



أكاديمية جيمز العالمية - دبي  
GEMS World Academy  
DUBAI

## COURSE SYLLABUS

# Language & Literature Grade 8

## MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME

### COURSE OVERVIEW

Grade 8 English forms the third year of the MYP Language & Literature A programme and will provide students with a foundation in critical thinking, close reading, and an introduction to a variety of text types. Building on the skills of the previous year, students will read, discuss and analyse a range of fiction texts including *a novel study* and a variety of short stories from various genres, exploring how authors use literary devices for a particular purpose. News reporting and research will also be taught. Summative assessments will be based on reading and responding to texts through both analytical and creative writing. Students will be aiming to write in a well-organised way using varied sentence structure and powerful vocabulary to produce effective written texts for specific audiences.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

The aims of all MYP subjects state what a teacher may expect to teach and what a student may expect to experience and learn. These aims suggest how the student may be changed by the learning experience. The aims of MYP language and literature are to encourage and enable students to:

- use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, analysis and social interaction
- develop the skills involved in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting in a variety of contexts
- develop critical, creative and personal approaches to studying and analysing literary and non-literary texts
- engage with texts from different historical periods and a variety of cultures
- explore and analyse aspects of personal, host and other cultures through literary and non-literary texts
- explore language through a variety of media and modes
- develop a lifelong interest in reading
- apply linguistic and literary concepts and skills in a variety of authentic contexts.

### UNIT OVERVIEWS



#### Unit 1 – The Gothic World Approximate Length: 7-8 weeks

An exciting entrance into Grade 8 - students will navigate into the gothic world established in the 1800s and closely examine the aesthetic of this genre that was created through vivid descriptions of setting. Gothic texts will range from Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" to short film, and extracts from classic gothic texts like *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. This is fascinating genre that can be compared to contemporary texts that explore a similar atmosphere. Students will learn how to build suspense in their own group performances as well as in their drafted short stories, demonstrating literary techniques that serve the intention of this genre.

*Key Concept: Aesthetics*

*Related Concepts: Genre, setting*

*Global Context: Orientation of Space and Time*

*ATLs: Research - media literacy, Thinking - creative thinking, Social - collaboration (summative 2)*

*Statement of Inquiry: The aesthetics of the gothic genre focuses upon the evolution of the supernatural setting from landscape to mood.*

ELG: In addition to the standard curriculum, ELG students will be exposed to more sophisticated Gothic literature and will complete analytical reading to further their understanding. Flipped learning will be used to allow students to prepare for class, allowing more higher order thinking to take place in the classroom. Success criteria for summative assessments include ELG differentiation to encourage students to challenge themselves.

**Unit 2 – Fairytales and Gender Stereotypes****Approximate Length:** 7-8 weeks

Building on students' prior knowledge of the classic fairy tales like Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin, Snowwhite, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty, this unit will push them to consider more critically the gender roles and expectations that are created in these texts and whether the more modern adaptations have altered these. Students will explore the original tales in art form, written as well as film, and discuss changes made in modern films - investigating how the changing expectations of men and women are reflected. The culminating task will involve an essay comparing and contrasting how a stereotype has changed in an old vs new version of a text.



ELG: In addition to the standard curriculum, ELG students will be assigned more complicated and thought provoking stimulus texts to extend their thinking. There will also be opportunity for ELG students to produce a modern adaptation of a fairytale, with the aim of challenging stereotypes as opposed to perpetuating them. Success criteria for summative assessments include ELG differentiation to encourage students to challenge themselves.

**Unit 3 – Modern News Media****Approximate Length:** 7-8 weeks

Students will immerse themselves in world news, reading, listening, and watching current news reports, while exploring credibility and bias in how news is delivered. They will investigate how modern formats, such as Youtube, have reshaped the production and consumption of news. For their summative assessment, students will work collaboratively to create a news broadcast on a specific topic, developing their research, organisational skills, and awareness of presentation styles.



ELG: In addition to the standard curriculum, ELG students will study a wider variety of news forms - including both soft news and hard news. The stimulus texts assigned to ELG classes will be of greater complexity and will challenge their thinking. Success criteria for summative assessments include ELG differentiation to encourage students to challenge themselves.

**Unit 4 – Controlled Humanity - The Individual Vs the Group****Approximate Length:** 7-8 weeks

Our final unit will center on how authors use character and setting to communicate a theme, in novels such as *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry or *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. With a focus on characterization, symbolism and theme, students will develop close-reading strategies and engage in rich discussions underpinned by comparative analysis. The summative assessment will be an analytical essay, developing students' appreciation of literary techniques and how this enhances the meaning of a text.

ELG: In addition to the standard curriculum, ELG students will explore allegory, symbolism and key themes. Teachers of ELG classes will also be looking to get students to link quotations in their analytical essays. Success criteria for summative assessments include ELG differentiation to encourage students to challenge themselves.

**PERSONALISATION**

The English Department use a range of resources to personalise learning both inside and outside our classrooms. IXL provides students with activities tailored to their MAP scores, this allows students to consolidate in-class learning at home. Students can also work towards the targets set by their teachers using this programme. We also use Newsela to allow students to access well written articles, which can be adapted to suit the individual reading level of a student. In addition to these programmes, teachers are committed to providing students with differentiated vocabulary lists to help them to extend their vocabulary.

**ASSESSMENT**

Students will be evaluated using formative and summative assessments. The purpose of formative assessments and homework is to prepare students for summative assessments. Formative assessments will take many forms with the goal of scaffolding the knowledge, skills and critical thinking required to successfully complete summative assessments. All summative assessments will be graded on the 1-8 IB scale. All reports will reflect the IB 1-7 grading scale and will be based on the best-fit approach to assessment.

**Course Grade Descriptors****Objective A: Analysing**

Through the study of language and literature students are enabled to deconstruct texts in order to identify their essential elements and their meaning. Analysing involves demonstrating an understanding of the creator's choices, the relationships between the various components of a text and between texts, and making inferences about how an audience responds to a text (strand i), as well as the creator's purpose for producing text (strand ii). Students should be able to use the text to support their personal responses and ideas (strand iii). Literacy and critical literacy are essential lifelong skills; engaging with texts requires students to think critically and show awareness of, and an ability to reflect on, different perspectives through their interpretations of the text (strand iv).

In order to reach the aims of studying language and literature, students should be able to:

- i. analyse the content, context, language, structure, technique and style of text(s) and the relationships among texts
  - ii. analyse the effects of the creator's choices on an audience
  - iii. justify opinions and ideas, using examples, explanations and terminology
  - iv. evaluate similarities and differences by connecting features across and within genres and texts.

**Objective B: Organising**

Students should understand and be able to organise their ideas and opinions using a range of appropriate conventions for different forms and purposes of communication. Students should also recognise the importance of maintaining academic honesty by respecting intellectual property rights and referencing all sources accurately.

In order to reach the aims of studying language and literature, students should be able to:

- i. employ organisational structures that serve the context and intention
- ii. organise opinions and ideas in a sustained, coherent and logical manner
- iii. use referencing and formatting tools to create a presentation style suitable to the context and intention.

**Objective C: Producing text**

Students will produce written and spoken text, focusing on the creative process itself and on the understanding of the connection between the creator and his or her audience. In exploring and appreciating new and changing perspectives and ideas, students will develop the ability to make choices aimed at producing texts that affect both the creator and the audience.

In order to reach the aims of studying language and literature, students should be able to:

- i. produce texts that demonstrate insight, imagination and sensitivity while exploring and reflecting critically on new perspectives and ideas arising from personal engagement with the creative process
- ii. make stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating awareness of impact on an audience
- iii. select relevant details and examples to develop ideas.

**Objective D: Using language**

Students have opportunities to develop, organise and express themselves and communicate thoughts, ideas and information. They are required to use accurate and varied language that is appropriate to the context and intention. This objective applies to, and must include written, oral and visual text, as appropriate.

In order to reach the aims of studying language and literature, students should be able to:

- i. use appropriate and varied vocabulary, sentence structures and forms of expression
- ii. write and speak in a register and style that serve the context and intention
- iii. use correct grammar, syntax and punctuation
- iv. spell (alphabetic languages), write (character languages) and pronounce with accuracy
- v. use appropriate non-verbal communication techniques.

**STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES****Academic Honesty**

GWA maintains very strict guidelines towards maintaining academic honesty as followed by IB students globally.

1. First offense: A student who submits plagiarised work will be required to meet with the teacher to discuss the offense.
  - The teacher will notify the parents and the MYP Coordinator by email of the offense.
  - The student will be required to repeat the assessment for **formative feedback purposes only**. (The summative cannot be graded as it was not the students' work.)
2. Second offense: The teacher will notify the parents and the appropriate Assistant Principal (6-8; 9-12).
  - An interview will take place and the assessment will receive a grade of (0). The assessment will be completed for **formative purposes only**.

**Late Assessment Policy**

When assessing students at GWA it is important for teachers to be able to provide students and their parents with a grade that, as much as possible, reflects their ability in a course. It is also important for students to meet reasonably established timelines to complete their assessments. In order to achieve this goal, the following procedures for the submission of summative assessments have been established:

1. Teachers will post the due date on ManageBac with at least one (calendar) week lead time for students to complete the assessment.
2. Submission of the assessment by students on the due date. If a deadline cannot be met, in order for the work to be evaluated, students must: provide a doctor's note, or provide a note from a parent explaining special family circumstances, or have established an extension with the teacher at least two days in advance. Such extensions will be given at the teacher's discretion.
3. The following are the possible consequences to students completing assessments late or not at all:
  - Detention(s) until the assessment is completed
  - Parent meeting to discuss behavior concern
  - Serve an in-school suspension until the assessment is completed. Parents will be contacted. Students must make up all work missed during the suspension.
4. Repeated failure to meet deadlines will result in narrative comments addressing these concerns in report cards and letters of recommendation to other schools, colleges, and universities.