

Group 1

These subject guidelines should be read in conjunction with the “Introduction”, “Outline” and “Details—all essays” sections of this guide.

Overview

A group 1 extended essay is intended for students who are writing in their best language (that is, students who could offer the language in question as a language A). The essay must be written in the language for which it is registered. Students studying a group 2 language who are interested in writing about the literature of that language should read the “Group 2” section. It is intended that students should not submit a group 1 extended essay in their group 2 language.

There are 3 categories of group 1 extended essays:

- Category 1—Studies of a literary work(s) originally written in the language in which the essay is presented
- Category 2—Studies of a literary work(s) originally written in the language of the essay compared with literary work(s) originally written in another language
- Category 3—Studies in language.

Students should put the category in which they have presented their essay alongside the subject in which it is registered on the cover sheet of the extended essay, for example, English A Cat: 2; German A Cat : 3; Spanish A Cat : 1.

A group 1 extended essay in categories 1 and 2 in literature provides students with an opportunity to:

- study in-depth a literary topic that is suitable in nature and scope for discussion in this form
- engage in independent literary criticism and include, where appropriate, established critical comment
- develop the ability to put forward their views persuasively and in a well-structured manner, using a register appropriate to the study of literature.

A group 1 extended essay in Category 3—Studies in language provides students with an opportunity to:

- develop skills of textual analysis by considering how language, culture, and context influence the ways in which meaning is constructed in texts
- think critically about the different interactions which exist between texts, audiences, and purposes
- develop the ability to convey views persuasively and in a well-structured manner, using an appropriate academic register.

Choice of topic

Categories 1 and 2: Literature

The extended essay may relate to work studied in class but students must take care in all cases to demonstrate relevant wider reading and individual study.

Appropriate literary works may be chosen from any source including the IB Diploma Programme prescribed list of authors. Most importantly, texts should be of sufficient literary merit to enable the student to develop sustained literary analysis.

Category 1: Studies of a literary work(s) originally written in the language in which the essay is presented

The essay must be based on the literature of countries where the language is spoken (that is, all works discussed will originally have been written in the language of the essay).

The following five examples of research questions for group 1, category 1 extended essays are intended as guidance only.

Language	English
Topic	Dance in Jane Austen's novels
Research question	"What are the role and the significance of dance in <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> and <i>Emma</i> ?"
Language	English
Topic	Death in Emily Brontë's and Emily Dickinson's poetry
Research question	"How is the subject of death treated in selected poems by Emily Brontë and Emily Dickinson?"
Language	French
Topic	Fiction and history in Blaise Cendrars' <i>L'Or</i>
Research question	"How and why does Cendrars modify facts and rewrite history in his first novel?"
Language	Danish
Topic	The presentation of nature in poetry
Research question	"Perceptions of nature in Danish poetry of the 1890s."
Language	Italian
Topic	Imagery and themes in the work of Giovanni Pascoli
Research question	"The theme of the nest in the poetry of Giovanni Pascoli."

Category 2: Studies of a literary work(s) originally written in the language of the essay compared with a literary work(s) originally written in another language

The essay must be a comparison of at least one literary work originally written in the language of the essay with a literary work or works originally written in a different language to that of the essay and studied in translation.

The following three examples of research questions for group 1 category 2 extended essays are intended as guidance only.

Language	English/French/German
Topic	The presentation of the hero in literature
Research question	"In what different ways do Shaw, Anouilh and Schiller present Joan of Arc in their respective plays?"

Language	French/Russian
Topic	Male authors and female characters
Research question	In what ways do the male authors of <i>Anna Karenina</i> and <i>Madame Bovary</i> seek to render their heroines sympathetic to the reader? How far do they succeed?"
Language	Italian/English
Topic	The use of literary tradition
Research question	"Themes and stylistic devices from Dante in T.S. Eliot's <i>The Waste Land</i> and <i>Four Quartets</i> ."

The topic chosen must be **literary** in nature and could be about a particular aspect, or be a comparative study of a work or works, author, period or genre.

The following examples of titles for group 1 literature extended essays are intended as guidance only. The pairings illustrate that focused topics (indicated by the first title) should be encouraged rather than broad topics (indicated by the second title).

English: "Religious imagery in *Wuthering Heights*" **is better than** "Religion in the Brontës".

English: "A comparison of the presentation of racial conflict in one work by James Baldwin and one work by Richard Wright" **is better than** "Racial conflict in the works of American writers".

French: "The portrayal of women in the works of Zola" is better than "The works of Zola".

French: "Existentialism in *Les Mains Sales* and *Les Mouches* by Sartre" **is better than** "What is existentialism?"

Spanish: "The treatment of social conflict in *La Busca* by Pío Baroja" **is better than** "Social conflict in modern literature".

Category 3: Studies in language

Where appropriate, students may compare and contrast different languages and cultures. However, the main focus of category 3 extended essays should be on the language and culture(s) of the language in which the extended essay is written.

Category 3 extended essays emphasize the production and reception of texts in cultural contexts, and essays of a general cultural nature are not appropriate. They must involve close textual analysis. It is emphasized that texts are constructed and understood in specific cultural and historical contexts; meaning may be contested.

The examples given below are, apart from example 7, specific to a particular language due to the importance of constructing a precise research question. However, these examples may also be appropriate as an area of study in another language and context. The following seven examples of research questions for group 1, category 3 extended essays are intended as guidance only.

Examples 1, 2 and 3: Language in a cultural context

Students have the opportunity to explore how language develops in specific cultural contexts, how it impacts on the world, and the ways in which language shapes both individual and group identity.

1. Language	English/French/German
Topic	The impact of electronic communication technologies on meaning

Research question	An analysis of the development and implications of “Twitter” reactions to the 2010 election campaign in Britain.
2. Language	English
Topic	The use of persuasive language in political speeches
Research question	How far does the use of rhetoric in Barack Obama’s speeches increase their effectiveness?
3. Language	French
Topic	The use of persuasive language in political speeches
Research question	How, and to what extent, did De Gaulle’s rhetorical strategies change over time in his political speeches?

Examples 4, 5, 6 and 7: Language and mass communication

Students are able to consider the way language is used in the media, and may address how the production and reception of texts is influenced by the medium in which they are written.

4. Language	German
Topic	News coverage
Research question	How were the views taken by different groups in support of Greece during its financial crisis of 2010, constructed in the German popular press?
5. Language	Spanish
Topic	News coverage
Research question	How has the Spanish print media portrayed illegal immigration from Africa into Spain since 2005?
6. Language	Chinese
Topic	Advertising
Research question	How does Chinese advertising of luxury goods use language and image to construct a particular view of the West?
7. Language	Any appropriate language
Topic	Public information
Research question	How does the use of startling visual imagery in a public health information campaign (on smoking, for example) function, and what does it reveal about prevailing cultural ideas of the body and health?

Treatment of the topic

Categories 1 and 2–Literature: literary works often address, for example, philosophical, political or social questions. However, the major focus of the essay should be the literary treatment of such questions. The literary works should not be a pretext for interdisciplinary study and should not be treated simply as documentary evidence in a discussion of philosophical, political or social issues. Students should always consider how the texts work as literature, dealing with aspects such as the effects they achieve, the devices they use and the way they are written.

Students should not use the extended essay solely as a vehicle for their own thoughts but, after providing careful analysis of the author's ideas, should present their personal views on the way the author has treated the subject. There should be a compromise between building on the wisdom of more experienced critics and introducing new personal elements. The mere reiteration of the views of established literary critics will not result in a successful extended essay.

Essays that attempt to interpret literary works as reflections of the writer's life are rarely successful, tending to produce reductive readings based on second-hand information. Biographical topics should thus usually be avoided.

Category 3–Studies in language: whatever area of language study the student chooses for their extended essay they will need to give focused and critical attention to the text or texts being considered. This close analysis must be integrated into a wider discussion of the contexts in which the text or texts are produced and understood.

Students are encouraged to adopt an analytical, critical position, and to show awareness of potentially conflicting viewpoints on texts and their meaning in a wider social context. Straightforward descriptive essays are inappropriate. Students should aim to be balanced, argue coherently, and present relevant supporting examples.

Students should develop a focused and manageable research question, approaching it critically and independently.

Texts

The term 'text' for the purpose of a category 3 language extended essay is defined to include the widest range of oral, written and visual materials present in society. This range will include:

- single and multiple images with or without written text
- literary written texts and text extracts
- media texts, for example films, radio and television programmes and their scripts
- electronic texts that share aspects of a number of media texts, for example, video sharing websites, web pages, sms messages, blogs, wikis and tweets.
- oral texts will include readings, speeches, broadcasts and transcriptions of recorded conversation.

When writing the essay, students must bear in mind that any narrative and/or descriptive material included should be directly relevant to the critical analysis. A précis of the student's reading is not sufficient.

Interpreting the assessment criteria

Criterion A: research question

For all three categories of group 1 essays, although the research question can best be expressed in the form of a question, it may also be presented as a statement or proposition for discussion.

The research question must:

- be specific and sharply focused
- be stated clearly in the introduction of the essay or on the title page

- be related to the target literature/language.

The research question must not:

- be too narrow or too obvious.

Criterion B: introduction

For categories 1 and 2 literature essays, the context should be established succinctly and should not be an excuse for padding out an essay with a lengthy account of the historical or biographical context of a literary text. Instead, the introduction should focus on the student's choice of research question and include an explanation as to why they made that choice. In some cases, students may be able to say how it relates to existing knowledge on the topic but, since they cannot be expected to know the whole range of secondary writing on major texts, it is sufficient for them to state briefly why they have chosen their particular research question and what they think it has to offer.

For category 3 language essays, the introduction of the essay should be brief. It should focus on the research question and how it relates to existing knowledge of the subject. The introduction should make clear how the chosen topic is specific or of special interest to the target language and culture(s).

Criterion C: investigation

For categories 1 and 2 literature essays, the range of resources includes, in the first place, the primary texts being studied (and, possibly, other writings by the author(s) in question, such as essays, journals and letters) and, less importantly, secondary sources such as published criticism on those texts. The correct planning of an essay should involve interrogating secondary sources in light of the research question, so that the views of critics are used to support the student's own argument, and not as a substitute for that argument. It may thus be helpful for a student to challenge a statement by a critic instead of simply agreeing with it. In a literary context, the data gathered is principally the evidence the student finds in the primary text(s) to support the argument of the essay. If students make use of internet-based sources, they should do so critically and circumspectly in full awareness of their potential unreliability.

For category 3 language essays, an extended essay in language presupposes a close and critical consideration of a primary text or texts (where the term "text" is broadly defined; see above). Such texts should be authentic, clearly identified, and appropriate to the language and culture(s) of the extended essay. Secondary sources will be used to provide a framework for critical analysis of primary texts, eliciting how language, culture, and context impact on the construction of meaning. Students should aim to develop their own argument, rather than simply adopting the views of critics. Students are also encouraged to take a critical perspective on secondary sources. If students make use of internet-based sources, they should do so critically and circumspectly in full awareness of their potential unreliability.

Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

For categories 1 and 2 literature essays, the topic studied here is principally the primary text(s) that is/are the focus of the essay. The quality of the student's understanding of the primary text(s) is the main concern. The use of secondary sources is not an essential requirement: this may be helpful in the case of classic texts, enabling discussion to start at a higher level, but it should not replace the student's personal engagement with the primary text(s).

For category 3 language essays, the topic studied is a primary text or texts, explored and understood through a critical consideration of its culturally specific production and reception. Students should move between analysis of the linguistic features of a primary text or texts and the social and cultural circumstances in which it is produced and understood. In this way, knowledge and understanding are revealed through the way a student is able to understand and situate a text or texts in its cultural context. Students should demonstrate an awareness of meaning as a constructed and often contested entity.

Criterion E: reasoned argument

For all three categories of group 1 essays, students should be aware of the need to give their essays the backbone of a developing argument. Personal views should not simply be stated but need to be supported by reasoned argument to persuade the reader of their validity.

For categories 1 and 2 literature essays, a straightforward description of a literary text through plot summary or narration of the action does not usually advance an argument and should generally be avoided (although, where a little-known text is under discussion, a brief description may be appropriate).

For category 3 language essays, straightforward descriptive or narrative accounts of a text or texts that lack critical analysis do not usually advance an argument and should be avoided.

Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject

For all three categories of group 1 essays, appropriate application of analytical and evaluative skills is the use of persuasive analysis and argument to support a personal interpretation. Second-hand interpretations that are derived solely from secondary sources will lose marks under this criterion, as will purely descriptive essays that list examples of literary (categories 1 and 2) and language (category 3) motifs but fail to critically analyse them.

Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject

For all three categories of group 1 essays, there is no single acceptable style for essays, which may be well-written in different ways—with, for example, different degrees of personal emphasis, some writers using the first person and others preferring a more impersonal mode of expression. Clarity and precision of communication in a group 1 essay includes the correct use of language.

Criterion H: conclusion

For all three categories of group 1 essays, “consistent” is the key word here: the conclusion should develop out of the argument and not introduce new or extraneous matter. It should not repeat the material of the introduction; rather, it should present a new synthesis in light of the discussion.

Criterion I: formal presentation

For all three categories of group 1 essays, this criterion refers to the extent to which the essay conforms to academic standards about the way in which research papers should be presented. The presentation of essays that omit a bibliography or do not give references/citations for quotations is deemed unacceptable (level 0). Essays that omit one of the required elements—title page, table of contents, page numbers—are deemed no better than satisfactory (maximum level 2), while essays that omit two of them are deemed poor at best (maximum level 1).

Criterion J: abstract

For all three categories of group 1 essays, the abstract is judged on the clarity with which it presents the three required elements, not on the quality of the research question itself, nor on the quality of the argument or the conclusions.

Criterion K: holistic judgment

For all three categories of group 1 essays, this criterion allows examiners to reward work that shows initiative, creativity and insight, even if the essay does not achieve the highest standard overall. Routine essays on well-worn topics will not score highly under this criterion.

Group 2

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