External assessment criteria—HL

Assessment criteria are used to assess students for all assessment tasks. The assessment criteria are published in this guide. The assessment criteria are the same at SL and HL for all shared components.

The following is an overview of the external assessment criteria at HL.

Paper 1: Guided textual analysis

There are four assessment criteria at HL which will be applied separately to each answer.

Criterion A	Understanding and interpretation	5 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	5 marks
Criterion C	Focus and organization	5 marks
Criterion D	Language	5 marks
Total		**20 marks**

Criterion A: Understanding and interpretation

- How well does the candidate demonstrate an understanding of the text and draw reasoned conclusions from implications in it?
- How well are ideas supported by references to the text?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The response demonstrates little understanding of the literal meaning of the text. References to the text are infrequent or are rarely appropriate.
2	The response demonstrates some understanding of the literal meaning of the text. References to the text are at times appropriate.
3	The response demonstrates an understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a satisfactory interpretation of some implications of the text. References to the text are generally relevant and mostly support the candidate's ideas.
4	The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a convincing interpretation of many implications of the text. References to the text are relevant and support the candidate's ideas.
5	The response demonstrates a thorough and perceptive understanding of the literal meaning of the text. There is a convincing and insightful interpretation of larger implications and subtleties of the text. References to the text are well-chosen and effectively support the candidate's ideas.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how textual features and/or authorial choices shape meaning?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The response is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices.
2	The response demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices, but is reliant on description.
3	The response demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices.
4	The response demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices. There is a good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.
5	The response demonstrates an insightful and convincing analysis of textual features and/or authorial choices. There is a very good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.

Criterion C: Focus and organization

- How well organized, coherent and focused is the presentation of ideas?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little organization is apparent in the presentation of ideas. No discernible focus is apparent in the response.
2	Some organization is apparent in the presentation of ideas. There is little focus in the response.
3	The presentation of ideas is adequately organized in a generally coherent manner. There is some focus in the response.
4	The presentation of ideas is well organized and mostly coherent. The response is adequately focused.
5	The presentation of ideas is effectively organized and coherent. The response is well focused.

Criterion D: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the analysis.)

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

Paper 2: Comparative essay

There are four assessment criteria at HL.

Criterion A	Knowledge, understanding and interpretation	5 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	10 marks
	Analysis and evaluation of textual features and/or authorial choices (B1)	(5 marks)
	Comparative analysis (B2)	(5 marks)

Criterion C	Focus and organization	5 marks
Criterion D	Language	5 marks
Total		**25 marks**

Criterion A: Knowledge, understanding and interpretation

- How much knowledge and understanding does the candidate demonstrate of the works in relation to the question?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little knowledge and understanding of the works in relation to the question.
2	There is some knowledge and understanding of the works in relation to the question.
3	There is satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the works and an interpretation of their implications in relation to the question.
4	There is good knowledge and understanding of the works and a sustained interpretation of their implications in relation to the question.
5	There is perceptive knowledge and understanding of the works and a persuasive interpretation of their implications in relation to the question.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

Criterion B1: Analysis and evaluation of textual features and/or authorial choices (5 marks)

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how meaning is shaped by the choices of language, technique and style, and/or broader authorial choices?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The essay is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and/or the broader authorial choices.
2	The essay demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices but is reliant on description.
3	The essay demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices.
4	The essay demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is a good evaluation of how such features and/or choices shape meaning.
5	The essay demonstrates a consistently insightful and convincing analysis of textual features and/or broader authorial choices. There is a very good evaluation of how such features and/or choices contribute to meaning.

Clarification for "and/or"

The use of **and/or** recognizes that a candidate's choice of literary works may be better suited for the analysis of textual features, broader authorial choices, or a combination of the two.

Marks must be awarded based on the overall quality of the analysis and the extent to which students evaluate how textual features and/or broader authorial choices shape meaning. Marks should not be based on the quantity of textual features or broader authorial choices discussed in the response.

Criterion B2: Comparative analysis (5 marks)

- How effectively does the candidate analyse similarities and/or differences between the two works studied?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little meaningful analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
2	There is a superficial analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
3	There is an adequate analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
4	There is a good analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.
5	There is a very good analysis of the similarities and/or differences between the two works selected.

Clarification for "and/or"

The use of **and/or** recognizes that a candidate's choice of literary works may be better suited for the analysis of similarities, or differences, or a combination of the two.

Marks must be awarded based on how the similarities or differences (or both) contribute to the depth of analysis of the selected works. Marks should not be based on the quantity or on the relative balance between the similarities and differences discussed in the response.

Criterion C: Focus and organization

- How well structured, balanced and focused is the presentation of ideas?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The essay rarely focuses on the task. There are few connections between ideas.
2	The essay only sometimes focuses on the task, and treatment of the works may be unbalanced. There are some connections between ideas, but these are not always coherent.
3	The essay maintains a focus on the task, despite some lapses; treatment of the works is mostly balanced. The development of ideas is mostly logical; ideas are generally connected in a cohesive manner.

Mark	Level descriptor
4	The essay maintains a mostly clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the works is balanced. The development of ideas is logical; ideas are cohesively connected.
5	The essay maintains a clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the works is well-balanced. The development of ideas is logical and convincing; ideas are connected in a cogent manner.

Criterion D: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the essay.)

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

Higher level essay

There are four assessment criteria at HL.

Criterion A	Knowledge, understanding and interpretation	5 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	5 marks
Criterion C	Focus, organization and development	5 marks
Criterion D	Language	5 marks
Total		**20 marks**

Criterion A: Knowledge, understanding and interpretation

- How well does the candidate demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work chosen?
- To what extent does the candidate make use of knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work to draw conclusions in relation to the chosen line of inquiry?

- How well are ideas supported by references to the work or body of work in relation to the chosen line of inquiry?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is little knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work shown through the essay in relation to the line of inquiry chosen. References to the work or body of work are infrequent or are rarely appropriate in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
2	There is some knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work shown through the essay in relation to the line of inquiry chosen. References to the work or body of work are at times appropriate in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
3	There is satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work shown through the essay and an interpretation of its implications in relation to the line of inquiry chosen. References to the work or body of work are generally relevant and mostly support the candidate's ideas in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
4	There is good knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work shown through the essay and a sustained interpretation of its implications in relation to the line of inquiry chosen. References to the work or body of work are relevant and support the candidate's ideas in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
5	There is excellent knowledge and understanding of the work or body of work shown through the essay and a persuasive interpretation of their implications in relation to the chosen line of inquiry. References to the work or body of work are well-chosen and effectively support the candidate's ideas in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

- To what extent does the candidate analyse and evaluate how the choices of language, technique and style, and broader authorial choices shape meaning in relation to the chosen line of inquiry?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The essay is descriptive and/or demonstrates little relevant analysis of textual features and the author's broader choices in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
2	The essay demonstrates some appropriate analysis of textual features and the author's broader choices in relation to the chosen line of inquiry, but is reliant on description.
3	The essay demonstrates a generally appropriate analysis and evaluation of textual features and the author's broader choices in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
4	The essay demonstrates an appropriate and at times insightful analysis and evaluation of textual features and the author's broader choices in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.
5	The essay demonstrates a consistently insightful and convincing analysis and evaluation of textual features and the author's broader choices in relation to the chosen line of inquiry.

Criterion C: Focus, organization and development

- How well organized, focused and developed is the presentation of ideas in the essay?
- How well are examples integrated into the essay?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Little organization is present. No discernible line of inquiry is apparent in the essay. Supporting examples are not integrated into the structure of the sentences and paragraphs.
2	Some organization is apparent. There is little development of a line of inquiry. Supporting examples are rarely integrated into the structure of the sentences and paragraphs.
3	The essay is adequately organized in a generally cohesive manner. There is some development of the line of inquiry. Supporting examples are sometimes integrated into the structure of the sentences and paragraphs.
4	The essay is well organized and mostly cohesive. The line of inquiry is adequately developed. Supporting examples are mostly well integrated into the structure of the sentences and paragraphs.
5	The essay is effectively organized and cohesive. The line of inquiry is well developed. Supporting examples are well integrated into the structure of the sentences and paragraphs.

Criterion D: Language

- How clear, varied and accurate is the language?
- How appropriate is the choice of register and style? ("Register" refers, in this context, to the candidate's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the HL essay.)

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.
2	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.
3	Language is clear and carefully chosen with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.
4	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.
5	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

Internal assessment

Purpose of internal assessment

Internal assessment is an integral part of the course and is compulsory for both standard level (SL) and higher level (HL) students. It enables students to demonstrate the application of their skills and knowledge in a different setting and to pursue their personal interests without the constraints that are associated with written examinations.

The internal assessment consists of a task in the form of an individual oral. Both SL and HL students are required to deliver an individual oral in response to a prompt, using an extract from one work and an extract from one non-literary text to focus their analysis of how perspectives on a global issue are presented in them.

The internal assessment should, as far as possible, be woven into normal classroom teaching and, to this end, will depend upon the students reflecting their study, analysis and exploration of how global issues are presented in their learner portfolios.

Guidance and authenticity

The individual oral submitted for internal assessment must be the student's own work. However, it is not the intention that students should decide upon a topic and be left to work on the internal assessment component without any further support from the teacher. The teacher should play an important role during both the planning stage and the period when the student is working on the internally assessed work. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that students are familiar with:

- the requirements of the individual oral
- the standards for academic integrity
- the assessment criteria.

Teachers and students must discuss the internally assessed work. Students should be encouraged to initiate discussions with the teacher to obtain advice and information, and students must not be penalized for seeking guidance. As part of the learning process, teachers should give advice to students on how to best prepare for the individual oral. This should include guidance on the choice of two texts the student will focus on to address the global issue of their choice, and on the suitability of the chosen global issue to the two texts. It could also include practice of the individual oral with texts and global issues different from those the students will use for their internal assessment. The teacher should provide feedback on areas of the student's work that could be improved so as to better fulfil the assessment criteria on the basis of such practices. As the process of preparation for the oral is drawing to a close, teachers may provide feedback on the outlines the students have created but may not rehearse the actual oral with the students.

It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that all students understand the basic meaning and significance of concepts that relate to academic integrity, especially authenticity and intellectual property. Teachers must ensure that all student work for assessment is prepared according to the requirements and must explain clearly to students that the internally assessed work must be entirely their own.

All work submitted to the IB for moderation or assessment must be authenticated by a teacher, and must not include any known instances of suspected or confirmed academic misconduct. Each student must confirm that the work is their authentic work. Once the oral has been completed at the time designated by the school, it cannot be redone, and once the oral has been submitted, it cannot be retracted. The requirement to confirm the authenticity of work applies to the work of all students, not just the sample work that will be submitted to the IB for the purpose of moderation. For further details, refer to the IB

publications *Academic integrity policy*, *Diploma Programme: From principles into practice* and *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures* (updated annually).

Authenticity may be checked by discussion with the student on the content of the work, and scrutiny of one or more of the following:

- the student's initial proposal
- the usual quality of the student's work.

The same material cannot be submitted to meet the requirements of both the internal assessment and the extended essay. The texts used in the internal assessment must be different from those used in other assessment components

Time allocation

Internal assessment contributes 30% to the final assessment of the SL course and 20% to the final assessment of the HL course. This weighting should be reflected in the time that is allocated to teaching the knowledge, skills and understanding required to undertake the assessment, as well as the time needed to conduct the oral.

Conducting the individual oral will require time:

- for the teacher to explain the requirements of the internal assessment
- to review the academic integrity documents
- for students to work on the internal assessment component and ask questions
- for consultation between the teacher and each student
- to review and monitor progress, and to check authenticity
- to conduct the orals and submit all documentation.

Requirements and recommendations

The individual oral must be conducted in the language A studied. The procedures and characteristics of the individual oral can, and should, be practised during the course, as should the development of verbal interaction between student and teacher. Students should be discouraged, however, from committing their individual orals to memory. Memorization tends to distance the speaker from the listener, thus making it unlikely that the oral will be effective or convincing.

Each student's individual oral must be audio recorded and the files must be of high quality. Each recording is to be retained according to the procedures set out in *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures*. Samples of the internal assessment selected for moderation must be submitted in the form of an audio file.

Using assessment criteria for internal assessment

For internal assessment, a number of assessment criteria have been identified. Each assessment criterion has level descriptors describing specific achievement levels, together with an appropriate range of marks. The level descriptors concentrate on positive achievement, although for the lower levels failure to reach certain minimum requirements may be included in the description.

Teachers must judge the internally assessed work at SL and at HL against the criteria using the level descriptors.

- The same assessment criteria are provided for SL and HL.
- The aim is to find, for each criterion, the descriptor that conveys most accurately the level attained by the student, using the best-fit model. A best-fit approach means that compensation should be made when a piece of work matches different aspects of a criterion at different levels. The mark awarded should be one that most fairly reflects the balance of achievement against the criterion. It is not necessary for every single aspect of a level descriptor to be met for that mark to be awarded.

- When assessing a student's work, teachers should read the level descriptors for each criterion until they reach a descriptor that most appropriately describes the level of the work being assessed. If a piece of work seems to fall between two descriptors, both descriptors should be read again and the one that more appropriately describes the student's work should be chosen.
- Where there are two marks available within a level, teachers should award the upper marks if the student's work demonstrates the qualities described to a great extent and the work is close to matching the descriptors in the level above. Teachers should award the lower marks if the student's work demonstrates the qualities described to a lesser extent and the work is closer to matching the descriptors in the level below.
- Only whole numbers should be recorded; partial marks (fractions and decimals) are not acceptable.
- Teachers should not think in terms of a pass or fail boundary, but should concentrate on identifying the descriptor that best matches the student's work for each assessment criterion.
- The highest level descriptors do not imply a faultless performance; they should be achievable by a language A: language and literature student. Teachers should not hesitate to use the extremes of the mark range if they are appropriate descriptions of the work being assessed.
- A student who is awarded a mark in a high level in relation to one criterion will not necessarily reach high levels in relation to the other criteria. Similarly, a student who is awarded a mark in a low level for one criterion will also not necessarily be placed in low levels for the other criteria. Teachers should not assume that the overall assessment of the students will produce any particular distribution of marks.
- Teachers are expected to make the assessment criteria available to students and ensure that they understand them.

Internal assessment details—SL/HL

Individual oral

Duration: 15 minutes (10 minutes: student individual oral; 5 minutes: teacher questions)

Weighting: 30% for SL, 20% for HL

The nature of the task

The individual oral addresses the following prompt:

Examine the ways in which the global issue of your choice is presented through the content and form of one of the works and one of the bodies of work that you have studied.

Explanation of the task

The individual oral is based on the exploration the student has carried out in the learner portfolio. During this exploration process, the student will have investigated a series of non-literary bodies of work and literary works and a variety of global issues. In the lead-up to the individual oral, the student must make a decision about which global issue and which body of work and work will be explored in the task. One work and one non-literary body of work must be selected. An extract of no more than 40 lines should be selected from each which is representative of the presence of the global issue in it. In forms or text types where the number of lines may not be applicable, teachers should be guided by the volume of text that can be discussed in sufficient depth in the time available.

Selection of body of work, work and extracts

The work and body of work selected must have a clear connection with the global issue. The individual oral should be a well-supported argument about the ways in which both represent and explore the global issue. Students must select two extracts, one from the body of work and one from the work, that clearly show significant moments when this global issue is being focused on. Normally these extracts should not exceed 40 lines or present an unmanageable amount of material to be analysed. The extracts must be continuous: there cannot be an interruption or an ellipsis in an extract. The source of the extracts must also be clearly stated including the names of the works chosen and the names of the authors. As the student brings unannotated copies of these extracts to the individual oral, extracts which are too lengthy may hinder their

ability to effectively expand the discussion to the body of work or work as a whole. An extract may be a complete text in itself, for example a whole poem or an advertisement. An extract may not, however, include more than one text, even if each text is extremely short.

If the extract is from a literary text which is part of a larger work studied, such as a short story, or if it is a complete text which is part of a work studied, such as a poem, students should discuss relevant aspects of the broader work as a whole in their individual oral.

If the extract is a complete non-literary text, students should discuss relevant aspects of the broader body of work of the author of the text. In the case of a photograph, for example, the broader discussion should refer to other photographs by the same photographer. If identifying the single author of a non-literary text is not possible, students should use an ampler definition of authorship to broaden their discussion of the global issue. In the case of an advertisement, for example, students could refer to the other advertisements or commercials belonging to the same campaign, to other campaigns of the same brand or to other work produced by the advertising agency. In the case of an article, students could refer either to other articles by the same author, provided it had a byline, or to the general editorial line of the medium in which the article was published if it had no byline. In cases such as the latter two, students should make explicit what constitutes their definition of authorship.

The extracts are meant to help students focus their responses, remove the need to learn quotations and enable them to explore more precise issues, such as style, specific devices and other distinct techniques used by authors to present the global issue. The choice of extracts should show the student's understanding of the relevance of the part to the whole and enable coverage of larger and smaller choices made by the writers to shape their perspectives on the global issue.

The distinction between the literary and the non-literary must be clearly established in the individual oral. Students should be reminded that texts written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list* or by authors widely recognized as literary authors must be considered literary. If neither of these conditions apply, and when the text type itself could be considered either literary or non-literary, teachers must make an informed decision about the nature of the text. They should teach it accordingly, bringing out either its literary or non-literary qualities.

An oral which:

- focuses on two literary text types, for example a graphic novel and a collection of song lyrics, or
- focuses on two non-literary text types, for example a collection of music videos and a screenplay, or
- treats a text by a writer on the *Prescribed reading list*, or by a literary writer, as non-literary

will not meet the requirements of the task.

Determining the global issue

A global issue incorporates the following three properties:

- It has significance on a wide/large scale.
- It is transnational.
- Its impact is felt in everyday local contexts.

Students may look to one or more of the following fields of inquiry for guidance on how to decide on a global issue to focus their orals on. These topics are not exhaustive and are intended as helpful starting points for students to generate ideas and derive a more specific global issue on which to base their individual oral. It should also be noted that there is the potential for significant overlap between the areas.

Culture, identity and community

Students might focus on the way in which texts explore aspects of family, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender and sexuality, and the way these impact on individuals and societies. They might also focus on issues concerning migration, colonialism and nationalism.

Beliefs, values and education

Students might focus on the way in which texts explore the beliefs and values nurtured in particular societies and the ways they shape individuals, communities and educational systems. They might also explore the tensions that arise when there are conflicts of beliefs and values, and ethics.

Politics, power and justice

Students might focus on the ways in which texts explore aspects of rights and responsibilities, the workings and structures of governments and institutions. They might also investigate hierarchies of power, the distribution of wealth and resources, the limits of justice and the law, equality and inequality, human rights and peace and conflict.

Art, creativity and the imagination

Students might focus on the ways in which texts explore aspects of aesthetic inspiration, creation, craft, and beauty. They might also focus on the shaping and challenging of perceptions through art, and the function, value and effects of art in society.

Science, technology and the environment

Students might focus on the ways in which texts explore the relationship between humans and the environment and the implications of technology and media for society. They might also consider the idea of scientific development and progress.

In selecting the global issue for their oral, students must be careful not simply to select from the broad fields of inquiry above, but to determine a specific issue for discussion that can be reasonably explored in a 10-minute oral. The global issue chosen for consideration should be significant on a wide scale, be transnational in nature, and be an issue that has an impact felt in everyday local contexts. The issue should be clearly evidenced in the extracts chosen.

For example, within the field of culture, identity and community, the theme of gender in itself might be unsuitably broad for an individual oral. A student interested in this theme might explore instead how gender bias manifests itself in different contexts; how this can be evidenced in many ways in texts of different sorts; how different authorial choices will determine what is meant by gender bias; whether bias should be viewed positively or negatively, allowing the students to evaluate the writer's choices and the impact they might have on the different readers' or viewers' understanding.

For further illustration of how to formulate a global issue from a field of inquiry please consult the "Incorporating global issues into learning and teaching" subsection of the "Delivering the courses" section of the *Language A teacher support material*.

The oral itself will only be concerned with the aspects of the global issue relevant to the two extracts chosen. The student should ensure the oral offers a balanced approach, giving approximately equal attention to both extracts and to the work and body of work they are extracted from. Thus, it is important that the student selects extracts and a work and a body of work that offer equally sufficient material for the discussion.

The learner portfolio and the individual oral

The learner portfolio is not specifically assessed but it is an important place for students to explore and reflect upon their works in relation to global issues.

In relation to the preparation of the individual oral, the learner portfolio provides an opportunity for students to:

- keep an ongoing record of the different global issues that could be related to each of the texts they read
- explore links that could be established between different texts on the basis of common global issues they address
- explore how key passages in the texts they have studied represent different or similar perspectives on one global issue through both form and content
- trace the evolution of their thinking and planning in connection with the global issue and how its cultural value, its definition and application to the texts they read have changed through their inquiry
- reflect on the challenges that the internal assessment poses for them as individual learners.

Conduct of the individual oral

Students have the flexibility to use any of the texts from their course of study up until the time of the assessment. It should be remembered that texts chosen for the individual oral cannot then be used for any

other assessment component. Students should select their own oral topics. Teachers should monitor and guide students in their selection of viable global issues, relevant texts and effective choice of extracts, but they should not suggest topics to students nor tell them what to do. Though teachers play a critical role in helping students prepare, this must be a student inspired and created oral.

The oral may be conducted at any time after a significant number of the texts have been studied in the course. All of the texts used for the oral need to be featured as part of the teaching of the course. It is recommended that the oral takes place either in the last part of the first year or the first part of the second year.

The place and time of the oral is chosen by the teacher. Teachers may conduct all the orals on one day or over several days. Students must be given adequate notice of when the oral will take place. Schools will be provided with a form for students to create an outline of their oral. Students should prepare this in advance as it will provide them with a springboard for their oral. Students should not read the outline as a prepared script. The form gives students a maximum of 10 bullet points to help provide structure to their oral. Individual bullet points must not be excessively long. Schools will be required to keep all copies of the outline form until after the results are issued. In order to determine authenticity of student performance, schools may be required to submit these forms to IB.

Copies of the extracts chosen by the student must be provided to the teacher for approval at least one week before the individual oral assessment takes place. Teachers will have their own copies of the extracts during the assessment and these may help the teacher frame suitable questions for the student.

The extracts must be clean, unmarked copies; the student may only take the extracts and the outline into the room where the individual oral assessment will take place.

The individual oral takes place between the student and teacher. The teacher asks questions to probe further into the student's knowledge and understanding of the extracts and the corresponding work and body of work, and their analysis of the choices made by the authors in relation to the global issue chosen. In the case of less confident students, teachers must encourage them to give them the opportunity to expand on unsubstantiated or inadequate statements.

The individual oral lasts 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions by the teacher.

The individual oral is internally assessed and externally moderated by the IB. Audio recordings of the oral, together with the relevant extracts, are required for the purpose of moderation. To this end, all materials and recordings must be clearly and accurately assembled and kept. Care must also be taken to provide a suitably quiet environment for the recordings.

Internal assessment criteria

Individual oral

There are four assessment criteria.

Criterion A	Knowledge, understanding and interpretation	10 marks
Criterion B	Analysis and evaluation	10 marks
Criterion C	Focus and organization	10 marks
Criterion D	Language	10 marks
Total		**40 marks**

Criterion A: Knowledge, understanding and interpretation

- How well does the candidate demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the extracts, and of the work and body of work from which they were taken?
- To what extent does the candidate make use of knowledge and understanding of the extracts and the work and body of work to draw conclusions in relation to the global issue?
- How well are ideas supported by references to the extracts, and to the work and body of work?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	There is little knowledge and understanding of the extracts and the work and body of work in relation to the global issue. References to the extracts and to the work and body of work are infrequent or are rarely appropriate.
3–4	There is some knowledge and understanding of the extracts and the work and body of work in relation to the global issue References to the extracts and to the work and body of work are at times appropriate.
5–6	There is satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the extracts and the work and body of work and an interpretation of their implications in relation to the global issue. References to the extracts and to the work and body of work are generally relevant and mostly support the candidate's ideas.
7–8	There is good knowledge and understanding of the extracts and the work and body of work and a sustained interpretation of their implications in relation to the global issue. References to the extracts and to the work and body of work are relevant and support the candidate's ideas.
9–10	There is excellent knowledge and understanding of the extracts and of the work and body of work and a persuasive interpretation of their implications in relation to the global issue. References to the extracts and to the work and body of work are well-chosen and effectively support the candidate's ideas.

Criterion B: Analysis and evaluation

- How well does the candidate use their knowledge and understanding of each of the extracts and their associated work and body of work to analyse and evaluate the ways in which authorial choices present the global issue?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The oral is descriptive or contains no relevant analysis. Authorial choices are seldom identified and, if so, are poorly understood in relation to the presentation of the global issue.
3–4	The oral contains some relevant analysis, but it is reliant on description. Authorial choices are identified, but are vaguely treated and/or only partially understood in relation to the presentation of the global issue.
5–6	The oral is analytical in nature, and evaluation of the extracts and their work and body of work is mostly relevant. Authorial choices are identified and reasonably understood in relation to the presentation of the global issue.
7–8	Analysis and evaluation of the extracts and their work and body of work are relevant and at times insightful There is a good understanding of how authorial choices are used to present the global issue.
9–10	Analysis and evaluation of the extracts and their work and body of work are relevant and insightful.

Mark	Level descriptor
	There is a thorough and nuanced understanding of how authorial choices are used to present the global issue.

Criterion C: Focus and organization

- How well does the candidate deliver a structured, well-balanced and focused oral?
- How well does the candidate connect ideas in a cohesive manner?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The oral rarely focuses on the task. There are few connections between ideas.
3–4	The oral only sometimes focuses on the task, and treatment of the extracts, and of the work and body of work, may be unbalanced. There are some connections between ideas, but these are not always coherent.
5–6	The oral maintains a focus on the task, despite some lapses; treatment of the extracts and work and body of work is mostly balanced. The development of ideas is mostly logical; ideas are generally connected in a cohesive manner.
7–8	The oral maintains a mostly clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the extracts and work and body of work is balanced. The development of ideas is logical; ideas are cohesively connected in an effective manner.
9–10	The oral maintains a clear and sustained focus on the task; treatment of the extracts and work and body of work is well-balanced. The development of ideas is logical and convincing; ideas are connected in a cogent manner.

Criterion D: Language

- How clear, accurate and effective is the language?

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	The language is rarely clear or accurate; errors often hinder communication. Vocabulary and syntax are imprecise and frequently inaccurate. Elements of style (for example, register, tone and rhetorical devices) are inappropriate to the task and detract from the oral.
3–4	The language is generally clear; errors sometimes hinder communication. Vocabulary and syntax are often imprecise with inaccuracies. Elements of style (for example, register, tone and rhetorical devices) are often inappropriate to the task and detract from the oral.
5–6	The language is clear; errors do not hinder communication. Vocabulary and syntax are appropriate to the task but simple and repetitive. Elements of style (for example, register, tone and rhetorical devices) are appropriate to the task and neither enhance nor detract from the oral.
7–8	The language is clear and accurate; occasional errors do not hinder communication. Vocabulary and syntax are appropriate and varied.

Mark	Level descriptor
	Elements of style (for example, register, tone and rhetorical devices) are appropriate to the task and somewhat enhance the oral.
9–10	The language is clear, accurate and varied; occasional errors do not hinder communication. Vocabulary and syntax are varied and create effect. Elements of style (for example, register, tone and rhetorical devices) are appropriate to the task and enhance the oral.

Approaches to learning and approaches to teaching in studies in language and literature

Through the approaches to learning in language courses, students develop skills that have relevance across all areas that help them "learn how to learn". Approaches to learning can be taught, improved with practice and developed incrementally, through implementing a number of approaches to teaching.

The approaches to learning provide a common framework for students to reflect on, and articulate, how they are learning. They prepare students for success in their studies and life beyond school. To this end, language learning should be supported in ways that are consistent with the IB learner profile and the pedagogical principles that underpin the IB programmes: the promotion of critical and creative thinking skills, learning how to learn, and promoting international-mindedness.

When designing their courses, teachers need to embrace the approaches to teaching in order for them to help students identify and develop learning skills in their studies in language and literature courses.

Approaches to teaching

Teaching based on inquiry

One of the pedagogical principles that underpins all IB programmes is that of teaching based on inquiry. Being inquirers is one of the attributes of the IB learner profile, where the process of inquiry is seen as involving the development of students' natural curiosity, together with the skills needed to enable them to become autonomous lifelong learners. The most significant aspect of inquiry-based teaching is that students are actively engaged in their own learning, constructing their own understandings and interpretations of issues.

Teaching and learning in studies in language and literature is not simply about the delivery and understanding of content; it is also about engaging with processes of comprehension, analysis, interpretation and contextualization. As such, inquiry is the basis for both the design and the implementation of classroom teaching practice in studies in language and literature. Students need to be encouraged to activate their curiosity, find their own ways into texts and make connections to prior learning.

Examples of inquiry-based teaching approaches and activities in studies in language and literature include:

- providing scope for and encouraging individual lines of inquiry as well as student choice in creating and choosing a variety of tasks
- encouraging students to engage in creative tasks (written, oral and visual arts), pastiches, role plays, performances, and so on, and to experience and explore through them the process of creative writing and the challenges to expression that it entails
- designing individual and group research tasks, case studies and presentations based on student questions and areas of interest
- exploring the ways in which other areas of inquiry (for example, historical, philosophical, psychological) might contribute to and enrich the reading experience
- using problem-solving approaches to texts (for example, finding connections between texts, applying different critical perspectives to texts).

Teaching focused on conceptual understanding

Concepts are broad, powerful organizing ideas that have relevance both within and across subject areas. Exploring concepts helps students to build the capacity to engage with complex ideas, and discussion of the "big ideas" behind a topic can help students get to the heart of why they are learning what they are

learning. There is also a strong link between teaching through concepts and moving students to higher order thinking; for example, it allows students to move from concrete to abstract thinking, and facilitates transfer of learning to new contexts.

In studies in language and literature, the concepts of identity, culture, creativity, communication, representation, transformation and perspective are central elements of the course. These key concepts to which learning and teaching regularly return can help students make sense of the various texts and issues examined in the course and in the world at large and can form a theoretical umbrella for the course as a whole. When teachers approach the various texts and issues examined in the course from the perspective of what they add to students' understanding of broader concepts, students' learning becomes more meaningful. This does not imply that the texts themselves are not immanently of interest and do not deserve careful critical attention, in particular in connection with how authors employ language and form to promote or even critique cultural identities and values, relationships and issues. However, it is recognized that some wider and important phenomenon underlies a specific text or issue, not only in relation to the world but also in relation to the discipline of studies in language and literature. With such an aspiration, we develop skills in critical thinking, making learning connected, transferable and deeper.

Examples of conceptually focused teaching approaches and activities in language and literature include:

- moving from the concrete to the abstract, for instance by drawing together knowledge from close readings of individual texts in order to explore broader conceptual concerns, e.g. the nature of poetry, the construction of meaning or the significance of "literariness" as an idea
- encouraging students to explore different formal representations and mappings of the world of literary texts; e.g. through literary form, format, purpose, audience or context
- applying conceptual frameworks to texts or, conversely, constructing conceptual frameworks from reading texts
- exploring the concept of transformation by designing activities that ask students to consider literary forms and their conventions by transforming texts in a variety of ways (through translation to film or through performance, for example)
- grounding close investigation of texts on broader conceptual discussions: for instance, in connection with the concept of representation, does the structure of narrative affect meaning? How does medium affect meaning? What is the relationship between the physical (a book, a performance, a live speech) and communication?

Teaching developed in local and global contexts

As individuals and as members of local and global communities, students make sense of the world through their life experiences, the communities around them and broader global concerns. Contextualized learning and teaching helps students see connections between ideas and aids the development of international-mindedness because it allows students to move between their own situations and situations of others.

There are a number of ways in which the idea of context can be significant in language and literature studies. Audience, purpose and literary form are crucial ways of connecting texts with the contexts of their production and consumption, and can help students to see applications of linguistic and literary knowledge to real life. The studies in language and literature classroom is also an ideal place for students to gain insights into familiar and unfamiliar, local and global cultural contexts both through the content of the texts themselves and the ways in which they are read and interpreted.

Examples of contextualized teaching approaches and activities in language and literature learning include:

- bringing the outside world into schools (writers, cultural experts, other teachers, theatre performances, school partnerships, etc.)
- drawing on students' backgrounds, experiences and interests allowing for texts from different cultures to be juxtaposed
- encouraging creative and real-world opportunities for students to explore cultural contexts and make links to other subjects, such as the arts; for example writing program notes for a local theatre production, creating art, monologues, collages or poetry

- taking students out into the world by providing opportunities for experiential learning by, for example, making explicit connections between CAS and the subject in the hope that students will be encouraged to generate a CAS project or experience related to their studies in language and literature
- providing students with cultural frameworks with which to understand texts and issues (for example, co-texts such as news articles or other writings from the culture).

Teaching focused on effective teamwork and collaboration

Collaboration is a key element of learning in the Diploma Programme. Learning is a social phenomenon that is closely associated with the approaches of shared, situated and embedded cognition, which view learning as the result of a complex interaction of minds within specific contexts. Collaborative learning takes place between students but also between students and teachers as they construct meaning.

Collaboration is particularly important in studies in language and literature as the use of language involves interaction among people. In addition, our reception of any text depends on the community of readers to which we belong. Finding meaning in a text is a collaborative process. Even an individual working through a text is influenced by past readings and experiences with others and, as Michael Ondaatje points out in *Running in the Family* (2009), "a literary work is a communal act".

Examples of collaborative learning activities in studies in language and literature include:

- designing activities that encourage interaction between students and negotiation among them in relation to differing interpretations of one same text
- using particular protocols, like literature circle protocols, that help structure discussion and therefore allow for greater autonomy from the teacher, fostering instead reliance on other students
- implementing peer-assessment activities in order for students to obtain feedback on their understanding from their classmates
- allowing students as a group a greater say as regards decision-making in relation to syllabus content, assessment or sequencing of material within the bounds set by the IB in this guide
- providing opportunities for students to carry out group presentations or performances that call for a variety of decisions, tasks, and aspects of performance.

Teaching designed to remove barriers to learning

Differentiation is about accommodating the different ways in which students learn, and about teachers designing learning experiences that allow students with a range of needs to meet their learning objectives. There is therefore an important link between differentiation and effective and purposeful planning.

In studies in language and literature, teachers, as they plan, can design lessons and activities that affirm identity and build self-esteem, value prior knowledge, and scaffold and extend learning. Decisions ranging from the choice of texts to the nature of classroom activities can greatly influence the extent to which the needs of individual students are being met.

Examples of teaching designed to remove barriers to learning in studies in language and literature include:

- selecting texts that are challenging but accessible and allow students to build on prior knowledge
- planning a wide range of activities that cater for different learning preferences and even suggest different modalities of tasks the student can choose from to achieve one same aim
- using a variety of strategies to create in-class groupings that allow for collaboration and growth
- paying attention to the use of multimodal texts so that students are able to access texts that are read aloud, or to work on graphic interpretations of texts that allow for a focus on the visual
- paying careful attention to timely and relevant feedback that is specific to the needs of the individual learner
- considering the possibility of giving the student some say as far as curriculum design is concerned, for example allowing the course to have some say in the choice of works that will be read.

Teaching informed by assessment (formative and summative)

Assessment plays a crucial role in both supporting and measuring learning. While formal, criterion-related summative assessments are used in the Diploma Programme to assess overall learning, other assessments, both formative and summative, should be used by teachers to determine levels of learning at different points of the teaching of the syllabus and make decisions about future approaches and engagements. Formative and summative assessments, paired with appropriate feedback, can be powerful tools to improve student learning.

In studies in language and literature, assessment can be often process-oriented and not just product-oriented. For instance, the work done in the learner portfolio aims to encourage students to undertake ongoing informal self-assessment of their understanding of the texts they read, the connections among them, the cultural values that frame their responses, the intercultural perspectives of multiple readers, and the concepts and areas of exploration that structure the course.

Assessment will be often teacher-led; however, at certain points teachers can plan instances of formal self- or peer-assessment in order to provide students with opportunities to reflect on their own and each other's learning and performance in order to develop their language and literature skills. The key to assessment is that the data is then used to inform instruction as assessment and feedback are as important to the teacher as they are to the student.

Examples of teaching informed by assessment in studies in language and literature include:

- checking that assessment marks and commentaries are understood, followed by clarification and further activities as needed
- producing discussion based on student feedback and previous responses
- encouraging students to undertake ongoing reflection and self-assessment in a variety of forms—brainstorming, free-writing, journal response, critical reflection—scaffolded over time
- conducting online, collaborative forum discussions on differentiated topics, where students can negotiate each other's interpretations of texts and explore the cultural values on which interpretations are based
- using mini-lessons or workshops to focus instruction based on gathered internal and external assessment data.

Approaches to learning

Thinking skills

Developing thinking skills is a key feature of the constructivist approach to learning that heavily influences all IB programmes. The teacher in the IB classroom is the facilitator who provides or shapes learning opportunities that allow students to develop skills of metacognition, reflection, critical thinking, creative thinking and transfer. Deliberate thinking in a classroom situation is best achieved through requiring students to come up with responses to questions that do not only require remembering or explaining.

In studies in language and literature students are asked to engage with authentic disciplinary problems. The three courses are built around the reading, listening and viewing of texts, the development of an informed, creative response to text and the communication of such a response to an audience. All of these activities involve and develop a varied range of sophisticated thinking skills.

Examples of the ways in which thinking skills can be developed in studies in language and literature include:

- establishing connections between texts studied and current affairs that might make transfer of learning to new contexts more likely to happen
- encouraging students to actively engage in the formulation of hypotheses about a text's meaning and how that meaning is constructed without needing to rely on tried interpretations or on easily accessible online sources

- fostering thinking through the juxtaposition of texts from different times, cultures, literary forms and text types
- using active learning techniques, such as role plays and debates during which students need to think and make decisions independently and spontaneously
- ensuring that a culture of thinking is firmly established in the classroom, by consistently using visible thinking routines.

Communication skills

Communication skills are important for success in school but are also essential to create an atmosphere of congeniality in the learning community: they help to form and maintain good relationships between students and between students and adults. Furthermore, being able to communicate well contributes to the development of students' self-confidence and enhances their future prospects.

It almost goes without saying that communication skills are at the heart of studies in language and literature. Specific aspects of communication such as reading, viewing, writing, speaking, listening and performing form a part of the aims of the courses in studies in language and literature. Almost every aspect of the studies of language and literature is related to the development of communication skills in students.

Examples of further ways in which communication skills can be developed in studies in language and literature include:

- articulating a well-developed and well-supported personal response to a text
- carrying out group and individual presentations, using a variety of presentation formats, and encouraging attentive listening from the rest of the class and presenter/audience interaction
- using digital tools to enrich learning and improve communication and feedback in the class learning environment
- practising different roles using role play and reflection and performing plays, skits or oral interpretations of literature for an audience of peers
- broadening academic communication beyond the classroom through student-led literary conferences, presentations to parents, and work with younger students or other school communities.

Social skills

Social skills are closely connected to communication skills in that they relate to the development of the learner as a whole and in that they both foreground the value of a community for learning. A starting point for developing students' social skills is to acknowledge that people differ greatly in terms of their degree of introversion or extroversion and that these differences should be respected. Similarly, different cultures have different expectations on appropriate behaviours in social situations. To be able to understand the perspectives of others, to form good relationships and to gain an awareness of how one's words and actions have an impact on other people are at the heart of many of the IB learner profile attributes and the aspiration to develop internationally minded students.

In studies in language and literature, the sensitive, interactive and collaborative engagement in the discussion of a wide variety of texts allows students to consider and develop their own social skills by debating/negotiating the meaning of a text, as students in one same classroom may have different interpretations of one same text. When students are faced with an interpretation that contrasts with or even opposes theirs, they need to listen carefully to the other student(s) that hold such an interpretation, support their own, and arrive collaboratively at an agreement, or when that is not possible, achieve a clear understanding of the differences between two or more views and identify the evidence that could be used to support each of them.

Examples of the ways in which social skills can be developed in studies in language and literature include:

- creating classroom and discussion norms
- creating, through attitude and example, a safe classroom environment where challenging and diverse texts can be studied in a respectful manner

- using in a balanced and purposeful way group and private response, group and individual work, and the classroom space for both better classroom interaction and private reflection
- developing an active listening ability that allows students to consider different perspectives and to engage in collaborative negotiation of meaning with the students who hold such perspectives
- teacher modelling possible varied responses to texts and public feedback that acknowledges and appreciates difference.

Self-management skills

IB students need to learn to persevere and be resilient as individuals. Learning to manage themselves is important for students in any academic programme and is important for competency in later life.

Self-management skills such as organizational skills, goal setting, and time management as well as affective skills such as managing state of mind, motivation and resilience are important for success in the study of language and literature especially when it comes to lengthy or difficult texts and self-directed research. Students should demonstrate initiative, perseverance and a strong willingness to learn independently. They should also be willing to embrace the opportunities for individual and personal choices the syllabus allows.

Examples of the ways in which self-management skills can be developed in studies in language and literature include:

- establishing clear deadlines and managing expectations in a fair and purposeful manner
- establishing a scheme of work or a plan of study that scaffolds growth and helps students to manage time without creating artificial boundaries, hoops or expectations that hinder true reflection
- giving attention to study techniques such as note-taking, text marking or the use of various digital organizational tools while allowing students to find their own approaches to self-management and academic organization
- encouraging self-reflection on progress against criteria but also self-reflection based on aims as broad as developing an interest in and enjoyment of language and literature
- helping students increase their autonomy and take responsibility over the organization of their own work, developing in the process an awareness of the challenges that deadlines pose for them individually.

Research skills

While good research skills have always been at the heart of academic endeavour, the availability of digital resources and the explosion of the amount of information easily accessible to students make the development of research skills a particularly pertinent part of today's education. Learning to use those resources and to put those skills into practice in an academically honest way is an important aspect of learning in all IB programmes.

Fundamental research skills such as formulating focused and intriguing research questions, appraising sources, and recording, evaluating and synthesizing information are critical skills in studies in language and literature. Throughout their studies, students have ample and excellent opportunities to practise their skills in both informal and more formal and extended ways. A course that deals with a variety of texts produced in a variety of contexts inherently demands some element of research in order to increase engagement and understanding.

Examples of the ways in which research skills can be developed in studies in language and literature include:

- teacher modelling effective research skills and solid academic integrity practices through the use of carefully selected secondary material that goes beyond the basic internet search
- development in the student of the ability to distinguish between a sound, well-grounded and well-researched interpretation of a text and one that is not, and the ability to evaluate the validity of the claims of different critical perspectives on texts
- individual research for presentations, papers or performances with teacher guidance on how to use online databases and how to identify and select the most fruitful sources

- group research tasks in relation to contextual concerns of texts studied
- research of linguistic and literary history or practices, again structured by the teacher, so that students can begin to have a sense of important disciplinary questions, appropriate databases, possible secondary text sources and means of assessing reliability.

Glossary of command terms

Command terms for studies in language and literature

Students should be familiar with the following key terms and phrases used in assessment objectives and assessment criteria, which are to be understood as described below. Some of these terms may be also used in examination questions, but most of them will be more frequently used to describe levels of achievement in the descriptors of the different assessment criteria.

Command term	Assessment objective level	Definition
Analyse	2, 3	Break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure.
Comment	2, 3	Give a judgement based on a given statement or result of a calculation.
Compare	1, 2, 3	Give an account of the similarities between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Compare and contrast	1, 2, 3	Give an account of similarities and differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Contrast	1, 2, 3	Give an account of the differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Describe	1, 3	Give a detailed account.
Discuss	1, 2, 3	Offer a considered and balanced review that includes a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by appropriate evidence.
Evaluate	2, 3	Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations.
Examine	2, 3	Consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue.
Explain	1, 2, 3	Give a detailed account including reasons or causes.
Explore	2, 3	Undertake a systematic process of discovery.
Interpret	1, 3	Use knowledge and understanding to recognize trends and draw conclusions from given information.
Investigate	1, 2	Observe, study, or make a detailed and systematic examination, in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.
Justify	1, 2, 3	Give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion.
Present	3	Offer for display, observation, examination or consideration.

Command term	Assessment objective level	Definition
To what extent	1, 2, 3	Consider the merits or otherwise of an argument or concept. Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with appropriate evidence and sound argument.

Bibliography

This bibliography lists the principal texts used to inform the curriculum review and the texts cited in the guide. It is not an exhaustive list and does not include all the literature available: judicious selection was made in order to better advise and guide teachers. This bibliography is not a list of recommended textbooks.

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Updates to the publication

This section outlines the updates made to this publication over the past two years. The changes are ordered from the most recent to the oldest updates. Minor spelling and typographical corrections are not listed.

Changes for November 2025

Assessment > External assessment > External assessment details—SL

"Paper 2: Comparative essay"

Correction of error in the previous version.

The word "and" was changed to "and/or" in the description of the task: "Students will be expected to compare and/or contrast two of the works studied in relation to the question chosen."

Assessment > External assessment > External assessment details—HL

"Paper 2: Comparative essay"

Correction of error in the previous version.

The word "and" was changed to "and/or" in the description of the task: "Students will be expected to compare and/or contrast two of the works studied in relation to the question chosen."