IB Diploma Programme



Language A:
Language and Literature
Course Briefing

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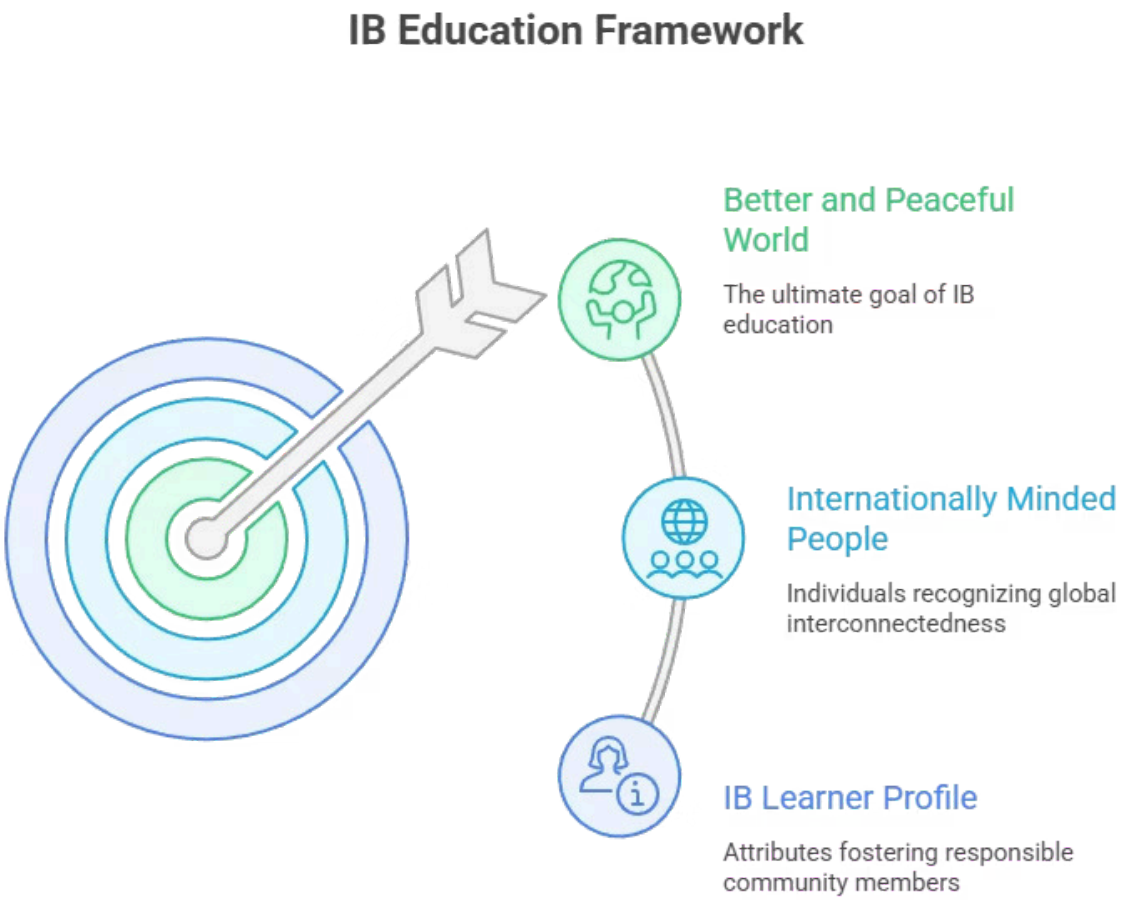
This briefing document provides a comprehensive overview of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) Language A: Language and Literature guide, first assessed in 2021. It highlights the core philosophy, program structure, key learning objectives, assessment components, and pedagogical approaches for this subject.

IB Mission and Learner Profile

> The overarching 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."

The IB Learner Profile outlines 10 attributes that are valued by IB World Schools, designed to help individuals become responsible members of local, national, and global communities. These attributes form the foundation of the educational philosophy that underpins all IB programmes.

Each attribute represents a crucial aspect of personal development, encouraging students to become well-rounded individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society whilst maintaining their own cultural identity and values.



The Ten Learner Profile Attributes

Inquirers

Nurturing curiosity and developing skills for inquiry and research.

Knowledgeable

Developing conceptual understanding across disciplines and engaging with issues of local and global significance.

Thinkers

Using critical and creative thinking skills to analyse complex problems and make ethical decisions.

Communicators

Expressing oneself confidently and creatively, and collaborating effectively.

Principled

Acting with integrity, honesty, fairness, justice, and respect for dignity and rights.

Open-minded

Critically appreciating one's own cultures and histories, and being open to diverse points of view.

Caring

Showing empathy, compassion, and respect, and acting to make a positive difference.

Balanced

Understanding the importance of intellectual, physical, and emotional well-being.

Reflective

Thoughtfully considering the world and one's own ideas, working to understand strengths and weaknesses.

Risk-takers

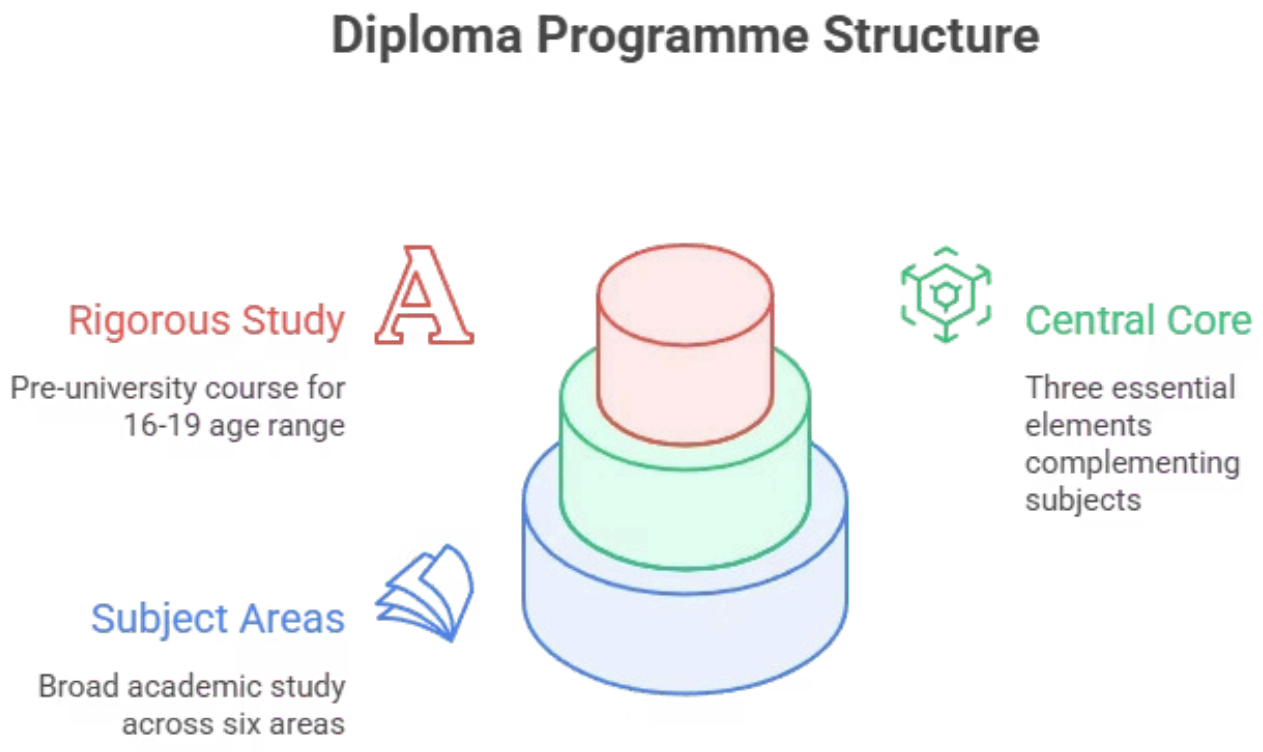
Approaching uncertainty with forethought and determination, exploring new ideas and strategies.

The Diploma Programme Model

The DP is a "rigorous pre-university course of study designed for students in the 16 to 19 age range." It encourages a broad range of academic study across six subject areas, complemented by a central core comprising three essential elements.

This comprehensive approach ensures that students develop not only subject-specific knowledge but also the skills and perspectives necessary for success in higher education and beyond. The programme's structure reflects the IB's commitment to developing well-rounded, internationally-minded individuals.

> The central core elements are mandatory for all DP students and serve to distinguish the IB Diploma from other pre-university qualifications.



The Central Core Elements

01

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

A course focused on "critical thinking and inquiry into the process of knowing," examining "the nature of knowledge and how we know what we claim to know."

It emphasises connections between shared and personal knowledge and awareness of diverse perspectives.

02

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

At the heart of the DP, CAS allows students to embody the IB learner profile through "real and practical ways," fostering individual growth and recognising their role in relation to others.

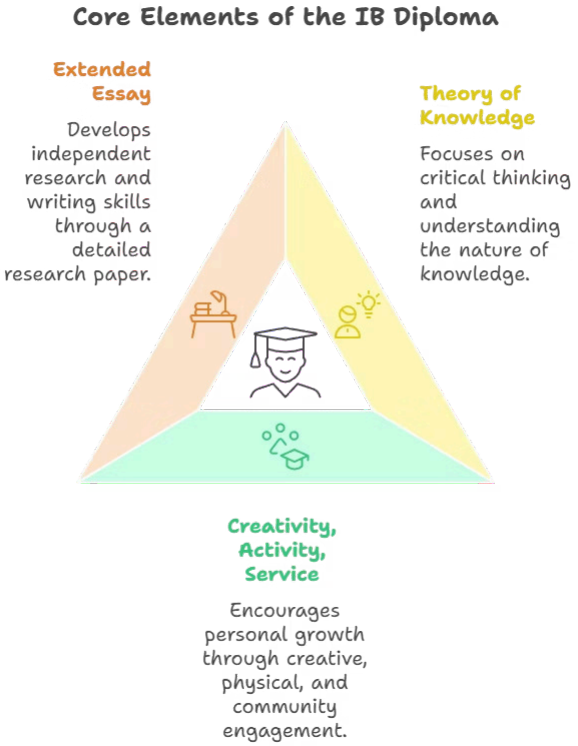
- **Creativity:** "exploring and extending ideas"
- **Activity:** "physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle"
- **Service:** "collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need"

03

Extended Essay

A 4,000-word independent research paper on a topic of special interest, chosen from one or two DP subjects.

It aims to develop "independent research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity."



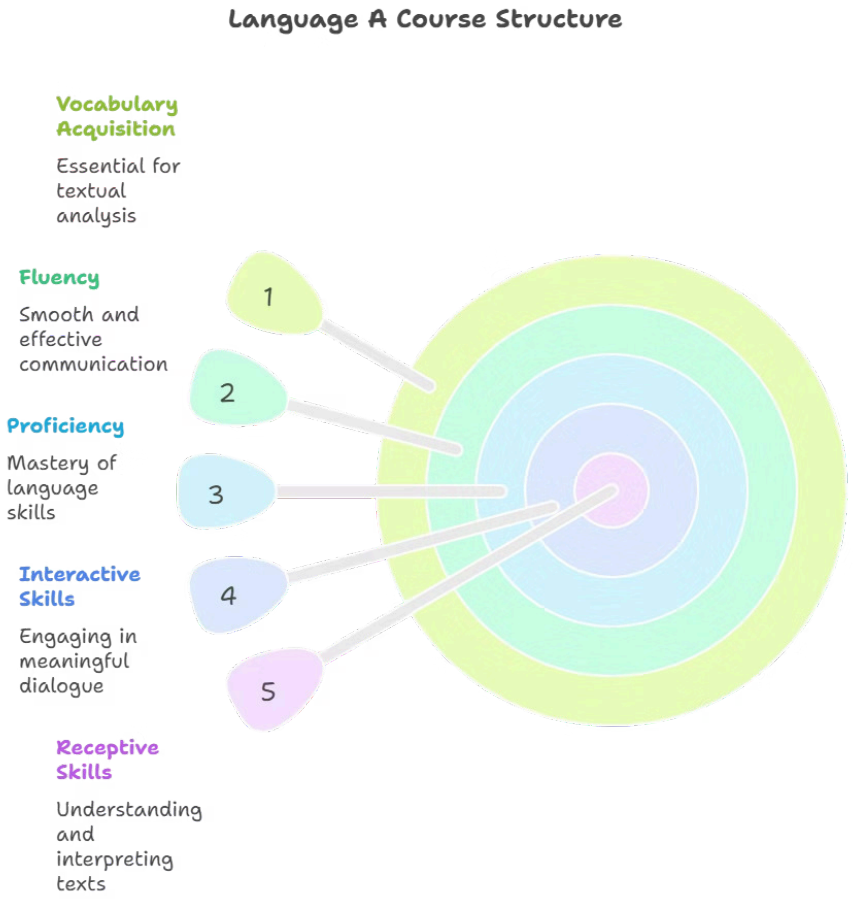
Language A: Language and Literature - Nature of the Subject

The Language A: Language and Literature course is designed for students with strong receptive, productive, and interactive language skills, aiming to consolidate and deepen them. It focuses on developing proficiency, fluency, and linguistic range, particularly in acquiring vocabulary for textual analysis.

This course represents a sophisticated approach to language study that goes beyond traditional literature courses. Students engage with texts not merely as aesthetic objects, but as complex cultural artefacts that both reflect and shape the societies in which they are produced and consumed.

The emphasis on both literary and non-literary texts ensures that students develop a comprehensive understanding of how language functions across different contexts and media.

> The course requires students to have strong foundational language skills, as it builds upon existing competencies rather than developing basic language proficiency.



Core Focus of the Course

> The course examines "a wide range of literary and non-literary texts in a variety of media." Students "investigate the nature of language itself and the ways in which it shapes and is influenced by identity and culture."

Approaches to study are wide-ranging, incorporating diverse theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches that reflect the interdisciplinary nature of contemporary language and literature studies.

Literary Theory

Students engage with various theoretical approaches to understanding texts, from formalist to post-colonial perspectives.

Sociolinguistics

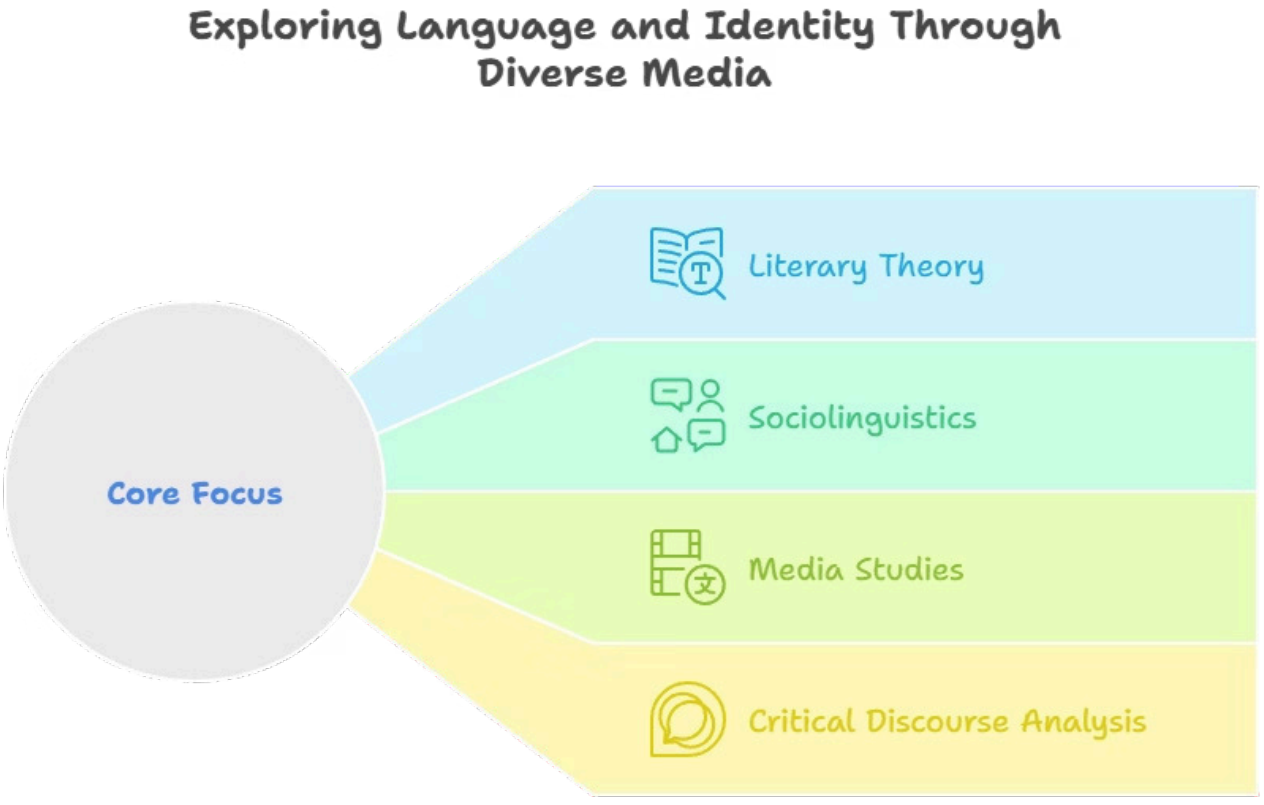
Examination of how language varies and changes in social contexts, and how it reflects and constructs social identities.

Media Studies

Analysis of how meaning is constructed and communicated through various media forms and technologies.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Investigation of how language is used to construct and maintain power relations in society.



Definition of "Text"

In this subject, "Text" is broadly defined as "anything from which information can be extracted," encompassing a wide range of oral, written, and visual materials.

Visual Materials

Single and multiple images (with or without text)

Written Texts

Literary and non-literary written texts and extracts

Media Texts

Films, radio/TV programmes and scripts

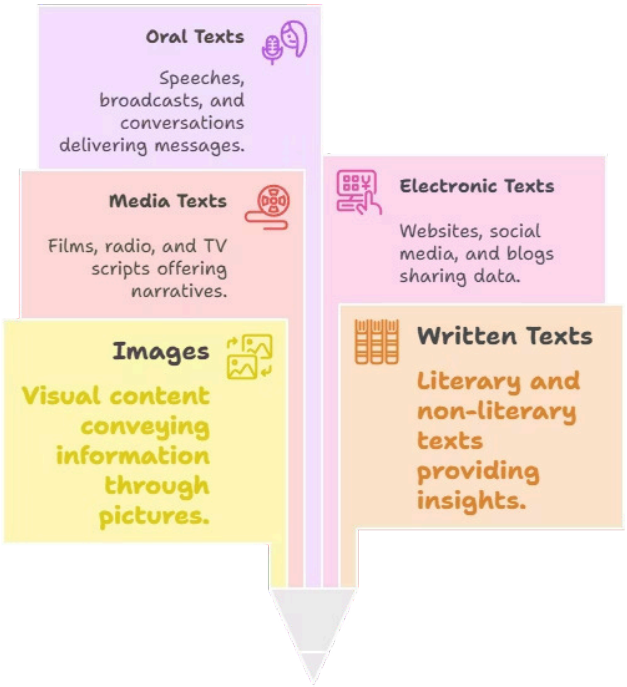
Electronic Texts

Websites, social media, blogs, wikis, tweets

Oral Texts

Readings, speeches, broadcasts, recorded conversations

This expansive definition reflects the contemporary understanding that meaning-making occurs across multiple modes and media, requiring students to develop sophisticated analytical skills that can be applied to diverse textual forms.



Key Distinctions and Requirements

Literary vs. Non-Literary Texts

The course explicitly categorises text types, and for certain ambiguous types (e.g., autobiography, essay, speech), the decision depends on whether the author is on the Prescribed Reading List, recognised as a literary writer, or if the text has a clear aesthetic purpose.

Standard Level vs. Higher Level

Standard Level (SL)

- Study of 4 literary works minimum
- Paper 1: One guided analysis
- Assessment weighting: External 70%, Internal 30%

Higher Level (HL)

- Study of 6 literary works minimum
- Paper 1: Two guided analyses
- Additional HL essay component
- Assessment weighting: External 80%, Internal 20%

⚠ The HL essay is a 1,200-1,500 word coursework task exploring a line of inquiry on a studied non-literary body of work or literary work.

Reading Requirements

Level	Standard Level (SL)	Higher Level (HL)
Literary Works	Minimum 4 works	Minimum 6 works
Original Language	At least 1	At least 2
Translated	At least 1	At least 2
Free Choice	2 works	2 works
Literary Forms	Must cover 2	Must cover 3
Time Periods	Must cover 2	Must cover 3
Continents	Must cover 2	Must cover 2

Equal time should be devoted to literary works and non-literary texts within each area of exploration.
Authors cannot be studied twice within the course or if already studied in other IB language courses.

Areas of Exploration

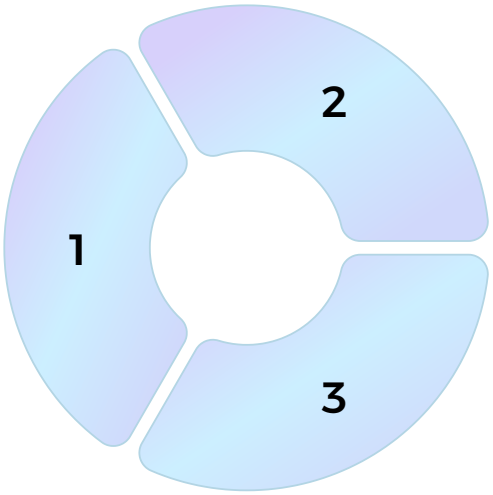
The syllabus is structured around three overlapping areas of exploration, designed to foster conceptual learning and critical engagement with texts:

Readers, writers and texts

Focuses on the "nature of language and literature and its study," with close attention to textual details, authorial choices, and the role of receivers in generating meaning.

Guiding questions:

- "How are we affected by texts in various ways?"
- "How does the structure or style of a text affect meaning?"



Time and space

Explores how language is "intertwined with community, culture and history," examining texts within their cultural and historical contexts.

Guiding questions:

- "How important is cultural or historical context to the production and reception of a text?"
- "How does the meaning and impact of a text change over time?"

Intertextuality: connecting texts

Focuses on "connections between and among media, text and audience involving diverse traditions and ideas."

Guiding questions:

- "How do texts adhere to and deviate from conventions?"
- "How can texts offer multiple perspectives of a single issue?"

Seven Central Concepts

Seven concepts are central to the teaching and learning of these courses, providing "powerful organising ideas" and promoting "conceptual learning":

Identity

Explores the relationship between author, voices, characters, and reader's identity in textual interpretation.

Culture

Examines how texts relate to their context of production and reception, values, beliefs, and literary traditions.

Creativity

Analyses the role of imagination in writing and reading, and the generation of multiple meanings beyond established interpretations.

Communication

Focuses on the relationship between writer and reader via a text, considering authorial choices and audience assumptions.

Perspective

Investigates the multiplicity of perspectives within a text and those brought by readers.

Transformation

Explores how texts refer to, appropriate, and transform elements from each other.

Representation

Addresses how language and literature relate to reality and how "form and structure interact with, and relate to, meaning."

Assessment Objectives and Components

The course aims to develop students' abilities across three key areas:

1

Know, understand and interpret

Texts, their meanings, implications, contexts, craft elements, and text features.

2

Analyse and evaluate

Language use, techniques, relationships between texts, and perspectives on human concerns.

3

Communicate

Ideas clearly, logically, persuasively, in varied styles and registers, and (for Literature and Performance) through performance.

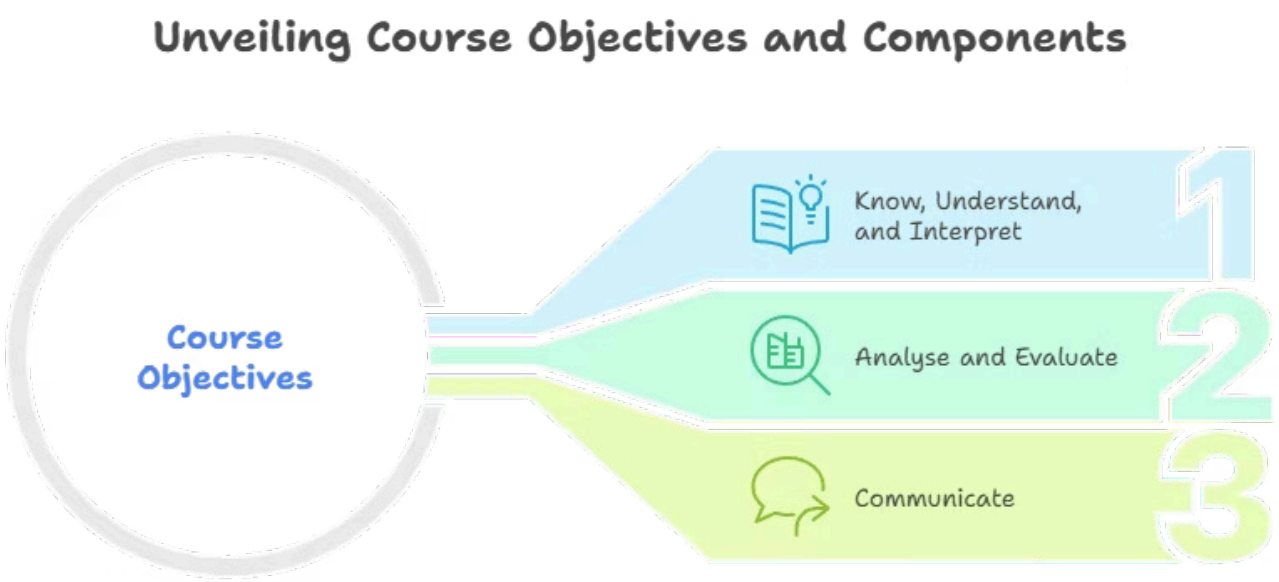
Assessment Structure Overview

Standard Level

- **External Assessment:** 70%
- **Internal Assessment:** 30%

Higher Level

- **External Assessment:** 80%
- **Internal Assessment:** 20%



External Assessment Components

Paper 1: Guided Textual Analysis

Standard Level

- **Duration:** 1 hour 15 minutes
- **Weighting:** 35%
- **Task:** Analyse one previously unseen non-literary passage

Higher Level

- **Duration:** 2 hours 15 minutes
- **Weighting:** 35%
- **Task:** Analyse two previously unseen non-literary passages

Assessment Criteria: Understanding, analysis/evaluation of textual features and authorial choices, focus/organisation, and language.

Paper 2: Comparative Essay

Duration & Weighting

SL: 1 hour 45 minutes, 35%

HL: 1 hour 45 minutes, 25%

Task

Students write a comparative essay on two literary works studied, responding to one of four general questions.

Assessment

Knowledge/understanding/interpretation, analysis/evaluation of authorial choices, focus/organisation, and language.

HL Essay (Higher Level Only)

Weighting: 20% | **Word Count:** 1,200-1,500 words

A formal essay exploring a student-chosen line of inquiry in connection with a non-literary body of work or a literary work studied in the course. Requires independent research and demonstration of "deeper understanding of the nature of linguistic or literary study."

Internal Assessment: Individual Oral

01

Duration

Total: 15 minutes

- 10 minutes: Prepared student response
- 5 minutes: Teacher questions

02

Task Requirements

Students examine how a self-chosen "global issue" is presented through content and form in:

- One extract from a non-literary body of work
- One literary work studied in the course

03

Global Issue Criteria

A global issue must have:

- "significance on a wide/large scale"
- Be "transnational"
- Have "impact...felt in everyday local contexts"

Assessment Weighting: SL: 30% I HL: 20%

Assessment Criteria: Knowledge/understanding/interpretation, analysis/evaluation of authorial choices, focus/organisation, and language.

Approaches to Teaching

The course emphasises "Approaches to Teaching and Approaches to Learning" (ATL), which are deliberate strategies, skills, and attitudes linked with the learner profile attributes.

1

Inquiry-based

Students are "actively engaged in their own learning," nurturing curiosity, making connections, and constructing their own understandings.

2

Conceptually focused

Teaching through the seven central concepts helps students "build the capacity to engage with complex ideas" and move to higher-order thinking.

3

Contextualised

Connecting learning to "local and global contexts" helps students see relevance and develop international-mindedness.

4

Collaborative

Learning is a "social phenomenon," emphasising interaction between students and teachers, and negotiation of meaning within a community of readers.

5

Differentiated

Accommodating diverse learning styles and needs by designing varied activities and selecting accessible texts.

6

Informed by assessment

Using both formative and summative assessment to support and measure learning, providing feedback to inform instruction.

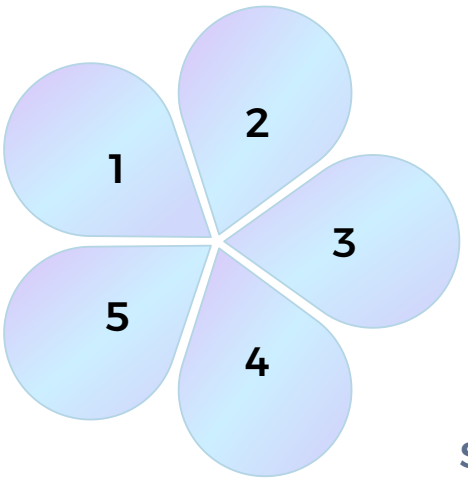
Approaches to Learning: Five Key Skill Areas

Thinking Skills

Developing metacognition, reflection, critical thinking, creative thinking, and transfer through authentic disciplinary problems.

Research Skills

Cultivating the ability to formulate research questions, appraise sources, and record, evaluate, and synthesise information ethically.



Communication Skills

Essential for expressing ideas, carrying out presentations, and engaging in effective interaction.

Social Skills

Fostering understanding of others' perspectives, building relationships, and appreciating cultural differences through respectful discussion.

Self-management Skills

Developing organisational skills, goal setting, time management, and affective skills like motivation and resilience.

These five skill areas work synergistically to develop students' capacity for independent learning and critical thinking, preparing them for success in higher education and beyond.

The Learner Portfolio

> The "learner portfolio is a central element" and "mandatory for all students."

It is an individual collection of student work that provides "evidence of the student's work and a reflection of their preparation for the assessment components."

Exploration and Reflection

Exploring and reflecting on literary and non-literary texts and their connections.

Personal Response

Reflecting on personal responses, assumptions, beliefs, and values.

Extended Learning

Documenting reading, research, and inquiry beyond the classroom.

Assessment Preparation

Preparing for assessment components, including making decisions about text choices and connections.

The portfolio serves as both a learning tool and a record of intellectual development throughout the course.

Academic Honesty and Conclusion

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is paramount, promoting "personal integrity, engender respect for the integrity of others and their work." All submitted coursework must be "authentic, based on the student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged."

Students are required to use a standard referencing style consistently throughout their work, ensuring that all sources are properly attributed and academic integrity is maintained.

Conclusion

> This document provides a foundational understanding of the IB Language A: Language and Literature course, emphasising its holistic approach to developing internationally-minded, critical, and communicative learners through the in-depth study of language and literature.

The course represents a sophisticated and comprehensive approach to language and literature education that prepares students not only for academic success but for engaged citizenship in an increasingly interconnected world. Through its emphasis on critical thinking, cultural awareness, and effective communication, the programme embodies the IB's mission to develop internationally-minded individuals who can contribute to creating a better and more peaceful world.

The integration of diverse texts, theoretical approaches, and assessment methods ensures that students develop the analytical skills, cultural competency, and intellectual flexibility necessary for success in higher education and beyond.