



Language A: language and literature subject outline

First examinations 2013

This document explains the major features of the course, and outlines the syllabus and assessment requirements.

More detailed information about the course can be obtained by referring to the guide for this subject, which is available on the subject page of the IB online curriculum centre (OCC) website (<http://occ.ibo.org>) and can also be purchased from the IB store (<http://store.ibo.org>).

Nature of the subject

Language A: language and literature comprises four parts—two relate to the study of language and two to the study of literature.

The study of the texts produced in a language is central to an active engagement with language and culture and, by extension, to how we see and understand the world in which we live. A key aim of the language A: language and literature course is to encourage students to question the meaning generated by language and texts, which, it can be argued, is rarely straightforward and unambiguous. Helping students to focus closely on the language of the texts they study and to become aware of the role of each text's wider context in shaping its meaning is central to the course.

The language A: language and literature course aims to develop in students skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary, can be seen as autonomous yet simultaneously related to culturally determined reading practices. The course is designed to be flexible—teachers have the opportunity to construct it in a way that reflects the interests and concerns that are relevant to their students while developing in students a range of transferable skills. An understanding of the ways in which formal elements are used to create meaning in a text is combined with an exploration of how that meaning is affected by reading practices that are culturally defined and by the circumstances of production and reception.

Teachers should be aware while constructing the course that the focus underpinning the approach to texts sees the study of the formal elements of each text as only one among several means of establishing a reading. As noted above, a wide range of factors, including the circumstances of production and reception, and the role of culturally determined reading practices, are seen as being equally important. A wider aim of the course is the development of an understanding of “critical literacy” in students.

In view of the international nature of the IB and its commitment to intercultural understanding, the language A: language and literature course does not limit the study of texts to the products of one culture or of the cultures covered by any one language. The study of literature in translation from other cultures is especially important to IB Diploma Programme students because it contributes to a global perspective, thereby promoting an insight into, and understanding of, the different ways in which cultures influence and shape the experiences of life common to all humanity.

Prior learning

There are no formal requirements for students undertaking the group 1 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 studying language A. Schools should refer to the IB document, *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes*, available on the OCC, 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 group 1 course will depend on the students' and teacher's interests and the students' future educational plans.

Links to the Middle Years Programme

In the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) language A provides a balance between language and literature where students develop an appreciation of the nature, power and beauty of language and literature, and of the many influences on language and literature globally. Language A courses develop linguistic and literary understanding and skills through the study of a broad range of genres and world literature, as well as language learning in context. The study of one or more languages A enables students to work towards their full linguistic potential. Gaining an understanding that language and literature are creative processes encourages the development of imagination and creativity through self-expression.

The Diploma Programme language A: language and literature course builds on this foundation. While it is not simply a language acquisition course, it aims to ensure the continuing development of a student's powers of expression and understanding in a variety of language domains.

Aims

Group 1 aims

The aims of **language A: literature** and **language A: language and literature** at SL and HL, and of **literature and performance** at SL are to:

1. introduce students to a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres
2. develop in students the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of individual texts and make relevant connections
3. develop the students' powers of expression, both in oral and written communication
4. encourage students to recognize the importance of the contexts in which texts are written and received
5. encourage, through the study of texts, an appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures, and how these perspectives construct meaning
6. encourage students to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
7. promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, language and literature.

Language A: language and literature aims

In addition, the aims of the **language A: language and literature** course at SL and at HL are to:

8. develop in students an understanding of how language, culture and context determine the ways in which meaning is constructed in texts
9. encourage students to think critically about the different interactions between text, audience and purpose.

Assessment objectives

There are four assessment objectives at SL and at HL for the **language A: language and literature** course.

1. Knowledge and understanding
 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of texts
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the use of language, structure, technique and style
 - Demonstrate a critical understanding of the various ways in which the reader constructs meaning and of how context influences this constructed meaning
 - Demonstrate an understanding of how different perspectives influence the reading of a text
2. Application and analysis
 - Demonstrate an ability to choose a text type appropriate to the purpose required
 - Demonstrate an ability to use terminology relevant to the various text types studied
 - Demonstrate an ability to analyse the effects of language, structure, technique and style on the reader
 - Demonstrate an awareness of the ways in which the production and reception of texts contribute to their meanings
 - Demonstrate an ability to substantiate and justify ideas with relevant examples
3. Synthesis and evaluation
 - Demonstrate an ability to compare and contrast the formal elements, content and context of texts
 - Discuss the different ways in which language and image may be used in a range of texts
 - Demonstrate an ability to evaluate conflicting viewpoints within and about a text
 - **At HL only:** Produce a critical response evaluating some aspects of text, context and meaning
4. Selection and use of appropriate presentation and language skills
 - Demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly and with fluency in both written and oral communication
 - Demonstrate an ability to use the oral and written forms of the language, in a range of styles, registers and situations
 - Demonstrate an ability to discuss and analyse texts in a focused and logical manner
 - **At HL only:** Demonstrate an ability to write a balanced, comparative analysis

Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Teaching hours	
	SL	HL
<p>Part 1: Language in cultural context Texts are chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media.</p>	40	60
<p>Part 2: Language and mass communication Texts are chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media.</p>	40	60
<p>Part 3: Literature—texts and contexts SL: Two texts, one of which is a text in translation from the prescribed literature in translation (PLT) list and one, written in the language A studied, from the prescribed list of authors (PLA) for the language A studied, or chosen freely. HL: Three texts, one of which is a text in translation chosen from the prescribed literature in translation (PLT) list and one from the prescribed list of authors (PLA) for the language A studied. The other may be chosen freely.</p>	40	70
<p>Part 4: Literature—critical study SL: Two texts, both of which are chosen from the prescribed list of authors (PLA) for the language A studied. HL: Three texts, all of which are chosen from the prescribed list of authors (PLA) for the language A studied.</p>	30	50
Total teaching hours	150	240

Assessment outline—SL

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Assessment component	Weighting
<p>External assessment (3 hours)</p> <p>Paper 1: Textual analysis (1 hour 30 minutes) The paper consists of two unseen texts. Students write an analysis of one of these texts. (20 marks)</p> <p>Paper 2: Essay (1 hour 30 minutes) In response to one of six questions students write an essay based on both the literary texts studied in part 3. The questions are the same at HL but the assessment criteria are different. (25 marks)</p> <p>Written task Students produce at least three written tasks based on material studied in the course. Students submit one written task for external assessment. (20 marks) This task must be 800–1,000 words in length plus a rationale of 200–300 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. (30 marks) Students are given two guiding questions.</p> <p>Further oral activity Students complete at least two further oral activities, one based on part 1 and one based on part 2 of the course. The mark of one further oral activity is submitted for final assessment. (30 marks)</p>	<p>30%</p> <p>15%</p> <p>15%</p>

Assessment outline—HL

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Assessment component	Weighting
<p>External assessment (4 hours)</p> <p>Paper 1: Comparative textual analysis (2 hours) The paper consists of two pairs of unseen texts. Students write a comparative analysis of one pair of texts. (20 marks)</p> <p>Paper 2: Essay (2 hours) In response to one of six questions students write an essay based on at least two of the literary texts studied in part 3. The questions are the same at SL but the assessment criteria are different. (25 marks)</p> <p>Written tasks Students produce at least four written tasks based on material studied in the course. Students submit two of these tasks for external assessment. (20 marks for each task) 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 800–1,000 words in length plus a rationale of 200–300 words.</p>	<p>70%</p> <p>25%</p> <p>25%</p> <p>20%</p>
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