LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
TEACHING AND LEARNING SYLLABUS
Pre-University
Higher 1, Higher 2 & Higher 3

Implementation starting with
2024 Pre-University One Cohort

Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

# CONTENTS

SECTION 1:
INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

DESIRED OUTCOMES OF EDUCATION

The Desired Outcomes of Education are attributes that educators aspire for all students to have by the completion of their formal education.

The student who is schooled in the Singapore education system embodies the Desired Outcomes of Education. The student has a good sense of self-awareness, a sound moral compass, and the necessary skills and knowledge to take on challenges of the future. The student is responsible to the family, community and nation. The student appreciates the beauty of the world, possesses a healthy mind and body, and has a zest for life. In sum, the student is

- a **confident person** who has a zest for life and strong sense of right and wrong, is adaptable and resilient, knows himself or herself, is discerning in judgment, thinks independently and critically, and communicates effectively;
- a **self-directed learner** who takes responsibility for his or her own learning, is curious reflective, and persevering in the lifelong pursuit of learning, driven by passion and purpose;
- an **active contributor** who is empathetic and open minded to collaborate effectively in teams, exercises initiative, has courage to take risks responsibly, is innovative and strives for excellence; and
- a **concerned citizen** who is rooted to Singapore, having a strong civic consciousness, is responsible to their family, community and nation and takes an active role in improving the lives of others.

21st CENTURY COMPETENCIES (21CC)
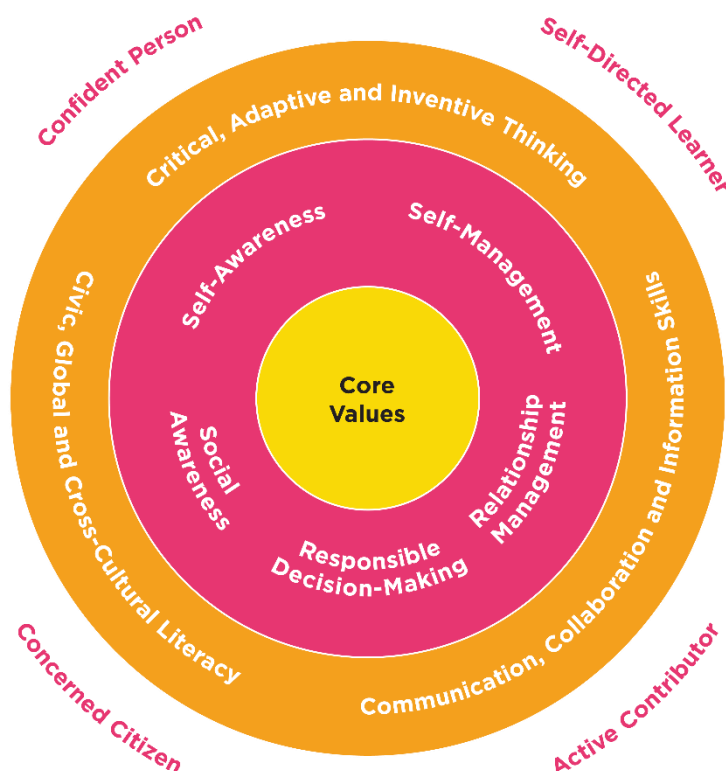
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Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes[1]
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Globalisation, changing demographics and technological advancements are some of the key driving forces of our current times, and they will continue to shape our future. To help our students thrive in this fast-changing world, the Framework for 21CC and Student Outcomes identifies the core values and competencies that underpin the holistic education that our schools provide. Together, these competencies will enable our students to tap into the rich opportunities in the new digital age while keeping a strong Singapore heartbeat.

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[1] For more information on the Framework for 21CC and Student Outcomes, access https://www.moe.gov.sg/education-in-sg/21st-century-competencies

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH IN THE A-LEVEL CURRICULUM

Literature in English contributes to the attainment of the Desired Outcomes of Education and the development of 21CC by enabling students to reflect upon and explore the presentation of human experience in a wide range of literary texts.

VALUE OF LITERATURE IN ENGLISH IN THE A-LEVEL CURRICULUM

The study of Literature in English allows students to engage critically with texts and to examine their literary, social, cultural and historical considerations across a range of literary periods and movements. The study of a literary work makes the student cognisant of how a particular text, although situated in a specific context, is also capable of demonstrating a powerful universality. Students examine how language shapes meanings and interrogate nuances of language. In addition, exposure to different ways of observing and experiencing the world enables students to critically engage with diverse perspectives, building empathy for others and a capacity for self-reflection. The experience of studying a wide range of texts in depth creates rich dialogue that ignites the imagination and sharpens creativity. The study of A-Level Literature allows students to experience the joy of reading Literature; students develop the ability to respond confidently to texts as they navigate a range of literary works.

UNDERSTANDING THE SYLLABUS DESIGN

The A-Level Literature in English teaching and learning syllabuses are centred upon the appreciation of a broad selection of literary texts, and outline the knowledge and skills required in the study of literature. The syllabuses emphasise the development of values and dispositions in students, thereby helping them enjoy and appreciate literature as an art form.

SYLLABUS AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Syllabus Aims

Through the study of Literature, students will:

1. experience the joy of reading literature;

2. appreciate diverse perspectives as well as negotiate the complexities and ambiguities in exploring universal human concerns;

3. demonstrate the skills to critically analyse and evaluate literary texts;

4. respond to literary texts with an understanding of genre and cultural contexts;

5. communicate informed, sensitive and personal responses effectively and persuasively; and

6. develop a love for reading literature.

Learning Outcomes

The Literature in English syllabus takes into account the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions which students should be able to demonstrate in the course of their study. These are listed below.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
By the end of the Literature in English course, students will be able to • understand the ideas expressed in literary texts by critically analysing and evaluating the construction of texts; • make a relevant and informed personal response to the texts and clearly communicate the knowledge, understanding, and insights appropriate to literary study; • understand and engage with literary texts in relation to their social, cultural, and historical contexts; and • read independently and build on their understanding of literary texts across the broad corpus of literature.

VALUES AND DISPOSITIONS
The Literature in English course provides students with opportunities to • develop global awareness of issues of human concern through the study of texts and empathise with diverse voices; • reflect on their assumptions, values and perspectives as they negotiate texts and reassess them in the light of other interpretations; • develop and demonstrate curiosity and interest in engaging with literary texts; • maintain an open mind in embracing ambiguity and negotiating complexity; • communicate respectfully in a way that is culturally appropriate to others; and • develop as confident, self-directed learners who read widely.

21st CENTURY COMPETENCIES IN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

The study of Literature in English focuses on *Response, Analysis* and *Comparison* skills (comparison skills are only taught for H2 Literature) in the study of literary texts. The subject requires students to understand the literary presentation of texts and to appreciate their complexities. Students respond to texts sensitively and demonstrate their responses persuasively. The process of critically examining literary texts strongly support the development of competencies that are essential for students to thrive in the 21st century. The following are some examples:

- The engagement with a diverse range of literary texts allows students to develop an understanding of the social, cultural and historical influences of these texts. This builds competencies in Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-cultural Skills. Students explore a variety of global voices and in the process learn to empathise with the diversity of shared human experience. The discussions on the texts enable them to consider the relevance of issues studied to the Singapore context.

- The study of a broad corpus of literary texts allows students to engage in literary inquiry. Through the critical analysis and evaluation of these texts, students develop sound reasoning as they justify their responses with textual evidence. The examination of complex ideas and ambiguities in texts allows students to develop qualities such as adaptability and resilience. This helps to hone competencies in Critical, Adaptive and Inventive Thinking.

- Students of Literature also develop their competencies in Communication, Collaboration and Information Skills when they share their responses to texts, as well as navigate and negotiate diverse perspectives. Students are guided to explain their own ideas, raise questions and consider the views of their peers objectively and respectfully. This co-construction of meaning provides new understanding and insights, allowing students to experience the value of collaborative learning and how it enriches discussions. Students are also taught to be accurate, responsible, respectful and ethical contributors of literary ideas and information with communities online. Literature in English provides an extensive range of opportunities for the development of 21CC.

SECTION 2:
CONTENT – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Areas of Study

Spectrum of Skills

2.   CONTENT – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The H1, H2 and H3 Literature in English syllabuses are framed by the following areas of study: *Response, Analysis and Comparison.*[2] These constitute the core of A-Level literary study and are demonstrated in the close examination of literary features, the interplay between text and context, and the use of language in a given work. The knowledge, skills and values gained from exploring texts enable students to acquire key 21CC as illustrated below:
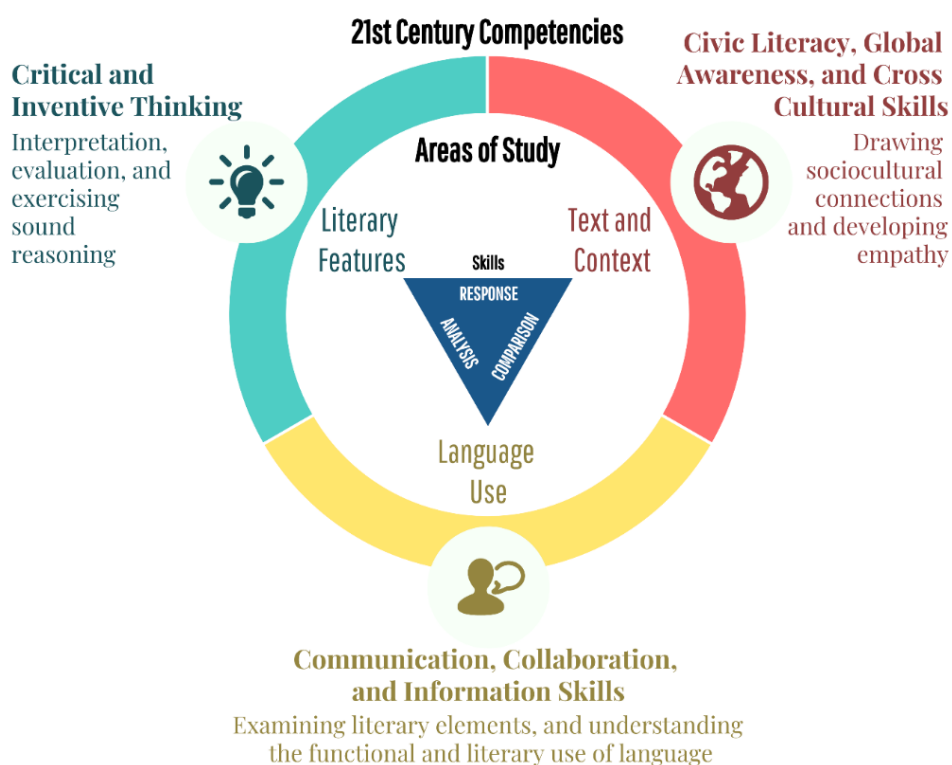
AREAS OF STUDY

The study of Literature at H1, H2 and H3 levels should be seen as a process of critically examining texts. In addition to the study of inherent stylistic features of texts, students should also explore the specific contexts that led to the production of these texts, as well as how readers and audiences relate to the texts. Students should engage with texts at various cognitive and affective levels. There are various approaches in engaging with literary texts and the teaching and learning of A-Level Literature in English is grounded in the three areas of study – literary features, text and context and language use.

Literary Features
- Definition of a genre, the individual form of the text and its stylistic features;
- Study of how these features are used by writers, and to what effect, in the various texts, seen and unseen.

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[2] H1 students are assessed on *Response* and *Analysis* skills. H2 and H3 students are assessed on *Response, Analysis,* as well as *Comparison* skills.

Text and Context
- Appreciation of how the texts studied relate to the social, cultural and historical contexts in which they were created;
- Exploration of the ideologies and assumptions that frame texts.

Language Use
- Use of language to communicate ideas in response to literary texts;
- Awareness of how writers use language to shape meaning and evoke responses to literary texts.

SPECTRUM OF SKILLS

Students should be equipped with the following skills:
- To make informed personal and critical responses in the study of major, canonical and contemporary writers as well as established literary topics and periods (for H2 Literature in English);
- To demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the ways in which the historical and cultural contexts of text and writer inform the meanings in texts;
- To analyse and evaluate critically the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings;
- To communicate clearly, knowledge, understanding, insights and perspectives appropriate to literary study.

SECTION 3: PEDAGOGY

The Singapore Teaching Practice

Principles for Teaching and Learning of Literature in English

Recommended Pedagogical Approaches for Literature in English

The Place of ICT in Literature in English

3.   PEDAGOGY

THE SINGAPORE TEACHING PRACTICE

The Singapore Teaching Practice (STP) is a model that makes explicit how effective teaching and learning is achieved in Singapore. Anchored on the notion of teaching as a profession, the STP draws on Singapore educators' beliefs about how students learn, and teachers teach. It is represented in the form of an orchid to reflect the Singapore context within which teachers practise their craft.
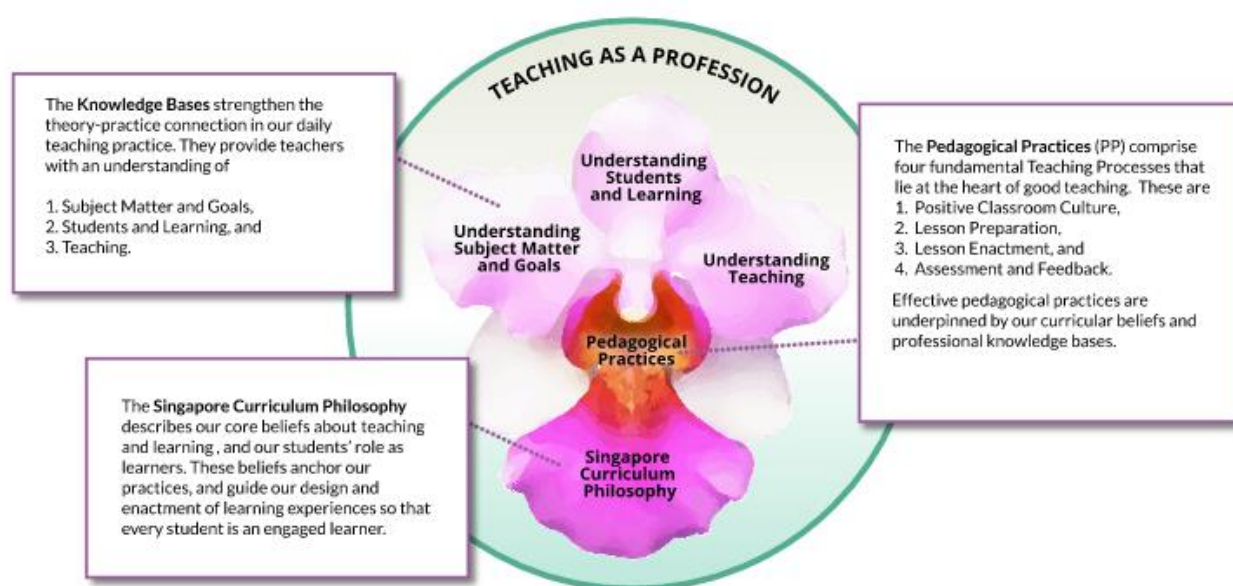
A-Level Literature teachers are guided by the STP and the Principles of Teaching Literature in English in considering their pedagogical approaches. To enable students with different learning needs and interests to achieve the learning outcomes, A-Level Literature teachers engage in Pedagogical Practices comprising the four fundamental Teaching Processes that lie at the heart of good teaching: positive classroom culture, lesson preparation, lesson enactment as well as assessment and feedback.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Literature teaching involves:
1. creating learning environments that deepens student engagement with Literature and encourages the joy of learning;
2. centring learning on students by empowering them with the agency to be responsible for and proactively shape their own learning;
3. encouraging students to question assumptions and engage critically with literary ideas;
4. engaging students in feedback on their learning; and
5. connecting learning by sensitising learners to human concerns in the community.

1. **Engaging Learning Environments**

Creating spaces that support both individual and collaborative learning in face-to-face and online settings will enhance student engagement and allow them to experience the joy of learning. The Literature classroom:

- is a safe space for inquirers to explore challenging and complex ideas;
- promotes active participation and engagement with literary texts, where students collaborate and co-construct knowledge;
- promotes respect for multiple viewpoints and diverse perspectives; and
- promotes learner independence and self-motivation.

2. **Student-centred Learning**

Placing students at the centre of their learning affords them ownership of and responsibility for their learning. The Literature classroom:

- encourages cognitive and affective student engagement, recognising that students come with a wide range of knowledge, beliefs, experiences and interests;
- promotes differentiated instructional strategies based on each student's level of readiness and learning profile;
- fosters student motivation by providing opportunities for them to make decisions about their learning; and
- provides opportunities for students to critically reflect on their beliefs, values and assumptions in the light of new knowledge.

3. **Literary Inquiry**

Challenging students to question and engage with ideas promotes deep levels of thinking and creates an understanding of Literature as a record of shared human experiences. The Literature classroom:

- explores ideas and concepts that endure across literary periods, movements and cultures;
- builds on and connects literary knowledge to new ideas and concepts;
- appreciates how language is used in literary texts to convey meaning and facilitates the development of critical thinking through the analysis and evaluation of literary texts;
- provides opportunities for students to reflect on their responses and articulate their thought processes when navigating texts; and
- enables students to develop a personal voice that reflects critical imagination, originality of thought and nuanced insights**.**

4. **Commitment to Feedback**

Providing timely and pertinent feedback improves student confidence, self-awareness and enthusiasm for learning. The Literature classroom:

- enables students to envision clear learning targets;
- helps students to identify their areas of strength and learning gaps; and

- offers constructive, individualised feedback that guides students to take actionable steps to improve their learning.

5. Connecting Learning

Sensitising learners to human concerns in the community is important in developing caring learners. The Literature classroom:

- considers the important role of social and cultural contexts in shaping meanings in texts;
- creates learning experiences that enable students to deeply understand community needs and concerns and to respond to these with empathy; and
- inspires students to act in ways that show care for the community.

RECOMMENDED PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES FOR A-LEVEL LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Three pedagogies have been recommended for use in the teaching and learning of A-Level Literature in English:
- Dialogic Teaching;
- Collaborative Learning; and
- Explicit Instruction

Dialogic Teaching for A-Level Literature

Dialogic Teaching is an approach that provides opportunities for the use of classroom talk to support and enrich student learning. This process of questioning and knowledge co-construction encourages teachers and students to appreciate diverse perspectives, navigate complexities and ambiguities in texts, and reflect on their own assumptions, values and perspectives. This process of dialogic talk deepens students' critical understanding of literary texts and hones their ability to communicate effectively and persuasively.

Collaborative Learning for A-Level Literature

Collaborative learning is a student-centred activity that involves students constructing and co-constructing meaning from their knowledge and experiences to achieve a new shared understanding of literary texts and ideas. Students work together in small groups to achieve shared learning goals and create new knowledge. Social interactions play an important role in collaborative learning as students learn to respect diverse perspectives and communicate informed and insightful personal responses in group discussions. When students reflect on and question their own assumptions and points of view, they become more aware of their own thinking processes, deepening their critical and creative thinking skills.

Explicit Instruction in Strategies for Literary Analysis

Explicit instruction in the literary analysis of texts is fundamental in enabling students to develop an informed personal response to a variety of texts. Close reading is the foundational skill of critical analysis that enables students of Literature to develop a detailed understanding of how language and context play a part in the construction of meaning across the different genres of prose, poetry and drama. This skill is demonstrated in the writing of critical commentaries that are effective and insightful.

THE PLACE OF ICT IN LITERATURE

The use of ICT in and beyond the Literature classroom provides students with opportunities for collaboration and self-directed learning. The flexibility afforded by technology supports blended learning environments that combine classroom instruction with online learning.

SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT

Formative and Summative Assessment in Literature in English

4.   ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of gathering and analysing evidence about student learning in order to make appropriate decisions that enhance teaching and learning. Assessment enhances learning when the information serves as feedback for teachers to modify instructional practice. The information also informs decisions about students, the curriculum, programmes and department policies and provides information to students and key stakeholders.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN A-LEVEL LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Assessment for A-Level Literature constitutes a continuous spectrum comprising both *Assessment for Learning (AfL)* and *Assessment of Learning (AoL)* elements. The latter element serves the important need of recording student performance in summative assessment. AfL in contrast, charts student improvement in learning. As opposed to perceiving these two elements as distinct, assessment for A-Level Literature is best enacted as a continuum, allowing teachers to engage in both formative AfL and summative AoL assessment practices to meet the learning needs of their students.

Effective formative assessment complements the recommended pedagogical approaches in the teaching and learning of Literature. Summative assessment serves to provide information on students' mastery of content knowledge and skills. The A-Level national examination is an example of summative assessment, which provides a snapshot of what students have achieved at the end of their A-Level education.

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Section 5:
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Acknowledgements

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