

May 2014 subject reports

Swedish A language and literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 26	27 - 40	41 - 54	55 - 67	68 - 82	83 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 13	14 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 58	59 - 71	72 - 84	85 - 100

Standard and Higher level internal assessment

HL component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

SL component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

As there was no discernible structural difference between the examinations or performances of HL and SL students, nor between material and criteria used, the report below therefore applies equally to both levels.

Overall, all schools followed set procedures, used appropriate extracts, filled the forms in correctly and submitted all work on time. Please continue to take note of IB instructions regarding the requirements of the component, especially:

- the extract should be a maximum of 40 lines
- 5 candidates or fewer should be given different extracts
- the sheet given with the extract should contain no other information about the text
- guiding questions should not be numbered

On occasion, the presentation extended well beyond the 10 minutes, and with the subsequent discussion, the whole oral was too lengthy. Please make sure to clarify the time limits to the candidates, ascertain that they have a way to keep track of the time and aim to keep the discussion within the set time limit.

It is also very helpful to provide a rationale for the mark given on the mark sheet. Where these comments are sparse, it is harder for the moderator to understand how the internal mark has been arrived at.

Please write the candidate number on each text extract, which facilitates the role of the moderator.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

All schools examined seemed to know and understand well what material is useful for the oral commentary. Occasionally more contemporary extracts or poems that are short and concise seem not to provide the students with quite the same challenges and material to work with, so this needs to be borne in mind. There is, on the other hand, also a tendency to extensive 'repetition' of some of the more traditional material used, so attempts at finding alternatives and a more varied range are still commendable.

Please ensure that the length of the extract is appropriate in order not to disadvantage the candidates. Where an extract is too long, candidates may not have time to analyse it properly. Where candidates receive shorter texts, they may have difficulties to talk for 10 minutes.

On the whole, all IAs were well executed by both candidates and teachers, and seemed well prepared. It is important that candidates are able to see a clock or timer in order to ensure to maintain correct timings. Some candidates' commentaries were on the shorter side, however the teachers were often able to bring the candidates back on track in the subsequent discussions and the full 15 minutes were generally used.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A

Overall, all students seem to come very well prepared and perform consistently to their best ability for this criterion, demonstrating both local and contextualised understanding of the text extracts, as well as generally focused ability to engage with the text in analysis.

Criterion B

This seems generally an area that creates greater challenges, and students often score lower here than for criteria A. Particularly the discussions around 'the effect of the reader' could often be more developed. When students score lower marks, it is either because it seems that they are not able to identify a large amount of textual features, or that their observations become lists rather than discussions around their effects.

Criterion C

This criterion is always a challenge, and most easily successful when students are given a poem to discuss (due to the inherent structure in such texts). One of the most often used texts, Strindberg's *Fröken Julie*, seem to cause particular difficulties - the lack (often) of linearity in the text itself requires candidates to find alternative structures, and sustaining such an independent structure can be challenging. Perhaps consider giving examples of how various alternative structures can be built and maintained when preparing for the task, to give the candidates strategies to use.

Criterion D

The candidates all seem generally aware of the vocabulary needed for this task, and employ it to the best of their ability.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Overall, the candidates showed a very strong knowledge of all the texts/extracts they were presented with, and were generally capable of demonstrating extensive and coherent understanding of meanings and themes both in the extracts themselves and in their wider context. What they found more challenging was to discuss how various textual characteristics and techniques create mood and tone, and how they affect how the text is read or experienced. At times they were capable of listing some features, but not being able to take the analysis beyond noting them. Perhaps this is an observation that can be used to think about how the candidates can better understand the link between technique and effect.

Candidates, at times, scored lower with regards to the structure and presentation of their commentary. A 10 minute oral analysis is not the easiest to structure well in the limited preparation time given, and candidates might benefit from more actual practice of this skill in advance of the assessment. Overall, it does seem that most candidates would benefit from some help in how to approach the structuring of their presentation. This could also be seen as a transferable skill; generally speaking, the techniques are similar to those used for other oral presentations, and also for the written analyses that candidates produce for Paper 1.

Teachers should show candidates how to use literary terminology in a productive, convincing and perceptive way. It would be meaningful for the candidates if the teachers could show them how different choices of words and expressions can change the meaning and tone in a text. The titles of poems or works often have a purpose and meaning in themselves, which can be worth discussing in class. Teachers could show candidates how to go into what is genre specific when analysing different genres; drama, prose and poetry, furthermore keeping in mind the setting, period of time and specific ideas during this period of time.

When specific dialects or different sociolects are used in dialogues, the candidates need help to interpret which effect that is created and what it can tell them about the setting, time period or character/narrative voice. It would be beneficial if teachers who choose texts that are written in a certain Swedish dialect, or in more old fashioned Swedish, could teach their students how this use of language can create effects, a special atmosphere, and how it can also reveal a great deal about the characters themselves, the time and place when/where it takes place as well as the tone in the text extract.

Candidates need more guidance during the course of the study on how to comment on word choice and the use of modern Swedish versus the Swedish that was used in the 1800s and the use of language in different social classes/regions of the country.

The candidates would benefit from practicing a lot at home and recording a few commentaries so that they can estimate how much time they have, and how they need to structure their commentaries so that they are not finished already after 6 minutes.

Further comments

A high standard of student performance; often both confident and knowledgeable. Overall very well assisted presentations, with patient, sympathetic and helpful teachers who asked relevant and perceptive questions in the discussion, but otherwise did not interrupt or interfere with the candidates' own presentation. Some orals were too short and others too long to give candidates the best possible chance. They need to be neither of these, so keeping to the relevant time frames is important

Higher and standard level written task

HL component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 18	19 - 23	24 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 40

SL component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The range and suitability of the work submitted

- Very good and consistent knowledge of primary texts
- Inventive text designs, which also demonstrate good understanding of key issues within the works studied
- Considered choice of text type
- Creative use of chosen text type and a good ability to produce their own text
- Independent and confident construction of own text
- Fluent language use, most often in an entirely appropriate register (weaker students less successful, but even in these cases they seemed to be using their language skills to the best of their ability)

Critical engagement

Demonstrating the ability of ‘critical engagement with an aspect of a text or a topic’ seems by far the most challenging aspect of the Written Task. Students’ text can be coherently crafted and fluent texts, which in some way relate to the primary text, but which do not sufficiently ‘explore a particular aspect of the course’ (from criteria A: Rationale).

Text types

Often it is the text type chosen which limits the critical engagement possible, and the students need to be encouraged to think about how the text type they decide on is going to allow them to ‘explore’ (discuss, investigate, probe, respond to) the literary text further, or engage critically and analytically with a cultural topic. It is, for example, easy to imagine a further chapter to a novel, or to re-write it into a poem or a short story for the more creative, allowing continued exploration of its themes. Although this will depend on the novel, an ‘extra’ chapter does not always go beyond showing imaginary skills with the given characters and settings, however a *krönike*-response to a cultural issue might give wide opportunity to use a range of arguments and counter-arguments, while demonstrating ability to adhere to and make good use of a specific text type (criteria B). These are only two examples, and there are many more, of what might constitute a more successful text type for this task than others.

It might also be worth encouraging more ‘cross-overs’, by which I mean using a non-literary format to explore a literary text, and vice versa. These are less common, though they do happen, and often with very positive results, but could potentially yield great opportunities for exploring a theme or a topic from a different angle. A film-score, say, for commenting on a social issue, a poem on intercultural understanding, a reportage on an aspect in a literary work, and so on.

Whichever type of text they choose to use, it might in any case help to try and remind candidates to think about how they are going to use their own text, not just what they are going to write.

It might also be worth bearing in mind that some text types are greater challenges than others, and will be understood as such. Diaries and letters might seem relevant to explore characters in literary texts further, but as text types they are quite straight forward, and do not allow the students to demonstrate a very wide range of stylistic ability and flexibility. The same could be said for the blog format. For these, critical engagement can be said to be even more central, to justify the choice of

such text types. The candidates also need to be careful with the first two; that they do not become just re-telling of the original narrative, the risk is particularly high for these formats.

Written Task 2 (HL only)

There seemed to be a much higher degree of successful engagement with this task this year. Where the responses are less successful it often comes down to not providing a focused and relevant response to the question as set. It is hard to tell whether this difficulty arises from a lack of ability to discuss the topics in question, or from a misunderstanding of the task. Those students who re-write the question into one of their own devising almost invariably shift the focus away from what the set question intended, and thus hinder successful completion of the task. Overall the students are very good at relating their discussions to specific texts, and to give examples from them. They are much less secure in interpreting the question asked (with notable exceptions!), and understand what the issues are that the question is asking them to consider and construct an argument around.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

On the basis of the Written Tasks (HL1 & SL) produced, it seems there are no specific recommendations to make in regard to the teaching that underpins the task, as understanding of primary texts and topics are much in evidence, as is the ability to create an independent text of various types in terms of both content, format and language. The weaker area is in using the WT for critical engagement with the primary text: understanding what this means and how to find ways of exploring particular aspects which can be said to constitute such engagement. This aspect has bearing also on WT2 for HL, where exploration of a critical question seems to be the most challenging aspect.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

- Identifying and discussing more complex textual differences between the texts.
- In some cases, devising and keeping to a structure which is effective throughout; using structures that are based on themes rather than ticking off topics, or going down a list of things to compare. These areas have a few, notable exceptions
- Drawing out understanding beyond the immediate surface of all texts. All texts, in various ways and to differing extents, contained “sub-texts” which are essential to their overall expression, and these were not always (again with several exceptions) detected. Where they were picked up on, they normally formed a central part of the analyses, suggesting that the

students are well capable of understanding their function and discussing their effects, and that the main challenge is to identify them in the first place.

- Holistic understanding of texts. Weaker discussions/analyses were often less aware of what the texts as a whole expressed, and focused instead of what was said word by word. Most of these analyses included a summary description, so it may not be obvious to the students what was lacking. However, all texts in this component had an agenda or an opinion to express, more or less clearly delineated, which was not always noted, or noted correctly.
- Discussion of potential 'reader-ship'. For publications the students do not know, speculation of who the readers might be often lead nowhere, and may be wrong. They need perhaps to think of the texts as types instead: an advert in a broadsheet (rather than one specifically designed for "industrial types" in this years' paper), an essay for a yearbook for an organisation where interest of audience and author can be assumed to be shared, an article in a topical magazine with a limited but pre-defined readership. This aspect more often than not seems to be included because it is expected to be, rather than because the students actually have something to say about it. For some students it might be helpful to remember that 'areas to include' in the discussion do not necessarily need to have their own sections, but can be included in other, thematic discussions. This might reduce the need to construct a discussion around readership alone, and may be more rewarding as contextualisation.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

- Understanding of the task
- Finding joint themes or links between texts
- Drawing out and discussing similarities and differences
- Identifying basic textual structures and comparing them between the texts
- Structuring the analysis coherently overall with an introduction and conclusion (but see below for further details)

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

This year's paper gave a choice of two text pairs, where roughly 1/3 of the students favoured 1 & 2, and 2/3 favoured 3 & 4. It appeared that the second text pair, a (promotional) article from an airport magazine and an advert for Volvo, appealed more immediately to more students, possibly for their more airy structures and more direct readability, while the first text pair, an essay and an organisational but also promotional webpage, might have been avoided for seeming more dense.

Although both pairs were very rich in details to discuss, and the students technically stood an equally good chance of a detailed analysis with either, there were several comparative analyses of the second pair that failed to discuss the advert in any detail beyond the basic structure, and which failed to pick up on the rhetoric in the article, again reading it only on a seemingly obvious surface. This happened with the first text pair as well, and may be an indication mostly of the individual students'

analytical ability, but it seemed to be more apparent with the second pair that students picked what looked like the more immediate text/s, without having considered in more detail what they might be able to discuss about them. Just because adverts contain pictures does not necessarily mean they are easier to understand, and/or discuss. Several analyses of this advert went no further than commenting on the elements of the picture, with no or unsuccessful discussion. It is actually not a very easy illustration to decipher – it takes perception and a highly developed analytical ability to successfully make it part of the overall analysis, and there were some students that achieved this to great effect and very impressively! However, for those students who struggled with this part, the advert seem to lead them into a place where they found even less to comment on than a full text would have done. Similarly, the airport article contained almost as much promotion and promotional rhetoric as the straight advert, and this was an important aspect to include in the analyses. Those discussions that stayed with noting common article structures and features, and failed to engage more in-depth with its (various) message(s) consequently scored lower marks.

The first text pair, on our need of and relationship to the forest, had their own inherent difficulties. The responses generally fell into two categories: one where the analyses were very much alive to both internal agendas and the techniques used to get these across, and one in which understanding of the texts' overall aim and content was less well understood (or in some cases incorrectly interpreted). Here the challenge seemed to be to pick out emphases and concerns from the very readable, more narrative texts, and to identify the stylistic techniques that allow them to achieve their aims. This can be harder to do in "dense" texts like these, and may be why so many students opted for what looked like an "easier" alternative of the second pair. The students that successfully engaged with this aspect wrote some of the most successful analyses of this year's paper.

It might therefore be worth encouraging students to think carefully, and in detail, that the texts they choose to discuss have to yield. The analyses need to contain both a holistic, overall understanding not just of topic but also of aim, approach and voice, and a close reading of expressions, techniques and textual detail. It is not enough to identify the advert by its lack of narrative text and presence of visual image; the text in this case contained a very specific voice, and the image needed detailed decoding.

In terms of teaching, the following areas might work as general areas in which the students might benefit from further discussions and/or practice:

- Textual message vs. content: what a text can be understood to say rather than what it is *about*.
- Readership: who is a text for, how can we see this, how does this affect the style/technique/voice/content?
- Structure of argument: how to construct an effective discussion.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 18	19 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Overall the areas which appeared difficult for the candidates were the discussion around and analyses of textual and stylistic features of the texts. Many candidates understood the meaning and the purpose of the text that they chose to write their commentaries on, but had difficulties in finding the most appropriate language and vocabulary to discuss and really analyse what the writers were trying to achieve. In many cases candidates were simply paraphrasing instead of commenting on the stylistic features. The legibility of handwriting was an issue and sometimes it was very difficult to decipher what was written. In many cases the candidates had crossed out sections in the middle of their papers, which made it difficult to follow the intended structure. Many candidates had failed to see that Text 2 was taken from www.aftonbladet.se and referred to it as "Aftonbladet", which implies that it was taken from the newspaper and not from the online version of the newspaper.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates seemed well prepared and confident in how to approach the task of this paper. Almost without exception, the candidates set an engaging introduction where they presented their purpose and referred to when and where the original text was published. Where the candidates had time they were also able to provide a summarising conclusion. They had no difficulties in understanding the purpose of the texts and most of the candidates showed confidently that they knew what kind of text type they were analysing. A large majority of the candidates wrote very engaging commentaries with personal responses and they tried to comment on a wide range of aspects in the text.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

There was a predominance of answers that engaged with Text 1 and perhaps the candidates found the layout and the content of the text and the advertisement easier to comment on. Both texts seemed to be accessible for candidates in terms of understanding their main purpose and often also to whom they were written. A great majority of the candidates were able to make fruitful comments on the type of text they were analysing, and most of the candidates tried to refer correctly to the text they had chosen by using the author's surname or by referring to the source instead of just saying Text 1. Text 1 appeared to be easier to grasp for the candidates in terms of the intended audience and its main purpose.

Most candidates had vivid comments about the photo that was used in Text 1 and how the text and the photo complemented each other. It was good to see that most of the candidates were trying to

comment on the headlines and how the authors had played with words to get more than one message through or to awake their readers' interest. Most of the candidates successfully added quotes from the chosen text to further illustrate what they were trying to say.

Some of the best written responses had commented on the use of a period in the title of Text 1 or commented on how the author/s of that same text had written "Låt livet ta plats" and made comments on how that phrase could have several different meanings. Many students were trying to comment on the use of literary features or stylistic devices, but ended up just mentioning which ones they were able to find in the text without writing much of what effect the use of, for instance alliteration, had on the tone of the text or the rhythm of the text. Some candidates were able to make comments on how the metaphor of "blomstra" was used in describing the cultural life, or how Kadhammar, author of Text 2 had used colloquial expressions as "Tjena" in the middle of his text to reveal his frustration. Some candidates had identified the use of bold letters in three of the paragraphs of Text 2 and were able to make interesting comments as well.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates were well prepared for Paper 1 and most of them wrote engaging comments and were able to structure these comments in a coherent manner. Some candidates commented line by line by paraphrasing, which is not necessary. It is important to teach candidates how to get right to the point in an analysis without paraphrasing too much. They should know that there is no need for the intended audience/reader of their analysis that they re-write and paraphrase the whole text. It is recommended that teachers help candidates how to not only mention various aspects of a text, but also to discuss what effect they had and why the author chose to use those features. Candidates seem to need more practice on how to properly comment on aspects such as tone and structure as well as literary features.

Further comments

As these exams are marked on screen it is very important that candidates try to write as legibly as possible and that they try to have the structure of their paper outlines before they start writing to avoid having to cross out large sections of their text. Sometimes it is difficult to decipher what some candidates are trying to discuss only because of their indistinct handwriting which in return unfortunately may mean that part of their argument is missed or misunderstood. Many of the candidates still referred to different "stycken" as "paragraphs", which has a completely different meaning in Swedish.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 20	21 - 25

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates generally show that they know their works quite well. Some, though, never go beyond displaying general knowledge of the works, plot, theme and main characters. Students need to understand that to show real comprehension, they must bring details into focus and substantiate claims.

The response to the question posed a problem for many. Some candidates seemed not to have taken the time to read the question closely enough, leaving parts of the question unanswered. Even where the handling of the question was made clear in the introduction, there was sometimes a drift away from the question in the rest of the response, into a discussion of other aspects entirely. To stay on target, candidates need to plan their writing.

Some essays seemed to echo the same basic ideas, suggesting too heavy a focus on these ideas in the classroom. The result is unfortunately that one is left with the feeling of something being reproduced. The candidates may be better off without the cramming sessions on these notes, as they tend to rely heavily on them. Less intense studying of notes; more skills practice could be the solution.

There were some instances of rather strained parallels between works. As this kind of linking is no longer needed, these mistakes were all the more unnecessary.

Some students' handwriting was nearly illegible, especially near the end where the stress set in.

Many candidates need to be reminded of the register expected for a literary analysis. Even candidates with decent command of grammar or spelling at times lost points by being too informal in tone. There were also quite a few instances of anglicisms (understandable, perhaps, for students of the IB Diploma, but nevertheless unsuitable for a Paper 2 in Swedish).

This has been brought to attention before, I think, but Albert Camus' novel *The Stranger* is not always a good choice of text, as its existentialist ideas can be hard to grasp in full, especially for young students. One wonders if a less demanding text would give students more freedom to explore ideas of their own.

There were a variety of texts studied. Novels were the most popular genre, followed by drama and short stories. Hjalmar Söderberg's *Doktor Glas* stands out as an all-time favorite, and Pär Lagerqvist's *Dvärgen* and August Strindberg's *Fröken Julie* were also popular.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates generally appeared well prepared for the examination, backed up by good teaching. The majority of the candidates showed that they knew their works quite well, and many seemed genuinely involved with the works studied.

Most candidates remember to include at least some mentioning of literary features, but not all are able to discuss their effects. When students commented on narrative voice, which many did, they were often able to discuss the effects of this particular stylistic feature well.

Almost all essays had at least a rudimentary structure: an introduction followed by a few major points, organised in paragraphs, and then a brief summary at the end. This is clearly an area where candidates have had much practice, perhaps as a result of writing in other subjects in the diploma as well. Some essays included a thesis, defended throughout the essay.

Even though responses usually have an overall structure, the internal structure is often in need of improvement. Students need training in delivering and upholding a convincing argument.

Writing a proper conclusion should be practiced more. Many students simply end by summarising what has already been stated. The summary sometimes takes up a good part of a page, without adding to the quality of the essay. Producing a single finishing sentence or two that wrap things up is much better.

Some essays were truly a delight to read. These essays often gave a glimpse of the candidate's own personal voice, with ideas that came across entirely as the candidate's own. These responses were often marked by smooth and organic inclusion of details to back up points made.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

There were responses written on all of the questions, with a heavy majority on Question 1 and Question 2. Only very few chose Question 3. Some responses on Question 1 tended to discuss 'injustices' in societies portrayed in the novels without reference to "how the works strengthen or challenge conceptions of injustice...". Many candidates just presented examples of characters being treated unjustly, resulting in unconvincing essays. Question 2 also generated some rather weak responses, leaving the focus on the works as literature. Question 5 about how suspense is created produced some fine essays. This question seemed to lend itself readily for a focused investigation, in itself posing a distinct aspect.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Choice of texts is vital for success: attempt to match the literature to be studied with the candidates' level.
- Plenty of time should be spent practicing the skills of writing an analysis, building and sustaining an argument.
- Encourage students to spend more time thinking and planning during the exam, and less time actually writing.
- Many essays show signs of rushing towards the end. Making an outline for the essay and sticking to it might help. Practicing timed writing under exam-like conditions could be a way to learn to use time wisely.
- Let candidates practice responding to Paper 2-questions. Sometimes writing full essays, sometimes just practicing making outlines.
- As preparation for this examination, it is a good idea to go back to read sections of the original works again. Rather than going over notes taken on them, candidates should reread chosen parts of the works close to the examination. It will freshen up on specific details, allowing them to deliver precision in referencing.