

German A: Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 17	18 - 33	34 - 47	48 - 60	61 - 73	74 - 85	86 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 14	15 - 26	27 - 41	42 - 55	56 - 68	69 - 81	82 - 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

A range of poems was submitted for part 1 and they were mostly of the correct length and level of difficulty. It has become apparent again though that particularly weaker students will struggle with very short poems. While good students will be able to talk about a sonnet at great length, the weaker ones will find it difficult to talk for anything getting close to 8 minutes. In other words, length is crucial!

While there were only a few samples without guiding questions, some schools/teachers "abused" the concept of two guiding questions by using very long questions which, in reality, contained many more and some used instructions in the same way. It should be noted that some teachers submitted guiding questions which were overly leading and contained information which the students should have given. Some questions required a simple "yes/no" answer.

It has been more obvious than ever that some teachers encourage students to pre-learn lengthy introductions (at times containing everything students ever want to say about the author but nothing relevant to the poem) and many answers.

There were only very few cases where the same texts appear to have been used too often or where the focus seems to have been on one text only for every candidate of a school.

Teachers should make every effort to avoid orals becoming formulaic and predictable, i.e. teachers often asked the same questions in the same sequence (not only in the second part).

Poems came from many epochs, with old-time favourites like Eichendorff, Novalis and Goethe but also Gryphius and Rilke and from the modern era Benn, Brecht, Kästner, Grass and Enzensberger and all were suitable.

The choice of works for the discussion was usually suitable too and well chosen. Again, many old-time favourites were part of the reading list - Goethe's "*Faust*" and Fontanes's "*Effie Briest*" but also Stamm's "*In fremden Gärten*", Koeppen's "*Tauben im Gras*", Mann's "*Mario und der Zauberer*" and Böll's "*Katharina Blum*".

In a few cases, a link between the poem and the work in discussion was obvious, such as in a poem by Brecht and the autobiography of Reich-Ranicki or a poem by Gryphius and Grass' "*Treffen in Telgte*".

Candidate performance against each criterion

In the past, it was nearly always the poem that generated the best performances and results. In this respect the change of the system will possibly push candidates towards better results in the IOC. The fact that candidates have to talk about two different works may seem somewhat hard at first but it gives them a wider possibility to demonstrate their knowledge. There were quite a few exams that differed considerably between the performance in the commentary and that in the discussion. In other words, students may perform well in the poem part but show less confidence in the work used for discussion and the other way round. This may be to the disadvantage of some, but is probably outweighed by a general advantage for many.

A - Knowledge and understanding of the poem

Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of their extracts but the understanding was not always of the same quality. While some produced in-depth commentaries, many still tended to narrate rather than use pertinent references to their poems. Pre-learning autobiographies, historical facts etc. is mostly not at all related to the poem and reduces valuable time a candidate has for talking about the poem itself.

Some candidates find it difficult to appreciate the text as a product of its time and thus misunderstand the meaning of the poem. Putting a poem in its context is important for a commentary and while candidates commenting on Baroque or Romantic poems often found it easier to do so, it will be difficult to produce an excellent comment on a Brecht poem without showing awareness of his theories relating to poetry.

B - Appreciation of the writer's choices

As expected this proved to be quite problematic for candidates and teachers. While the best students were able to show in great detail how meaning was created through the use of language, style etc. many struggled to show this in any detail or depth. Very often students did not comment on sentence structure at all or focused on their "pet stylistic device" rather than commenting on the full range. There were too many teachers who would not enable students to comment on language and style in subsequent questions as they would ask general questions, even if the student had not commented on them in sufficient detail.

One word of constant annoyance: only very few candidates used the expression "Vers" rather than "Zeile" and even some of the teachers made this mistake. With the use of poetry as a major part of the IOC this should be avoided.

C - Organisation and presentation of the commentary

Weaker candidates definitely struggled structuring their comments effectively, although poems often can be structured chronologically. As mentioned before, candidates were pressed for time, analysing important literary features, mentioning some background information on the author and the epoch, come to a thorough interpretation based on the literary features and with reference to them and answer the guiding questions – all in eight minutes! Some commentaries just ended midway due to lack of time, i.e. being cut short by the teacher. Therefore, the length of the poem is crucial!

D - Knowledge and understanding of the work used in discussion

This part varied tremendously. While a fair number of candidates performed well, demonstrating good to even excellent knowledge and understanding and came up with a personal response based on many aspects of the work in question, some struggled and did not offer much more than a summative overview of the events.

E - Response to discussion questions

Parts D and E of performance toward each criterion are heavily intertwined: the better the response to the questions the more knowledge and understanding of the work. In general, a true discussion between candidate and teacher was preferable to a pre-fabricated one where candidates obviously provided the answer the teacher wanted to hear. Overall, there were some genuine examples of a discussion, most orals, however, were simple question and answer sessions with questions and answers following the same patterns in many schools.

F - Language

My overall impression is that this year's candidates showed a high command of their A language, both grammatically as well as stylistically. However, the register remains a problem and very often candidates suffer from the teacher not using an appropriate register. Despite it being mentioned in every previous A1 subject report, many still talk about "books" rather than novels, dramas..., "Vers" is often replaced by "Zeile", "Autor" and "Erzähler/lyrisches Ich" etc. are not distinguished and quite a few colloquialisms are used.

For some candidates, however, German is not their mother tongue other than in an IB definition. Taking this into consideration and the fact that they may tend to make mistakes more often than native speakers they should be awarded with good marks provided their commentary and discussion

responses are a) comprehensible, b) their answers reflect a high knowledge and understanding of the works in question and c) they are capable of analysing a piece of work and appreciating its literary features. If all this is paired with a well-structured commentary there is no reason why a candidate cannot score 3 or even 4 points in the language criterion.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates should be encouraged to acquire and use a correct register and avoid colloquial language (this applies to some teachers, too)
- They need to develop a better understanding of the effect of language and style
- They need to show awareness that a text is a product of its time
- The choice of poem and its length can be vital for the success of candidates, especially the weaker ones
- The guidelines for timings should be followed
- Candidates (and teachers for that matter) need to be familiar with IB guidelines!

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

The majority of candidates performed well and managed to score 20+ marks on this component. There was a difference in the degree of difficulty of the works studied and analyzed: extracts from "Faust I" were much more challenging for candidates than more contemporary poems like "*Bildzeitung*" by Enzensberger. All works were suitable, but most teachers opted for popular works as they did in previous years. Length of individual extracts or poems varied, the longer ones were harder to do justice to and analyze in the prescribed time frame. The guiding questions were mostly appropriate in nature and number.

Candidate performance against each criterion

A – Knowledge and understanding of extract

The majority of candidates were either well prepared with regard to the work studied or at least adequately familiar with it. Criterion A received the highest points although there was a wide range. Some students spent too much time on authors' biographies and background information about the period at the beginning of their commentary. That was not necessarily relevant to the extract and took time away from the 8 minutes of analysis. I did not feel that it was a question of structuring, but that

maybe teachers had stressed the importance of making this part of the commentary. Weaker candidates tended to summarize instead of analyze. Most were able to place the passage into context where applicable.

B – Appreciation of the writer’s choices

There was a wide range of responses to this criterion from detailed analysis of the writer's stylistic choices to mostly ignoring them. All in all this was the weakest component, after criterion D. Candidates who are analyzing poems and classical works are often more aware of those stylistic elements, but even then they sometimes just mention things like alliteration, tone, rhetorical questions etc. and do not analyze further. Many candidates had a good knowledge of literary/stylistic terms, but were unable to connect the author's choices to the meaning of the poem/extract. Knowledge of these terms alone is not sufficient, there has to be some reflection on the meaning of these stylistic devices.

C – Organization and presentation

Organisation and presentation were often the weakest part of most commentaries as a lot of candidates went through their poems or extracts line by line. Few had a well planned structure for their commentary. Where there was a purposeful structure candidates integrated references to the text or delivered well organized commentaries starting with an introduction and a conclusion at the end.

D – Language

Language and register, with just one or two exceptions, was mostly clear and appropriate, at least adequate.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Put greater emphasis on structure and presentation of the extract and less on background information
- Make sure to stay within the time limit for the oral commentary
- Check equipment for background noise; find a quiet place for recording.
- It is not enough to identify and list literary devices, there needs to be a connection to meaning and interpretation

Further comments

Several commentaries were over 15 minutes in length, one was over 20 minutes.

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

There was a wide range of work submitted covering many genres: as ever, the works of North American dramatists such as Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams remain popular, as does 'Antigone' - both Sophokles' and Anouilh's version and Chekhov's 'Three Sisters', 'The Cherry Orchard' and inevitably Ibsen's 'Nora'. Novels also featured strongly as the basis for the essays, such as works by Flaubert, Albert Camus, Gabriel García Márquez, Ernest Hemingway and Paul Auster. Interestingly, several schools dared to branch into 'unknown' territory and chose African and Asian literature with Banana Yoshimoto's 'Kitchen' being a popular newcomer. Selected short stories by Ernest Hemingway were also a welcome addition. In some quite worrying cases several candidates from one school, had the same topic which led to almost identical arguments – a scenario that should be avoided at all costs. (Why is the play called "A doll's house"? and in another instance, 'Resistance' in "Antigone").

Some essays centred on the characterisation of protagonists, which occasionally led to candidates relying too heavily on re-telling aspects of the work rather than interpreting them. The same was true for essays which attempted an evaluation of Camus' existentialism based on a character or aspect of 'The Outsider' and essays linking the demise of the Confederate States in the USA with Blanche du Bois' downfall in 'Streetcar named Desire'. In general, essays concentrating on aspects of symbolism, language used by certain protagonists or ambiguity between two characters attained higher results, and essays with a title formulated in question form or hypothesis were particularly successful in attaining the highest marks.

One student compared an aspect of two of the three works which is not allowed anymore – that is what last year's comparative assignment entailed. In one particular school's case, candidates had opted for Haruki Murakami's "An elephant vanishes", but instead of examining a certain aspect in one story, two short stories were selected without a particular focus which led to the candidates getting lost within their analysis.

In some cases, the topic of the written assignment was too broad or general, and did not allow an in-depth approach. A simple "Characterisation of Dr Zhivago" as assignment title is not suitable at all for this task, and teachers should advise their students to look for more challenging and interesting topics – that is what the supervised writing prompts are there for, to prepare them properly and guide them without giving them their final topic.

Candidate performance against each criterion

A - Fulfilling the requirements of the reflective statement

A surprising number of candidates did not attain the full 3 marks for the reflective statement. These often failed to demonstrate how their understanding had been extended or enriched as a result of the class discussion.

A good number, though, showed a clear development of their understanding of cultural and contextual considerations of the discussed work, but others just summarised the plot instead of focussing on their learning process during the interactive oral and their reaction to it.

Some reflective statements were clearly written after the written assignment, stating the exact topic they were going to look at in their essay – that is not the chronological order of the works in translation assessment part. At present, the reflective statements can either be typed or handwritten - if latter, it must be legible, though.

B - Knowledge and understanding

Most candidates demonstrated good even profound knowledge of their chosen work, but many tend to repeat ideas or drift off into another topic. There were some inaccuracies, too: Flaubert's unloved Charles Bovary might be a simple man, but he certainly is not 'retarded' as one student put it. Ibsen's Nora does not contemplate taking her own life and Williams' Stanley does not rape Blanche because he is anxious that she might deprive him of the family money, but to finally push his sister-in-law to breaking point.

Many candidates also exploited pertinent references of literary criticism, and should be encouraged to cite all of these works in a bibliography at the end of their essay. Candidates should be reminded that it is not necessary for the introduction of their essay to provide a summary of the work which is always familiar to the examiner – nor do they need to explain their course of action.

C - Appreciation of the writer's choices

This was a difficult criterion for the majority of students, but could have easily been achieved by paying special attention to language, structure and style. One candidate stated that the characters were trying to express their contempt by using various linguistic and stylistic means. Whether one approves or disapproves of the work under discussion – it is unsuitable for a student to challenge Gabriel Garcia Marquez' position as renowned writer, heavily criticising his gender portrayal in "*Chronicle of a death foretold*", labelling him as chauvinist and questioning as to why he was given the Nobel prize. Because most topics were content based, the actual appreciation of the writer's choices fell short for most candidates.

D - Organization and Development

The majority of candidates did well in this criterion, logically building up their arguments, supporting them with relevant quotes, clearly structuring their essay into introduction, main body and conclusion to bring it to a close. Some candidates were missing their reflective statement and quite a few did not include their bibliography. In one particularly careless case, the candidate had repeated an entire paragraph word for word. Again, a problem remains using references properly as many candidates just listed a quote – in some cases even several - without any explanation or embedding them into the flow of their arguments. Sometimes, the chosen quotes did not fit with the previously made statement,

had the exact same content as that statement or were too long. A few candidates just quoted certain phrases, but did not link it with a page number which is worrying. It is quite obvious that some teachers have not taught their candidates how to properly quote from the same work continuously, using *ibid.*

E - Language

Overall, many candidates wrote at a high academic standard, however, there were also many whose silly mistakes in this criterion lost them valuable points.

There are many areas within the language criterion that need addressing:

Spelling mistakes such as „er währe; Sichtwiese; Landarzt; widerspiegeln; Kammeraden; befielt, repräsentativ“ are errors that can be avoided by simply re-reading and double-checking the essay.

Candidates should never start a sentence with „weil“, „und“ or „obwohl“, avoid writing their assignment from a first person point-of-view to make it more academic, and use the correct tense.

Several grammatical issues also arose – 'das' and 'dass' remains a problem; punctuation seems to be difficult for those students studying in English-speaking institutions, and hence, it must be practised.

Incorrect German quotation marks, the wrong use of apostrophes (they are not the same as in English) and mixing English and German terms as in “ein weiteres masochistisches Statement” should be addressed by teachers as well.

Candidates must be aware that the written assignment is a piece of academic writing and the start of many that they will encounter at university. Colloquialisms must be avoided as there were several candidates whose writing style was too informal:

- ein krasses Beispiel.....
- ja, es ist nämlich so....
- Jedoch besteht immer das Gefühl, dass Roberto schuldig ist, da er immer versucht, sich bei Gerardo einzuschleimen
- ..da er auf klassische Musik von Wagner steht....
- Zwischen Hedda und Brack war schon einige Zeit vor dem Anfang des Dramas etwas gelaufen
- Die andere Backe wird nahezu dankend hingehalten

A too colloquial expression, mixing it with English and incorrect spelling in addition is not a winning combination either:Hemmingway selbst war ein bekennender outdoor-Fetichist.

Quite shockingly, the German cases remain a problem and need to be addressed by the teacher:

- Als Leser lehrt mir der Text....
- Von seiner eigener Fantasie....
- Innerhalb dem ersten Teil...

The difference between the verbs 'wissen' and 'kennen' should be clear to candidates at higher level.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

The steps leading up to the written assignment are crucial. What is an interactive oral and what is it supposed to cover and what is the reflective statement based on. The question is VERY important in order to get full marks on criterion A.

Teachers need to spend more time going over analysis – there was too much summary in some of the assignments and candidates should bear in mind that the examiners know the works well.

Teachers must put more emphasis on working on criterion C: appreciation of the writer's choices. Candidates need to be totally immersed with the work their written assignment is based on and be able to read in between the lines.

Correct referencing is of paramount importance (life-long skill) and that is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Teachers must inform their candidates that choosing an interesting and specific topic is the key to success here - also, candidates should be encouraged to explore an unusual angle as many topics were very repetitive.

Teachers should not guide them in their choice of topic or question to avoid similar essays.

More time should be spent on academic writing – profound expressions, avoidance of colloquialism, sentence structure and correct spelling (capitalised spelling in German) and grammatical structures.

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

All the essays were based on works from the present PLT and consisted of works that had been translated into German. Only very few essays were a language mix (references, quotations) of German with examples written in English.

There were some very good assignments with outstanding and interesting topics down to assignments not suitable for the tasks. In some cases the entire class seemed to have prepared one written assignment work only (*Huckleberry Finn*). „*Der Drachenläufer*“ was very popular this year but unfortunately the essays on it tended to be mainly narration of content rather than a critical discussion.

Candidate performance against each criterion

A - Fulfilling the requirements of the reflective statement

Many candidates appeared to be fairly ignorant of the requirements of the reflective statement. It was either too long and a preparation/draft for their own essay on their specific topic or a general statement without demonstrating understanding of/reflection on cultural and contextual aspects. Some reflective statements were written in class as a task in one of the lessons and hand written – not really based on a discussion or they simply reiterated the opinion of the class without an opinion of their own. Here, self-taught students showed great difficulty to fulfil the requirement.

B - Knowledge and understanding

In general, candidates chose topics well and displayed good knowledge and mostly good understanding of the works. A topic phrased as a question is usually more helpful in staying focussed and not drifting off – into historical excursions, biographical notes, textual and other unnecessary information.

C - Appreciation of the writer's choices

Appreciation of language, structure, technique or style were sometimes mentioned but hardly addressed/analysed – this seemed to be the most difficult criterion; teachers need to prepare candidates thoroughly in this regard and mention the loss of at least 3-4 points.

Even many essays of good quality did not refer to the effect of stylistic features. A good number of candidates were not familiar with the terminology of stylistic features and mixed up symbol and motif or symbol and metaphor.

D - Organization and Development

Many essays showed a lack of planned structure – repetitions were a sign that ideas had not been developed effectively and logically. In some cases, candidates lost sight of the topic and arrived at conclusions with little or no reference to the chosen theme.

Often, candidates forgot to justify statements by integrating examples/quotations from works selected. These references ought to be part of the essay rather than being mentioned as footnotes.

Essays with a word limit of 1 000 words or below were simply too short to do justice to the task.

Here, too, examiners wondered whether candidates were always familiar with IB requirements.

E - Language

As always, there was quite a mix of abilities – candidates completely out of their depth and not only from a language point unable to do justice to the task and others who displayed a good or even excellent command of the language, expressing ideas clearly, precisely and convincingly. In some cases, candidates should have proof-read their assignment, used a spell-check and handed in a paper that was legible.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates need to work with the criteria and be made aware of the reduction of points/marks if neglected
- Pay more attention to criterion C
- Teachers need to read instructions more carefully: reflective statement based on a class discussion, printed version, length, help with choice of topics, integration of references and –last but not least- on proof reading
- Adhere to the word-limit (and do not go below it)
- Self-taught candidates should not attempt the task without the help of a tutor who understands the requirements.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20

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

With each of the two questions to choose from there were aspects that were difficult for the candidates. The majority of candidates elected to write a commentary on question 2, the Bonhoeffer poem. To arrive at an interpretation with the appropriate quotes seemed difficult for many. They made up all sorts of stories that had nothing to do with what the poem was about. Some got stuck on '*Selbstfindung*' and made the commentary all about their own experiences, others decided it was a social commentary about the conditions in Nazi prisons and attempted to prove that the poem was criticizing these. With the prose extract in question 1 most of the candidates who chose that option ignored stylistic features and concentrated on what was happening at the FDJ meeting and the GDR in general. For both questions there were an astounding number of candidates with truly inadequate language skills that ranged from barely understandable (and illegible) to riddled with so many spelling mistakes that examiners were unable to mark every single one of them for lack of time. At times it was hard to figure out what exactly some candidates were trying to say. A lot of candidates structured their commentaries poorly. They either went through the poem or extract line by line or wrote a summary without reference to the text or poem.

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

Candidates in the higher mark range were particularly well prepared to analyse stylistic devices and their effect. They used excellent quotes to illustrate their thoughts for commentaries on question 1

particularly. They knew a lot of literary terms and some used them well to understand the poem in more depth, others simply listed as many stylistic devices as they could without addressing their role in the meaning of the extract or poem.

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

Question 1

The most successful commentaries showed that the candidate understood the role of L. in and around the FDJ meeting and were able to see different perspectives and nuances. It was also impressive that those candidates who analyzed stylistic devices and the author's choices came up with very good understanding of the different voices and perspectives expressed in the extract

The weakest candidates often engaged in a general criticism of communism and were unable to back up their arguments with pertinent quotations. A surprising number failed to notice, or took no regard of, the footnotes, e.g. placing the piece during World War II. There was also far too much paraphrasing with no focussed attempt at analysis. Several of the interpretations included too much speculation.

Question 2

Some candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of Bonhoeffer's situation and were able to place it in a historical context without losing sight of the poem itself. A few showed great sensitivity to the nuances of the poem and what was expressed. There were some very good writers who structured the commentary clearly and effectively in beautiful language. This poem is sophisticated and the detailed analysis and interpretation that some candidates achieved was very impressive.

The weakest candidates showed a complete lack of understanding of the core meaning of the poem. Again there were a lot of speculative interpretations without supporting quotations and far too much summary of the poem line by line and / or paraphrasing. A surprising number of candidates still do not know how to write a commentary and simply wrote a personal reaction to the poem.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It is important that students know more than just the basics of the German language. Formal writing skills and accurate spelling must be practised and consolidated in preparation for these assessments.

It is not enough to name lots of literary devices without also looking for why they are there and what their effect is.

Standard level paper one

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

The structure of an essay seems still to be difficult. The introduction is often too weak, just stating author and title, but not the thesis, which the student intends to investigate. The conclusion is often just a summary rather than a pointed conclusion of the analysis.

The language in standard level papers is far too regularly very weak indeed. Not only is formal expression missing, but also are there too many mistakes in punctuation and spelling.

To form the "appreciation of the writer's choices" into a fluent structure causes problems for many students. Too many candidates just list literary features, but do not interpret them.

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

As both choices of paper 1, the text and the poem, were not that difficult to understand in their main meaning, most candidates could grasp the main idea. Most of the candidates could identify at least some of the important features.

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

Candidates showed strength in setting the text into its historical context, but then were weak in looking more carefully into language and technique of the excerpt. Most pupils could identify the structure of both text and poem. Pupils seemed to have found it difficult to analyse the details of the poem and its progressive structure. They could identify the cut, but then didn't focus on it deeply enough.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

In order to make sure that the candidates identify more specific features of the text/poem and interpret them accordingly, there has to be more practice. This has to include a discussion of the structure of an essay, which needs to be match international standards. Pupils seem not to be aware of the criteria for an introduction, conclusion and of developing a structure of the main body. Avoid making general statements! Candidates should learn how to use the analysis for proving their interpretation rather than just naming as many literary features as possible!

The language is a big problem; punctuation is hardly existent, spelling of simple words catastrophic and a formal expression almost not existent.

Further comments

Punctuation, spelling and the lack of formal expression seem to get worse. Very often, essays can be understood only by second reading, after having been corrected. German pupils seem to find it particularly difficult to structure their essays into a coherent piece, which develops/follows an idea. They prefer to summarize rather than analyse & interpret. Maybe teachers could ask more "why?", "Why is it written in this way?" "What's the intention of structuring the text/poem like this or of using these techniques?"

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

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

Many candidates struggled to apply their pre-acquired knowledge to the actual task in hand. The questions chosen were often not referred to appropriately or convincingly. Several candidates seemed to re-produce related essays, which they had previously written, without relating them convincingly to the question they were answering. One strategy used quite regularly was to “tweak” the question so that it fitted in with the needs of the candidate! Another strategy, often used to assure the reader of the connection to the title, was to repeat the question as regularly as possible throughout the script. This was very tiring to read and does not serve its intended purpose.

Most candidates probably knew the texts they had studied very well, but there was too often a lack of detailed knowledge within the scripts. Many candidates summarised their texts instead of analysing them.

The scripts were rarely well structured. The comparison was often particularly weak and regularly only became apparent in the conclusion. Here a more effective structure would have helped to connect the separate analysis of the texts.

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

Most candidates knew their works well and were able to summarise the plot successfully. Many had a good repertoire of pre-learned knowledge, structures and theoretical concepts, but a lot of candidates then tried to manipulate the question to fit their needs. Most candidates wrote at length. Most candidates focussed their essays on just two works, rather than trying to include three. This certainly helped the structure and the depth of ideas presented.

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

1. "Liebesgeschichte" – This was a popular question, but often responses just focused on content, not on the effect of love on the structure of the play
2. "Dialoge und gesellschaftliche Veränderungen" – This was a challenging question. Often candidates did not focus on "dialogue" as in a "conversation" but rather a statement or a speech
3. "Ort" – Great question, several candidates achieved highly on this question. When less successful, the response was often too shallow. (Location as in just "city" rather than different/specific areas)

4. "Glaubwürdigkeit des Erzählers" – Very good question, chosen by better candidates because it allowed them to present a detailed argument.
5. "Erwartungen von Größe vs Heldenhaftigkeit" – The problem is that most students had no idea about a classical hero and thought of Disney-like Super-Heroes. Therefore, there were several doubtful arguments.
6. "Symbolik" – Like 5, a shocking number of candidates don't know what a symbol is and just add up different types of figurative language. In these essays, the structure was often weak
7. "Geschichte in Geschichte" – Too many candidates didn't understand the story within a story problem. The majority of the responses to this question were weak.
8. "Stilistische Merkmale" – For well prepared students who learned their novella characteristics, this proved to be a very accessible question, often with very good results.
9. "Schicksal nur ausschnittsweise dargestellt" – Problem with the question, often twisted which ended in a weak argument.
10. "Ausdruck von Gefühlen in Gedichten" – Good question but the few candidates who chose this, did not really excel.
11. "Natur als Ausdruck von menschlicher Erfahrung" – no response
12. "wörtliche Rede/Gespräch" - no response

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Read the question properly
- Study how to structure an essay effectively
- Know your works well, including how to spell the name of the author
- Teach the difference between summarising, paraphrasing and analysing
- Encourage a concise, short paper rather than elaborate one based on repetitions
- Encourage independent thinking: the candidates should not criticise the authors but can judge the effectiveness or the interpretation of standard features.
- Paragraphing

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 25

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

Many candidates selected a question without reflecting whether it was suitable with reference to the works they had studied.

Many introductions were rather far-fetched without an obvious link to the works selected and not leading to the main body of the essay. An increasing number of candidates used the introduction to state how they were going to structure their essay or by answering the question in a way, which should be part of the conclusion.

In too many cases, a question was chosen without thinking about what it entailed – and candidates simply wrote down everything they knew about their works and author(s) - information that was partly irrelevant in regard to the question.

Unfortunately, the difference between summarising content and interpretation does not appear clear to many candidates. This may explain why so many essays failed to focus on the question chosen – for example, discussing the importance of place should have been an easy topic. It was not sufficient to mention that in Brecht's Galileo many cities in Italy are mentioned showing that Galileo moved around the country. Another example: Güllen is the place in Dürrenmatt's Besuch der alten Dame and does not merely stand for "Gülle", but it is also mentioned as a town of cultural importance.

The analysis of literary features was another criterion where candidates lost marks because they either overlooked this point completely or they mentioned some but without analysis and reference to the work and the effect thus achieved.

Another problem was theatre theory - most candidates who had chosen a Brecht play, usually Das Leben des Galilei or Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, mentioned the device of distancing effects (Verfremdungseffekt) – but did not show with reference to the work how and why and with what effect on the reader/audience.

Several candidates, despite delivering strong work, failed to include any quotes, or simply just added the quote to a statement instead of weaving it into the text flow.

The majority of students lost marks in criterion E due to silly and unnecessary language inaccuracies: incorrect grammar, orthography, expression, repetitions, and tenses.

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

A fair number of candidates showed good knowledge and usually also a reasonable to good understanding of the works chosen. Unfortunately, though, too many mistook summarisation for interpretation and failed to focus their essay on the question selected.

Most candidates, however, selected only two works and displayed adequate to good knowledge and often even understanding.

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

1. "Liebesgeschichte" - most candidates simply summarised the love story without questioning its importance for the play nor what role it played in regard to the development of the plot mostly, candidates treated the works chosen separately and only some good essays included a comparative element
2. "Dialoge und gesellschaftliche Veränderungen" - most candidates found it difficult to remember dialogues to use as a basis for their discussion because in most cases they probably did not understand the question. The second part of the question - social changes are expressed through/in the dialogue - was therefore hardly ever addressed
3. "Ort" – was often answered too superficially as explained above; other places (the description of the surroundings in Dürrenmatt's Die Physiker, for example) were often not even considered
4. "Glaubwürdigkeit des Erzählers" - most candidates just gave a superficial description of the narrator without investigating whether he was trustworthy
5. "Erwartungen von Größe vs Heldenhaftigkeit" – a few good essays which defined the term `hero` and explained the difference between the hero of a classic play and a hero like Jakob (Becker, Jakob der Lügner) or Gregor (Andersch, Sansibar)
6. "Symbolik" - most candidates struggled to define the term and therefore failed to focus their answer sufficiently. It has been surprising just how much formal literary terminology appears to be unknown to the candidates.
7. "Geschichte in Geschichte" - few candidates chose this topic; and those who did knew what they were talking about.
8. "stilistische Merkmale" – most essays addressed the question and demonstrated good knowledge but many failed to consider the second part of the question, "Bedeutung" and "Wirkung"
9. "Schicksal nur ausschnittsweise dargestellt" – hardly anybody understood this topic; candidates referred to ONE SCENE and analysed it; a small number of candidates did, though, discuss at least some features typical for a Novelle, Kurzgeschichte etc.
10. "Ausdruck von Gefühlen in Gedichten" - only one response; too descriptive
11. "Natur als Ausdruck von menschlicher Erfahrung" – no response
12. "wörtliche Rede/Gespräch" - no response

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- More practice in writing a fluent essay, using the correct register – spelling, grammar, punctuation
- Teaching the difference between summarisation and interpretation
- Practise how to understand questions in their entirety with the help of past papers
- Practise structuring an essay: introductions have to lead to the main body of the essay and conclusions are not a summary of the main body
- Teach candidates the important literary devices so that they understand them and can use them
- Make clear to candidates that literary features and for that matter quotations should not simply be mentioned but need to be analysed with reference to works