

Diploma Programme

Language A Language and Literature

Curriculum review report – update on progress

November 2009



This report provides an overview of the new Language A Language and Literature course , giving information about the syllabus and assessment for the course, including some extracts from the draft guide.

The development of the Language A Language and Literature course is the result of internal decisions informed by a series of meetings with teachers, examiners and consultants. Schools have also been consulted through questionnaires and the responses to these have been given careful consideration by participants in the meetings. Decisions taken throughout this process also reflect the need to ensure that the new course remains relevant throughout the next curriculum review cycle.

The first teaching year for the new course will be 2011 for May session schools and 2012 for November session schools.

Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Teaching hours	
	SL	HL
<p>Part 1: Language in cultural context</p> <p>Texts are chosen from a variety of non-literary sources, genre and media.</p>	40	60
<p>Part 2: Language and mass communication</p> <p>Texts are chosen from a variety of non-literary sources, genre and media.</p>	40	60
<p>Part 3: Literature – Texts and contexts</p> <p>HL: 3 texts, one of which is a text in translation chosen from the Prescribed literature in translation list (PLT) and one of which is a text from the Prescribed book list for the language studied (PBL). The other may be chosen freely.</p> <p>SL: 2 texts, one of which is a text in translation from the PLT and one, written in the language A studied, from the PBL or chosen freely.</p>	40	60
<p>Part 4: Literature – Critical Study</p> <p>HL: 3 texts, all of which are chosen from the prescribed booklist (PBL) for the language studied.</p> <p>SL: 2 texts, both of which are chosen from the prescribed booklist (PBL) for the language studied.</p>	30	60
Total teaching hours	150	240

Texts

In Parts 1 and 2 a wide range of text types should be included to help students with analysis and production. In this guide, text is defined to include the widest range of oral, written and visual materials. This range will include single and multiple images with or without text, literary and non-literary written texts and extracts there from, media texts, for example films, radio and television programmes and their scripts, electronic texts that share aspects of a number of these areas, for instance video sharing websites, webpages, sms messages, blogs, wikis and tweets. Oral texts will include readings, speeches, broadcasts and transcriptions of recorded conversation.

Part 1: Language in cultural context

In this part of the course students are given the opportunity to explore how language develops in specific cultural contexts, how it impacts on the world and the ways in which language shapes both individual and group identity. Topics for stimulating approaches to the unit are listed below, each of which implies a range of vocabulary and writing styles with which students should become familiar.

Students studying this part of the course should pay particular attention to the role of language in constructing meaning and understanding of particular issues in the world.

The study of *Language in cultural context* means that students will be able to meet the following learning outcomes:

- **Analyse how audience and purpose affect the structure and content of texts.**
- **Analyse the impact of language changes.**
- **Demonstrate an awareness of how language and meaning are shaped by culture and context.**

The above learning outcomes are achieved through the study of texts in relation to some of the suggested topics listed below.

- gender (inequality, constructions of masculinity and femininity)
- language and communities (nation/region, subcultures)
- language and the individual (multilingualism/bilingualism, language profile/identity)
- language and power (linguistic imperialism, propaganda)
- history and evolution of the language (disappearing and revival languages, creoles)
- translation (what is added and what is lost)
- language and knowledge (science and technology, argot and jargon)
- language and social relations (social and professional status, race)
- language and belief (religious discourse, mythology)
- language and taboo (swearing, political correctness)

Part 2: Language and mass communication

In Part 2 students consider the way language is used in the media. Mass media include newspapers, magazines, the Internet (e.g. social networking), mobile telephony, radio and film. This unit also addresses the issue of how the production and reception of texts is influenced by the medium in which they are delivered.

The study of *Language and mass communication* means that students will be able to do the following. While each of the learning outcomes must be covered, the examples provided are not prescriptive but are intended to provide guidance on the ways in which these learning outcomes can be incorporated into the teaching of Part 2.

- **Examine different forms of communication within the media.**
- **Show an awareness of the potential for educational, political or ideological influence of the media**
- **Show the way mass media use language to inform, persuade or entertain.**

The above learning outcomes can be achieved through the study of some of the suggested topics listed below.

- textual bias (news reporting, sports coverage)
- stereotypes (gender, ethnicity)
- popular culture (comics, soap operas)
- the language and presentation of speeches and campaigns (elections, lobbying)
- language and the state (public information, legislation)
- media institutions (TV channels, Internet search engines)
- the role of editing (news bulletins, websites)
- the use of persuasive language (advertising, appeals)
- arts and entertainment (radio and TV drama, documentaries)

Part 3: Literature – Texts and contexts

SL 2 literary texts: 1 from the Prescribed Literature in Translation list (PLT); 1 from the Prescribed book list (PBL) for the language studied or chosen freely.

HL 3 literary texts: 1 from PLT; 1 from the PBL for the language studied; 1 chosen freely.

Meaning is shaped by culture and context. Literary texts are not created in a vacuum but influenced by social context, cultural heritage and historical change. Through the close reading of literary texts, students are able to consider the relationship of literature to issues at large such as gender, power and identity. Students should be encouraged to consider how texts build upon and transform the inherited literary and cultural traditions. The compulsory study of translated texts encourages students to reflect on their own cultural assumptions through an examination of work produced in other languages and cultures.

The study of *Literature – Texts and contexts* means that students will be able to meet the following learning outcomes:

Consider the changing historical, cultural and social contexts in which particular texts are written and received.

Points to be considered could include:

- the impact of different forms of publishing, for example, serialisation
- political pressure and censorship
- dominant and minority social groups
- role of the individual and family in society
- the impact of prevailing values and beliefs
- protest and polemic

Demonstrate how form, structure and style can not only be seen to influence meaning but can also be influenced by context

Points to be considered could include:

- narrative technique
- characterisation
- elements of style and structure
- poetic language

Understand the attitudes and values expressed by literary texts and their impact on readers.

Students should be able to recognise that:

- there can be very different readings of the same text
- the context of reception influences the way a text is read
- different values may be in contention within a text

Part 4: Literature – Critical study

SL 2 literary texts, HL 3 literary texts, all of which must be taken from the PBL for the language studied

Close reading is considered to be a core skill in the understanding and interpretation of literature. By looking closely at the detail of literary texts, students develop awareness of their rich complexities and the intricacies of their construction.

The study of Literature – critical study means that students will be able to meet the following learning outcomes:

Explore literary works in detail.

Points to be considered could include:

- identify and situate a text or an extract in the context of a larger work
- understand the explicit and implicit meanings in a text
- respond to the key features of texts, such as language, characterisation and structure
- organise the analysis in a coherent and structured way

Analyse elements such as theme and the ethical stance or moral values of literary texts.

Points to be considered could include:

- identify the evidence in the text for a particular stance
- consider point of view in different literary genres

Understand and make appropriate use of literary terms (for example, imagery, persona, tone, metaphor and irony).

Assessment component	Assessment component	Weighting
Standard Level	Higher Level	
<p>External assessment (3 hours)</p> <p>Paper 1: Textual analysis (1 ½ hours) Students write an analysis on one of two previously unseen non-literary texts.</p> <p>Paper 2: Essay (1 ½ hours) Students write an essay on one of six questions based on works studied in Parts 3.</p> <p>Written task Students produce at least three written tasks and submit one written task for external assessment. Each task must be 800-1000 words and include a rationale.</p>	<p>External assessment (4 hours)</p> <p>Paper 1: Comparative textual analysis (2 hours) Students write a comparative analysis of one pair of non-literary texts.</p> <p>Paper 2: Essay (2 hours) Students write an essay on one of six questions based on works studied in Parts 3.</p> <p>Written tasks Students produce at least four written tasks and submit two written tasks for external assessment. One of the tasks submitted must be a critical response to one of the prescribed questions for the HL additional study. Each task must be 800-1000 words.</p>	<p>70%</p> <p>25%</p> <p>25%</p> <p>20%</p>
<p>Internal Assessment This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.</p> <p>Individual oral commentary Students comment on an extract from a literary text studied in Part 4 of the course. Students are given two guiding questions.</p> <p>Further oral activity Students complete two oral activities, one based on Part 1 and one on Part 2. The mark of one oral activity is submitted for final assessment.</p>	<p>Internal assessment This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.</p> <p>Individual oral commentary Students comment on an extract from a literary text studied in Part 4 of the course. Students are given two guiding questions.</p> <p>Further oral activity Students complete two oral activities, one based on Part 1 and one on Part 2. The mark of one oral activity is submitted for final assessment.</p>	<p>30%</p> <p>15%</p> <p>15%</p>

Paper 1: Textual Analysis

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Weighting: 25%

Paper 1 contains two unseen passages from non literary texts for analysis of which students select one. One or two guiding questions are provided. A passage for analysis may either be a complete piece of writing or visual text, or an extract from a longer piece. The texts for analysis are not necessarily related to specific parts of the syllabus. Different non literary text types are included, for example:

- advertisement
- opinion column.
- Extract from an essay
- Electronic text, for example, social networking sites, Blogs
- Brochure, for example a public information leaflet
- Extract from memoir, diary or other autobiographical text

Students are required to analyse and comment on the text in the light of their understanding of its possible audience and purpose. In order to achieve this, students need to analyse structure, language and style in addition to aspects such as text type, context, bias, and/or ideological position.

There are many acceptable ways of approaching the analysis of a text. Regardless of the approach taken the analysis should be continuous and structured, and should include relevant examples from the text. Rather than simply listing formal aspects, students should focus on how such aspects are used to create particular effects.

Paper 2: Essay

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Weighting: 25%

Paper 2 consists of six questions based on the literary texts studied in Part 3 of the Language A Language and Literature course. Students are required to answer one question only.

The format of Paper 2 is the same for both higher level and standard level students, but the complexity of the questions and what is expected of students differ between the two levels (see the assessment criteria).

Students will be expected to respond to questions in a way that shows their understanding of the learning outcomes demanded in part 3. This means analysing the works they have studied in the light of the way the contexts of production and reception affect their meaning. Examples of the kinds of questions students need to consider in preparing for the assessment are:

- How can we explain the continued interest in a particular work in different contexts and at different times?
- What do you think of the assertion that the meaning of a text is fixed and does not change over time?
- to what extent do male and female literary characters accurately reflect the role of men and women in society?

Written task

Weighting: 20%

A written task demonstrates the student's ability to choose an imaginative way of exploring an aspect of the material studied in the course. It must show a critical engagement with an aspect of a text or a topic.

Formal requirements

Students complete at least three written tasks, one of which is submitted for external assessment.

The content of each task must relate to the different parts of the course: at least one from Part 1 or Part 2, and at least one on a literary text from Part 3 or Part 4.

Students are free to choose a text type which is appropriate to the content of the task.

It should be noted that an essay is not an acceptable type of text; candidates are required to write an essay in Paper 2.

The task must be between 800 – 1000 words.

Rationale 200 – 300 words

- The rationale is included in the word count. Text titles or topics recorded on the rationale are expected to match those recorded on the cover sheet.
- On their rationale students must explain how the content of the task is linked to a particular part of the course; how he/she intends to explore particular aspects of the course; the nature of the task chosen; and information about audience, purpose and the social, cultural or historical context in which the task is set.
- The rationale should not only include knowledge about the text or topic studied, but also about the formal conventions of the text type produced.

Paper 1: Comparative textual analysis

Duration: 2 hours

Weighting: 25%

Paper 1 contains two pairs of unseen texts for comparative analysis. Each pair will be linked in such a way that invites investigation of similarities and differences. Students select one pair. A pair may include complete pieces of writing, or extracts from longer pieces or a combination of these. The provenance of all texts will be clearly indicated. One of the two pairs may include one visual text. This could be an image with or without written text. The texts for analysis are not necessarily related to specific parts of the syllabus and the links between texts will be varied and could include for example, theme, genre features or narrative stance.

Students are required to analyse, compare and comment on the texts in the light of their understanding of audience and purpose. In order to achieve this, students need to analyse structure, language and style in addition to aspects such as text type, context, bias, and/or ideological position.

The comparative analysis should be continuous and structured, include relevant examples from the texts and be balanced in its comments on the similarities and differences between the texts. Rather than simply listing formal aspects, students should focus on how such aspects are used to create particular effects.

Paper 2: Essay (as for SL)

Duration: 2 hours

Weighting: 25%

Written tasks

Weighting: 20%

A written task demonstrates the student's ability to choose an imaginative way of exploring an aspect of the material studied in the course. It must show a critical engagement with an aspect of a text or a topic studied.

Formal requirements for Tasks 1 and 2

Students complete at least four written tasks, two of which are submitted for external assessment.

One of the HL tasks submitted must be a critical response to one of six prescribed questions (Task 2).

One of the tasks submitted for external assessment must be based on a literary text studied in Part 3 or Part 4 of the course. The other must be based on material studied in Part 1 or Part 2 of the course.

Each task must be between 800 – 1000 words.

Task 1 (as for SL)

Task 2: Critical response (Higher level only)

The aims of Task 2 are:

- to give students the opportunity to consider in greater detail the material studied in the four parts of the language and literature course
- to reflect and question in greater depth the values, beliefs and attitudes that are implied in texts studied
- to encourage students to view texts in a number of ways.

Areas of study

In preparation for Task 2 students must address one of the following areas of study which correspond to the topics and material studied in the four parts of the course.

- **Reader, culture and text**
- **Power and privilege**
- **Text and genre**

Formal requirements

There are two prescribed questions for each of the abovementioned areas of study. Task 2 is a critical response to one of these six questions. The critical response is based on material studied in the course. This material could be a longer work or works such as a novel or a group of poems. It could also be a shorter text or texts such as a newspaper article on linguistic imperialism studied in Part 1 or a sports blog from the online version of a newspaper studied in Part 2.

A rationale is not included with Task 2. Instead, students are expected to complete an outline on a designated form that can be found in the Handbook of Procedures. This outline is submitted with the task for external assessment.

This outline must be completed in one or two supervised classes and must include the following information:

- the prescribed question that has been chosen
- the title of the text(s) for analysis
- the part of the course to which the task refers
- three or four key points that explain the particular focus of the task

Where appropriate, Task 2 must be accompanied by relevant support documentation such as the newspaper article or magazine advertisement on which it is based.

Where a complete shorter text is chosen (for example, a newspaper article or an advertisement from a magazine), students can refer to other texts to support their response.

The critical response must be clearly structured with an introduction, clearly developed ideas or arguments and a conclusion.

Individual oral commentary

Weighting: 15%

Introduction

Students are expected to engage in a critical examination of a particular extract that has been studied in Part 4 of the Language A Language and Literature course. The individual oral commentary allows students to analyse the relationship between form, language and meaning in a particular text.

The nature and emphasis of the commentary depends to a great extent on the extract chosen; however, in all cases, the student should aim to explore significant aspects of the text, namely, its literary features.

Choice of text

The teacher is entirely responsible for the choice of extract. Students must not be allowed to choose the texts for commentary.

Requirements

Preparation time: 20 minutes ; delivery time: 15 minutes

Guiding questions

In addition to the text for commentary, students should be given two or three guiding questions at the beginning of the preparation time. These questions should not be numbered.

Teachers should aim to set one guiding question on what is happening or being discussed in the text, and one question on the language used. The questions should:

- offer a possible starting point for the commentary
- relate to one of the most significant aspects of the text
- refer to general details only, not to specific details in a particular line
- allow the student to explore independently all significant issues dealt with in the text
- encourage the student to focus on interpretation of the text.

The Commentary and discussion

Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to communicate in a sustained and organized manner and during the commentary students must focus only on the text. If the text is an extract from a novel, for example, the relationship to the whole text or other works by the writer should be made only when relevant.

When the student has completed the commentary, the teacher is expected to engage in a discussion with the student. This discussion will give the student the opportunity to expand on particular statements made during the commentary.

The commentary should last for approximately half the time allotted and approximately seven minutes should normally be allocated for discussion.

Further oral activity

Weighting: 15%

The further oral activities are intended to address the relationship between language, meaning and context.

Students are required to engage in at least two further oral activities, one based on Part 1 and one on Part 2. The mark of one of the activities is chosen for final assessment, the marks of the other activities need to be recorded and kept by the school.

These activities are an opportunity to explore some of the central concerns in Parts 1 and 2 of the course. An important one of these is the issue of intercultural understanding. Through the examination of the ways in which the cultural context of a text, including the way and the medium through which it is communicated students will be able to explore some of the intercultural aspects of the course, reflecting on their own cultural practices. A wide variety of activities can be undertaken and these may be interactive in nature, integrating both listening and speaking skills, and individual presentations. Students choose their activity in consultation with the teacher.

There must be a clear link between the activity and the texts that have been studied in a particular part of the course.

The further oral activity is not recorded or sent for external moderation.

Internal assessment Criteria SL and HL

Individual oral commentary

There are three assessment criteria at HL and SL.

Criterion A	Knowledge and understanding of the text or extract	10 marks
Criterion B	Understanding of the use and effects of literary features	10 marks
Criterion C	Organisation	5 marks
Criterion D	Language	5 marks
		Total marks: 30 marks

Interactive oral activity

There are three assessment criteria at HL and SL.

Criterion A	Quality of analysis	10 marks
Criterion B	Organisation	10 marks
Criterion C	Language	10 marks
		Total: 30 marks

