

978-1-108-70496-0 — English A: Language and Literature for the IB Diploma Exam Preparation and Practice with Digital Access (2 Year)

Nic Amy , David James , David McIntyre

Excerpt

More Information

Introduction

In this section you will:

- · learn about the features in this book and how to use them
- gain an overview of the English A: Language and Literature course
- become familiar with the aims and assessment objectives for the course
- find out the format and requirements for the different course assessments
- find guidance on how to use the learner portfolio effectively
- learn how the literary works and non-literary texts you will study in your course are selected
- become familiar with the key command terms for your study of language and literature.



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How to use this book

Paper 1

A 'Getting started' task will engage you with the theme of the unit and uncover what you already know



In this section you will explore a variety of different text types

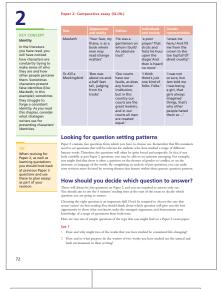
Paper 2

Clear learning objectives for each section



The assessment and evaluation criteria are clearly summarised for each component

You will be encouraged to evaluate sample student responses

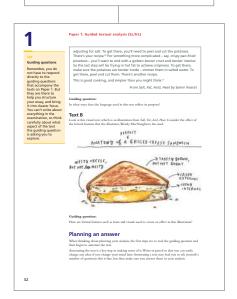


This section refers to the seven key concepts



You will be asked to assign sample responses with a grade

Texts cover a range of international contexts



You will write and assess your own draft responses



You will develop your editing and redrafting skills

2



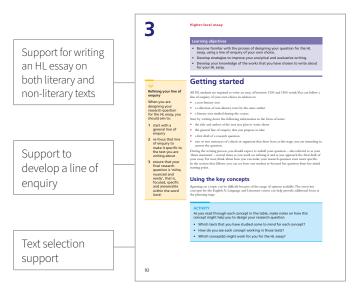
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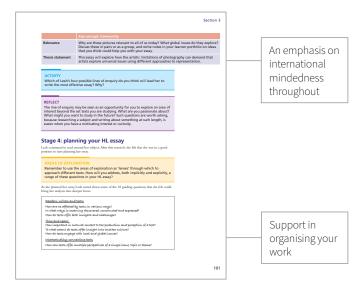
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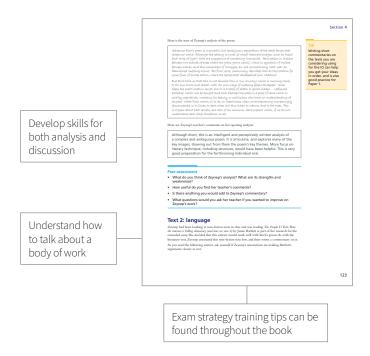
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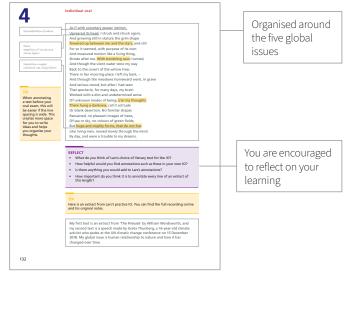
Higher-level essay





Individual oral







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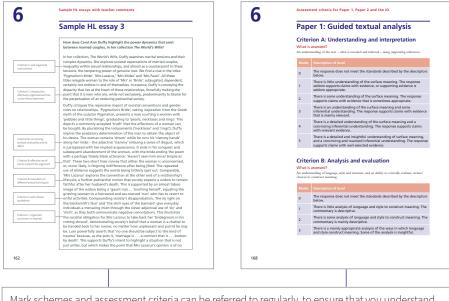
Practice papers

Two practice papers to help you prepare for the exam





Sample HL essays and assessment criteria



Mark schemes and assessment criteria can be referred to regularly, to ensure that you understand the required standard



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Introduction to the English A: Language and Literature course

IB English A: Language and Literature – syllabus overview

This book will help you prepare and practise for your IB English A: Language and Literature examinations. The different assessment components will test what you have learnt and understood during the course. In preparing for these examinations, it is therefore essential to understand what you will learn during your course of study. Think of the assessment as the end point of your learning – an important part of your course, rather than something separate from it.

This introductory section will outline what you will be studying and learning during your course.

How your course is structured

Your course will involve equal study of both literature and language texts. At times, you may want to separate your study of literary works and language texts. At other times, and perhaps more frequently, it may be more interesting and productive to think about both literary works and language texts as examples of 'language in use', where language can be thought of as both practical and aesthetic, often at the same time.

Language is a principal vehicle for human communication. In important ways, it both reflects and shapes how we experience the world. That makes it so interesting and valuable to study! Studying language and literature becomes the study of a significant aspect of human existence. During your course, you will:

- critically consider language texts and literary works
- be encouraged to develop and motivate your own understanding of language and literature
- have your perspective challenged by considering alternative viewpoints
- read closely and for detail, considering the different ways that writers' choices, text types, literary forms and context influence meaning
- learn that texts and literary works do not speak for themselves, but rather can be understood in a variety of ways.

In addition to analysing language and literature, including texts that may contain audio and visual elements, you will be asked to write and produce your own texts. This creative work will, in turn, help you understand the imaginative work of others.

The course sets out to teach ideas such as these, and assesses your understanding and skills of this nature. As you approach your study and examinations, it is helpful to bear in mind the close relationship between what is taught and what is assessed.

This book is intended to supplement your classroom study, and to guide you towards success in examinations through support and activities that develop your skills and understanding. While the book can help you to enhance your potential to do well in examinations, it is not an alternative to the focused and sustained study that your course requires!



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Course requirements

Literary works

Some parts of your course involve the study of language, some the study of literature, and some the study of both at the same time. The examinations reflect this: some assess your understanding of *either* language *or* literature, and others your understanding of both language *and* literature. As you develop your understanding of the course and its assessment, it is important to remember whether you are being assessed on your understanding of literary works, non-literary texts or both.

You will study a wide range of literary works, and your understanding of these will be assessed both during and at the end of your course. Your teacher will choose the literary works you study, and these choices must adhere to the IB regulations. Your teacher may involve you in this choice. While IB regulations allow flexibility of choice, they ensure that all students study a variety of literary forms from different places and times. The number of literary works you study will depend on whether you are a higher-level (HL) or a standard-level (SL) student.

- HL students will study *six* literary works. At least *two* of these will be in translation (i.e. translated from a language other than English).
- SL students will study *four* literary works. At least *one* of these will be in translation (i.e. translated from a language other than English).

The literary forms you will study in your course will be taken from the following:

- prose: fiction (e.g. novels)
- prose: non-fiction (e.g. travel writing)
- drama
- poetry.

Non-literary texts

The course gives equal weight to the study of language and literature. Half of your study will focus on the study of literary works, and the other half will focus on the study of non-literary texts. The kinds of non-literary text you study will be very wide-ranging, and may include:

- blogs
- electronic texts
- reports
- photographs
- magazine articles.

In the same way that your literary works will be chosen to represent different places, times and voices, non-literary texts will be chosen to represent diversity through time and space.

At times, a literary work can be very different from a non-literary text, in terms of language, form and function. At other times, these differences may be much less obvious, and it may become challenging to differentiate between the literary and the non-literary. However, you should see this challenge as a positive one: remember that literary and non-literary texts often share much in common – this can help you as you approach your examinations. For example, novels are normally regarded as literary works, while newspaper stories are not. However, newspaper stories may contain language features that are frequently regarded as literary. Remember that the distinction between literary and non-literary texts is not absolute; this will help you find coherence in your studies and build all the skills needed for success in your course.



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In some cases, you will study 'discrete' non-literary texts, or texts that are part of a wider 'body of work'. If, for example, you study one photograph, this is an example of 'discrete' study: by contrast, if you study 15 photographs taken by the *same* photographer, this is an example of a 'body of work'. In both cases, your study of non-literary texts is intended to increase your understanding of the different ways that texts establish meaning and effect.

It is important to remember that only those texts studied as part of a wider 'body of work' may be used for the individual oral (IO) examination and, for some students, the higher-level (HL) essay.

How your course is organised

There is no single way for teachers to organise your course of study. Teachers will organise courses differently, including the selection of literary works and non-literary texts, depending on a variety of factors that reflect the student population, and the social and cultural circumstances of your school. Teachers are given a good degree of freedom to construct interesting and engaging courses, but they must also adhere to IB regulations. They are guided by the five key organising principles (areas of exploration, concepts, theory of knowledge, approaches to learning, and accountability) discussed in the rest of this subsection.

Areas of exploration

There are three areas of exploration:

- readers, writers, texts
- time and space
- intertextuality connecting texts.

Teachers can decide how to build these areas of exploration into your course of study. Broadly speaking, the areas of exploration should inform the teaching of all the texts that you study, whether literary or non-literary, and each area of exploration should be given equal attention in your course as a whole. At times, your teacher may focus on one area of exploration and give less attention to the others.

It is important to understand that these areas of exploration are not directly assessed. However, they do provide you with a useful 'thinking tool' around which you can develop your ideas, expand your understanding and make connections across your course.

What does each area of exploration mean?

Readers, writers, texts

This area of exploration emphasises the *textual*. It involves the close study of language and structure, including the choices that writers make.

Time and space

This area of exploration emphasises the *contextual*. Writers and readers are influenced by the time and place in which they write or read, and contextual factors include the social, cultural, economic, political and personal circumstances that may influence the choices that writers (and publishers) make, and the ways in which texts are read and understood.



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Intertextuality - connecting texts

This final area of exploration emphasises the *intertextual*; that is, the relationships that exist between literary works or texts. For example, it is possible to read and enjoy Jean Rhys's novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) without further knowledge of its writing and production history. However, if you also know that Rhys's novel builds on an earlier novel – Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) – in effect, critically responding to, or 'writing back' to, Brontë's novel, your understanding and appreciation of Rhys's novel is enhanced.

Concepts

As in other IB courses you will study, and like the 'areas of exploration', concepts work as an organising tool for your study of language and literature. Seven concepts inform the structure and organisation of this course. These are:

- identity
- culture
- creativity
- communication
- perspective
- transformation
- representation.

The concepts interact with the areas of exploration. At different times, the concepts will 'run through' the areas of exploration, providing a further tool with which to think about your study of literary works and non-literary texts. Like the areas of exploration, concepts are not directly assessed. Again, however, you should regard concepts as powerful cognitive tools to enhance your understanding of works and texts.

Concepts are an aspect of other IB courses, and working with concepts will therefore help you make interdisciplinary connections between the English A: Language and Literature course and other IB subjects, studies in the IB core and the wider world. How you work with concepts will depend on your teacher and your school. Some teachers will choose to use the concepts to construct enquiry-type questions, to help scaffold your study.

Theory of knowledge (TOK)

At different times during the English A: Language and Literature course, you, your teacher, or your fellow students will make, or be encouraged to make, connections to TOK. It may be tempting to see such connections as interesting but nothing to do with assessment. However, the opposite is true: TOK helps you develop skills of critical and lateral thinking. This is not *explicitly* measured in the assessment criteria. However, it is measured *implicitly*. Students who demonstrate critical thinking will be rewarded for this in examinations. For example, in language and literature, this might be demonstrated by an ability to read a text from different perspectives.

As in other subjects, language and literature provides examples of more general concerns that are relevant to assessment in TOK.



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Approaches to learning (ATL)

Schools and teachers will differ in how they promote and support the development of ATL skills. ATL skills include communication, self-management and research skills. The development of such skills is lifelong, and your ability to demonstrate these skills is important to citizenship and academic success. You will need to manage your time purposefully, and to express your ideas clearly, succinctly and in an appropriate academic register.

As you move through your course, it will be helpful to reflect on how you are managing your independent study, and how your different linguistic skills are developing. If, for example, you find it difficult to keep pace with your studies or you find it challenging to express your ideas in writing, you should consider why this is and, in discussion with your teacher, put in place a plan to make improvements.

Accountability

Teachers of English A: Language and Literature will offer you, to a greater or lesser extent, freedom to make choices. As discussed under the ATL heading above, one important choice you must make is how you manage your studies and time. A further aspect of this is *academic honesty*. This includes a range of things. For example, your teacher will alert you if the course does not allow you to use the same literary work in two assessment components. Also, academic honesty means that you must produce your own independent work, and that you must not plagiarise by claiming that the work of others is your own.

Issues around academic honesty can sometimes seem scary, but they need not be. If you work with honest intent and consult your teacher where you are in doubt, issues around academic honesty are nothing to be afraid of.



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Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

Syllabus aims

As a student, there is no requirement for you to have a detailed understanding of the course aims for English A: Language and Literature. However, having a broad sense of the aims of the course can help you understand, and put into context, what you are learning and why you are learning it.

The course has eight aims. You will:

- study a wide range of literary works, non-literary texts and other media (e.g. moving film, audio, visual texts, etc.), which will come from a variety of times, places and cultures
- 2 develop productive and receptive skills, including writing, reading, speaking, listening, viewing, presenting and performing
- 3 develop skills that enable you to analyse and critically evaluate a wide range of text types
- 4 develop an understanding of the formal and aesthetic qualities of texts, showing appreciation of how they may be understood in a variety of ways
- 5 develop an understanding of texts and their relationship to cultural contexts, and local and global issues
- 6 develop an understanding of the relationship between language and literature and the other academic disciplines you are studying
- 7 develop an ability to collaborate confidently and creatively with others
- 8 develop an interest in and enjoyment of language and literature that you will carry over the course of your life.

Assessment objectives

As with the course aims, it is not expected that you will have a detailed knowledge of the assessment objectives. However, the better you understand what you will be assessed on, and why and how you will be assessed, the higher your chances of success in your examinations.

The examinations that you will take are informed by key assessment objectives, and these objectives form the basis for the marking criteria in all assessment components. There are three assessment objectives:

1 Knowledge, understanding and interpretation

In working with a range of texts, this objective requires you to demonstrate an understanding of:

- how meaning is produced and received
- the ways in which context influences how meaning is produced and received.

2 Analysis and evaluation

In working with a range of texts, this objective involves an ability to demonstrate how language and style contribute to meaning. You will critically engage with texts to show an appreciation of the relationships within and between texts. This objective also requires you to show how language and literature comment more broadly on human concerns.

3 Communication

This objective is about how you express your ideas. Most often, communication will be in formal academic contexts, and involve an ability to express your ideas clearly, accurately and appropriately in both speaking and writing.