

Finnish A Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 19	20 - 35	36 - 47	48 - 60	61 - 72	73 - 84	85 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 15	16 - 30	31 - 43	44 - 57	58 - 69	70 - 81	82 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 25	26 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

At Higher Level internal assessment candidates are assessed on two compulsory activities: the individual oral commentary (IOC) and the individual oral presentation (IOP). This component is conducted and assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB. It should be stressed that the IOC is the only activity that should be recorded and a sample submitted to moderators; however, examiners received some IOPs instead to be moderated. Sample works have now been submitted electronically by schools, which has worked very well.

At Higher Level, the extract for the individual oral commentary must be based on the poetry studied in part 2 of the course. An 8 minute literary analysis (followed by 2 minutes for further questions) is made of a poem, which is selected by the teacher. The poem, or extract of a poem, must be accompanied by one or two guiding questions. After the oral analysis of the poem, there is a

discussion, conducted by the teacher, following immediately after the individual oral commentary without stopping the recording. The content of the questions for the discussion should be based on one of the works in part 2 of the course that was not used for the commentary. Teachers and candidates have clearly understood the structure of the IOC, and the orals were mostly conducted according to IB regulations (procedures, instructions, and forms). However, teachers should be more careful when filling out the forms and ensure they are using the latest version of each form. In addition to this, it can be noted that some teachers did not comment on their students' performances at all; they should give a short comment in the space provided.

Generally, the extracts for commentary on poetry were suitable in length and nature, including two guiding questions. However, some of the extracts chosen seemed to be too long, which resulted in superficial treatment of the extracts. Some schools only used extracts from long poems. Quite often these extracts proved to be very demanding for the candidates to analyze within an 8 minute time limit. Hence, in some schools all the commentaries given by the candidates exceeded 10 minutes without the teacher interrupting them. Furthermore, some poetry passages included more than two guiding questions, which is not permitted. However, subsequent questions posed by the teachers were generally carefully formulated and engaged students in further exploration of the poem or extract.

The discussions were generally conducted according to IB regulations. A great number of teachers succeeded in creating a nice atmosphere for the discussion. Therefore, their candidates were given the possibility to show their knowledge and understanding of the work discussed. In some cases, the discussion was conducted more in the form of an interview which did not lead to best possible results.

Candidate performance against each criterion

When it comes to the candidates' performance against different criteria, there are certain aspects to be considered:

Criterion A deals with the issue of the knowledge and understanding of the extract. In general, candidates showed a rather good knowledge and understanding of the poems studied. However, some candidates were not able to place the extract into its precise context. If there is some background information about the author or genre or the work of the author, it should be tightly connected to the interpretation of the extract. Otherwise, the candidate is quite likely to deviate from the topic.

The appreciation of the writer's choices (criterion B) was usually good, although there were many candidates having difficulties integrating the literary features into their commentaries. The analysis of the effects of the literary features seemed to be a challenge for many. Most of the candidates were able to name different literary devices (such as symbols, metaphors, poetic voice, verse/lines) when interpreting the extract. However, they were not able to discuss in all cases how these literary resources are used to shape meaning in the poem or extract – the relationship between form, language and themes.

Criterion C deals with the organization and presentation of the commentary. To award high marks, an IOC should consist of a clearly visible and logical structure. Different approaches and conventions have been rewarded. Most candidates were able to organise their IOC well and develop their responses in a meaningful manner. Almost every candidate had some kind of an introduction at the beginning of the commentary and a short summary at the end. The most successful candidates had planned their responses, so that they supported their interpretation constantly with well-chosen

references from the extract. The weaker commentaries consisted of paraphrases or partial summaries of the poem. There were a couple of students that were able to give only a 4 minute analysis of a poem. In these cases, it is beneficial if the teacher has a lot of subsequent questions about the chosen extract.

The candidates' knowledge and understanding of the work (criterion D) used in discussion was, in general, very good. Teacher's questions play a critical role: if an interesting aspect of the work was offered by the teacher, the student was usually able to expand and explore the question deeply. The weaker student performances revealed a lack of knowledge of the work used in the discussion. Some schools had chosen a collection of short stories to be used as "one work" in the discussion. The best students were capable of comparing the short stories written by different authors, but weaker students seemed to have problems establishing this comparison.

In criterion E, it seemed clear that many students gave well-informed and persuasive responses to the discussion questions, which resulted in an enthusiastic and detailed consideration of the aspects raised by the teacher. However, if the knowledge and understanding of the work was weak or mediocre, the responses were usually short and sometimes irrelevant.

Criterion F deals with the use of language. The choice of register should be appropriate and effective for the occasion. The IOC can be considered a formal setting, where a Finnish speaker should be more likely to adhere closely to prescribed grammar than to spoken language. The use of language was generally good; candidates were usually able to choose an appropriate register for this occasion, with a minimum use of informal language. Furthermore, literary terms were very often used in a correct and precise way.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

When it comes to the recommendations for the teaching of future candidates, teachers should make them aware of the guiding questions when they hand out the chosen poem or extract and should encourage candidates to plan a good and visible structure to their response.

More effort could be directed to the subsequent questions and the questions for the discussion; it is a benefit if the teacher can pose different kinds of questions so that the candidate gets an opportunity to indicate his/her interpretative skills in the best possible way. This aspect could play a significant role in the analysis of the poem; if a candidate has not made use of literary devices when interpreting the extract of a poem, it is beneficial if the teacher can help him/her by posing a question related to vocabulary, tone, sentence structure, terminology or rhyme and other devices.

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 23	24 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

At Standard Level internal assessment, candidates are assessed on two compulsory activities: the individual oral commentary (IOC) and the individual oral presentation (IOP). The IOC is a literary analysis of an extract from any one work studied in part 2 of the syllabus. Each extract must be accompanied by one or two guiding questions given by the teacher. After an 8-minute commentary the teacher will ask subsequent questions for two minutes. The total delivery time of the IOC is 10 minutes.

According to the marking instructions and IB Guide, the IOC is the only activity that is recorded and a sample submitted to moderators in the IB. However, it seems that, in some schools, the IOPs have been recorded and they were mistakenly sent to the IB instead of the IOCs. Sample works have now been submitted electronically by schools, which has worked very well.

In general, the range of the IOCs submitted was good. It is obvious that a lot of good work has been done in schools. However, it is strongly recommended that teachers check the recordings and all the material sent to the IB more carefully, since there were some cases where the wrong extracts were submitted with the IOCs.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A deals with the issue of the knowledge and understanding of the extract. To sum up, candidates could pay more attention to the interpretation of the extract. If they do not understand the meaning of the text, they, without doubt, will have difficulties in making a commentary on it. In addition to this, it is important to explain briefly the content and context of the extract at the beginning of the commentary. If the candidate fails to do this, this might lead to a mediocre or poor result.

Criterion B deals with the appreciation of the writer's choices. Most candidates were able to name various literary terms (such as symbols, metaphors, poetic voice) when interpreting the extract. However, they were not able to discuss, in all cases, how these literary devices are used to shape meaning in the extract – the relationship between form, language and themes. This aspect created some problems in the structure of the IOC. In the best commentaries, however, candidates were able to provide more than one possible interpretation in a persuasive and effective way.

The role of the teacher is significant when it comes to criterion B. Teachers should pay more attention to the choice of extracts. The extracts should offer an opportunity to analyze the writers' choices and include various literary terms. If the chosen poem, for instance, lacks figurative language, this kind of an extract might not be suitable for the IOC.

Criterion C deals with the organization and presentation of the commentary. To award high marks, an IOC should consist of a clearly visible and logical structure. Different approaches and conventions have been rewarded. A weak structure was probably the biggest problem amongst most students from different schools. There were many IOCs with no coherence or clear focus; the poorer performances contained disconnected observations that were not integrated into the body of the whole response. More attention could therefore be paid to the organization and presentation of the commentary, so that candidates could have wider opportunities to obtain higher marks. For instance, a circular structure might be easily understandable for most candidates. A line by line analysis is not always the best possibility, but, in some cases, it demonstrates well the candidate's ability to interpret the details of the extract.

Criterion D deals with the use of language. The choice of register should be appropriate and effective for the occasion. The IOC can be considered a formal setting, where a Finnish speaker should be more likely to adhere closely to prescribed grammar than to spoken language. However, there were some students that made constant use of verbal fillers and contractions (“niinku”, “tota noin”, “joo”), which led them to achieve lower marks in this criterion. On the one hand, there were some candidates who used the language in a very clear, correct and precise manner; on the other hand, there were some candidates that regularly used spoken language (e.g. a constant use of “mä” instead of “mina”).

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers could pay more attention to their subsequent questions. If these questions are well-planned, they help candidates to show their talent and understanding of the work. Because some candidates quite often forget to show their analytical skills, it is usually beneficial to have one question that invites them to use some analytical concepts at the end of the IOC, if needed. Even teachers should know the chosen extracts extremely well – it is misleading if the teacher gives a lot of positive feedback when a candidate offers a wrong interpretation of the text.

Further comments

School-supported self-taught candidates have had an oral examination consisting of two sections: a 10 minute individual oral commentary based on an extract chosen from one of the part 2 works and a 10 minute individual oral presentation based on two part 4 works.

Generally, candidates were well prepared for their oral examinations. Candidates could pay more attention to the names of literary devices in Finnish (such as symbols, metaphors and types of narrator). There were many candidates who made use of their own terms (for instance “rimmausskeema” instead of “loppusointukaava”) which created some problems understanding their interpretations.

It should also be mentioned that a candidate is supposed to speak freely, not read aloud from prepared notes. Moreover, candidates are asked to pay more attention to the register and style suited to the choice of presentation. An oral examination is a formal setting, where a Finnish speaker should be more likely to adhere closely to prescribed grammar than to spoken language.

Higher and standard level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20	21 - 25

General comments

According to the IB Guide, the written assignment is based on a work in translation studied in part 1 of the course. Candidates need to write an analytical essay with a reflective statement, and both tasks are externally assessed by the examiners in the IB. The goal of the written assignment process is to produce a literary essay on a topic generated by the candidate and developed from one of the pieces of supervised writing.

There were a lot of interesting essays written on different works of literature. The most popular works chosen as the subject of study for this component were *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini and *Perfume* by Patrick Süskind. However, there were even some works from ancient literature that had been chosen.

Candidates usually tended to perform better in the task if they wrote their written assignments about less known works. There seems to be thousands of pages of research, summaries, and studies written on great works of literature usually considered to be a part of literary canon (such as Ibsen's above mentioned work) – a lot of these summaries and studies are easily accessible in the internet, too. Some candidates are not able to develop their own ideas from this information, but rather take too much inspiration from these notes and studies. Quite often new works of literature provide a fresher theme to be investigated. However, candidates generally knew the chosen works of literature and genres well. There were many candidates that were able to offer insightful and interesting thoughts about the works in question.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Candidates are required to write Finnish language with a high degree of accuracy. Although most of the written assignments were good in language, there were a few poorly written essays with poor sense of cohesion, and the general use of language. There was even one written assignment that consisted of one single paragraph.

It could be beneficial to pay more attention to citation and the role of the written sources, too. In general, candidates are very good at citing the literary works they are analyzing. In many cases, citing provides the backbone for the interpretation and argumentation. However, there were a couple of essays that contained too much paraphrasing at the cost of clear analysis.

Written assignments do not need to be “an abbreviated extended essay”. Some written assignments relied on literary studies that were cited throughout the written assignment. Citing might in some cases let candidates concentrate more on their secondary sources than the literary work in question. It must be underlined that the strength and credibility of written assignments does not depend on the secondary sources, but on the strength of the candidate's argumentative and interpretative skills.

It seemed that the administration of reflective statements was not as good as it should be. Teachers should definitely study the details of the written assignment procedures in order to help their students to get better marks.

The best written assignments had a very clear focus, together with a high degree of accuracy in grammar. The focus was often already revealed somehow in the title of the work, too. To be more specific, the title often offers the reader a perspective – with the help of clear focus and title, the reader can be drawn into the chosen theme. In the best written assignments, the writer usually started with a problem or question that he/she tried to solve by demonstrating a lot of evidence and making

an argument for or against this problem and supporting that argument with some clear quotations taken from the work of literature. In general, it is better to study a specific and small issue, in the context of the whole work, rather than to choose too broad a scope. However, it is also important that the chosen focus also gives the candidate an opportunity to show his/her ability to analyze literary works as well as to show their analytical skills.

It should be noted that the written assignment is not a comparison of two or more literary works but a clearly focused literary analysis of a single chosen work.

Self-taught students had usually a couple of common problems with their written assignments – they were quite often citing English sources and did not use the original names of the characters but their translations. However, there were also a couple of very good works written by some self-taught students abroad. In spite of this, it is recommended for self-taught students to try to find a Finnish tutor to help with their Finnish studies because this could lead to better results.

Candidate performance against each criterion

As already stated before, there were significant problems with the reflective statement (criterion A). There were a great number of candidates (and probably teachers, too) who have not understood the role of the reflective statement.

The reflective statement is meant to be a short writing exercise (300 – 400 words in length) and should be completed as soon as possible following the interactive oral but **BEFORE** writing the written assignment. Each student is asked to provide a reflection on each of the interactive orals that have taken place in the classroom. The reflective statement on the **SAME** work as the student's final assignment is submitted to the IB for assessment. It must be emphasized that the reflective statement and the supervised writing should not be confused with each other. The supervised writing is understood as a springboard to elicit ideas from the student and help the student develop a topic for the final essay.

There were several issues that examiners faced. Firstly, it was evident that some reflective statements were not written following the interactive oral but rather after having gone through the whole four-staged process of writing. There were several candidates who provided more a reflection of their writing process of the written assignment (or a reflection of the whole four-stage process of the written assignments consisting of interactive oral, reflective statement, supervised writing and written assignment) than a reflection on their participation in the interactive oral. Secondly, a number of reflective statements were hard to award marks because the teacher had proofread the texts with red pen. It must be stressed that the teacher should not proofread reflective statements or award marks because this is an externally assessed component. Thirdly, there were some supervised writings submitted instead of reflective statements. The original pieces of supervised writing should not be submitted to the IB, but kept at the school.

There were a great number of candidates whose reflective statements were not based on the question of how their understanding of cultural and contextual considerations of the work was developed through the interactive oral. On the contrary, these candidates only wrote several lines about the themes and characters of the literary works studied without pondering on cultural or contextual questions at all. A very common problem dealt with the requirement of reflection. There were dozens of papers with no sign of reflection. Teachers should therefore pay more attention to this

– candidates really need to indicate how their understanding has developed through the interactive oral. If the reflective statement lacks self-reflective language, the candidate cannot score high marks.

Criterion B is related to knowledge and understanding. One should bear in mind that knowledge is best indicated by the use of detailed textual evidence to support argumentation and interpretation. There were some candidates that only included one or two quotations or close textual references, which were not sufficient to support their argument. However, most candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the text with some carefully chosen textual references.

More attention could be directed to the contextualization; if a student concentrates on a detailed theme (which is recommended), it is important to relate these details to a reading of the work as a whole, so that the particular details are always related to the broader meaning. There were many candidates having significant problems in this respect. For instance, this kind of problem might appear in the way in which many candidates talk about the characters of the literary work: they do not introduce them at all. If characters were introduced at least with short epithets to the reader, when they first appear in the written assignment, the reader could rely better on the interpretation and argumentation.

Criterion C deals with appreciation of writer's choices – basically this means analyzing the use and effects of the literary features used in the works and the literary features used in the text to shape meaning. The best candidates quite often chose a topic that naturally included the topic of "writer's choices" – for instance, an investigation of symbols in a particular literary work of art offered a very good starting point to achieve good marks on this criterion. However, more contextual approaches (for instance, an interpretation of the historical background of a chosen novel) seemed to be weaker in this respect – candidates quite often forgot to discuss writers' choices and the effects of the literary features when they were concentrating on contextual facts.

The organization and development of the written assignment is assessed in a criterion D. Any form of structuring has been rewarded if it was appropriate. The biggest problems in HL essays seemed to appear at the beginning of the assignments. There were quite a few papers that started with historical background information about the author or the chosen literary work. It would have been more effective to go straight to the main implications and hypotheses. In the weakest SL written assignments, there seemed to be a weak paragraph structure and severe problems with cohesion. The structure has to reflect the interpretation stated at the beginning of the work. In addition to this, there should be clear links between the conclusion at the end and the hypotheses/questions at the beginning. There were some texts with a superficial structure, although there were also candidates that were capable of creating excellent structures. Moreover, it was obvious that some of the weaker assignments were not proofread because they repeated the same paragraphs two or more times in different places. It is therefore highly recommended that even teachers read the final versions before submitting them to the IB in order to avoid this type of errors.

There should be more emphasis on the work on Criterion E (language). However, there were big differences between candidates when it comes to this criterion. The best candidates were able to write with a clear, accurate, and even lively language, but a couple of the weaker candidates used such an obscure language that it was almost impossible to understand. Although most of the written assignments used good language, there were some poorly written essays with poor sense of cohesion and general use of language. Candidates should be advised to proofread their own texts before submitting them. More attention should be directed towards the following: the use of commas (a comma is not used after the first word in a sentence), sentence structure (too long sentences with a

severe overuse of 2nd instructive case in infinitive, e.g. words such as “tehden”, “tietäen”), incorrect word choices (e.g. “kiusaus” is used instead of “kiusaaminen”). Some candidates had problems using literary terms correctly. It is suggested that the difference between symbol and metaphor is clear.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

It is strongly recommended that all teachers familiarize themselves with the function of the reflective statement in order to help their students to achieve better marks. The IB Language A Literature Guide provides all the necessary information.

Self-study candidates are strongly recommended to base their reflective statement on their journal writing. They should understand “reflective” not as a personal or rhetorical response to the literary work or the journal, but as a way of demonstrating their sense of culture and context of the work under analysis. More information about this is provided in the IB Language A Literature Guide.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that even the overall impression of the written assignments is important, too. We recommend candidates to use string tags (do not staple) and to add page numbers and a list of sources to their written assignments.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 10	11 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

The interpretations of the poem or prose passage should be “proven” with specific textual referencing and adequate explanation. Hypothetical considerations outside the context of the text, especially in the prose passage (what might have happened before or what might happen later) do not make the interpretation more convincing.

The discussion of literary features should be an integral part of the analysis which illustrates the meaning of the text as a whole and demonstrates how that meaning is constructed by the writer. Too many candidates tended to discuss literary features out of context, often in a separate paragraph towards the end of the commentary.

Some misunderstandings arose from the candidates being unfamiliar with the word *marraskesi*, which happened to appear in both texts offered for commentary.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

This year about two thirds of the candidates chose to write their literary commentary on poetry. Many candidates appeared very well prepared to analyze the poem.

Candidates who read the text carefully and took the time to organize their thoughts before starting to write performed well. Almost all candidates tried to address literary devices, many showing good, perceptive understanding of the text.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Prose

The prose extract from Helena Kallio's novel *Ennen kuin sielu puutuu* (2006) proved challenging for the candidates and many seemed rather unsure of how to handle it. Many candidates misinterpreted the narrative structure of the text: the narrator was not the little girl, Lea, described in the passage but the female actress, whose learning process was the main focus of the passage. Most candidates paid very little attention to the narrative voice or point of view in the extract.

The candidates who worked through the prose passage in a linear fashion tended to run out of time, especially when ideas had not been fully thought through at the planning stage. Those who did not organize their reading in a linear fashion often found an approach which worked for them, either taking a thematic approach or using literary features as the basis for their commentary. The better answers were also alert to the historical clues in the prose extract (e.g. the civil war period in Finland) and used these to present informed commentaries. Stronger candidates also tended to consider the viewpoint of the narrator and the imagery of the text in some detail.

Some candidates spent the first couple of pages on the content of the prose passage, and then went back to explaining literary features, an approach which sometimes led to unnecessary repetition. Paraphrasing doesn't constitute a valid interpretation.

Poem

As it has been mentioned before, many candidates appeared very well prepared to write the poetry commentary and almost all candidates revealed a reasonable general understanding of Aki Luostarinen's poem *Mennyt on vieras maa* (2002). There was some good close reading of the poem and effective analysis of the imagery.

It is important to analyse and interpret the poem as a whole; some candidates ignored parts of the poem which did not fit in with their central idea. This doesn't lead to a very convincing interpretation. It was also clear that some candidates had been taught to include different possible readings of the poem. Often it would have been better for the candidates if they had chosen only one interpretation and tried to support it with precise references to the poem.

Many candidates noted the use of several literary devices in the poem (e.g. imagery, rhyme, the structure of the stanzas), but some failed to consider their effect and meaning in the context of the poem as a whole.

A number of candidates seemed to have little grasp of the concept of speaker (or the voice of the text), and identified the speaker with the author.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates should be encouraged to prepare as thoroughly for analysing prose and its conventions as for the poetry.

They should ensure that they read and absorb the whole passage or poem before writing anything - the commentary must treat the entire passage or the entire poem.

Many commentaries were structured using a line by line approach. A stanza by stanza or, with prose, strictly sequential reading can work, but stronger candidates tended to organize and analyse by ideas, using textual evidence throughout the passage to support those ideas.

Candidates need to be able to embed quotations into sentences so as to illustrate the point being made and to contribute to the argument, not interrupt it. They should know how to integrate quotations, and how to cite verse - if quoting more than one line of continuous verse, insert slash marks at the end of lines to indicate an awareness of the verse form.

Further comments

The candidates need to keep their handwriting legible. This is essential because the answers are being scanned for e-marking.

There were several unfinished commentaries this year. This could be avoided with better planning of the commentary before starting to write.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

The second question of the prose analysis asked candidates to comment on “the context” of the extract. This was a slightly unclear task, as the concept ‘context’ does not have an unequivocal meaning among the concepts of literary analysis. Therefore, the candidates had understood this concept in different ways. Several candidates did not, for example, discuss the childhood of the characters in relation to the present of the events. Due to this confusion, it was fair to accept several possible interpretations of context in the answers.

In the analysis of the poem, it was unclear for many candidates how to divide the poem into verse lines and stanzas. Therefore, the specific poem was a challenge as the division of lines and stanzas is a basis for analysis for many candidates.

Very few candidates gave any notice in either question to areas of analysis such as style.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates knew fairly well the concepts to analyse poems. At the same time, regarding the use of concepts, the close reading of the prose extract was more difficult. Taking into account the amount of time that the candidates have to write their answers, it is a challenge to write a coherent and logical piece of writing. As most of the candidates dealt well with this issue, they must have practised it enough with their teachers.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

In the analyses of the prose extract, it can be appreciated how closely the candidates have read the text. Most of the candidates did not notice several nuances related to the characters and even spelt the first names of characters incorrectly. This is the result of reading the prose too swiftly and conclusions being drawn with haste. Candidates who read the passage meticulously noticed the deep nuances and dynamics between the characters and some of them also paid attention to differences in social class and to discrepancies of the characters in their childhood.

The content of the poem in question was adequate and suitable for the candidates. They examined well the themes of solitude and death. The second question of the poem was slightly puzzling (the question about the feelings that the poem aroused in the reader), yet the candidates managed this better than expected. The contemplation of the moods and feelings of the poem enriched the interpretation.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

I would emphasise the practice of finding an overall interpretation. In particular, in the analysis of the poem many candidates were able to find the aspects of form, the speaker, metaphors or figures of speech, but when it came to the core meaning of the poem, we encountered peculiar interpretations.

The prose extract must be handled specifically as an extract, not as a whole narrative or a short story.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 - 16	17 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Some candidates have difficulties in creating a clear and well-structured essay (criterion D). Accuracy in grammar and choice of register (criterion E) were good in candidates at Higher Level but they should be improved at Standard Level. More attention should definitely be directed to cohesion and sentence structure, so that ideas could be better organized and developed. Some candidates had problems in integrating quotations into their own argument. There were many students that used punctuation rules as if they wrote English instead of Finnish (e.g. adding comma after the first word in the sentence) or overusing the 2nd instructive case in infinitive (e.g. words such as “tehdén”, “tullen”), thus making sentences far too long.

It seems that often poetry and drama might be more demanding than short stories or the novel in this respect. Most responses focused on the questions on the novel, which was the most popular genre chosen by most of the schools. There were only a few responses dealing with poetry, short stories or plays. The most popular question was definitely number 9, dealing with the description of society in the novels.

Some candidates had problems establishing a comparison: sometimes they did not compare the chosen works, although they are required to do so. This leads to weaker results (especially on criterion B). The weaker responses consist of too much description of the plot and paraphrasing at the cost of clear analysis. Some literary conventions might be identified but the use of analytical skills might be forgotten. Some questions led to too much self-reflection instead of a well-thought literary analysis.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Many candidates seemed to be very well prepared for the examination. For instance, they were able to quote several lines of poetry to support their argument. In general, almost all candidates were able to remember the names of the characters correctly. The best candidates had a very good command of literary conventions and genres and showed good analytical skills. However, they should put more effort on the accuracy of language, as stated above.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

A number of questions were not chosen at all. Poetry, drama or short story was chosen as a genre of study only by very few candidates. The best responses usually dealt with only two of the works studied: if there were three works analyzed in one response, it usually resulted in weaker structure and superficial interpretation.

Some of the questions were divided into two or even three different “sub-questions” which caused some confusion. There were candidates who only concentrated on the first part of the question, and, therefore, were not awarded high marks on criteria A and B.

Most of the candidates answered question number 9 which dealt with the description of society in the books studied. There was a clear issue with the responses to this question: there were a great number of candidates just describing the society, and not appreciating the use of literary convention in relation to the question and the works used.

The question about the emblematic traits of a novel also created problems with a number of candidates (due to the interpretations of the definition of emblematic trait). However, some candidates had – quite rightly – interpreted emblematic traits as being symbolic traits or motifs in a work of art. This kind of definition of emblematic traits then served as a sound basis for a good interpretation.

Question number 12 created some issues because it asked candidates to write about the reader's response. Candidates were asked to respond personally to the poetic speaker. This question was challenging for the candidates.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

More emphasis must be placed on accuracy of grammar; more specifically sentence structure, correct use of verbs and correct spelling, which are of great importance. It would be beneficial to give guidelines about how to avoid the use of spoken language, for instance, there were a couple of answers when the word (“tämä”) was constantly written in its spoken form.

More attention should be paid to formal aspects of essay writing. To award high marks, a response should contain a clearly visible and logical structure. Different approaches and conventions can be rewarded, but it might be easy to start with two or three easier genre conventions, and try to practice these to become more independent.

Candidates should avoid answering questions which include unfamiliar concepts for him/her.

