

Syllabus

Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Teaching hours	
	SL	HL
<p>Readers, writers and texts</p> <p>Works are chosen from a variety of literary forms. The study of the works could focus on the relationships between literary texts, readers and writers as well as the nature of literature and its study. This study includes the investigation of the response of readers and the ways in which literary texts generate meaning. The focus is on the development of personal and critical responses to the particulars of literary texts.</p>	50	80
<p>Time and space</p> <p>Works are chosen to reflect a range of historical and/or cultural perspectives. Their study focuses on the contexts of literary texts and the variety of ways literary texts might both reflect and shape society</p>	50	80

<p>at large. The focus is on the consideration of personal and cultural perspectives, the development of broader perspectives, and an awareness of the ways in which context is tied to meaning.</p>		
<p>Intertextuality: Connecting texts</p> <p>Works are chosen so as to provide students with an opportunity to extend their study and make fruitful comparisons. Their study focuses on intertextual relationships between literary texts with possibilities to explore various topics, thematic concerns, generic conventions, literary forms or literary traditions that have been introduced throughout the course. The focus is on the development of critical response grounded in an understanding of the complex relationships among literary texts.</p>	<p>50</p>	<p>80</p>
<p>Total teaching hours</p>	<p>150</p>	<p>240</p>

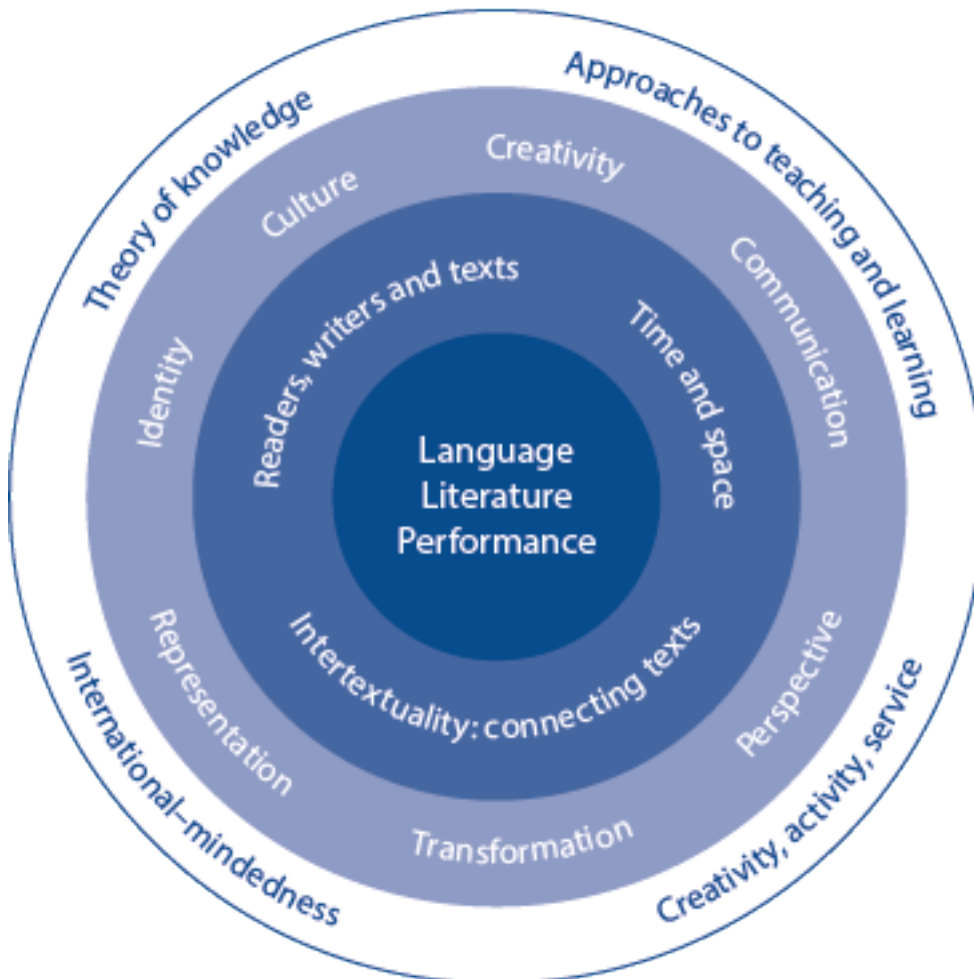
The number of hours indicated for each area of exploration is neither prescriptive nor restrictive as there is likely to be a great deal of overlapping across the areas in the study of a text. Careful planning of class activities is necessary to ensure a balance between the types of approaches to texts favoured by each of the areas.

The recommended teaching time is 240 hours to complete higher level (HL) courses and 150 hours to complete standard level (SL) courses as stated in the document *General regulations: Diploma Programme* (see article 8.2).

Syllabus content

The studies in language and literature model

Studies in language and literature courses are built on the notion of conceptual learning in which students engage with central concepts of the discipline to become flexible, critical readers of all types of texts. The model represents the relationship between the three courses in studies of language and literature, their main topics of study, their central concepts, and the way they relate to the principles at the core of the IB Diploma Programme (DP).



At the heart of the study of all three courses are the domains of language, literature and performance. Each course stresses these elements to a different degree, but all engage with them to some extent.

The study of language, literature and performance, as well as the development of the relevant skills, is divided into three areas of exploration—the exploration of the nature of the interactions between **readers, writers and texts**; the exploration of how texts interact with **time and space**; and the exploration of **intertextuality** and how texts connect with each other. Although these three areas seem to offer an ordered approach to progression through the course, they are, as represented in the diagram, inherently overlapping, iterative or circular and allow for flexibility in course design.

The entire pursuit of studies in language and literature is tied to core elements of the DP and to the overarching principles of IB learning, theory of knowledge (TOK), creativity, activity, service (CAS), the extended essay, the approaches to teaching and approaches to learning, and international-mindedness.

What students will learn in the language A: literature course

In the language A: literature course, students will learn about the various manifestations of literature as a powerful mode of writing across cultures and throughout history. They will explore and develop an understanding of factors that contribute to the production and reception of literature, such as:

- the creativity of writers and readers
- the nature of the interaction with the writers' and readers' respective contexts and with literary tradition
- the ways in which language can give rise to meaning and/or effect
- the performative and transformative potential of literary creation and response.

Through close analysis of literary texts in a number of forms and from different times and places, students will consider their own interpretations, as well as the critical perspectives of others. In turn, this will encourage the exploration of how viewpoints are shaped by cultural belief systems and how meanings are negotiated within them. Students will be involved in processes of critical response and creative production, which will help shape their awareness of how texts work to influence the reader and how readers open up the possibilities of texts. With its focus on literature, this course is particularly concerned with developing sensitivity to aesthetic uses of language and empowering students to consider the ways in which literature represents and constructs the world and social and cultural identities.

Course requirements

At standard level (SL), at least 9 works must be studied across the three areas of exploration while at higher level (HL), at least 13 works must be studied.

The IB has created an extensive *Prescribed reading list* of authors in a wide range of languages to accompany studies in language and literature courses. This searchable online list provides teachers

with a resource from which they will be able to select a group of authors that guarantees diversity and compliance with course requirements. Six authors have been suggested as a starting point in the exploration of the literature of each language. Teachers can decide whether to follow this recommendation or not.

In selecting works, teachers should attempt to achieve a balance between literary form, period and place, and endeavour to include a variety of forms the human and artistic experience can take.

SL students must study at least nine works of which:

- a minimum of four must be written originally in the language studied, by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- a minimum of three must be works in translation written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- two can be chosen freely—from the *Prescribed reading list* or elsewhere—and may be in translation.

There must be a minimum of two works studied for each area of exploration. Works must be selected to cover three literary forms, three periods and three countries or regions (as defined on the *Prescribed reading list*) in at least two continents.

HL students must study at least 13 works of which:

- a minimum of five must be written originally in the language studied, by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- a minimum of four must be works in translation written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- four can be chosen freely—from the *Prescribed reading list* or elsewhere—and may be in translation.

There must be a minimum of three works for each area of exploration. Works must be selected to cover the four literary forms, three periods and four countries or regions as defined on the *Prescribed reading list* in at least two continents.

A work is defined for studies in language and literature courses as one single major literary text, such as a novel, autobiography or biography; two or more shorter literary texts such as novellas; 5–10 short stories; 5–8 essays; 10–15 letters; or a substantial section or the whole of a long poem (at least 600 lines) or 15–20 shorter poems. Where more than one text is studied as part of a work, texts must be from the same author.

The ideas and skills introduced in each of the areas of exploration are integral to and embedded throughout the course, and there is a significant overlap. Teachers should take into account the type and range of works to be studied, the time required for each area of the course, the development of student skills, learning outcomes, performance work to be undertaken and assessment deadlines when making decisions regarding teaching sequence. More guidance on course construction models is provided in the *Language A teacher support material*.

Authors

One same author cannot be studied twice within a language A: literature course. Additionally, a language A: literature candidate may not study:

- an author that he or she may already be studying as part of another studies in language and literature course
- an author that he or she may already be studying as part of a language B course.

A language A: literature candidate may write his or her extended essay on an author studied as part of the course provided he or she chooses a different work by that author.

Literary forms

The *Prescribed reading list* includes four literary forms. At SL, three of the literary forms must be selected for the study of works. At HL, all four literary forms must be studied.

Period

The *Prescribed reading list* contains different periods, which classify authors according to the century/centuries in which they lived. The language A: literature syllabus as a whole must include works by authors from at least three different periods.

Place

The *Prescribed reading list* indicates the countries or regions with which authors are closely associated. The language A: literature syllabus at SL must include works by authors from at least three different countries or regions and must cover at least two continents. At HL, the syllabus must include works by authors from at least four different countries or regions and must cover at least two continents.

Areas of exploration

Readers, writers and texts

"Just as the reader participates in the production of the text's meaning so the text shapes the reader."

— *Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2005)*

This area of exploration introduces students to the nature of literature and its study. The investigation students will undertake involves close attention to the details of texts in a variety of literary forms to learn about the choices made by authors and the ways in which meaning is created. At the same time, study will focus on the role readers themselves play in generating meaning as students move from a personal response to an understanding and interpretation that is influenced by the community of readers of which they are a part. Their interaction with other readers will raise an awareness of the constructed and negotiated nature of meaning.

Students will learn to understand the aesthetic nature of literature and come to see that literary texts are powerful means to express individual thoughts and feelings, and that their own perspectives as experienced readers are integral to the effect of a literary text.

Study in this area should be structured to allow students to become more confident in their ability to recognize key textual features and how they create or affect meaning. Works can be chosen which lend themselves to close reading and give students a sense of elements across a variety of

literary forms. The aim is not to enumerate or define various features, but to study them beyond the identification of elements or the consideration of individual effects to see the complex constructed nature of literary texts. While conducting detailed study, learning activities can be structured to introduce students to the ways in which literary professionals attend to texts and their concerns. Student writing and response can involve moving back and forth between personal and academic response or between the creative and the expository.

The area of exploration of readers, writers and texts aims to introduce students to the skills and approaches required to closely examine literary texts as well as to introduce metacognitive awareness of the nature of the discipline by considering the following guiding conceptual questions.

- Why and how do we study literature?
- How are we affected by literary texts in various ways?
- In what ways is meaning constructed, negotiated, expressed and interpreted?
- How does language use vary among literary forms?
- How does the structure or style of a literary text affect meaning?
- How do literary texts offer insights and challenges?

Possible links to TOK

Links to TOK in this area revolve around the questions of what kind of knowledge can be constructed from a literary text, how that knowledge is constructed and the extent to which the meaning of a literary text can be considered fixed. Here are examples of links to TOK arising from this area of exploration:

- What do we learn about through literature? What role does literature fulfill? What is its purpose?
- In what ways is the kind of knowledge we gain from literature different from the kind we gain through the study of other disciplines? How certain can we be of the knowledge constructed through reading literary texts?
- How much of the knowledge we construct through reading a literary text is determined by the writer's intention, the reader's cultural assumption and by the purpose valued for the text in a community of readers?

- Are some interpretations of a literary text better than others? How are multiple interpretations best negotiated?
- What constitutes good evidence in explaining a response to literature?

Time and space

“The ultimate boundary of world literature is found in the interplay of works in a reader’s mind, reshaped anew whenever a reader picks up one book in place of another, begins to read, and is drawn irresistibly into a new world.”

— *David Damrosch (2009a)*

This area of exploration focuses on the idea that literary texts are neither created nor received in a vacuum. It explores the variety of cultural contexts in which literary texts are written and read across time and space as well as the ways literature itself—in its content—mirrors the world at large. Students will examine how cultural conditions can shape the production of a literary text, how a literary text can reflect or refract cultural conditions, and the ways culture and identity influence reception.

Students will investigate ways in which literary texts may represent and be understood from a variety of cultural and historical perspectives. Through their exploration, students will be able to recognize the role of relationships among text, self and other, and the ways in which the local and the global connect. These relationships are complex and dynamic. The background of an author and the make-up of an audience are not necessarily clear or easily described. Literary texts are situated in specific contexts and deal with or represent social, political and cultural concerns particular to a given time and place. For example, a work written to address the concerns of an author in contemporary society can be set in ancient times. Cultures that are geographically separated can share mores or ideas, while people living in proximity can embrace disparate traditions. Students will consider the intricacies of communication within such a complex societal framework and the implications that language and text take on when produced and read in shifting contexts.

Study and work selection in this area should allow students to explore texts and issues from a variety of places, cultures and/or times. The culture, biography of an author, historical events or narratives of critical reception will be considered and may be researched, but the focus of study will be on the ideas and issues raised by the literary texts themselves and a consideration of whether these are best understood in relation to an informed consideration of context. In this area of exploration,

students examine the ways in which a literary text may illuminate some aspect of the political or social environment, or the ways in which a more nuanced understanding of events may affect their understanding or interpretation of a literary text. The study of contexts does not imply a static, one-to-one relationship between a literary text and the world, but sees the former as a powerful “non-human actor” across time and space.

Time and space aims to broaden student understanding of the open, plural, or cosmopolitan nature of literary texts by considering the following guiding conceptual questions.

- How important is cultural or historical context to the production and reception of a literary text?
- How do we approach literary texts from different times and cultures to our own?
- To what extent do literary texts offer insight into another culture?
- How does the meaning and impact of a literary text change over time?
- How do literary texts reflect, represent or form a part of cultural practices?
- How does language represent social distinctions and identities?

Possible links to TOK

Links to TOK in this area are related to the questions of how far the context of production of a literary text influences or informs its meaning and the extent to which the knowledge a reader can obtain from a literary text is determined by the context of reception. Here are examples of links to TOK arising from this area of exploration:

- How far can a reader understand a literary text that was written in a context different from his or her own?
- To what extent is it necessary to share a writer’s outlook to be able to understand his or her work?
- What is lost in translation from one language to another?
- How might the approaches to a given time and place of a poet, a playwright or a novelist and a historian differ?
- Is the notion of a canon helpful in the study and understanding of literature? How does a canon get established? What factors influence its expansion or change over time?

Intertextuality: connecting texts

"Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations: any text is the absorption and transformation of another."

— *Julia Kristeva (1980)*

This area of exploration focuses on intertextual concerns or the connections between and among diverse literary texts, traditions, creators and ideas. It focuses on the comparative study of literary texts so that students may gain deeper appreciation of both unique characteristics of individual literary texts and complex systems of connection. Throughout the course, students will be able to see similarities and differences among literary texts. This area allows for a further exploration of literary concerns, examples, interpretations and readings by studying a grouping of works set by the teacher or set in close conversation with a class or groups of students. Students will gain an awareness of how texts can provide critical lenses to reading other texts and of how they can support a text's interpretation by expanding on it or question it by providing a different point of view.

Intertextuality: connecting texts can be approached in a variety of ways, such as through:

- the study of a group of works from the same literary form (for example, fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama)
- the study of sub-categories within that literary form (for example, the novel, comedy, the sonnet, the essay)
- an exploration of a topic as represented across literary texts (for example, power, heroism, gender)
- a study of the way different texts address one same concept (for example, representation, identity, culture)
- an analysis of how allusions by one literary text to another affect the meaning of both of them (for example, explicit intertextual references from an author to another author's work)
- a theoretical literary investigation (such as literary value or critical perspective).

This area of exploration aims to give students a sense of the ways in which literary texts exist in a system of relationships with other literary texts past and present. Students will further engage with literary traditions and new directions by considering the following guiding conceptual questions.

- How do literary texts adhere to and deviate from conventions associated with literary forms?
- How do conventions and systems of reference evolve over time?
- In what ways can diverse literary texts share points of similarity?
- How valid is the notion of a “classic” literary text?
- How can literary texts offer multiple perspectives of a single issue, topic or theme?
- In what ways can comparison and interpretation be transformative?

Possible links to TOK

Links to TOK in this area are related to the question of how the interaction of a literary text with other literary texts—brought about explicitly by the author or established by the reader in the act of reception—influences our perception of them and their meaning. Here are examples of links to TOK arising from this area of exploration:

- What kind of knowledge about a literary text and about literature do we gain when we compare and contrast literary texts?
- Does knowledge of conventions of form and literary techniques allow for a better and deeper understanding of a literary text?
- How are judgments made about the literary merit of a text? What makes a literary text better than others?
- Is the study of literature better approached by means of a temporal perspective (grouping texts according to when they were written) or by means of a thematic approach (grouping them according to the theme or concern they share)? What impact does each one of them have on knowledge of the discipline?
- How useful are classifications of literary texts according to form and period? How do they contribute to the understanding of literature and its history?

The learner portfolio

The learner portfolio is a central element of the language A: literature course and is mandatory for all students. It is an individual collection of student work compiled during the two years of the course.

The work carried out for the learner portfolio forms the basis of preparation for the assessment, although the portfolio itself will not be directly assessed or moderated by the IB. However, it is a fundamental element of the course, providing evidence of the student's work and a reflection of his or her preparation for the assessment components. Schools may be required to submit these learner portfolios in cases in which it is necessary to determine the authenticity of student's work in a component, to certify that the principles of academic honesty have been respected or to evaluate the implementation of the syllabus in a school.

The learner portfolio is a place for a student to explore and reflect on literary texts, as well as establish connections between them and with the areas of exploration and the central concepts in the subject. In the learner portfolio, students will be expected to reflect on their responses to the works being studied in the corresponding area of exploration. They will also be expected to establish connections between these works and previous ones they have read, and between their perspectives and values as readers and those of their peers. As they progress through the syllabus, it is expected that these connections will be drawn between works within and across areas of exploration, and that they will provide a foundation for the construction of broader knowledge about the transactions between texts, culture and identity.

The learner portfolio is also a space in which students can prepare for assessment. They will use the portfolio to make decisions about the most appropriate and productive connections between the works they have studied and the assessment components. It should be introduced at the beginning of the course and become increasingly important as students' progress and prepare for external and internal assessment.

The learner portfolio must consist of a diversity of formal and informal responses to the works studied, which may come in a range of critical and/or creative forms, and in different media. It is the student's own record of discovery and development throughout the course. It could be used to document:

- reflections related to the guiding conceptual questions of the course
- reflections on the assumptions, beliefs, and values that frame a response to texts
- explorations of texts and the insights they offer into social, global and real-world issues
- detailed evaluations and critical analyses of works, texts or extracts, which explore the potential meanings for language used in them

- reflections on the connections across a range of texts studied
- experiments with form, media and technology
- creative writing tasks for exploration of different literary forms and development of the student's personal responses to works
- reading, research and inquiry carried out beyond the classroom experience
- records of valued feedback received
- reports of classroom or group activities or discussions that explore the diverse values and perspectives negotiated and the process of negotiation in itself
- challenges faced and achievements
- selections of suitable extracts that could form the basis of the individual oral
- instances of self-assessment to evaluate the student's own progress.

Teachers are free to set and monitor guidelines for the learner portfolios, but students should be encouraged to shape them in ways that allow them to independently record their personal development. The type of portfolio the students keep—digital or non-digital, traditional or multimodal—will be dictated by individual learning preferences. Students should be allowed to explore different options freely.

It is expected that the work necessary to meet the requirements in all assessment components will have evolved and been drawn from the contents of the portfolio. To that effect, each student's portfolio should include at the end the "Works studied form" detailing the works that have been selected as part of the course and how they have been made to interact with the assessment components.

The "Assessment" section contains suggestions on how to make use of the learner portfolio in the preparation for each assessment component.

Examples of the kind of work that could be included in the portfolio are provided in the *Language A teacher support material*.

School-supported self-taught students

School-supported self-taught (SSST) students may study language A: literature at SL only. They will be expected to meet the same syllabus requirements as for taught SL students, but with the following exception: all works studied must be written by authors chosen from the *Prescribed reading list*.

The open nature of the language A: literature syllabus means SSST students must be given assistance with specific aspects of their studies. They must be assigned a tutor in their first and best language and a special class must be created including all SSST students in the cohort which is scheduled in their school timetable. These arrangements are necessary to equip SSST students with the information and skills they will need to select works for their booklist, and to help them decide which works to use for each of the assessment components.

Students will also need guidance in choosing a suitable global issue for the works selected for the internal assessment, in selecting the extracts from each of them and in organizing their individual oral.

A separate resource tailored to SSST students is available on the programme resource centre.

Development of linguistic skills

Students will use and develop the following linguistic skills at all levels in the three studies in language and literature courses.

Receptive skills

Students will understand and evaluate a wide range of works, attending to textual detail, applying knowledge of textual conventions and making informed interpretations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations. They will consider arguments, distinguishing the main points from relevant supporting details and explanations. They will use a variety of strategies to deduce meaning and move beyond the literal level to broader implications.

Productive skills

Students will present and develop their ideas and opinions on a variety of topics, orally and in writing. They will construct and support complex arguments with explanations and examples. They will experiment with form by carrying out, as part of their class activities, transformative and re-creative

activities either in writing or as performance. They will speak and write at length and with purpose in order to meet a wide range of communicative needs: describing, narrating, comparing, explaining, persuading and evaluating.

Interactive skills

Students will begin, maintain and close oral exchanges, displaying the ability to adjust style or emphasis; using a variety of strategies to maintain the flow of discussions; attending to diverse perspectives and opinions. They will take into account audience and purpose employing appropriate language, tone of voice, body language and gesture. They will also be able to interact with texts and maintain written conversation in various registers and on various platforms.

Conceptual understanding

The document *What is an IB education?* states: “IB programmes offer students access to a broad and balanced range of academic studies and learning experiences. They promote conceptual learning, focusing on powerful organizing ideas that are relevant across subject areas, and that help integrate learning and add coherence to the curriculum” (see the “Broad, balanced, conceptual and connected” section).

All DP language programme subject groups promote a vision of learning in which the development of language skills and conceptual understandings of language are complementary to each other, so that the total learning experience of the student is as robust as possible. Thus, DP students become more accomplished communicators in the languages they study when their abilities to read, write and speak about course content are reinforced and extended by an understanding of why and how people use language to communicate.

In particular, the approach to developing conceptual understandings of language in the DP languages programme is designed using the following guiding principles.

- DP students with experience of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) or the Middle Years Programme (MYP) are provided with frequent opportunities to develop further their conceptual understandings of language (PYP) or their understanding of the key and related concepts in the MYP language and literature and language acquisition courses.

- DP students are encouraged to apply what they already know about other languages and cultures —through formal study or personal experience—in order to enhance their overall learning process.
- DP students are encouraged to consider broad questions about language and culture as appropriate to their course of study in order to develop international-mindedness and increase self-awareness as inquirers in their own learning process.

Conceptual understanding in studies in language and literature courses

Concepts are vital in studies in language and literature courses since they help organize and guide the study of works across the three areas of exploration. The concepts interact with the three areas of exploration in numerous ways and contribute a sense of continuity in the transition from one area to the next. They also facilitate the process of establishing connections between texts, making it easier for students to identify different ways in which the works they study relate to one another. Although they are not explicitly assessed in any component, the concepts constitute an essential part of a student's investigation and should therefore be included in the discussion of each of the works studied.

The seven concepts that structure the teaching and learning of these courses have been selected because of the central position they occupy in the study of both language and literature. They foreground aspects of linguistic and literary study that have been the focus of attention and inquiry. Brief explanations of the seven concepts are provided. These explanations are not meant to be exhaustive, although they will serve as a guiding set of ideas for the course.

For ideas on how to approach these concepts through class activities, please consult the “Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning in studies in language and literature” section in this guide or the *Language A teacher support material*.

Identity

When reading texts, students will encounter and interact with a multiplicity of perspectives, voices and characters. It is usual when reading and interpreting a text to assume that the views are to some extent representative of the writer's identity. However, the relationship between an author and the different perspectives and voices they assume when they write is frequently complex, and this makes the concept of identity an elusive one. The figure that emerges from the reading of various texts by the same author adds to the complexity of the discussion. Conversely, the ways in which the identity

of a reader comes into play at the moment of reading a text are equally central to the analysis of the act of reading and interpretation.

Culture

The concept of culture is central to the study of language and literature. It raises the question of how a text relates to the context of its production and reception, and to the respective values, beliefs and attitudes prevalent in them. This concept also plays an important role with regard to the relationship that is established between an individual text and the writing tradition preceding it. The application of this concept to the study of a text should prompt reflection on the extent to which it is the product of a particular cultural and literary context and how it interacts with it.

Creativity

Creativity plays an important part in the experience of reading and writing. The concept is fundamental to analyse and understand the act of writing, and the role that imagination plays. When applied to the act of reading, creativity highlights the importance of the reader being able to engage in an imaginative interaction with a text, which generates a range of potential meanings from it, above and beyond established interpretations. Creativity is also related to the notion of originality and to the question of the extent to which it is important or desirable in the production and reception of a text.

Communication

The concept of communication revolves around the question of the relationship that is established between a writer and a reader by means of a text. The extent to which writers facilitate communication through their choices of style and structure may be an aspect to analyse in this exploration. The writer may also have a particular audience in mind, which may mean assumptions have been made about the reader's knowledge or views, making communication with some readers easier than with others. Alternatively, the amount of cooperation that a text demands from a reader for communication to take place, and the readiness of the reader to engage is also important as a topic for discussion. Even with cooperative readers, the meaning of a text is never univocal, which makes the concept of communication a particularly productive, and potentially problematic one in relation to both literary and non-literary texts.

Perspective

A text may offer a multiplicity of perspectives which may, or may not, reflect the views of its author. Readers have also their own perspectives, which they bring to their interaction with the text. This variety of perspectives impacts on the interpretation of a text and, therefore, deserves critical attention and discussion. The fact that the acts of reading and writing happen in a given time and place poses the additional question of how far the contexts of production and reception have influenced and even shaped those perspectives.

Transformation

The study of the connections among texts constitutes the focus of one of the three areas of exploration, namely intertextuality: connecting texts. The complex ways in which texts refer to one another, appropriate elements from each other and transform them to suit a different aesthetic or communicative purpose are evidence of the importance of transformation in the process of creating a text. Additionally, the act of reading is potentially transformative in itself, both for the text and the reader. Different readers may transform a text with their personal interpretation. The text, on the other hand, can have an impact on the reader, which potentially might lead to action and to the transformation of reality.

Representation

The way in which language and literature relate to reality has been the subject of much debate among linguists and literary theorists across time. Statements and manifestos by writers have made claims about this relationship, which range from affirming that literature should represent reality as accurately as possible to claiming art's absolute detachment and freedom from reality and any duty to represent it in the work of art. Irrespective of such a discussion, the concept is a central one to the subject in connection with the way in which form and structure interact with, and relate to, meaning.

Principles of course design

The language A: literature course allows teachers significant freedom in organizing and structuring their courses. The three areas of exploration focus on different approaches to the study of literary texts and do not establish any requirements about the literary forms to be studied. The requirements on the provenance of the works—whether they are studied in the original language they were written in or are studied in translation and whether authors are on the *Prescribed reading list* or freely chosen—

must be met throughout the course. There is no prescribed method of how they should be distributed across the areas of exploration.

Additionally, as the syllabus does not bind the areas of exploration to particular assessment components, there is room for individual decisions to be made by students about the works for each of their assessment tasks. The freedom to make course design decisions requires careful planning to guarantee that requirements are met throughout the teaching of the syllabus material.

The central principles of variety, integration, autonomy and accountability are aimed at providing guidance for teachers in structuring their courses and advising students how to make sensible and careful decisions.

Variety

Teachers must ensure that:

- the choice of works represents as wide a variety of literary forms, places, times and voices as possible
- the organization of the works into the three areas of exploration allows for sufficient opportunities in each area to connect, compare and contrast works written originally in the language studied with those studied in translation, works from different literary forms and from diverse times and places
- the works that are chosen represent a balance between canonical voices and newer, less traditional, voices (this is so that students are exposed to different conceptions of literature and have a sense of the current literary developments and of the theoretical constructs that accompany them)
- whenever possible, student involvement is encouraged in the selection of works, so that individual preferences can be considered and hopefully catered for.

Integration

The three areas of exploration should not be thought of as isolated compartments, but as complementary approaches in the study of the selected works. While each will propose a specific lens through which to explore a work, it is expected that teachers will take advantage of opportunities to

make consistent references to the immanent, the contextual and the comparative study of literature, and attempt to integrate them throughout the course.

The syllabus offers various ways of integrating the three areas of exploration.

- The learner portfolio is a space in which students will be expected to reflect on the works being studied in the corresponding area of exploration and establish connections between them and previous ones read. As they progress through the syllabus, it is to be expected that these connections will be drawn between works within and across areas of exploration.
- Assessment components like the individual oral or paper 2 will prompt students to elaborate on points of contact between works as they consider possible options to choose for these assessments. Teachers should encourage students to take advantage of the flexibility the syllabus allows and not to limit themselves in their choice of works to individual areas of exploration.
- The seven central concepts in studies in language and literature courses provide sustained lines of inquiry that run through the three areas of exploration.

Autonomy

For students to be able to make careful decisions about the choice of works to use for assessment components, they need to be encouraged to think of their learning in a more autonomous way. Teachers should foster this by initially ensuring students have access to information about course aims, syllabus requirements, assessment components and criteria as early as possible. Studies in language and literature courses require a high level of agency on the part of the students regarding the preparation of their work for the assessment components. For that to be successful, students must be made aware of what is expected of them in each area of exploration and for each assessment component.

It is also important that there should be ongoing assessment of the students' progress towards their goals. It is likely that students will elaborate and follow individual routes in their preparation for the assessment components. They will, however, require guidance on the part of the teacher with regard to the appropriateness of their choice of works, and the associated concept or global issue. Regular instances of self-assessment and peer-assessment will also help students carry out an evaluation of their progress towards the objectives the course sets for them.

Accountability

A prominent feature of the structure of studies in language and literature courses is the amount of freedom both teachers and students have to choose how to comply with syllabus requirements. The syllabus is not prescriptive and this means there is plenty of room for individual choice.

Both teachers and students should be aware that this flexibility does not imply leniency in relation to compliance with the requirements of the course. Teachers must make sure that:

- the requirements of the course are met by the whole class
- each student has a clearly laid-out plan for addressing the demands of all assessment components, which guarantees that all the necessary works will have been read and studied
- to the best of their knowledge, no work will be used for two different assessment components
- the principles of academic honesty are respected.

