



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level Higher 1 (2025)**

Literature in English (Syllabus 8832)

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AIMS

To develop in students:

1. the ability to critically analyse and evaluate literary texts
2. the ability to appreciate and make informed personal responses to literary texts
3. the ability to communicate ideas effectively and persuasively
4. the ability to negotiate complexities and ambiguities, being aware of diverse perspectives
5. an awareness of the relationship between texts and their cultural contexts
6. the ability to read texts independently
7. a love for reading literature.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Candidates should be able to:

1. make informed personal and critical responses to the texts and account for their responses
2. demonstrate how the literary context of the text informs their understanding of the text
3. critically analyse and evaluate ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings
4. clearly communicate the knowledge, understanding and insights appropriate to literary study.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

One compulsory written examination of 3 hrs duration will be set.

ASSESSMENT MODE

The Examination is open book: candidates will be allowed to bring copies of their set texts into the examination room.

(a) Materials that can be taken into the examination room

Only non-electronic original texts (original published editions) should be taken into the examination venue. Candidates are only allowed to bring one hardcopy of each approved text. No photocopies or texts downloaded from the internet are allowed. No other materials, including critical works or study notes of any kind, should be taken into the examination venue. The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

(b) Underlining and highlighting of texts

Only underlining, highlighting and the use of vertical lines are permitted. Nothing else should be written in the texts except the candidate's name. Separate pieces of paper such as sticky notes and tape flags are not allowed.

(c) Folding and flagging of pages

Pages can be flagged with paper clips or by folding the page corners. Page numbers can be highlighted, underlined, or marked out with vertical lines. Any other kind of folding or flagging of pages in texts (for example, use of sticky notes or tape flags) is not permitted.

QUESTION TYPES AND SPECIFICATIONS

The questions in the examination focus on two areas of skill – Response and Analysis.

(i) Response

This is the candidate's ability to respond to either an unseen text extract, or a passage from a set text. In doing so, candidates demonstrate the ability to analyse both the formal and stylistic features of the extract (Assessment Objectives **i** and **iii**). This skill is assessed in Sections A, B and C of the examination paper.

(ii) Analysis

This is the candidate's ability to write a critical analysis of the set texts they have studied. In doing so, candidates will demonstrate an ability to make an informed personal and critical response to the text as a whole (Assessment Objectives **i**, **ii** and **iii**). This skill is primarily assessed in Sections B and C of the examination paper.

All of these types of questions will also require the candidate to organise and present information, ideas and arguments clearly and effectively (Assessment Objective **iv**). Their grammar, punctuation, and spelling will also be taken into account.

PAPER 1: READING LITERATURE (3 hours)

Paper 1 is designed to give students broad exposure to literary study. The texts set will be texts of recognised importance and significance. Candidates will answer one question from each of the three Sections. All questions hold equal weight in the computing of marks for the paper (i.e. 33⅓% each).

Section A: Poetry

Two questions will be set, primarily focusing on response skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications'). Each question will require the candidate to respond to an unseen poem. At least one of the questions will feature a Singaporean poem. The candidate will answer **one** question.

Section B: Prose

In this section, the student will study **one** of the following prose texts:

Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein* (1831 text)
 F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*
 Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice*
 Kazuo Ishiguro: *An Artist of the Floating World*

Two questions will be set for each text, primarily focusing on analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications'). One question will be an essay question, the other will be a passage-based question. The candidate will answer **one** question on one text.

Section C: Drama

In this section, the student will study **one** of the following drama texts:

William Shakespeare: *Measure for Measure*
 George Bernard Shaw: *Saint Joan*
 Arthur Miller: *Playing for Time* (stage play version)
 Timberlake Wertenbaker: *Our Country's Good*

Two questions will be set for each text, primarily focusing on analysis skills (see ‘Question Types and Specifications’). One question will be an essay question, the other will be a passage-based question. The candidate will answer **one** question on one text.

Note to candidates: All the texts are set for the 2025 examination but only for CI3 and repeat JC2 school candidates.

AREAS OF STUDY

The study of Literature at H1 level should be seen as a process of critically examining texts. In addition to the study of inherent stylistic features of texts, students should also explore the specific contexts that led to the production of these texts, as well as how readers and audiences relate to the texts. Students should engage with texts at various cognitive and affective levels. As the study of Literature covers multiple aspects which may not always be easily demarcated, the following areas of study are broad indications of the ground that could be covered in the course of teaching Literature.

(i) Literary Features

These include:

- The definition of a genre, the individual form of the text and its stylistic features.
- Study of how these features are used by authors, and to what effect, in the various texts, seen and unseen, that the students encounter.

(ii) Text and Context

- An appreciation of how the texts studied relate to the contexts in which they were created, including social, cultural and historical contexts.
- Exploration of the ideologies and assumptions in the texts. A more informed interrogation of the text can be made when students are aware of the events and ideas that predominated during the period in which these texts were created.
- How texts relate to movements in artistic creation at a particular point in time. The study of literary forms is relevant here. For example, it is useful for students reading a sonnet written by a Romantic poet to have an understanding of the general features of the Romantic movement as well as knowledge of how the sonnet form has developed in Literature in English up to that point.

(iii) Language Use

- Proficiency in the use of the English language in both a functional and literary sense.
- Study of language use at the grammatical, lexical and structural levels.
- Examination of elements of style, such as register, figurative language, rhythm and language patterns.
- Understanding of the effects of the use of language to create meaning by writers from the word level right through to discourse levels.

SPECTRUM OF SKILLS

Candidates should be equipped with the following skills:

- (i) An ability to make informed personal and critical responses to the texts and account for their responses.
- (ii) An ability to understand and comment on the ways in which the historical and cultural backgrounds of text and author inform the meaning of the text.
- (iii) An ability to analyse and evaluate critically the ways in which writers’ choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.
- (iv) An ability to communicate clearly knowledge, understanding and insights appropriate to literary study.

Skills	Examples
(i) Make informed personal and critical responses to the texts and account for their responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an informed personal response • Make connections between their own ideas and experiences and those in the text • Reflect critically on the development of their own informed response • Comment on the ways in which both content and form shape the reader's response • Demonstrate knowledge of ways in which a text invites the reader to respond
(ii) Demonstrate how the literary context of the text informs their understanding of the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge of some key social, cultural and historical influences in the creation of texts • Comment on ways in which characters, viewpoints, and situations convey the social conventions, beliefs and attitudes of individuals and groups in a particular society • Identify and interpret the ideas, viewpoints and values expressed in a text • Understand literary influences and traditions and the notion of reader, text and author
(iii) Critically analyse and evaluate ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the elements of literary genres • Analyse literary form including structure, setting, character, conflict, plot, methods of characterization, themes • Analyse stylistic devices including voice, persona, symbolism, irony, mood and tone • Analyse the use of language including register, diction, tone, imagery, rhythm in a text • Recognise imaginative or dramatic techniques for creating effects • Present a sustained interpretation supported by appropriate and detailed references to the text(s) • Present an evaluative/critical comparison and make connections between two or more texts
(iv) Clearly communicate the knowledge, understanding and insights appropriate to literary study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ability to write effective literary essays to convey their knowledge and understanding of, and insight into the texts • Show an ability to use appropriate literary terms in their responses • Present a clear and coherent argument in support of their ideas.

APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Section A Band Descriptors

Notes on Implementation of Band Descriptors

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

22–25

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the poem

Engages with the poem through detailed close analysis

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which writers' uses of poetic form, structure and language create the meanings of the poem

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the poem; it is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

18–21

Proficient work, making an informed personal and critical response to the poem

Engages with the poem through close analysis

Analyses with skill ways in which writers' uses of poetic form, structure and language create the meanings of the poem

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form and style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent, capable of giving accurate expression to complex ideas

14–17

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the poem with some personal response

Makes a close analysis of the poem, at times simply following line by line

Analyses ways in which writers' uses of poetic form, structure and language create the meanings of the poem

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form and style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the poem and the issues raised by poem and question, with only occasional lapses

10–13

Satisfactory work, making a response to the poem that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Analyses the poem in a line-by-line fashion

Makes some analysis of ways in which writers' uses of form, style and language create the meanings of the poem

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the poems – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time though with some digression; assembles relevant points into a simply structured response

Makes use of quotation and paraphrase and may use some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the poem and the issues raised by poem and question, with only occasional obscurity

6–9

Uneven work, making a response to the poem that shows some understanding

Makes appropriate references to writers' uses of poetic form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the poem

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set at first, but tends to digress

Assembles points rather than analyses, tending to list points and make general assertions

Makes some use of paraphrase or quotation; limited reference to critical terminology

Uses a simple style or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the poem

1–5

Some attempt to hold to poem and question, showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

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To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the poem

Sections B and C Band Descriptors

Notes on Implementation of Band Descriptors

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

22–25

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which writers' uses of form, structure and language create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the text, using quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the question set; is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

18–21

Proficient work, making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Analyses with skill ways in which writers' uses of form, structure and language create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates, where relevant, a good understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the text, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent; able to give accurate expression to complex ideas

14–17

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the text with some personal response

Analyses ways in which writers' uses of form, structure and language create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Demonstrates a sound understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with appropriate reference to the text – at times too much or too little, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional lapses

10–13

Satisfactory work, making a response to the text that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Makes some analysis of ways in which writers' uses of form, structure and language create the meanings of the text

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the text – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time within a simple structure though with some digression into generality

Demonstrates, at times, some awareness of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports some points with appropriate reference to the text, using quotation and paraphrase mostly accurately – perhaps uses some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional obscurity

6–9

Uneven work, making a response to the text that shows knowledge of the text

Makes appropriate references to writers' uses of form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the text

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set at first, but tends to digress and lacks structure

May demonstrate, at times, some awareness of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context, but without understanding of how this relates to the individual text

Supports some points with reference to the text; relies mostly on assertion, with repetition; uses quotation and paraphrase at times, possibly not wholly accurate, at too great a length and without discrimination

Uses a simple style, or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the text

1–5

Some attempt to hold to text and question showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

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To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the text

APPENDIX B: EDITIONS USED FOR SETTING QUESTIONS

Note: These are not prescribed editions. However, Centres may wish to consult this list before deciding which editions their candidates should purchase.

Paper 1: Reading Literature

Author	Title of Book	Publisher
Mary Shelley	Frankenstein	Penguin
F Scott Fitzgerald	The Great Gatsby	Penguin
Jane Austen	Pride and Prejudice	Penguin
Kazuo Ishiguro	An Artist of the Floating World	Faber
William Shakespeare	Measure for Measure	Collins (ed. Alexander)
George Bernard Shaw	Saint Joan	Penguin
Arthur Miller	Playing for Time	Nick Hern
Timberlake Wertenbaker	Our Country's Good	Methuen