

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Secondary

Special/Express/Normal (Academic)



Curriculum Planning & Development Division
Ministry of Education
Singapore

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Aims

A course based on this syllabus should give pupils opportunities to develop their ability to:

- 1 enjoy the reading of literature and appreciate its contribution to aesthetic and imaginative growth;
- 2 explore areas of human concern, thus leading to a greater understanding of themselves and others;
- 3 read, understand and respond to various types of literary texts to appreciate the ways in which writers achieve their effects, and to develop information retrieval strategies for the purposes of literary study; and
- 4 construct and convey meaning clearly and coherently in written and spoken language.

Principles of Literature Teaching

The principles upon which Literature teaching is based will reflect the aims of the syllabus. Schools' Literature programmes should be informed by these principles:

1 **Response to literature**

- 1.1 Individual pupil response must be encouraged and developed.
- 1.2 The pupil's role is an active one: s/he is expected to participate in creating a response to the text.
- 1.3 The teacher's role is to provide pupils with the opportunity and support which will enable them to offer their own viewpoints, and substantiate these with textual evidence.
- 1.4 Pupils must have sufficient time to discuss, read, explore and respond. There should be opportunities for interaction through consultation and discussion.
- 1.5 A positive classroom environment needs to be developed in which literary texts are discussed with interest as well as enjoyed and valued.

- 1.6 Pupils must be given the opportunities to respond to a text through, for example, art, drama, music, choral reading, movement and creative writing.
- 1.7 A response that is coherent and intelligible should not be penalised for linguistic inaccuracy.

2 **Development of skills of literary appreciation**

- 2.1 Critical appreciation and analysis can and must be developed at all levels.
- 2.2 Teaching should help pupils acquire an understanding of form and literary devices as appropriate to their developing abilities.
- 2.3 However, the terms and concepts used in critical appreciation must be taught as a means to deepen literary experience and not as an end in itself.

3 **Breadth of literary experience**

- 3.1 Pupils should be exposed to as wide a range of texts as possible. This would include exposure to:
 - a) the various literary genres, i.e. drama, poetry and prose;
 - b) a wide range of human concerns; and
 - c) literature from different parts of the world, including Singapore.
- 3.2 Pupils should have the opportunity to view and listen to texts being performed.

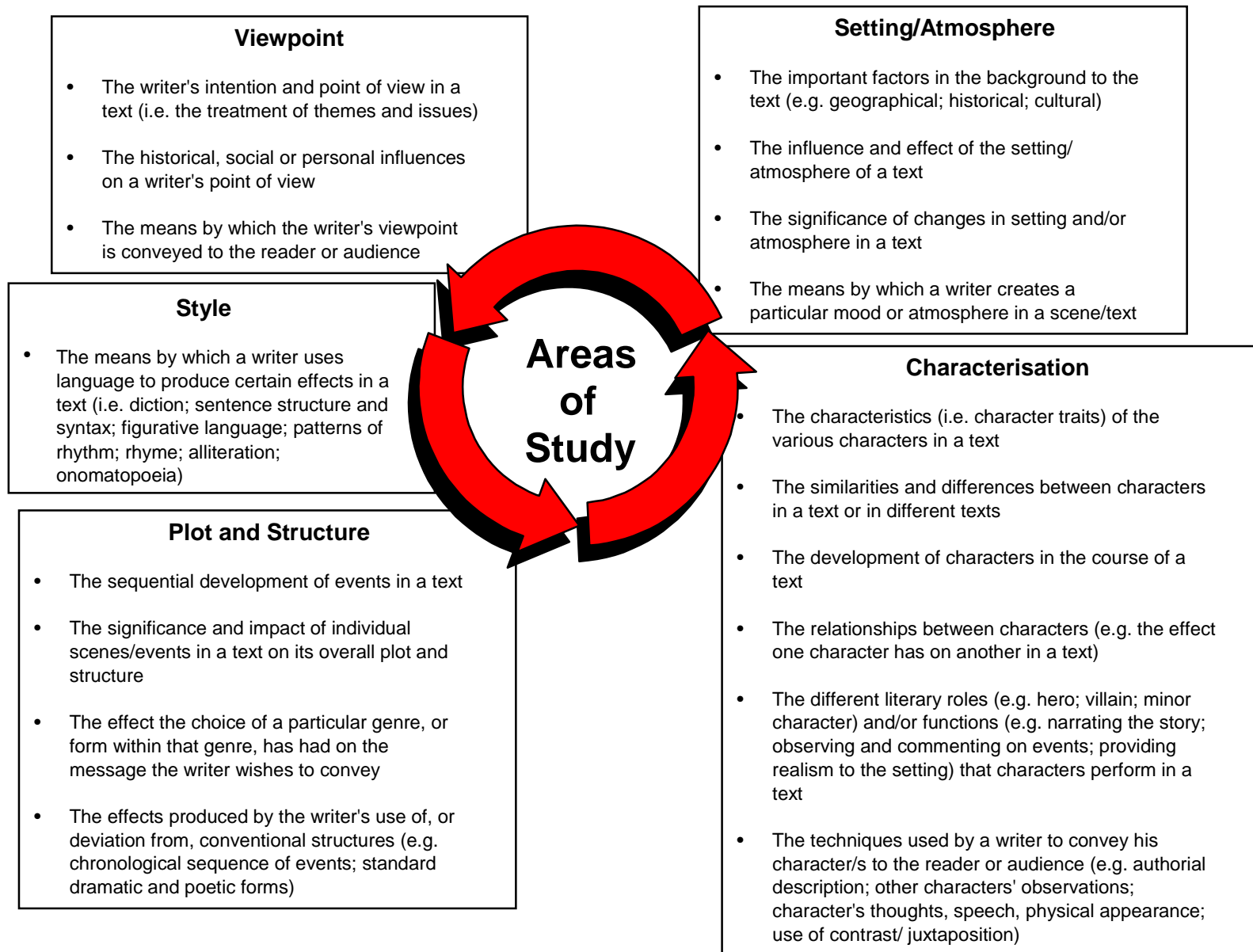
Areas of Study

Areas of study refer to the various elements that make up a literary text. It is expected that all areas of study will be covered by the end of Secondary 2, and further developed in Secondary 3 and 4.

The areas of study and their subsidiary points have been listed in no particular order of difficulty or importance, and there is likely to be a degree of overlap between them. The areas of study should not be taught in isolation, but should lead pupils to a holistic and meaningful appreciation of the text.

It is also likely that not all texts will lend themselves to every area of study, e.g. some poems will not be appropriate for a study of characterisation.

Each of the five areas of study provide a framework within which pupils will be encouraged to comprehend, interpret and respond to all types of literary texts.

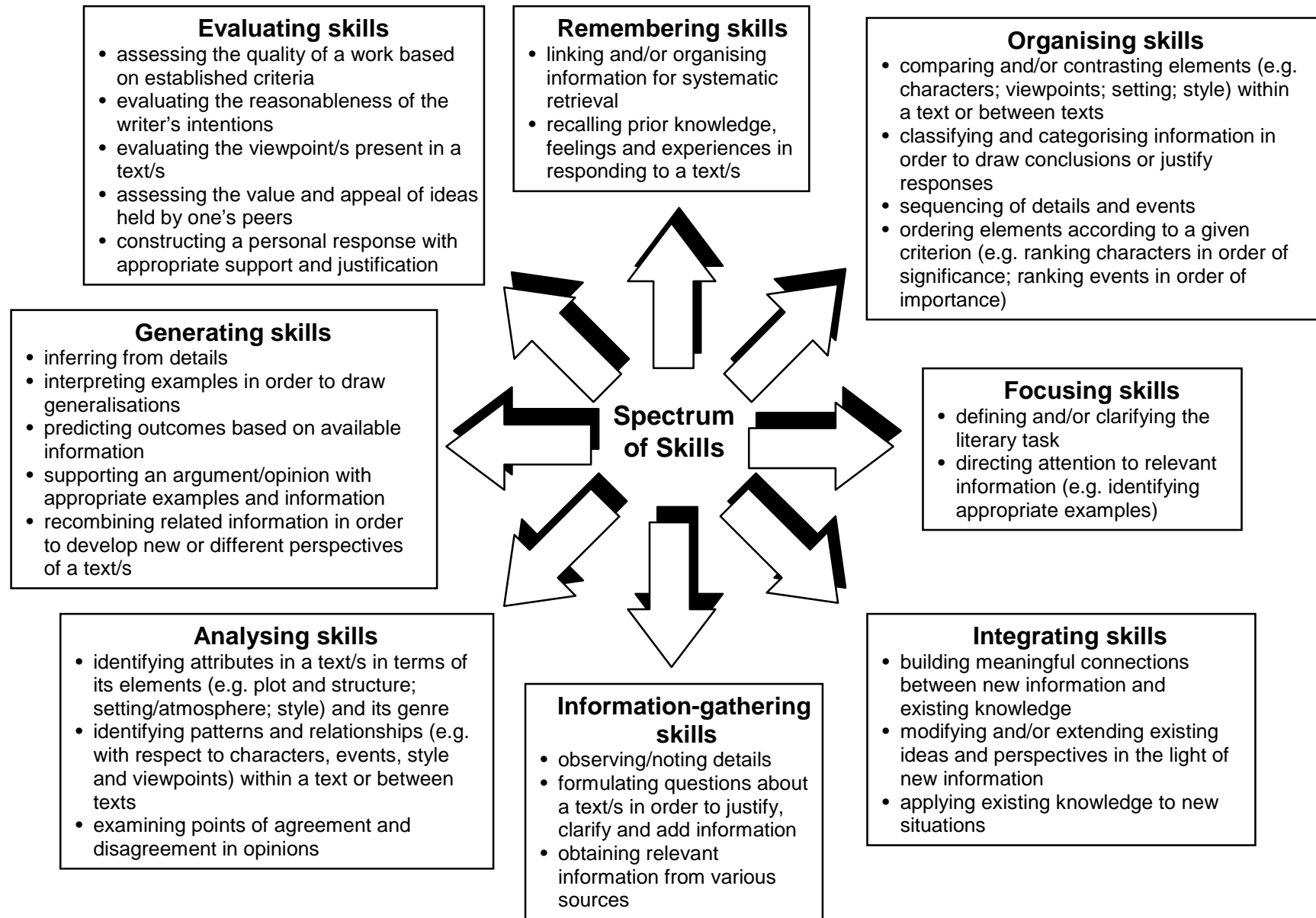


Spectrum of Skills

Pupils are to be equipped with the following spectrum of skills in order to read and respond to the various areas of study. For example, the skill of comparison can be applied to comparing characters, situations, genres, effects of style and viewpoints of various writers.

The main skills have been listed with examples given. All the main skills should be introduced and reinforced at every level but the levels of mastery of these skills will vary according to the ability of the pupils.

The skills overlap each other, and some skills may lead to the teaching of other skills. The distinction between skills should not be too rigidly followed.



Assessment Objectives

Candidates should be able to:

- 1 demonstrate first-hand knowledge of the content of literary texts (e.g. by referring to relevant parts of a text);
- 2 demonstrate an understanding of literary texts in ways which may range from a grasp of their surface meaning to a deeper awareness of their concerns and attitudes;
- 3 recognise and appreciate the ways in which writers achieve their effects (e.g. characterisation; plot and structure; setting/atmosphere; style; viewpoint);
- 4 communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to what is read; and
- 5 express that response with clarity and coherence, using textual evidence where appropriate.

The Assessment Objectives are inter-related and it will not normally be possible or desirable to test them in isolation.

Assessment Modes

Pupils will be assessed by formal and informal modes.

Informal Assessment for Lower Secondary

Informal assessment will be ongoing. Guidelines for continuous assessment are provided in the syllabus support materials.

Formal Assessment for Lower Secondary

By the end of Secondary Two, pupils will have been assessed in all of the following areas:

- an unseen text (out of a choice of 2 genres, i.e. prose, drama or poetry)
- a set drama text
- a set poetry collection
- a set prose text

Questions on the unseen text will require the candidate to demonstrate understanding of the meaning of the text, and to discuss critically the ways in which the writer has communicated that meaning.

Questions on the set texts will assess candidates on the various areas of study (i.e. characterisation; plot and structure; setting/atmosphere; style; viewpoint).

For each set text, there will be a choice of passage-based and essay questions in each of the above areas.

Pupils may be allowed to take their texts with them into the examination room

Pupil Outcomes

A pupil who has studied a course of Literature will:

- 1 have read works from the three literary genres (i.e. poetry, prose and drama);
- 2 have read literature from different parts of the world, including Singapore;
- 3 be able to read a text independently;
- 4 be able to critically analyse a text;
- 5 be able to give a personal response to a text and its concerns; and
- 6 apply skills of literary appreciation to read new/unseen material.