

# Understanding the IB Language B Exams

Exams starting 2013



# Language B

- Designed for students with some previous learning of a language (i.e. Spanish 1, 2, 3)
- It may be studied at *ab initio* (AB), Standard Level (SL) or Higher Level (HL)
- The main focus of the course is on language acquisition and development of language skills: listening, reading comprehension, speaking and writing defined by the IB as receptive, productive, and interactive skills.

# Learning Outcomes

- Students will take various assessments to measure their skills near the end of the course (Exams start in February and end in May)
- The desired outcome is a score of 4 or higher on a 7 point scale (where a 1 is “very poor” and a 7 is “excellent”).

# Requirements

- *Ab initio* (AB)
  - Studied as a 6<sup>th</sup> subject  
i.e. A student who studies French or German for 4 years may opt to study Spanish their junior and senior year and take an easier form of the Language B exam.  
240 instructional hours recommended
  - Seniors only
  - Paper 1
  - Paper2
  - Written Assessment
  - Individual Oral
  - Interactive Oral

# Requirements

- Standard Level (SL)
  - 150 hours recommended for instructional hours
  - Junior or Senior
  - Paper 1
  - Paper2
  - Written Assessment
  - Individual Oral
  - Interactive Oral

# Requirements

- Higher Level (HL)
  - 240 hours recommended for instructional hours
  - Seniors only
  - Paper 1
  - Paper2
  - Written Assessment
  - Individual Oral
  - Interactive Oral
  - Study of two pieces of literature

# Group 2 Aims

1. develop students' intercultural understanding
2. enable students to understand and use the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes
3. encourage, through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures

# Group 2 Aims

4. develop students' awareness of the role of language in relation to other areas of knowledge
5. develop students' awareness of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar
6. provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through the use of an additional language
7. provide the opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of an additional language

# Assessment Objectives

Students will be assessed on their ability to:

1. communicate clearly and effectively in a range of situations, demonstrating linguistic competence and intercultural understanding
2. use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and /or cultural contexts
3. understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with accuracy and fluency

# Assessment Objectives

Students will be assessed on their ability to:

4. organize ideas on a range of topics, in a clear, coherent and convincing manner
5. understand, analyze and respond to a range of written and spoken texts
6. understand and use works of literature written in the target language of study (HL only).

# The Core

For both SL and HL the required topics are:

- Communication and media
- Global issues
- Social relationships

# The Options

Two of the following options are studied at both SL and HL:

- Cultural diversity
- Customs and traditions
- Health
- Leisure
- Science and technology

# Topics

- Additionally, each topic studied must have two different aspects covered.
- For example under the options topic of **health** we could study **diet and nutrition** as well as **drug abuse**

# Assessments

- The approach to assessment used by the IB is criterion-related, not norm-referenced. This approach to assessment judges students' work by their performance in relation to identified levels of attainment, and not in relation to the work of other students.
- An assessment objective describes what students should be able to do.
- Assessment criteria describe how well students should be able to do it.

# Assessment Outline—SL

- External assessment (70%)
  - Paper 1 (1 hour 30 minutes) Receptive skills. Text handling exercises on four written texts, based on the core. (25%)
  - Paper 2 (1 hour 30 minutes) Written productive skills. One written exercise of 250-400 words from a choice of five, based on the options. (25%)
  - Written Assignment (3-4 hours): Receptive and written productive skills. Intertextual reading followed by a written exercise of 300-400 words plus a 100-word rationale, based on the core. (20%)

# Assessment Outline—HL

- External assessment (70%)
  - Paper 1 (1 hour 30 minutes) Receptive skills  
Text handling exercises on four written texts, based on the core. (25%)
  - Paper 2 (1 hour 30 minutes) Written productive skills. Two compulsory writing exercises  
Section A: One task of 250-400 words from a choice of five, based on the options.  
Section B: Response of 150-250 words to a stimulus text, based on the core. (25%)
  - Written Assignment (3-4 hours): Receptive and written productive skills. Creative writing of 500-600 words plus a 150-word rationale, based on one of the literary texts read. (20%)

# Assessment Outline—SL & HL

- Internal assessment (30%)

Internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB.

- Individual oral (8-10 minutes)

Based on the options: 15 minutes' preparation time and a 10-minute maximum presentation and discussion with the teacher (20%)

- Interactive oral activity

Based on the core: Three classroom activities assessed by the teacher. (10%)