Kognity

IBDP English A: Language and Literature

Our IBDP English A: Language and Literature SL/HL subject supports the DP syllabus for the first assessment in 2021.
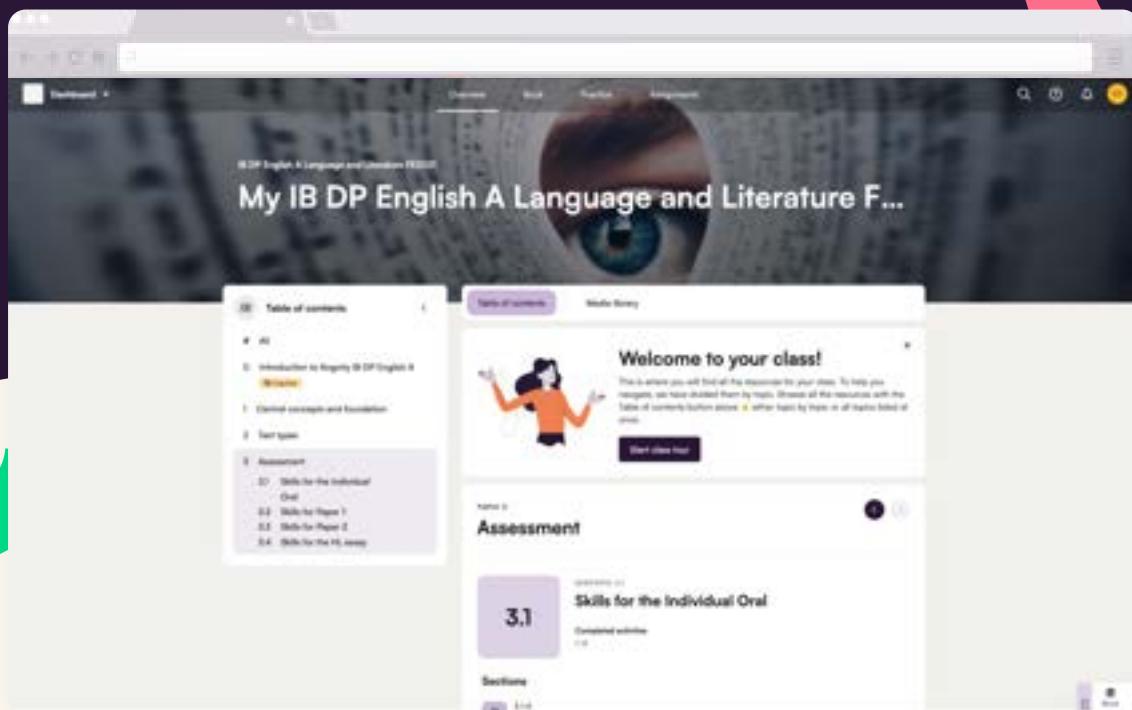
Key Features

Kognity's IBDP English A: Language and Literature has several key features which support both teachers and students. An overview of these features will be covered here and more detailed descriptions and ways they can be incorporated into the learning environment can be found in additional documents and webinars in the educator hub.

1. The Book

a. Syllabus organisation

This resource is fully aligned with the current IBDP curriculum and offers high-quality, flexible and modular guidance and support for IB teaching and learning.

The specific syllabus understandings from the DP English A: Language and Literature guide can be seen at the start of each section.

2. Text types / 2.1 Non-literary text types

Advertisements

Concept: Representation   AOE: Time and Space   FOI: Science, technology and the environment

The content is organised around 3 topics:

- Topic 1 introduces the foundational elements of the subject

  1   Central concepts and foundation

      1.1   Seven concepts
      1.2   Areas of exploration
      1.3   Fields of inquiry and global issues
      1.4   Textual features and authorial choices

- Topic 2 covers both non-literary and literary text types

  2   Text types

      2.1   Non-literary text types
      2.2   Literary text types

- Topic 3 is focused on the core skills for the different assessment components

  3   Assessment

      3.1   Skills for the Individual Oral
      3.2   Skills for Paper 1
      3.3   Skills for Paper 2
      3.4   Skills for the HL essay

b. Learning Design

The resource is rooted in learner-centred methods that prioritise flexibility, active engagement, and scaffolded skills development. It was designed for both linear progression and modular use, allowing students and teachers to engage with it sequentially or dip in and out based on their unique classroom needs and goals. It follows a "Learn and Apply" loop that operates on two levels: the broader topic level and the subtopic level, ensuring that active learning is embedded throughout.

Topic 1 serves as a foundational reference point, equipping learners with essential understandings of the IB DP English A: language and Literature course components including the seven Central Concepts, the Areas of Exploration, the Fields of Inquiry, and Global Issues, as well as foundational tools for textual analysis, such as Textual Features and Authorial Choices.

Topics 2 and 3 are structured around learn sections, focused on building essential knowledge and analytical skills, and corresponding apply sections, which give students the opportunity to put those skills into practice through analysis of new extracts.

At the subtopic level, the Learn and Apply loop begins with a "Big Picture" section that introduces a subtopic question, connects the content to the real world, and sparks curiosity. Each subtopic then closes with a Learner Portfolio Reflective Prompt, designed to foster metacognition and encourage students to reflect on their learning journey completing the inquiry loop.

c. Course Content

Diagrams, illustrations, photos and interactive activities add a visual perspective to key concepts of the syllabus, making learning fun and engaging.


Interactive 1. Intertextuality in Garfield[1].

d. International Mindedness

Within Kognity English A: Language and Literature you will find selected extracts to showcase a diverse range of perspectives, ensuring inclusive representation across various key dimensions:

- Author's Gender: A balanced inclusion of authors across genders
- Inclusion in PRL: Alignment with the IB Prescribed Reading List (PRL) where applicable
- In Translation: Inclusion of translated works
- Literary and Non-Literary Balance: Extracts are evenly distributed across literary and non-literary categories to ensure comprehensive coverage of the syllabus.
- Extract Time and Place: Texts span different historical periods and geographical contexts
- Key Concepts: Extracts are linked to the IB's 7 central concepts

- Areas of Exploration: Texts are aligned with the three Areas of Exploration
- Fields of Inquiry: Extracts connect to the five Fields of Inquiry, enabling students to explore global issues

This diversity ensures that students engage with texts that reflect a wide range of cultural, temporal, and conceptual contexts, fostering critical thinking, inclusivity, and global understanding.

Figure 3. Social media post from *Humans of New York*.
Credit: Brandon Stanton[1]
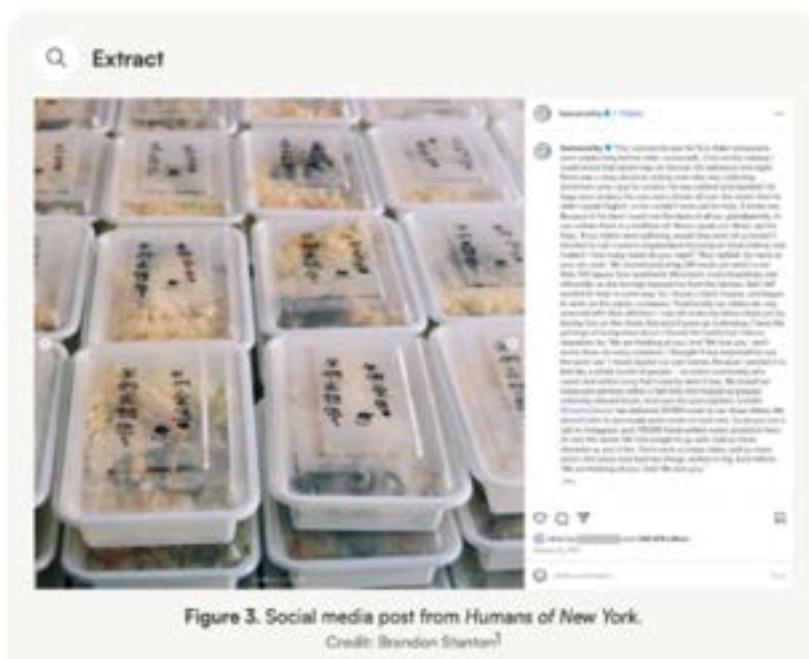
e. Contextual framing

One of the main challenges of English A: Language and Literature is that teachers and students can study an immense variety of texts. "Introduction", "Before you start' and 'You should know" boxes have been purposefully crafted to provide essential context and orient students before they encounter complex extracts. Whether clarifying historical background, unpacking cultural references, obscure terminology, or signalling key textual features, these boxes ensure students aren't thrown into analysis without grounding. By establishing a shared foundation, they empower students to approach unfamiliar material with greater confidence, curiosity, and critical engagement—regardless of the unique text choices in their individual classrooms.

Culture

Section

Introduction

Culture is everywhere; it is in the languages we speak, the traditions we celebrate, and the viral social trends we follow. In this section, you will explore how culture is represented in different literary and non-literary texts, and how it underlies the way we interpret texts.

Skills objectives

- Understand the relationship between language and culture.
- Interpret how culture affects both the creation and reception of texts.
- Explore how different cultures are represented in language and literature, recognising stereotypes, biases, or the diversity of cultural depictions.

Thinking prompt

How does culture shape the meaning and interpretation of texts?

Before you start

In this activity, you will apply the Step Inside visual thinking routine to explore a speech delivered at a global marine conservation summit. This thinking routine encourages you to analyse a text by stepping into the perspective of its creator. As you answer the questions, reflect on what the speech-maker may observe (perceptions), care about (sentiments) and believe (knowledge and beliefs) — the three core questions of this Step Inside routine — and how those values shape the language and structure of the text.

The Step Inside routine will help you develop your critical thinking skills and deepen your understanding of how non-literary texts reflect purpose, identity and audience engagement.

You should know:

- The following extract is a speech that was delivered by Steffi Lemke, Germany's Federal Minister for the Environment, at a high-level international event on marine conservation in December 2022.[1]
- As you read, consider how the speaker's position, cultural context and values shape the choices made in the text.

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f. Assessment

Topic 3 is entirely devoted to assessment and Kognity offers a comprehensive suite of assessment-focused resources designed to prepare students for success in English A: Language and Literature. Through activity sheets, scaffolded templates tailored to each assessment component—The Individual Oral, Paper 1, Paper 2, and the HL Essay—abd through exam-style questions, students practise core skills such as critical thinking, textual analysis, writing and speaking. Reflective prompts and learner portfolio tasks further encourage metacognition and conceptual engagement, making Kognity a powerful tool for guiding students through the rigours of IBDP assessment with structure, clarity, and depth.

TOPIC 3
ASSESSMENT

SUBTOPIC 3.1
SKILLS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL ORAL

3.1.0 **The big picture**

3.1.1 Critical thinking in the Individual Oral

3.1.2 Activity sheet: Critical thinking in the Individual Oral

3.1.3 Textual analysis in the Individual Oral

3.1.4 Activity sheet: Textual analysis in the Individual Oral

3.1.5 Speaking skills in the Individual Oral

3.1.6 Activity sheet: Speaking skills in the Individual Oral

3.1.7 Learner portfolio reflective prompt

2. Assignments

The assignments section allows teachers to assign exam-style question assignments. This can be used in many different ways including a flipped classroom approach, a review approach or a support approach.
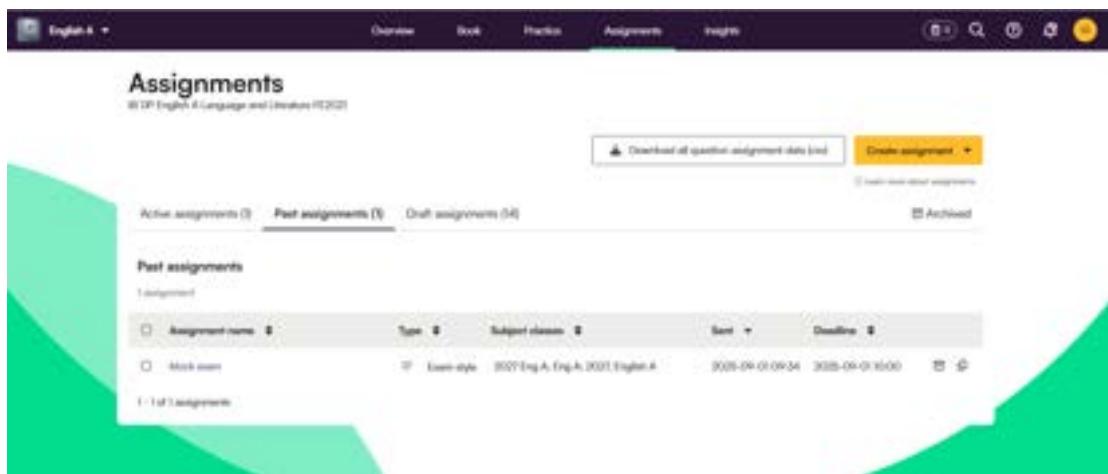
Exam-style questions are available in a lockable format so that teachers can decide how to use this feature to suit their students and program best, for example to give access before mock exams, final exams or throughout the program.