

## May 2013 subject reports

### Arabic A Literature

#### Overall grade boundaries

##### Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 21	22 - 35	36 - 47	48 - 60	61 - 73	74 - 85	86 - 100

##### Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 19	20 - 32	33 - 46	47 - 60	61 - 72	73 - 83	84 - 100

#### Higher level internal assessment

##### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 30

#### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The passages and extracts submitted were appropriate and suitable and the topics selected fell within the PLA and part 4; the centres' free choice.

The majority of candidates demonstrated knowledge and familiarity of the works although some centres' specialization in certain topics resulted in the repetition of thoughts and ideas.

Candidates seemed able to identify the major themes included in their extracts and presented them in an adequate manner. Candidates, generally speaking, spent a long time commenting on only one guiding question and some exceeded the recording time limit of 20 minutes defined by the IB in the new syllabus instructions.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

It was well observed that the majority of candidates spent a considerable amount of their recording time concentrating on less important aspects of the text rather than exploring the significant themes. Furthermore, detailed commentaries on authors' biographies resulted in the consumption of almost a third of the time allocated for the recordings and were unnecessary.

Some candidates, it seemed, had written their commentaries in advance of their oral recordings. Page 63 of the Language A: Literature Guide clearly states that 'students must not know on which poem, or extract from a poem, the commentary will be based until the start of the preparation period'. Some teachers, in trying to help their candidates, also intervened more than necessary during the recording time.

The majority of candidates showed a good understanding of the selected texts/extracts, placed them in their context and presented an adequate interpretation of the significant themes. Well prepared candidates indulged themselves in a critical and independent analysis and response. However, the appreciation of the writer's choice seemed to be almost ignored or overlooked in most recordings.

In the organization and development of ideas and themes, candidates could have done better with more concentration. Regarding the language criterion, the majority of candidates demonstrated clear linguistic issues despite the use of local dialects in their commentaries instead of the proper Arabic. Grammatical and linguistic lapses seemed to be almost frequent in most recordings.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Centres need to pay close attention to the specified recording times as this session some recordings exceeded this limit.

Candidates need a sound understanding of the writer's choice of language, structure, technique and style and should be able to comment on how this shapes meaning.

Candidates are reminded to avoid the use of local dialects during their recordings and focus on their use of language and grammar.

Centres should practice the format of the exam with candidates and instruct them on the proper method of oral commentary.

## Standard level internal assessment

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 23	24 - 30

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

Extracts and texts fell within the PLA and centres' free choice. Candidates' texts were appropriate and suitable for commentary although some centres' specializations, it appears, caused the repetition of thoughts and ideas.

Candidates, generally speaking, presented appropriate knowledge of the major themes and significant ideas presented in their selected extracts although some did not adhere to the time frame given, reaching 25 minutes in some cases.

Some candidates spent a considerable amount of time commenting on the writer's/poet's biography instead of the concentrating on the significant themes in the extract itself.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

In criterion A, the majority of candidates demonstrated a good comprehension of the contents of their extracts. They delivered a structured and focused commentary with an analysis of their texts and an evaluation of the crucial themes as appearing in the extracts. They also brought forward a generally valid interpretation of their thoughts including some degree of a critical, personal response.

In criterion B, however, candidates made little effort and spent little time on the discussion of the writer's choice of language, structure, technique and style and how these shaped meaning.

There was an impression that some candidates prepared their commentaries and responses in advance of the recording process. Page 54 of the Language A: Literature guide states that 'until the start of the preparation period students must not know the selection or the part 2 work from which the extract for the individual oral commentary will be taken'. Page 58 also states that 'teachers must allow students to do their presentation without any interruption or assistance' and numerous teachers interrupted candidates frequently during their commentaries and failed to ask any subsequent questions.

In criterion D, some degree of accuracy was observed in the use of grammar and phraseology with an attempt to use an appropriate register. The majority of candidates presented their commentaries using generally clear language despite some usage of local dialects and colloquial vocabulary.

### Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Centres need to focus on the techniques required in order to give a literary commentary. They should also concentrate on the use of appropriate spoken language.

Consideration must be made to the recording time limits and teachers must ensure that these are adhered to. They are also reminded not to interrupt candidates during the recording time and to register any comments on the 1/IARF form.

More training should be given on how to comment on the linguistic and grammatical elements of a text and how to comment on the writer's choice of language, structure, technique and style.

## Higher level written assignment

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20	21 - 25

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The majority of candidates submitted suitable works. The selected topics were relevant with some personal views presented in an appropriate form and a formal development of ideas.

A variety of topics were selected but some centres seemed to specialize in certain themes. Candidates' selections, except in some cases, were based on at least two of the three world literature works studied in part 1 of the programme and they were able to develop their essay titles to suit the particular works chosen. As a result, some good essays were produced.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

In criterion A, in their reflective statements, candidates made little effort to explain how their cultural and contextual understanding was developed through the interactive oral. It was well observed that neither teachers nor candidates were aware of the significant requirements of the reflective statement and in the majority of assignments this statement was presented in report form or as a summary of the chosen topic.

In criterion B, while some essays demonstrated limited knowledge and understanding of the work used for the assignment, others displayed detailed knowledge and understanding with perceptive insights.

In criterion C, the majority of candidates showed only an adequate appreciation of the ways in which language, structure, technique and style shaped meaning and a few candidates failed to mention this at all.

In criterion D, ideas were generally effectively organized and developed, with well-integrated examples from the works used. On the contrary, some ideas, in some assignments, were superficially organized and developed, with only some integrated examples from the texts.

Criterion E, the language component, showed candidates care about the conventions of the written works with the appropriate register for the assignments selected. Language seemed clear and

carefully chosen, with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and, despite some lapses in some assignments, register and style was mostly appropriate to the tasks.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Centres and candidates need to fully understand the requirements of the reflective statement and written assignment.

Attention should be paid to the exact number of works to be studied in HL and the PLT should be consulted.

Writing techniques, particularly of a linguistic and grammatical nature, should have priority in the teaching process and candidates need to be taught the appropriate method of presenting their work in a systematic and stylistic fashion. Consideration should be given to the appreciation of cultural settings relevant to assignments in addition to the use of precise and pertinent quotations.

## Standard level written assignment

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20	21 - 25

## The range and suitability of the work submitted

The majority of candidates appeared to be well acquainted with their selected assignment topics which were defined and discussed appropriately although centres' specialization in certain topics resulted in the repetition of thoughts and discussions. This specialization also affected the selection of works and compelled candidates to discuss and treat the same topic. Nevertheless, some candidates showed some independent thoughts and views in their assignments.

Although candidates submitted reflective statements, they were not aware of its significance and its contents. The statements were presented as a summary of the discussed work or, in some cases, in the form of a report.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

Candidates successfully demonstrated good comprehension of their selected topics and appeared well prepared.

In criterion A, some effort had been made in the reflective statement and candidates showed some good understanding of the different cultural and contextual elements. But, it was observed that candidates were not aware of the significance of the reflective statement, which was presented either in a report form or as a summary of the chosen topic.

In criterion B, there was a wide variety of knowledge and understanding displayed amongst the candidates. While some demonstrated mediocre knowledge and understanding of the topics, others showed comprehensive knowledge and understanding in addition to perceptive insights into the submitted works.

In criterion C, the majority of candidates showed only an adequate appreciation of the ways in which the writer's choice of language, structure, technique and style shaped meaning. Some candidates completely overlooked this aspect in their discussion and only concentrated, in a narrative style, on the detailed events included in their selected works.

In criterion D, the majority of candidates had their ideas effectively organized and developed, with well-integrated examples from the texts.

In criterion E, candidates displayed good conventions with appropriate register for the assignments. Language seemed clear and carefully chosen, with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction, despite occasional lapses.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Centres and candidates need a clear understanding of the requirements for the reflective statement and written assignment.

Attention should be paid to the exact number of works to be studied in SL and the PLT should be consulted.

Writing techniques, particularly of a linguistic and grammatical nature, should have priority in the teaching process and candidates need to be taught the appropriate method of presenting their work in a systematic and stylistic fashion. Consideration should be given to the appreciation of cultural settings relevant to assignments in addition to the use of precise and pertinent quotations.

## Higher level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 17	18 - 20

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

One of the main difficulties for candidates was their lack of understanding of the requirements of a literary commentary making it difficult for them to identify the required features within the text. Instead, they indulged themselves in a narrative description of the texts with only a basic acknowledgement of the themes and ideas.

The candidate's general weakness in grammar, syntax and phraseology also made it difficult for them to present their work in an appropriate form. Some candidates were unable to present their work in a logical, legible form.

The poem appeared more difficult for the candidates to analyze than the short story due to centres' specialization in certain genres.

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

The majority of candidates showed good comprehension of their chosen passages. They were able to interpret the texts and identify major themes and ideas into their work. Candidates supported their work with quotes and references from the text.

As a result of centres' specializations, the majority of candidates selected the short story over the poem for their commentary. This helped them to bring forth some good personal responses and critical views in an organized order. Their prepared study proved their readiness to meet all the required criteria needed for paper1 including the understanding, interpretation and appreciation of the writer's choices and organization.

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

The majority of candidates were able to present well shaped and organized analyses, although others exposed weaknesses in this area.

While the majority of candidates were able to comment on the writer's choice of form, structure technique and style others failed to address this in their work. Candidates were able to recognise and understand the dominant themes in the text although some candidates in certain centres showed weaknesses in the ability to pinpoint the actual topic its precise meaning.

In the organization of their work, candidates brought forth well organized and coherent ideas presented in a logical and persuasive manner. The linguistic, stylistic, phraseology and syntactical issues appeared to be among weaker candidates and centered on the presentation of their work.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates need to be instructed thoroughly in the proper methods and techniques of literary commentary and analysis. An awareness of the appropriate stylistic, linguistic and syntactical aspects should also be considered in the presentation of their work.

Centres should spend a proportionate amount of time teaching their candidates how to approach a literary analysis of a poem instead of concentrating on the short story genre only.

Focus should be given to the analysis of a writer's choice of form, structure, technique and style and how these are used to shape meaning in a text. Attention should also be given to the organization of ideas in a piece of written work and candidates should ensure all written work is legible and clear.

## Standard level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 18	19 - 20

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

The majority of candidates found it difficult to present their commentaries in an appropriate format; style, presentation of ideas etc. They also struggled grammatically and linguistically and this made it difficult for them to present their analysis in an appropriate, legible manner. Candidates also struggled with the two guiding questions and, on some occasions, these were overlooked completely.

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

Generally speaking, there was good understanding of the text demonstrated by acceptable interpretation and analysis supported by appropriate references. The majority of candidates were able to identify, analyze and comment on the significant theme(s) in the texts and presented relevant ideas and critical responses in an organised form. Candidates were also able to identify and comment on various literary features. The majority chose to analyze and comment on the short story text instead of the poem and this, no doubt, was a result of teaching which focused heavily on this genre at the expense of the other.

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

While the majority of candidates appeared well prepared to analyze their selected text in a systematic style, other candidates showed some weaknesses in the appropriate presentation of their response.

The majority of candidates successfully demonstrated awareness of the significant themes presented in the chosen text and only a few missed the dominant ideas, instead, commenting on some inappropriate issues. Many were able to present personal and logical commentaries in a persuasive and systematic manner while only a few candidates came up with rather poor, general commentaries consisting mainly of unsubstantiated generalizations. Overall, candidates showed weaknesses in their choice of register and presentation with some scripts illegible due to poor knowledge of the appropriate writing style.

Candidates, generally speaking, showed more strength in the analysis of the short story than in the poem.



## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

In future teaching, equal time should be dedicated to the analysis of the short story and the poem. It was evident that emphasis had been placed on the teaching of the short story this session.

Candidates need regular practice of the appropriate methods of literary commentary in order to present suitable responses in the examination.

The teaching should focus on the identification and analysis of the stylistic features of a text and the appropriate conventions of writing a literary commentary.

This session there was general weakness in the candidate's written work including; sentence structure, literary terminology, vocabulary and grammar and centres are advised to spend time on this with their candidates.

## Higher level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

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

Some candidates in certain centres showed some confusion in their selection of genres as they had mixed up 'novel' with 'short story' and their selected texts were not related to the PLA or Part 3 of the programme. It seems they were not fully aware of the new syllabus.

The major difficulty for candidates was the application of the techniques required to compare and contrast two literary works. Many found it difficult to comprehend the actual requirements behind the question and, instead, adopted a narrative form. Some candidates failed to demonstrate an appropriate appreciation of the literary conventions of the genre while others overlooked this criterion completely which had a negative effect on their total mark. In addition, candidates encountered difficulties in the differentiation between criterion A (knowledge and understanding) and criterion B (response to the question). Unfortunately, some scripts appeared illegible and hard to follow.

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

The majority of candidates preferred to choose question 4 (the role of characters in novel) while only a few candidates chose question 5 (the narration techniques in novel). The impression given was that candidates were given more instruction in some literary genres than others and had well prepared answers for these questions.

Candidates were able to discuss their chosen texts, identify literary devices, give relevant ideas and offer some personal views. They were able to respond to the main implications of the questions with some comparison of the chosen works. Stronger candidates were able to present independent thoughts in a convincing manner.

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

Although the majority of candidates discussed the significant topics implied in the question, some were only able to present a trivial argument and missed crucial themes and ideas. While many addressed the question and were able to incorporate some personal views and independent thoughts, there was a lack of understanding of the appropriate method of discussing these ideas.

Candidates seemed to differ in their awareness and appreciation of the literary conventions of the genres. While some candidates identified and presented examples of literary conventions used in their chosen works in a rather effective manner, others paid little attention to this criterion. This also applies to writing techniques as candidates, generally speaking, appeared rather weak in their application of the appropriate register, style and terminology. In their ideas, candidates were well organized with suitable structure but some of them appeared to lack the required organization and structure.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates, in future, need to master the correct method of discussion writing. They should learn how to differentiate between the different assessment criteria, in particular, their knowledge and understanding of the question and their response to it.

The ability to recognise significant themes and ideas is required to present a systematic analysis of the question and an in-depth comprehensive awareness and appreciation of the literary conventions of each genre is needed for the presentation of a pertinent answer. Teachers, furthermore, are reminded to concentrate, in their future teaching, on writing techniques, organization and development of ideas and appropriate application of register. Since there is a general weakness in the grammar, syntax, style and appropriate use of terminology, teachers are also asked to concentrate on these issues to enable their candidates achieve higher marks in their exam.

## Standard level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

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

The main difficulty for candidates appeared to be the application of appropriate discussion techniques and style of writing. Some scripts were presented in an illegible form and therefore it was difficult to follow the details discussed. Many candidates found it difficult to analyze the actual themes and ideas presented in the question and, instead, wrote in a narrative form.

In addition, candidates struggled to differentiate between criterion A (knowledge and understanding) and criterion B (response to the question). As a result, both were approached in the same manner which affected the organization of their analysis of the selected topic. Many clearly did not understand the conventions of different literary genres resulting in some candidates completely overlooking this criterion, which impacted heavily on their total mark. Finally, general weaknesses in grammatical and linguistic aspects of writing made it difficult for some candidates to express themselves in an appropriate and logical style.

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

In their choice of questions, the majority of candidates preferred to select question 4 (the role of characters in a novel) while only a few candidates chose question 5 (the narration techniques in novel). The impression was received that centres focussed on the teaching of certain genres, for example, the novel, at the expense of others as candidates had well prepared answers to these questions.

Candidates were able to discuss their chosen texts, identify literary devices, give relevant ideas and offer some personal views. They were able to respond to the main implications of the questions with some comparison of the chosen works. Stronger candidates were able to present independent thoughts in a convincing manner and ordered sequence.

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

Although the majority of candidates discussed the significant topics implied in the question, some were only able to present a trivial argument and missed crucial themes and ideas. While many addressed the question and were able to incorporate some personal views and independent thoughts, there was a lack of understanding of the appropriate method of discussing these ideas.

Candidates seemed to differ in their awareness and appreciation of the literary conventions of the genres. While some candidates identified and presented examples of literary conventions used in their chosen works in a rather effective manner, others paid little attention to this criterion. This also applies to writing techniques as candidates, generally speaking, appeared rather weak in their application of the appropriate register, style and terminology. In their ideas, candidates were well organized with suitable structure but some of them appeared to lack the required organization and structure.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates, in future, need to master the correct method of discussion writing. They should learn how to differentiate between the different assessment criteria, in particular, their knowledge and understanding of the question and their response to it.

The ability to recognise significant themes and ideas is required to present a systematic analysis of the question and an in-depth comprehensive awareness and appreciation of the literary conventions of each genre is needed for the presentation of a pertinent answer. Teachers, furthermore, are reminded to concentrate, in their future teaching, on writing techniques, organization and development of ideas and appropriate application of register. Since there is a general weakness in the grammar, syntax, style and appropriate use of terminology, teachers are also asked to concentrate on these issues to enable their candidates achieve higher marks in their exam.

Centres are also advised to discuss the assessment criteria and descriptors with their candidates to draw their attention to all the essential requirements needed for a well shaped answer.