Chinese A Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 24	25 - 38	39 - 50	51 - 61	62 - 73	74 - 84	85 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 19	20 - 36	37 - 49	50 - 61	62 - 71	72 - 82	83 - 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 material that was submitted by majority of the schools dealt with classical poetry in first part of this component and several other genres of classical literature in the second part. Such a choice of passages/works across schools has proved helpful for the moderator to judge the sample candidates' performance evenly. While most of them followed closely the regulations on this component, a few schools still failed to carry out the exercise regarding the provision of passages and the guiding questions as well as the time control. Errors included the level of difficulty, the type of the passages and the guiding questions.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: In general, they performed quite well in this area, due to their solid and detailed understanding of the poem. Some of them even related the chosen piece to the whole work, so that their commentary gained some depth. However, some candidates' capability to interpret the piece's implications was rather limiting, and their approach to it was usually descriptive and rather superficial.

Criterion B: Most of them showed an adequate awareness and appreciation of the literary means and their effect. Yet, their consideration of these means impact on the creation of specific meaning was overall rather vague and needs some improvement.

Criterion C: As in the past, there were still a big number of candidates who failed to organise their commentary in a logical and coherent fashion. They either could not link different sections smoothly, or simply adopted the linear approach to interpret the poem as the easy option.

Criterion D: Most of the candidates demonstrated familiarity with the work under discussion and were able to make relevant reference to it while answering the teacher's questions.

Criterion E: Again, most of the candidates responded the teacher's questions in a confident and proper manner. Some even demonstrated their critical reading of the text and provided their personal opinion.

Criterion F: Probably due to the thorough preparation for this exercise, the candidates in the sample in general performed well in this regard. They showed a care with choice of register and terminology and expressed their ideas with a clear, precise language. There were only a small number of candidates who seemed to have encountered some small problems in finding a suitable and smooth register for their commentaries.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Make sure to understand correctly and follow closely the regulations for this exercise in terms of providing the passage and the guiding questions and conducting the subsequent discussion; pay attention to the administrative and clerical issues as well. Teachers should also avoid providing the same passage to a small number of candidates repeatedly.

- Guide candidates to pay close attention to the literary tools and the shaping of the texts' meaning.

- Encourage candidates to explore the various aspects of the work in discussion and display their personal response to the issues as portrayed by the writers.

- Help candidates to build a sense of structure for their commentary, and organise their material in a logical and coherent fashion and deliver it with the right register.

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

Most of the schools selected classical literature as the texts for their students' internal oral commentaries, which has been helpful for the assessment and moderation process.

All the chosen genres were from the subject's list of works. However, a few schools still made some mistakes in the provision of passages and the guiding questions concerning their level of challenge and suitability. Some other schools also failed to comply with the regulation on the time limit of the recording.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Sample candidates in general demonstrated their good understanding of the passage given and some of them even received a perfect mark under this criterion, as their interpretation was also associated to the passage's context and sub-textual significance. Some however showed a rather limited capability to dig the underlying nuance and relied heavily on descriptive approach to the piece.

Criterion B: More than half of the candidates were able to show their good appreciation of the literary means and their relationship to the text's meaning. Yet, others failed to pay adequate attention to this aspect in their commentaries and their analysis in this regard was not convincing or solid.

Criterion C: There were still a rather big number of candidates in the sample group who failed to organise their commentary in a logical and coherent manner. Some organized their analysis with loosely connected points, while others adopted the linear approach to the passage. Their commentaries were therefore not well developed.

Criterion D: In general, candidates gave a smooth and well prepared performance which was reflected in the quality of their language. They showed a care with choice of register and terminology and expressed their ideas with a clear, precise language.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Make sure to understand correctly and follow closely the regulations for this exercise in terms of providing the passage and the guiding questions and conducting the subsequent discussion; pay attention to the administrative and clerical issues as well.

- Guide candidates to pay close attention to the literary tools and the shaping of the texts' meaning.

- Encourage candidates to explore the various aspects of the work in discussion and display their personal response to the issues as portrayed by the writers.

- Help candidates to build a sense of structure for their commentary, and organise their material in a logical and coherent fashion and deliver it with the right register.

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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

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

Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

There are many common characteristics in terms of strength and weakness between candidates' Standard Level and Higher Level written assignments. This report will include both levels.

There were only a small number of candidates who participated in the N13 Chinese A: Literature examination. Under the new requirements for the Written Assignment for the first time, many candidates demonstrated clear understanding of the nature of the assignment and were able to follow instructions correctly and meet expectations satisfactorily. No major irregularities appeared during the marking process. Most of the coursework was delivered on time. The texts selected were appropriate and all from the published list. The cover pages were correctly filled out and the format of the essays, including the referencing and the bibliography, was mostly satisfactory. Students' reflective Statements were all attached. However, only about half of the schools submitted the "Group 1 Notice of Works Studied (previously the 1/A1AP) in advance through IBIS. Some Reflective Statements submitted referred to works that were different from the works being discussed in the essay.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

For the most part the experience of marking the WA was positive. Without the "comparative" requirement, the new approach to the writing seemed to be more realistic in meeting the level of most candidates' ability, yet maintaining its challenging and rigorous edge. Many candidates seemed to have a clear understanding of the nature of the assignment and were able to follow the IB instructions correctly. Most candidates were awarded between 12-23 points, meaning very few finished their assignment with excellent quality but, on the other hand, very few did poorly.

Some candidates' Reflective Statements did not meet the requirement and their works exceeded the word limit. Some referred to works that were different from the works used in the essay.

Some did not use references when using quotations from the texts. Clear instructions from teachers on the issue would be helpful.

Picking a suitable discussion topic seemed challenging for many candidates. Weaker candidates tended to select topics that do not have a clear literary focus.

Candidate performance against each criterion

In the Reflective Statement, many put the emphasis on discussing the historical and cultural elements which the works revealed, rather than the historical and cultural contexts from which the work emerged.

Many candidates presented good to very good understanding of the works studied. However, personal perspectives were often absent in many of the writings. Too much paraphrasing was frequently observed. As the result, Criteria B and D often suffer.

It seemed the topic selection and the treatment was still a major problem for many. This is one of the reasons why there had been few candidates who did exceptionally well. Lack of personal, critical responses to the texts is a common weakness among many.

Candidates were generally better at organisation and creating adequate structure for their writing.

Many candidates' writing skills are weak so they did not do well in criterion E. Many struggled to make themselves clear as a result of grammatical and linguistic errors.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers need to provide more guidance to the candidates in terms of the text handling and topic selection.

- Teachers need to provide more guidance in terms of writing the Reflective Statement. Candidates need to understand what the historical and cultural elements mean and how it is important to engage in literary criticism.

- Candidates need to be encouraged to analyse, not paraphrase.

- Chinese writing fundamentals needs to be addressed. Many candidates' writing was problematic. Grammar, phrases and sentences contained mistakes.

- Schools need to submit the form of "Language A: Notice of Work Studied (previously 1/A1AP) on IBIS. Only a few schools followed the procedure this session.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 - 20

General comments

The difficulty level of the chosen passages proved accessible to most of the candidates. Their performance was in general solid and convincing and given a good or very good mark

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

Candidates showed no problem understanding the main message of the passage or poem, the theme was very straightforward. However, many of them were still unable to gain a clear grasp of the subtext of the passage chosen and engage in a critical exploration. Some also only managed to show rather vague awareness of the literary features of the text concerned and provide a brief and superficial discussion. In addition, it was a big challenge for most of the candidates to know how to develop their ideas in a logical and progressive way, as they could adopt the method of linear explanation of the story.

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

Most of the candidates made an effort to discover the main feelings and thoughts as conveyed in the texts and their significance. During their discussion, they were also able to make specific reference to the story or the poem to support their argument. Those stronger candidates also correctly investigated the importance of the ending. In analyzing the selected text's literary features, many candidates demonstrated their familiarity with the concepts required and carried out, to various degrees, a discussion of the typical technical devices of the genre concerned. In expressing their thoughts, candidates, as a whole, displayed effective writing skills.

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

Text 1: The prose piece was chosen by a majority of candidates. In their commentary, they showed their clear understanding of the evident message that the writer intends to convey. They were able to give their detailed interpretation of the narrator's attitude towards life and the relationship between him and his surroundings. The technical devices which are employed by the author and the effect were noticed and discuss by many of them. The area

which differentiated the very strong responses from the common ones was the in-depth analysis of the subtle feelings that the narrator expresses in the story.

Text 2: The poem was very much a minority choice as only a few candidates commented on it. In general, their interpretation of the piece's theme was adequate and the technical elements, such as imagery, tone and structure also received attention. As usual, most students constructed their commentaries by developing a sequential analysis of the piece, e.g. sentence by sentence and stanza by stanza.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- To provide candidates with some basic knowledge of the literary terms and concepts that are needed for this exercise, including their definition and role.

- To remind candidates to engage in careful reading and re-reading of the texts in order to gain a solid understanding of them and be able to interpret their underlying meaning.

- To teach candidates to pay attention to the effects of the techniques and styles employed by the authors and provide such an analysis in relation to the question in their answers.

- To train candidates on how to communicate and construct their arguments in a coherent manner and to encourage them to address the issue as raised in the given passage. They should not write a purely narrative account of what is described in the given passage.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 - 20

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

Candidates did reasonably well in this component. The examination materials seemed accessible for most of the candidates. There were no complaints from teachers regarding the suitability of the papers. The short poem, compared to the prose, seemed a bit challenging but the candidates who chose to do it achieved reasonably good results. However, the concerns in previous examiner reports about engaging in the study of poetry and in the ways of treating poetic imagery are still valid. It was evident that many candidates need more training on writing a poetry commentary.

When writing the commentary on the prose extract, some candidates relied too much on paraphrasing and line-to-line interpretation. They often overlooked some of the important aspects of the prose (attitude toward age/life) and failed to grasp the main message that the writer expressed. Furthermore, it was common for candidates to assume it is safe to treat all passages as texts which criticised the government or society.

The skill of handwriting needs to be addressed. Many candidates' handwriting was problematic, often illegible. The mistakes in grammar, phrases and sentences sometimes seemed overwhelmingly common.

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

Many candidates did reasonably well in recognising the main literary features in the prose extract and therefore could make adequate comments. Many candidates paid good attention to the stylistic devises such as creation of suspense, symbolism as well as the narrative tones therefore resulting in producing high quality commentaries and securing points on criterion B. Many candidates developed good structures in their commentaries, showing development of ideas and consequently doing well in criterion C.

In poetry, many candidates adequately recognised the writer's use of imagination and symbolism and made adequate comments. Some attempted to connect the literary devices with the specific historical background on which the poem was written in order to achieve a better understanding. However, those who tried to identify the meaning in every line of the poetry writing often failed to treat the poem holistically and poetically.

Many candidates did well in meeting the requirement of answering the guiding questions. Their writings were generally well structured, showing various degrees of idea development. Many showed the ability to engage in close reading and were conscious about the literary details used in the texts. Many were able to explore the possible connections between details such as light, colour, wind, and the writers' intention.

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

Many candidates did relatively well on criteria A and B. They demonstrated good understanding of the prose/poem and made adequate reference to the ways which language, structure and technique were used to shape meanings.

Many candidates did not do as well in criteria A and C because of excessive paraphrasing and line-to-line interpretation.

Many demonstrated their skills in identifying literary features and making comments accordingly. However, some failed to treat the text holistically and perceptively. The little poem at the end of the prose was significant but it was ignored by many.

Poor handwriting and poor referencing to the text may have a negative impact on some candidates' achievement, teachers are reminded to encourage good practices.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates' personal interpretations of a literary text should be encouraged. Standard formats or formulate 'template' approaches for the students to deal with paper one are not recommended.

- Help candidates to learn to plan their writing prior to drafting.

- Help candidates with examination time management.

- Encourage candidates to engage in more poetry study.

- Help students to practice their Chinese handwriting. The increasing trend of illegible writing among the candidates has a negative impact on their performance.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

General comments

In many papers, it was evident that the candidates received useful and relevant training prior to the exam. This was shown in their understanding of the nature of the task and the quality of their answers.

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

One challenge was that many candidates seemed to have difficulty in giving an in-depth and complete interpretation of the key demand of the question concerned. This affected the quality of their answers as they either could not see the related aspects of the issue or in some cases, they made a rather simplified and superficial analysis. This also prevented them from making effective use of the prepared material and from establishing a meaningful and convincing link between the texts studied and the chosen question. Besides, the production of the essay and the appreciation of the literary features of the works in relation to the question continued to be a relatively weak area in many scripts.

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

As in the past, most of the candidates were able to apply sufficient knowledge of the works studied in their answers. Yet, they still find it very hard to organise their thoughts in a progressive and coherent manner, as they only present the examples from the works one after another as their response to the question. In terms of their communication skills, they used the language in an adequate fashion and their choice of register and phrases were in general appropriate and smooth. The appreciation of the works' literary features in relation to the question was still the common weakness.

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

Approximately half of the candidates chose a question on novels, especially Question 12, and the questions on prose, short stories and poetry were also selected by a small number of candidates. As indicated above, candidates normally demonstrated an ability to grasp the main meaning of the chosen questions and tackled them in an adequate fashion. They were also confident enough to find relevant examples from the works studied to support their argument. However, as said before, their response lacked enough sophistication and depth as well as a comparison between the different works against the question. In addition, there were a big number of candidates who were unable to provide sufficient analysis of the technical devices employed by the authors in relation to the question.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- To teach candidates the literary terms and expressions related to genres and encourage them to use them correctly in answering the relevant question.

- To urge candidates to build a strong sense of planning for their writing, by unwrapping carefully the demand of the selected question before they formulate their answer. By doing so, they would be able to construct their essays with a focus and put forward their argument in a coherent and logical manner.

- To encourage candidates to challenge the validity of the statement given when needed.

- To teach candidates to appreciate the effects of the technical devices and styles employed by the authors and to include this analysis in relation to the question in their answers.

- To guide candidates on how to make a valid link between the different works against the question.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

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

Questions seemed straightforward and accessible for most of the candidates. There were no concerns from schools and teachers about the suitability of the questions. However, most candidates selected the novel and short story questions – which may be a reflection of schools' preference in terms of Part 3 choices.

There were only a few candidates who chose poetry questions and they tended to discuss the "content" of the poems rather than literary conventions of the genre.

Providing enough textual evidence to support one's arguments seems a challenge for some candidates. Mentioning only one or two lines from a short poem/story was not enough to support the arguments required by most of the paper two questions.

It was evident that many candidates lacked knowledge of Paper 2 criteria. They relied too much on paraphrasing to show their understanding of the text while overlooking the main demand(s) of the question.

Some candidates' handwriting caused problems at the time of marking.

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

Most candidates demonstrated their good understanding of works in Part 3. Providing details and examples helped many candidates when responding to the questions and making the arguments. It is evident that good examination preparation among candidates produced positive results.

Candidates' essays were generally complete, with satisfactory structure and development, indicating some good examination time management and effective writing practices.

Several candidates selected question 10 which dealt with narrative style and how narrative style reveals writer's positions in novel. Many candidates did well on this question.

While the number of good handwriting scripts seems to be diminishing, some candidates did write very good scripts.

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

Questions 2, 10, 12, 13 and 15 were popular choices among candidates. It seemed there were hardly any who chose to do Questions 3, 5, 6, 8 and 14. Since the total number of candidates was small, this may not be an indicator of questions' being too easy or too difficult.

It was evident that majority of the candidates engaged in close and detailed reading prior to the examination. Many were able to identify the key demands of the questions and to produce efficient arguments with support of textual evidence. However, the examination preparation was often double edged. The "formulated approaches" may have provided the candidates with some safe and standardised answers, but it ultimately becomes a limitation for candidates' creativity.

A small number of candidates used only one text to address the Paper 2 questions. This is against the regulation.

It was evident that some candidates only engaged with very few short poems or stories in their Part 3 studies. The thin and narrow textual coverage often limited candidates' response and made them fail to provide enough support for the arguments which most of the paper 2 questions required.

Questions 15 was another popular question among candidates. Since it asked about the use of details in short story writing, many tended to list as many details as possible instead of discussing the literary conventions and the ways which the writer chose to shape meanings.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Make sure candidates have covered enough texts to address a Paper 2 question. Not having enough text coverage will result in insufficient arguments.

- Help candidates to better plan their writing before starting to write.

- Teachers should help candidates engage more in studies of genre, having the candidates not only knowing what the author said but how the author said it through the particular genre thus producing special effects on the reader.

- Candidates should practice their handwriting. This is imperative in our current internet dominated time.