

May 2013 subject reports

Swedish B

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-15	16-31	32-48	49-61	62-74	75-87	88-100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-15	16-30	31-48	49-61	62-75	76-88	89-100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-6	7-12	13-17	18-21	22-26	27-30

General comments

Teachers are reminded that 2/BIA from must be completed in full, including description of what kind of interactive oral activities the candidate participate in.

The instructions about the use of photos and captions, as specified in the Guide, was not always followed by teachers. Please note that the same picture can be used for several candidates but the caption must be different each time. In some cases the caption was illegible due to poor quality of the picture, which presented problems. It is also of importance that all photos include a caption, as this is often a springboard to more interesting and stimulating expolrations and the chance for moving away from too much simple description.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Most topics selected were suitable. However, many focussed on the same traditions, were very similar in their nature, and often fairly uninteresting and simple in their approach. Candidates often limited themselves to describing food items or activities connected to the festival. Some topics lent themselves a little too much to descriptive presentations although, of course, it is possible that presentations on such topics could be well handled by some candidates, especially if encouraged by suitably challenging captions and follow-up questions. Some topics were unsuitable because they did not relate to Swedish culture.

A few teachers did not seem to be aware that the discussion phase should relate to the picture. While it is acceptable for a fresh topic to be introduced during the course of the discussion, this part should always begin by probing further into the topic and the candidate's presentation. It is NOT acceptable to introduce a second picture.

Timing is now not a significant problem, as most teachers seem to have understood the expectations under the new structure. However, there are still samples where the presentation is too long and the teacher has failed to stop the candidate.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Productive skills

High standard was demonstrated overall. Many candidates reached the highest mark band demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary and idiomatic usage. Grammar and sentence structure was also used effectively. It seems that many candidates have experience of speaking Swedish at home or elsewhere, since their speech is of native or near native level. Having said this, some candidates are clearly genuine second language learners of Swedish and naturally they would have to work harder to achieve the higher marks. Centres should be aware that it is not appropriate to place candidates who already have a high level of fluency in a language into a Language B course.

In part 2 of the examinations the performance of some candidates became less effective as it involves more spontaneous responses. The more relaxed and natural the interaction between the teacher and candidate is, the more successful the outcome seems to be.

Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills

Most candidates did well in this criterion. Many achieved higher marks in this criterion than in criterion A. Most seemed to enjoy talking to their teachers and the understanding between them was usually good. However, when candidates did not reach the higher bands, it was often due to poor questioning technique by the teacher. The follow-up questions sometimes tended to be more prescriptive and fact-finding in nature, which did not encourage the candidate to develop their ideas or move their thinking onto a deeper level. If the candidate can show in the subsequent questions that they are able to demonstrate complex thinking, they would receive higher marks. Some candidates do well here but many could do better if challenged more.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

HL candidates who have a good command of Swedish should also be encouraged to challenge themselves in order to achieve higher marks and choose topics that are more demanding than simply describing what they can see on the picture.

The choice of topics this year seemed more limited than in previous years. Teachers are encouraged to think beyond the most obvious aspect of Sweden's culture or festivals, such as Midsummer and Christmas.

Refrain from "yes / no" questions or questions 'fishing' for a particular answer. This type of questioning prevents candidates from demonstrating higher-order thinking and appropriate skills.

Make sure the questions asked are interesting to the candidate and formulated in a way that they have to answer with a few sentences. This will enable candidates to show that they are able to express more complex ideas. This was perhaps the most common issue noted by examiners this year: to stimulate the candidates and to challenge their thinking.

Please encourage the candidates to take initiative in the examination if they feel they are not receiving questions that are challenging them to their full potential. Strategies to do this may be practised during class.

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-6	7-12	13-17	18-21	22-26	27-30

General comments

Teachers are reminded that form 2/BIA must be completed in full, including description of the nature of the interactive activity assessed in class. Sometimes there was a big difference in marks recorded between the marks for the Individual Oral and the Interactive Oral. It is good practice to explain such differences on the 2/BIA forms.

Please note that the same picture can be used for several candidates but the caption must be different each time. Many teachers used the same photos AND captions for several candidates. Please see the Handbook of Procedures for clarification.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The stimuli were often 'correct' regarding topic, but many photos were unsuitable and less effective for a variety of reasons:

- The quality was often poor - black and white, grainy and not showing details clearly.
- Steriotypical scenarios which did not stimulate to discussion or interesting ideas/developments.
- Titles or captions were often unimaginative and lacking in inspirational qualities. The best ones provoked or took the candidates thoughts outside the expected ideas.
- Time was used well most of the time. This has improved with the disappearance of the 'general discussion'.

Unfortunately, the quality of the extended discussion linked to the initial topic did not always go beyond the more obvious ideas. Sometimes the candidate's thoughts were simply broadened, not deepened.

Time was clearly controlled much better with the new assessment format, although some teachers let the candidate talk for too long during part 1.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Productive skills

Candidates' command of the spoken language varied greatly, from very limited and barely comprehensible to very good with natural intonation. At times it was difficult to interpret and assess the language, especially when the candidate was hesitant or displayed many errors. In part two, many candidates failed to maintain the same level of language as in part one. Grammar and vocabulary often showed more limitations when the assessment moved into a discussion format.

Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills

Many candidates demonstrated a good ability to engage actively and most reached the middle mark bands. However, very few displayed an ability to engage in and present complex ideas. The flow of the conversation was often not maintained or it became repetitive.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should try to encourage candidates to make more of the caption and try to link the caption to the picture. This can often lead to more interesting ideas, especially if the caption/title is 'provocative' or express an opinion or controversial statement. The discussion will most certainly take a more interesting and profound turn and more complex ideas will surface.

Teachers should train candidates to briefly describe the photo before they discuss the topic. Especially for weaker candidates, this could present an opportunity to raise their marks. More able candidates need to go beyond the more obvious, and perhaps use the descriptive phase as not just simply an opportunity to describe what they can see, but what it might represent.

If teachers could prepare some open ended questions related to the topic and pictures, the discussion might flow better. Sometimes the candidates were not given appropriate support during the discussion which meant that the responses remained on a superficial level. Teachers could practise asking questions such as 'explore', 'interpret', 'analyse' and 'develop', as well as the more usual 'how' and 'why'. Avoid closed questions, when the teacher is 'fishing' for a particular fact or specific word. This does not really give the candidate an opportunity to show his/her interactive skills but seemed simply makes them nervous and insecure.

Higher level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-7	8-11	12-14	15-18	19-21	22-25

General comments

Some centres provided a short summary of the novels that the candidates based their WA on. Even though this was not mandatory, it was very thoughtful and proved helpful to examiners.

A few centres did not use the appropriate forms for filling in the marks.

On the whole, the candidates seemed to appreciate and have very good understanding of the literature they had read. They evidently selected the works that they liked the most for their assignments and the different themes seemed to engage them.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The candidates had read many different works, from classics such as by Strindberg, Lagerlöf, Lagerkvist, through to modern novels such as by Guillou and Gardell. In terms of the assignment itself, candidates tended to choose the following text types: letter, diary, article, review. Some candidates had read works by Astrid Lindgren that are almost children's books (Bröderna Lejonhjärta and Sunnanäng). Teachers should select works that are little more demanding for HL candidates.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Language. In general, most candidates had quite effective language. Some candidates seemed to have fluent Swedish.

Criterion B: Content. Most candidates incorporated their aims quite well with the literature and the connection was good. Some, however, more reiterated the plot than used the literature to reach their aims. Paragraphing was overall very good. Some ideas were not always organized well, however.

Criterion C: Format. Candidates produced the letter text type well, but they could make sure they know how to write Swedish dates, salutations, punctuation etc. in the correct way. Many had a natural interactive tone. Many candidates also wrote a diary entry. Here, some did well and achieved a reflective tone. However, some simply retold the plot which was not convincing in a diary format. Articles also proved to be a risky text type. Many candidates did not define or explain what kind of article they were producing and thereby lost their aim. Some of these articles were more like essays. It should be born in mind that the written assignment is a creative task and therefore an acadmic (literary) essay is not an appropriate text type.

Most candidates had written the correct number of words. Very few wrote more than 600 words.

Criterion D: Rationale. This appeared to be the most challenging criterion. Most candidates wrote fewer than 150 words and often it seemed that if they had written the full 150 words they would have scored higher by making their rationale more clear. All candidates stated which text type they had chosen. About half of the candidates explained which aspect they had chosen to focus on. Half of the candidates were clear about their aims. Many candidates had too many aims or their aims were not suitable (for example, "show that I have read the book" or "show my knowledge about X and Y...").

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Make sure the candidates understand the demands of all the criteria, especially the rationale. Practise producing and analyzing them in class, discussing what makes them good, what is missing etc. Explain the need to write 150 words in the rationale, and not shorter, since the shorter the rationale the more likely it is that it will not be sufficiently clear, detailed, and linked to the literature.

Remind the candidates to check their own rationales after they have written them. They should ask themselves 'is my aim clear?', 'which aspect have I chosen from this novel?', 'have I explained it clearly?', 'how am I going to reach my aim?' - it is not enough to say "by writing a letter" because that is simply stating the text type. Use some examples from the literature to explain how those aspects from the novel will help to inform/persuade/forgive etc.

Teach the candidates what they need to include in the different text types. A letter is not only a date and a 'hello' phrase; there has to be a personal address and a need to communicate, for instance. A diary has to include some kind of reflection and there has to be a natural reason why they would write a diary. Discuss the difference between an article and an essay. Explain that an article is written in a context (who reads the article, what needs to be explained and why is the article written? To inform only (news) or persuade? If it's more about persuasion than information, perhaps a letter to the editor is better?).

Standard level written assignment

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

General comments

Many centres did not use the appropriate forms for filling in the marks.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

The range of core topics from the different centres was varied and interesting. Only in very few instances did the choice of the three texts make it difficult for the candidates to choose an aspect.

Generally, the teachers had picked very interesting and suitable texts that seemed to have appealed to the candidates.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Language. Language levels varied, probably depending on how long the candidates had spent learning Swedish. Almost all managed to write between 300-400 words.

Criterion B; Content. Too many candidates seemed to think that they had to explicitly mention all three sources, quoting the headlines and the writers of the articles. Very often the texts therefore turned out to be summaries of the three texts. This made the incorporation of the ideas from the sources somewhat unnatural, for instance in a diary entry.

Criterion C: Format. Candidates normally picked a suitable format, but the text type must be effective in order to achieve the maximum marks available, which takes some effort. Some candidates selected the format "letter" but simply summarized the three texts between a 'hello' and a 'goodbye' phrase which is not sufficient to achieve a high score.

Criterion D: Rationale. This criterion is where candidates struggled the most. All candidates mentioned their text type, but hardly any explained the aspect they will focus on. About half of the candidates stated their aim by using the word "aim", but often they had too many aspects they "wanted" to convey which made the rationale and the task unfocused. Furthermore, hardly any candidates seemed aware how to explain HOW they achieved their aims. They seemed to have misunderstood this part and only explained the text type. For example, a candidate might state that they had chosen to write a blog because a blog would allow them to write informal language which suited the topic and for giving their opinions, but nothing at all about HOW they used the sources to achieve their aims. Very few rationales were linked to the sources. Hence the candidates often received their lowest mark for the rationale.

The rationale was almost always shorter than 100 words. The recommended word count for the rationale is 100 words and candidates are unlikely to have provided all the information needed to achieve the maximum marks if they come in too far below this.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Please see HL Written Assignment section.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-10	11-21	22-33	34-40	41-47	48-54	55-60

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

A number of candidates had problems giving short answers and selecting the relevant details. The True/False with justification questions sometimes appeared confusing for some average or weaker candidates; some gave the correct justification but ticked the wrong box or vice versa, which resulted in a zero mark. Another problematic area was providing a single word or a short phrase from the text.

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

The general level of competence of the candidates was very high. A significant number of candidates seemed to have achieved a total mark of 50 or more. Only a few candidates received marks below 30. The majority of candidates had a good range of vocabulary which helped to demonstrate their competence in text handling (the tasks relating to both intensive and extensive reading). In general, the matching and reference exercises did not cause any difficulties to the candidates.

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

Text A turned out to be challenging to some extent for many candidates despite the accessible content of the text. Q5 “Det kliar i fingrarna” was most often answered incorrectly. Q1, 7 and 9 were mostly answered correctly. Q10-11: The word “undvik” was missed by many candidates. Most candidates ticked the correct box but gave a false justification.

Text B was the easiest part with most correct answers. In Q16, the most difficult option in the set was C, which was missed by many candidates.

Text C was of average level of difficulty and the candidates’ performances varied significantly. Even average to good candidates seemed to have difficulty with Q21. Q22 was mostly answered correctly.

Text D appeared to have been quite demanding, perhaps due to the literary content. Average to good candidates scored well in Q31-35 and Q38 but many answered Q36-37 incorrectly. The weaker candidates mostly missed Q36-37 and Q39-42.

Text E produced mixed performance and varied responses in general. Q43-45 were mostly answered correctly but in Q46-47 many candidates gave the correct justification but ticked the wrong box or vice versa, which resulted in zero mark. In Q48 many average candidates gave the word “klasskompisarna”. The most difficult option in the set in Q51 was E, which was missed by many candidates. Many candidates gave option A as the answer. Q51-55 were mostly answered correctly, even by weaker candidates.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers are advised to familiarise candidates with the appropriate techniques for answering various types of questions quickly and effectively as well as to explain and practise written answer techniques required for each particular task.

Please also make sure that the candidates understand the exact meaning of the terms used in the questions (word, phrase etc.) in order to answer correctly. This will benefit the weaker candidates especially.

In True/ False with Justification questions, it is important to remind the candidates that both the correct tick and the correct brief quotation must be provided in order to gain the mark and that essential words must not be omitted.

In tasks where a single word is required, candidates must write one word only. An answer which includes more than one word usually leads to zero mark. If a phrase/expression is required, giving the whole sentence sometimes reduces the answer's correctness and the candidate may lose the mark.

The scripts are now scanned and marked electronically. Clear hand writing and presentation therefore are extremely important.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-8	9-16	17-21	22-27	28-34	35-40	41-45

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

A number of candidates showed continuous difficulties in giving short answers and selecting the relevant details. The True/False with justification questions sometimes appeared confusing for some average or weaker candidates; some gave the correct justification but ticked the wrong box or vice versa, which resulted in a zero mark. Another problem area was providing a word or a short phrase from the text.

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

The general level of competence of candidates varied significantly. The majority of candidates had a rather good range of vocabulary which helped to demonstrate their competence in text handling (the tasks relating to both intensive and extensive reading) but there were also rather weak candidates. A

good number of candidates achieved a total mark of 40 or more but there were a few who achieved only 15 marks or less.

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

Some candidates' answers appeared to be mainly guesses, rather than knowledge of the correct meaning of the words. Matching and short answer (open-ended) exercises demonstrated, in some cases, a poor understanding of the text or a limited vocabulary, or they showed that the text was not read carefully. In True/ False with justification questions, the essential words that justify the statement must be included to be given the mark.

Text A seemed to have been the easiest part for candidates. The general problem as mentioned above was too long or vague answers which often resulted in irrelevant responses and mistakes, especially in Q2. In Q8, many candidates ticked the correct box but gave an incorrect or irrelevant justification. Q10-11 were difficult for the average candidates, many giving the word "i" or "till" in Q10 and "kompis" in Q11.

Text B was of average difficulty. Q12-14 were mostly answered correctly. Q15 "vänder på varje krona" was missed by many candidates as well as both options in Q16. Q17-18 were mostly answered correctly. In Q19, many candidates had chosen option A instead of D. In Q21 the most difficult option in the set was E, which was missed by many candidates; many candidates had chosen option H instead.

Text C gave a varying set of responses. Some candidates with apparent problems with basic vocabulary performed well in questions with communicative purposes of the text and some candidates with obvious strength in understanding vocabulary struggled with questions testing overall understanding. Q22-24, was answered correctly by a relatively small proportion of candidates. Many strong candidates gave option D in Q22 and B in Q23. Q25-30 proved demanding, challenging the candidates' ability to provide a word or a short phrase from the text. Q28 "lär" was correctly answered only by a few candidates. This question acted as a clear discriminator.

Text D appeared not to have been easily accessible to average candidates and presented remarkable problems for all weaker candidates. In Q34 many candidates gave option H. In Q38, many candidates repeated the word "prylarna" from Q37. For Q41, many candidates gave option E. The correct answer to Q42 was "luftgitarr" but it was missed by very many candidates which was probably due to the word "udda" in the source text.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Practise more vocabulary exercises: rephrasing, synonyms or antonyms.

Please make sure that candidates understand the exact meaning of the terms used in the questions (word, phrase etc.). This will benefit especially the weaker candidates. Where a single word is required, candidates must write one word only. An answer which includes more than one word often leads to zero mark. If a phrase/expression is required, giving the whole sentence sometimes leads to zero mark.

The scripts are scanned and marked electronically. Clear hand writing and presentation are therefore extremely important. Please advise candidates to pay extra attention to the legibility of their responses.

In questions where a letter is required, candidates must write their answer clearly; if the answers cannot be read then marks cannot be awarded.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-10	11-20	21-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-45

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

Section A: Small elements such as writing the date in the Swedish format, proper salutations (no commas in Swedish in letters), writing compounds in two words.

More importantly about the text types: some (but far from all) candidates did not take into consideration which text type they were supposed to write their texts in. Candidates seemed to struggle particularly with writing a report and an article. These text types are integral to the Language B course and therefore should be practised.

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

Despite the comments above, candidates this year seemed much more prepared in using paragraphs and writing letters, and generally more aware of the different text types and the differences between them than in previous years.

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

Q1: The fact that this task involved writing an article seemed to have escaped many of the candidates. They did not consider the readers, omitting sometimes headlines, introduction to the text and a suitable ending.

Q2: Many candidates failed to understand the word "bordsskick" (table manners), but managed anyway to write about manners in the canteen. Most candidates did not write a report to the headmaster. They did however describe the situation and suggest what to do about it.

Q3: This was the most popular task of them all - the school nurse seems to be a popular person in all centres! The candidates were very good at writing blogs and could come up with very good things to say about the school nurse and the situation.

Q4: Many candidates had very good ideas for a youth club. Some, however, seemed to forget that it was supposed to be a brochure.

Q5: Also a popular choice. Candidates were good at coming up with arguments for and against online sources in school. They could however improve on addressing the audience a little more clearly initially and introduce themselves, and finish off the speech appropriately.

Section B: Candidates had much to say about the stimulus. Some did better in this section than in section A. Most candidates reacted to the stimulus but some wrote about the subject more generally with little link or connection to the actual stimulus. This does not score as high.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates need to practise writing reports and articles.

When it comes to language, almost all had problems spelling: tjäna, stjäla, verkar, verkligen, konserter.

Many used the conjunction "eftersom att" frequently. They would benefit from being taught some alternatives to this. Candidates also need to work on not separating compounds.

Further comments

Please instruct candidates to leave some space between the end of Section A and the beginning of Section B.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-17	18-20	21-22	23-25

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

Candidates struggled with giving due attention to the small details of the task, such as writing the date correctly in Swedish, rather than in the English format.

More importantly, some candidates had difficulty with the different text types. In order to achieve high marks, they must give consideration not just to the layout but also tone and audience.

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

The candidates have, in fact, improved on writing letter using correct conventions, adding the date and using quite good salutations. They were better at using paragraphs generally.

The candidates seemed to enjoy writing and had many an abundance of ideas they wanted to share.

Only one or two candidates produced tasks that were too short.

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

Q1: Many candidates wrote about the international food party and had many ideas. Some had problems in terms of how to address the headmaster in a letter. How you might address a variety of recipients is something that could be discussed in class

Q2: Very few picked this task about fashion. Candidates struggled writing a natural interview as part of an article.

Q3: This task involved writing a diary entry about a sick friend, and was the most popular choice. The difficulty here was using a reflective tone and being aware of the communicative purpose of the diary. They should not, for example, explain who your best friend is since the diary is for yourself and you know who your best friend is. Explicit explanations as if writing to somebody you do not know is not suitable for a diary. Some candidates found it easy to relate to the worry and concern for somebody who was ill.

Q4: Candidates had many ideas for a day out with the school. Some did not write a proper brochure and did not show clearly when and where to meet. They would have benefited from giving the layout of the text and the audience more consideration.

Q5: This task involved writing to an aunt about social media and was another popular choice. The candidates wrote a good email, using a natural tone and addressed the aunt appropriately. However, they seemed to find it difficult to explain social media to a person who does not know anything about it. They used English terminology, such as "like", when talking about Facebook with little or no explanation.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Please practise all the text types that are part of the curriculum. Study how interviews are written in magazines, using headlines, giving attention to how they start and finish. Avoid writing transcript-type interviews ("I: Hello! How are you? Sandra: Hi, fine thanks!") as they do not always lend themselves to achieving higher marks against the criteria.

Please also discuss the audience in the different text types and tasks, and the importance of layout in communicating the message effectively in text types such as a brochure.

Perhaps teachers can read some samples of different diaries with the candidates and discuss what features in the text are typical for a diary. (What's the difference between prose, a letter and a diary, for example?)