

English B

What is the course about?

English B is about developing your ability to speak and write in English, using the right words for the situation you are in: to communicate effectively. This means expanding your vocabulary and knowledge of grammar, but also being more aware of language nuances, of what is culturally appropriate, and the effects of your words on readers and listeners. Similarly, you will be learning to understand a wide range of written and spoken English precisely, and to respond.

You will study issues such as concepts of beauty, or the future of education, and how they play out in English-speaking cultures all over the world, and for Higher Level, you will also study works of literature related to these issues.

How is the course structured?

The course is

world. You will have exam-style comprehension questions to practise for the Listening exam, and also gain knowledge of this issue, leading to class discussion. We will also cover reading, speaking and writing in each unit, along with the other Language B themes.

What distinguishes this course from others?

This course is not based around a text book (although we will use one from time to time). Each unit is planned around authentic materials such as newspaper articles, podcasts, radio programmes and documentaries from different English-speaking countries, from Ireland to New Zealand.

In keeping with the I.B. Approaches to Learning, you will have the opportunity to choose some units of study with the teacher, and will have a say in which works of literature you study at Higher Level. You will develop your thinking and research skills by investigating some topics independently, and teaching what you have learned to the class. You will also have the chance to link what you are learning to other DP subjects: when we study Social Organization in the Food unit for example, we could look into international corporations such as Monsanto, and link this to Business and Management.

How is the course assessed?

During the course, you will be assessed on your listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and will get feedback from your classmates and the teacher. You will also learn to assess yourself using the I.B. criteria for the course. We will use this information to set goals and decide on priorities for the course.

The final I.B. Diploma assessment is as follows:

Internal Assessment (during the second year of the course, date to be confirmed):

Individual oral (25%) recording of conversation with teacher, based on a picture or photograph (Standard Level) or an extract from one of the books we have studied (Higher Level).

Final Examinations

Paper 1 Writing (25%). One writing task from a choice of three.

Paper 2 Listening and Reading (50%). Comprehension questions based on three audio texts and three written texts.

What aspects of the course can make worthwhile extended essay questions?

You might choose to investigate an area of language, such as English idioms and their origins, or a cultural topic, such as investigating the claims made by a documentary film