IB Diploma Program Course Outline
For English A1, HL: Language and Literature
Instructor: Michael Sanks – Year 1

English A1: Language and Literature Course Rationale and Description:

Language A: language and literature comprises four parts—two relate to the study of language and two to the study of literature.

The study of the texts produced in a language is central to an active engagement with language and culture and, by extension, to how we see and understand the world in which we live. A key aim of the language A: language and literature course is to encourage students to question the meaning generated by language and texts, which, it can be argued, is rarely straightforward and unambiguous. Helping students to focus closely on the language of the texts they study and to become aware of the role of each text’s wider context in shaping its meaning is central to the course.

The language A: language and literature course aims to develop in students skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary, can be seen as autonomous yet simultaneously related to culturally determined reading practices. An understanding of the ways in which formal elements are used to create meaning in a text is combined with an exploration of how that meaning is affected by reading practices that are culturally defined and by the circumstances of production and reception.

As noted above, a wide range of factors, including the circumstances of production and reception, and the role of culturally determined reading practices, are seen as being equally important. A wider aim of the course is the development of an understanding of “critical literacy” in students.

In view of the international nature of the IB and its commitment to intercultural understanding, the language A: language and literature course does not limit the study of texts to the products of one culture or of the cultures covered by any one language. The study of literature in translation from other cultures is especially important to IB Diploma Programme students because it contributes to a global perspective, thereby promoting an insight into, and understanding of, the different ways in which cultures influence and shape the experiences of life common to all humanity.

The aims of language A: language and literature are to:
1. introduce students to a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres
2. develop in students the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of individual texts and make relevant connections
3. develop the students’ powers of expression, both in oral and written communication
4. encourage students to recognize the importance of the contexts in which texts are written and received
5. encourage, through the study of texts, an appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures, and how these perspectives construct meaning
6. encourage students to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
7. promote in students an enjoyment of, and lifelong interest in, language and literature.
8. develop in students an understanding of how language, culture and context determine the ways in which meaning is constructed in texts
9. encourage students to think critically about the different interactions between text, audience and purpose.

**Assessment Objectives**
There are four assessment objectives for the **language A: language and literature** course.

1. Knowledge and understanding
   – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of texts
   – Demonstrate an understanding of the use of language, structure, technique and style
   – Demonstrate a critical understanding of the various ways in which the reader constructs meaning and of how context influences this constructed meaning
   – Demonstrate an understanding of how different perspectives influence the reading of a text

2. Application and analysis
   – Demonstrate an ability to choose a text type appropriate to the purpose required
   – Demonstrate an ability to use terminology relevant to the various text types studied
   – Demonstrate an ability to analyse the effects of language, structure, technique and style on the reader
   – Demonstrate an awareness of the ways in which the production and reception of texts contribute to their meanings
   – Demonstrate an ability to substantiate and justify ideas with relevant examples

3. Synthesis and evaluation
   – Demonstrate an ability to compare and contrast the formal elements, content and context of texts
   – Discuss the different ways in which language and image may be used in a range of texts
   – Demonstrate an ability to evaluate conflicting viewpoints within and about a text
   – Produce a critical response evaluating some aspects of text, context and meaning

4. Selection and use of appropriate presentation and language skills
   – Demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly and with fluency in both written and oral communication
   – Demonstrate an ability to use the oral and written forms of the language, in a range of styles, registers and situations
   – Demonstrate an ability to discuss and analyse texts in a focused and logical manner
   – Demonstrate an ability to write a balanced, comparative analysis

**Teacher’s Role**
I am here primarily to be a supporter of student learning, rather than a transmitter of knowledge, and will strive to promote the IB learner profile in students and their work in the following ways:
• **Providing an inclusive, positive and safe class ethos.** Students should feel confident to explore and experiment with their own responses and to challenge those of others.

• **Empowering students.** They will have a variety of opportunities, both critical and creative, to demonstrate their understanding of skills through a wide variety of active learning approaches, including discussion, debate, role play, reading, writing and oral presentation.

• **Recognizing that students learn in different ways.** Students will experience a range of activities and assessment tasks that best advance their understanding and enjoyment of the texts they encounter.

• **Facilitating critical discourse.** I will try to ensure from the very beginning of the course that students acquire, in an integral and practical way, the language of critical discourse for language and literature.

• **Promoting the appreciation of language as an art form.** Students will have opportunities to go beyond the mere “decoding” of texts towards a wide and humane appreciation of the texts studied.

• **Enabling students to explore a wide variety of texts.** A wide range of texts that are diverse in convention, culture and complexity will be made available.

• **Providing opportunities for student inquiry into the subtleties and implications of cultural contexts.** This will include such dimensions as the geographical, the historical and the ethnic situations of texts.

• **Providing opportunities for writing about language and literature.** Effective feedback will support students in writing in a structured and analytical manner.

• **Scaffolding the processes necessary for making reasonable comparative judgments about texts.** Students will be able to express these both orally and in writing.

• **Ensure students acquire core skills.** These are the skills that are particular to the study and expression of students’ experience of literature and language.

• **Clarify learning goals for students.** This will be done on a regular basis and will refer to the requirements and learning outcomes of the course.

• **Provide systematic formative assessment.** There will be regular feedback to students about their performance against specified assessment criteria, which will consider the question “What do I need to do to improve?”

• **Ensure practice of rhetorical skills.** These are the skills that students require in order to deliver effective oral presentations to a variety of audiences.

**Skills**

In order to achieve the learning outcomes of this course, students will need a strong grasp of specific skills.

**Language skills**

Although language A: language and literature is not a language acquisition course, it nevertheless provides an opportunity for students to develop and refine their language skills. In particular, they are expected to acquire the vocabulary appropriate to the analysis of texts. Furthermore, they develop the ability to express their ideas in clear, unambiguous language. The production of a range of texts, intended for different audiences and purposes, requires effective use of register and style. Students will be expected to show facility in both written and oral communication.
Close analysis of texts
Language A: language and literature is centrally concerned with the ways in which meaning is generated by the meeting between texts and the contexts within which they exist. Close attention to the details of the text and its features is important in developing an informed understanding of the links between the text and its context. Consequently, the ability to undertake detailed critical analysis of texts, which is an important skill in its own right, is crucial in allowing students to assemble the evidence they require to justify the validity of their reading of the texts they encounter in the course. While being specifically addressed in part 4 it is, however, an important concern in all parts of the course.

Visual skills
Viewing is part of a general multimodal literacy. Written text is often found in combination with still images, moving images and sound. As students become adept at the other literacy skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, it is also essential that they develop skills in understanding and interpreting the visual images used in conjunction with these texts. Considerations of visual analysis feature throughout the language A: language and literature course. In addition, moving images in the form of film are likely to be frequently used in parts of the course. Students will grow in their awareness of the way in which images may be analysed for form, content and meaning in much the same way as a conventional written text.

Language A: Language and Literature Year 1 Course Outline

In year one, students will cover only parts 1 and 2 of the 4 part curriculum outline.

Part One: Language in Cultural Context (Semester One)
In this part of the course students are given the opportunity to explore how language develops in specific cultural contexts, how it impacts on the world, and how language shapes both individual and group identity. In this part students will become familiar with a range of vocabulary and writing styles

Students’ study in this part of the course will pay particular attention to the role of language in relation to the many areas involved in the construction of meaning and understanding of particular issues in the world.

The study of language in cultural context aims to enable students to meet the following learning outcomes:

• Analyse how audience and purpose affect the structure and content of texts.
• Analyse the impact of language changes.
• Demonstrate an awareness of how language and meaning are shaped by culture and context.

Language and Power – This unit will be subdivided into three sections: political influences, religious influences, and social influences. Obviously these three areas will overlap as well.
Texts Studied in this Unit
Political – Primary Text: *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli
- Allegory – *Animal Farm*, Orwell
- Essay – “Politics and the English Language,” Orwell
- Document – US Declaration of Independence
- Speech – John Winthrop “On Liberty” 1645

Religious – Primary Text: *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare
- Satire – Chaucer: Pardoner in General Prologue and his Tale
- Visuals – Pictures of the “last days” in different times and places
- Sermon – “Sinner in the Hands of an Angry God,” Jonathan Edwards, 1741
- Meditation - #17, John Donne

Social – Primary Text: *A Testament of Hope* by Martin Luther King
- Satire – “A Modest Proposal,” Swift
- Speech – “Ain’t I a Woman,” Sojourner Truth, Ohio Convention 1851
- Speech – “Disappointment is the Lot of Women,” Lucy Stone, National Woman’s Rights Convention, Ohio 1856
- Speech – Inaugural Address, J. F. Kennedy, 1961
- Speech – “Women’s Rights are Human Rights,” Hillary Clinton, 1995, Beijing, China

Assessments in this Unit
- Written Task 2 (external assessment)
- Further Oral Activity (internally assessed, externally moderated)

Part Two: Language and Mass Communication (Semester Two)
In part 2 students consider the way language is used in the media. Mass media include newspapers, magazines, the internet (for example, social networking), mobile telephones, radio and film. This section also addresses the issue of how the production and reception of texts is influenced by the medium through which they are delivered.

The study of language and mass communication means that students will be able to meet the following learning outcomes:

- Examine different forms of communication within the media.
- Show an awareness of the potential for educational, political or ideological influence of the media.
- Show the way mass media use language and image to inform, persuade or entertain.
The Progression of Mass-Communication – This unit will be subdivided into five sections which follow the historical progression of mass-communication: Pre-printing press, Advent of the printing press, Newspaper, Television and Film, and Electronic Media.

Texts Studied in this Unit

Pre-Printing Press – Primary Text: Antigone by Sophocles
- Pericles’ Funeral Oration, from Thucydides’ Peloponnesian War
- Cicero’s Speech “In Defense of Aulus Licinius Archias the Poet”
- Pope Urban II’s speech at the Council of Cleremont which began the Crusades

Advent of the Printing Press – Primary Text: Martin Luther’s 95 Theses
- Visual – Passional Christi Und Antichristi
- Indulgence by Jeronimus Mungofher

Newspaper – Primary Texts: two current editions of different newspapers published on the same day (students’ choice).
- Historical Newspapers – Avisa, Relation, Publick Occurences, The New-England Courant

Television and Film – Primary Texts: 1st ½ of Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman
- Leave it to Beaver, Episode 1
- Married with Children, Episode 1
- Arrested Development, Pilot
- Antigone with Irene Pappas, 1961
- Antigone, Rites of Passion, 1990

New Media – Primary Texts: 2nd ½ of Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman
- “Jake Reilly’s ‘Amish Project’”
- SMS
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Blogs
- YouTube

Assessments in this Unit
- Written Task 1 (external assessment)
- Further Oral Activity (internally assessed, externally moderated)

Assessments

External assessment (4 hours) 70%

Paper 1: Comparative textual analysis (2 hours)
The paper consists of two pairs of unseen texts.
Students write a comparative analysis of one pair of texts. (20 marks)
25%
**Paper 2: Essay (2 hours)**
In response to one of six questions students write an essay based on at least two of the literary texts studied in part 3. The questions are the same at SL but the assessment criteria are different. (25 marks)

25%

**Written tasks**
Students produce at least four written tasks based on material studied in the course. Students submit two of these tasks for external assessment. (20 marks for each task)
One of the tasks submitted must be a critical response to one of the prescribed questions for the HL additional study.
Each task must be 800–1,000 words in length plus a rationale of 200–300 words.

20%

**Internal assessment**
This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.

30%

**Individual oral commentary**
Students comment on an extract from a literary text studied in part 4 of the course.
(30 marks)
Students are given two guiding questions.

15%

**Further oral activity**
Students complete at least two further oral activities, one based on part 1 and one based on part 2 of the course.
The mark of one further oral activity is submitted for final assessment. (30 marks)

15%

**Miscellaneous**

**Close Reading Strategies**
The course focuses on developing the literacy skills necessary for reading, understanding, and analyzing a variety of texts. Students learn strategies for effectively annotating texts.

Students are taught to use strategy when confronted with text and to choose a close reading application appropriate for that text. For example, if the text is a photograph, they should use the Photograph Deconstruct strategies; For analyzing texts for rhetorical purpose, students can use any of the following: **SOAPSTone Plus**, which is the preferred method in the course (Speaker, Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Tone, Plus Stylistic Devises and Rhetorical Techniques).

**Style and Rhetorical Analysis**
Using close reading strategies, students develop the skills necessary to write effective style and
rhetorical analysis. Students learn to view style as a component of rhetoric rather than some “alien” or separate element. Students learn to discern the connection and nuances between purpose, meaning, style, effect, and structure. The oftentimes challenging task of moving students from close reading application to the actual writing of analysis paragraphs and essays led me to create an analysis helper packet (presented in Week 3 of Boot Camp) entitled, “From SOAPSTone to Style Analysis Paragraphs and Essays.” We use these packets throughout the course, as they remind students that analysis is not the mere identification of the writer’s techniques, but rather the effect of those techniques. Here also, students learn to realize that writers are using various techniques and devices to achieve their purpose and that this is the root of analysis. The helper packets break analysis into manageable “ingredients” that must present and be sustained throughout their analysis. In addition to the teacher-made packets, we use activities from Nancy Dean’s *Voice Lessons: Classroom Activities to Teach Diction, Detail Imagery Syntax, and Tone.* Formulaic writing is discouraged, and the six week basic training period in the first semester will help students to write analytically under the Toulmin and Rogerian models.

**Discussion (Listening and Speaking)**
Discussion is a key component of the course. Students participate in Think-Pair-Share and Socratic seminar discussions throughout the course. Students learn to develop their listening and speaking skills and to make relevant contributions to these conversations. During these activities, students are provided with a variety of texts such as film, speeches, letters, essays, research, and photographs. Students learn to identify the assertions made in the texts and to take positions, ask questions, and share ideas. This process includes refuting the ideas of others, accepting the ideas of others, and meaningfully engaging in conversations that lead them to be better listeners, speakers, and writers. Discussions are student or teacher lead. Divergent thinking and multiple viewpoints are encouraged.

**Visual Literacy**
Throughout the course, students learn to read their visual world. Students are introduced to photographs, political cartoons, graphics, and film. Visual texts are paired with thematically linked written texts. To help develop visual literacy skills, students use a Cartoon Deconstruct Helper and Photograph Deconstruct Helper that students use in the same way they use SOAPSTone with written texts. Film is also used and analyzed as text using visual literacy strategies.

**Argumentative Writing Skills**
The introduction, development, and refining of argumentative writing skills serve as a curriculum power piece throughout the course. Students are taught the Toulmin as well as the Rogerian model of argumentation as they appear in *The Norton Reader* and in *Everything’s an Argument.* This process includes learning the terminology such as syllogism, data, claim, warrant, logos, ethos, pathos, concession, refutation, etc. More importantly, students learn to view the rhetorical triangle as the relationship between speaker, audience and text. Further, students learn to SOAPSTone their own arguments and to use strategy in order to construct an effective argument.

Students participate in interactive writing intensive workshops in order to develop their
argumentative compositions. Here, students read and discuss the works of authors from the reading list as well as give peer response to student samples. Students learn to revise and refine their drafts modeling the good work of others as well as by using the writing process. Student-generated samples from within the class are also used as “masterpiece” models. The competition and desire to create a “masterpiece” serve as an incentive to strive for improvement.

**Narrative, Expository, and Descriptive Writing**
Opportunities to write in the argumentative mode are balanced with assignments that require students to use narrative, expository and descriptive writing. Most of the writing takes place in an on-demand, in-class timed setting; however, some writing assignments are completed as homework. Major essay assignments require students to use the writing process and to show evidence of this process through prewriting and drafts. Following all major writings, students are required to reflect, revise, and refine their work.

**Sentence Composing**
During the revising and refining of drafts, students learn to deconstruct and rebuild their own writing. This step is a sentence-by-sentence process. Here, we teach the value and power of sentence variety and techniques for constructing simple and compound sentences into complex structures. Here, we teach the use of polysyndeton, asyndeton, gerunds, infinitives, inverted sentences, loose sentences, period sentences, etc. We analyze the sentence structures of some of the representative authors and require students to model their techniques. These imitation exercises help them when they are assigned full-blown style-modeling essays. As an aid in this process we will incorporate various lessons from Don Killgallon’s *Sentence Composing for High School* throughout the year.

**Writing Journals**
Each student is expected to obtain and maintain a composition notebook (the black and white speckled kind) which they will use throughout the entire year for in-class timed writings. Keeping a journal such as this will allow the student to take ownership of his/her own writing and track their progress over the course of the year.

**Vocabulary**
Vocabulary development is another vital element to the course taught in every unit. Most of the vocabulary comes from the content of the texts; however, literary terms and SAT vocabulary (from SAT lists and practices) are also taught. A variety of strategies are used to develop vocabulary. Some of these include flash cards, Vocabulary Episodes, student-generated vocabulary lists, sentence completion activities, and analogies.

**Behavioral Expectations**
Since this is a college-level class, students should conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the best universities’ standard; careful listening, mutual respect, and extreme courtesy are essential in maintaining a class where all members feel comfortable participating.

**Coursework and Grade Expectations**
In a college level course students are expected to be the primary responsible party in keeping up with coursework and grades. As the teacher I will do all that I can to assist students in
maintaining or raising scores or keeping up with coursework, but true success at the college level does not happen unless the student him/herself take personal responsibility.

**Grading System**
50% - Quizzes, Homework, Class-work, and General Class Participation

25% - Tests and Exams

25% - Essays and Projects

**Late Work**
The fast pace of the IB Language A: Language and Literature course does not easily lend itself to a student who wishes to turn in work late. I will review each late work request on a case-by case basis, taking a 5 point deduction per calendar day.

**Extra Credit**
Extra credit is offered throughout the year, but it is often times a lengthy assignment or project that takes time to complete. If a student feels they will need extra credit, it is a necessity that they ask for it early in the grading cycle. Best practice is to always do it—just in case. If a student waits until the day before grades are due to complete extra credit, it is quite unlikely they will have time to complete it.

**Class Supplies**
Due to the building nature of this course, it is imperative that students have a large three-ring binder to keep up with all assignments and handouts. There are many items that I will hand out at the beginning of the year that will be used on a recurring basis throughout the course. If a student fails to keep up with his materials, it is his/her responsibility to obtain a copy from a classmate—paper is scarce so I don’t have enough to give out multiple copies of the same handout.

Also, for the purpose of timed-writing journals and writing portfolios, student need to acquire a composition notebook—the black and white speckled kind (yes, it does have to be that style)—which they will work in throughout the entire year.

I do not have a strong preference about writing utensils, but it should not use red or pink ink as that makes my comments hard to distinguish from the students writing.

**ONGOING ASSIGNMENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

- Each six weeks, students are responsible for learning to appropriately use the 50 vocabulary words selected because of their frequency on both IB and SAT tests. Students are evaluated on their knowledge and retention of these words in a variety of ways.

- Each six weeks students are expected to turn in a writing assignment in which they incorporate a list of assigned rhetorical or literary devices. This assignment is due the last class of the third week of each six weeks and is to follow standard MLA format: typed, double spaced, 12-font, Times-New Roman. The devices assigned are to be highlighted
and labeled, and any assignment not highlighted and labeled will not receive credit until done correctly. Students will receive credit only for those devices used correctly. The assignments by six weeks are: 1st six weeks – Letter to Wellman; 2nd six weeks – Editorial; 3rd six weeks – Letter to the Editor; 4th six weeks – Speech; 5th six weeks – Teacher of the Year Nomination; and 6th six weeks – College Application Essay.

Bibliography

Textbooks
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Course Supplements

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www.timemagazine.com
www.newsweekeducation.com
www.apcentral.com
www.rhetoric.com
www.tea.state.tx.us
www.politicalcartoons.com

* In addition to the above teacher sources, I developed the course using my notes from colleague training, the AP Summer Institute, 2009, and IB Trainings in courses 1-3, 2009-2011.