

Nature of Literature

In both the old and new syllabi, IB has put paramount emphasis on students' understanding of "the nature of literature and its study" (Language A: Literature Guide, 2019; Language A: Language and Literature Guide, 2019). In fact, IBDP is the only high school programme that requires every single student to study literature.

As a literature lover who has devoted my life to the study, writing and teaching of literature, of course I can't stress enough how important literature is in a person's life. No matter you aspire to become a doctor, plumber, forester or engineer, literature is indispensable. But why? Why do IB and I believe literature is so important?

Literature is a vital channel for the cultivation of humanistic values, and the study of world literature allows students to develop their empathy and intercultural perspectives. This curriculum design adheres to IB's mission statement:

"The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect."

This is also why IB requires teachers and students to select texts from different time periods and spaces, giving rise to the three areas of exploration and seven key concepts.

How about you? What's your definition of "the nature of literature"? Tie your views to the 7 Key Concepts in the new syllabi. Strategically, you should reflect these views in all the assessments. For example, instead of doing a boring summary of what you've already written, link the text(s) that you're analyzing to a relevant key concept and the nature of literature.

For real exam application of this strategy, subscribe to our **level 7 samples service** to view the commentary on Text 2 of November 2016 Paper 1, *The Silent History*.