

Detailed course overview

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SSST students follow the language A: literature standard level (SL) course. The syllabus is divided into four parts, and there are four assessment components. Alternative arrangements are made for SSST students in assessments related to parts 1, 2 and 4 of the syllabus.

The table below gives an overview of how each part of the syllabus is assessed.

Syllabus	Assessment task
Part 1: Works in translation	Written assignment: a literary essay of 1,200–1,500 words based on one work studied, and a reflective statement of 300–400 words.
Part 2: Detailed study	Section 1 of the alternative oral assessment: a formal oral commentary that is based on one of the two works studied.
Part 3: Literary genres	Written examination paper 2: an essay based on at least two works studied in response to one question.
Part 4: Options	Section 2 of the alternative oral assessment: an oral presentation that is based on two of the three works studied.

Part 1: Works in translation

Number of works studied: two at SL

All works must be chosen from the prescribed literature in translation (PLT) list.

This part of the course is a literary study of works in translation, based on close reading of the works themselves. Students are encouraged to appreciate the different perspectives of people from other cultures and to consider the role that culture plays in making sense of literary works.

Part 1 of the course aims to deepen students' understanding of works as being products of a time and place.

Artistic, philosophical, sociological, historical and biographical considerations are possible areas of study to enhance understanding of the works.

Students should aim to develop their ability to:

- understand the content of the work and the qualities of the work as literature
- respond independently to the work by connecting the individual and cultural experience of the reader with the text
- recognize the role played by cultural and contextual elements in literary works.

Part 2: Detailed study

Number of works studied: two at SL

All works must be chosen from the prescribed list of authors (PLA) for the language A. Each work must be from a different literary genre and by a different author.

In part 2, the focus is on detailed analysis of a work, both in terms of content and technique. The detailed study is best achieved through approaches that ensure close reading and in-depth analysis of the significant elements of the works involved. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with a variety of interpretations and critical perspectives. They should also learn to form and articulate personal responses to the works.

This part of the syllabus will be assessed orally. Students should therefore make use of every opportunity to equip themselves with the skills for speaking appropriately about literature in a variety of contexts. In consultation with their supervisor, students are encouraged to select works that provide ample scope for formal, close analysis.

Students should aim to develop their ability to:

- acquire detailed knowledge and understanding of the works studied
- demonstrate appropriate analytical responses to specific genres
- show how particular effects are achieved through language use, and analyse elements such as character, theme and setting
- engage with the details of works in order to develop a considered and informed response.

Part 3: Literary genres

Number of works studied: three at SL

All works must be chosen from the same literary genre from the prescribed list of authors (PLA) for the language A.

In part 3, a group of works selected from the same literary genre is studied in depth. Each genre has recognizable techniques, referred to as literary conventions, and writers use these conventions, along with other literary features, in order to achieve particular artistic ends.

The grouping of works by genre is intended to provide a framework for the comparative study of the selected works through an exploration of the literary conventions and features associated with that genre.

To ensure a meaningful comparison of the literary genre being studied, students and teachers are encouraged to be attentive in selecting works. While grouping works by themes can also be useful, the expectation is that students will gain an understanding of the various ways in which conventions of the genre can be used.

Students should aim to develop their ability to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of the works studied
- acquire a clear sense of the literary conventions of the selected genre
- understand the ways in which content is delivered through the literary conventions of

the selected genre

- compare the similarities and differences between the chosen works.

Part 4: Options

Number of works studied: three at SL

SSST students will be expected to meet the same syllabus requirements as for taught SL students, but with the exception that in part 4, all three works must be chosen from the PLA for the language A.

Within the parameters of the PLA, the choice of works may be dictated by circumstances that apply to specific regions or countries. Such circumstances may be a study of works in a particular genre or period, or from particular countries, to balance choices elsewhere in the course. The selection of works may fulfill local or national requirements.

Students will be assessed on their literary understanding as well as their ability to produce an effective oral presentation.

Students should aim to develop their ability to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of the works studied
- present an individual, independent response to works studied
- acquire powers of expression through oral presentation
- learn how to interest and hold the attention of an audience.