



Clarifications for the groups 1 and 2 courses

First examinations 2013

Introduction

The aim of this document is to help teachers interpret the Diploma Programme subject guides and associated documents for groups 1 and 2 with greater confidence. This document should be read and used alongside the subject-specific guides and the lists of authors to assist teachers in course planning and preparation.

Language A: literature

General clarifications

Authors are listed in the prescribed list of authors (PLA) by genre; only works in the genres listed for a particular author may be selected for study. For example:

- In the English PLA, William Shakespeare is listed on both the drama and the poetry lists. Either Shakespeare's poetry or his drama works may therefore be chosen for study in parts 2 or 3.
- Edgar Allan Poe is listed under prose: novel and short story. Therefore, his poetry may not be selected for study in parts 2 or 3.

Part I and written assignments

Interactive oral and reflective statement

All students should take part in at least one 30-minute (minimum) interactive oral related to **each** of the part 1 texts. All students should also complete a reflective statement in relation to each of the interactive orals. This means that:

- SL students will have completed at least two interactive orals and written at least two reflective statements
- HL students will have completed at least three interactive orals and will have written at least three reflective statements.

Supervised writing

All students must complete a supervised writing task in relation to each work studied for part 1. This should be undertaken after studying the work and completing the interactive oral and the reflective statement.

Teachers must provide prompts for the students to stimulate their critical thinking about the text. Teachers should use one set of prompts for all students. However, if SL and HL students are taught together, teachers may provide differentiated SL and HL prompts. Teachers **must not** give the prompts to students before the supervised writing period begins.

Written assignment

Students should have studied all the works set for part 1, and should have completed all the supervised writing tasks **before** beginning their final written assignments. It is not essential for all the part 1 texts studied to be represented in the final written assignments.

It is not essential that the student's final written assignment topic be directly related to their supervised writing. If, however, it is very different teachers must ensure their students are able to account for this. Teachers are expected to ensure that no malpractice takes place.

Students may refer to secondary sources in their written assignments if they wish. Teachers should train their students in the use of a suitable referencing system so they are able to present their work appropriately.

Part 4 and the individual oral presentation

Choosing the works

Part 4 represents a chance for the teacher to choose the works to be studied freely. The three options presented in the subject guide are intended to guide and inspire teachers, not to restrict them—they are perhaps better thought of as examples.

In contrast to parts 1, 2 and 3, teachers are free when choosing works for part 4 to compile anthologies of shorter texts by various writers, for example, a collection of war poetry.

When selecting texts for study in part 4, teachers may, if they wish, include a screenplay or other script in their course. There are rare occasions when film can be used as a discrete text, but it would always be in a way that acknowledges its link to a literary text before moving into primary analysis of the film text. For example, a study of *Apocalypse Now* would ideally begin by acknowledging its limited relationship to *Heart of Darkness* before focusing on the film script. However, in all cases, teachers must ensure that there is an actual text to study, and that it represents a sufficient literary challenge to the students.

Choosing presentation topics

Students may base their individual oral presentation on more than one of the texts studied in part 4 if they wish. However, they should be careful not to overload the presentation.

Paper 1

At SL, students are presented with a choice of passages, one of which they will select for analysis. They are also required to clearly address both the questions presented with the passage. The format of their answer, however, must be a continuous piece of writing rather than two sections addressing the questions consecutively.

In the *Language A: literature guide* (February 2011), the list of possible genres available for paper 1 is not exhaustive. Drama texts may be selected for either standard or higher level examinations.

Language A: language and literature

General clarifications

Authors are listed in the prescribed list of authors (PLA) by genre. Only works in the genres listed for a particular author may be selected for study—except for the free choice text in part 3.

Context should be understood in the widest possible sense.

- It may include the social and/or historical setting of the work.
- It may include the context of a situation within the work.
- It will certainly include the contexts of production and reception of a work.

Paper 1

In the *Language A: language and literature guide* (February 2011), drama is not listed as an example of a possible genre selection for paper 1 at HL (although screenplay is). However, this list is not intended to be exhaustive, and drama texts may be selected for the higher level paper 1 examinations.

It is important for teachers to be aware that paper 1 visual texts for analysis will **not** be presented in colour. This may change in future; teachers will be informed if this decision is made.

Paper 2

Teachers should note that, although the structure of the paper 2 questions implicitly invites students to compare, comparison is not specified in any of the criterion descriptors. Therefore, it will neither be given specific credit nor penalized if it is absent.

Students should not base their paper 2 essay answers on sections of literary texts studied in parts 1 and 2 of the course. Paper 2 tests their understanding of part 3 only.

Written task

The single written task submitted for assessment at SL, and task 1 submitted for assessment at HL, may take the structure of multiple shorter texts (for example, two letters from one character to another, or showing two different points of view about a published article). The student should then show in the rationale how these two responses are unified.

Teachers are advised that task 2 submitted for assessment at HL (critical response) does **not** require a rationale. It requires an outline, as specified on page 43 of the guide. The statement on page 41 of the guide that each task “must be 800–1,000 words in length with an added rationale of 200–300 words” is incorrect in this respect. There is no word limit prescribed for the outline, but it must meet the criteria specified on page 43.

The 2 MB file limit specified on page 31 of the guide is for each task at HL. Students’ written task portfolios may therefore have a total size of 4 MB (tasks 1 and 2).

Teachers are advised that, when choosing texts or topics to study in parts 1 and 2, there is **no** requirement to focus exclusively on cultures or countries primarily associated with the language A being studied. However, teachers are reminded that students are engaged in the study of the chosen language A; therefore, texts associated with other languages and their cultures should be studied in translation, to ensure the focus on the chosen language A is maintained. In addition, texts in translation should **not** form the main focus of study in a topic.

Further oral activity

In the assessment criteria for the further oral activity, criterion B relates to the student’s “understanding of the way language is used to create meaning” and to the “appreciation of how language and style is used to particular effect in the text”. When marking the further oral activities, teachers should be aware that this criterion requires students to demonstrate their understanding of how language is used in the texts they have studied. Criterion B does **not** reward students’ own use of language—this is rewarded through criterion D.

Language A: literature and performance

Paper 1 and paper 2

Paper 1 is an open text examination; students may take a clean copy of the study texts with them into the examination room. However, teachers are reminded that paper 2 is **not** an open text examination; that is, students may not take copies of study texts with them into the examination room.

Prescribed list of authors/prescribed literature in translation list

On the prescribed literature in translation list (PLT), in the genres “Short story” and “Poetry”, some authors’ individual works are not specified. Teachers are free to compile their own collection of works by the writer in the specified genre.

Language B

General clarifications

Assessment stimuli such as written assignment source texts and individual oral photographs may be reused in subsequent assessment sessions at the teacher's discretion. However, care should be taken to ensure that there is no danger of students becoming familiar with the stimuli prior to the assessment.

Written assignment

When preparing their written assignments, students are permitted to use reference materials. For the purposes of language B, reference materials may be understood to include:

- dictionaries in printed form
- the subject guide published by the IB
- at HL, the literary text that is the focus of the written assignment.

No supplementary material specific to the topic being written about (beyond the supplied source material) is allowed.

Teachers are reminded that, after liaising with the student to select an appropriate subject, the teacher should not comment on or correct the assignment, which should be entirely the student's own. This means that teachers may not interfere with or redirect a student during the writing of the assignment.

At SL, the topic on which the written assignment will be based **must not** be divulged to students in advance.

Teachers should not materially edit written assignment source texts; cuts to overly long sources are acceptable, but teachers should not rewrite source texts. If source texts are cut, information pertaining to this editing should be given on the coversheet.

At HL, the literary source for the written assignment may be an entire work that has been read in class, or a fragment of this work.

Individual oral

Photographs used for the individual oral should be accompanied by a caption or title. The caption or title should quickly and directly guide the student to the area that is open for discussion/presentation. It should not direct the student to particular interpretations of the picture, nor limit the student's presentation in any way. Directives (for example, "Discuss this in relation to French-speaking cultures" or "Compare this to your own culture") should be avoided.

Language ab initio

Paper 2

All questions—both section A and section B—will be accompanied by a template for students to help them concentrate on the language and the message of their response.

Written assignment

It is strongly recommended (for academic, procedural and administrative reasons) that the assignment take place in **one** single session. Where possible, teachers are encouraged to have the date of the assignment printed in the school calendar at the beginning of the school year.

The success of the written assignment will depend on the choice not only of a suitable topic (reflecting the student's interests and strengths) but also on the choice of title once the topic has been decided upon.

Titles such as “The school systems of Germany and Argentina” are not helpful for this task and would generate very general and reductive writing. A title such as “A typical day in a school in Buenos Aires and my school in Hanover” would lend much more focus and provide a better opportunity for the student to achieve a higher mark.