



**Option Internationale du Baccalauréat (OIB) – France  
(British Option): English Language and Literature  
A Guide for University Admissions Tutors**

Candidates for the OIB British Option take **first language (English) examinations** in English Language and Literature and History-Geography, in addition to the standard subjects of the French Baccalaureate.

**What do the OIB English Language and Literature examinations tell an Admissions Tutor about the candidate's level of achievement in English?**

The OIB English Language and Literature examinations are **first language** examinations. The **literature component is examined and assessed at a level equivalent to A-level English Literature**, and language is assessed **by reference to appropriate educated mother tongue usage**. The linguistic demands of these exams are focused on the **use of English in an academic context**; this makes them an excellent preparation for university study in any subject. The levels of linguistic achievement for successful candidates are C1 or C2 on the CEFR, or 'educated native speaker/writer'.

Many OIB candidates will already have taken IGCSE First Language English and English Literature in Year 11. In Year 10, students following the bilingual, bicultural programme, many of whom go on to prepare the OIB three years later, are already expected to have attained level B2 in a course that is based strongly on literary and cultural content.

In terms of **reading**, the OIB English examinations demand the comprehension and analysis of complex literary works in their entirety. Examples of writers set in 2014: Andrew Marvell, Emily Dickinson, Seamus Heaney, T.S. Eliot, Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, E.M. Forster, Alan Bennett, Caryl Churchill. All students also have to study a Shakespeare play and a synoptic topic (currently Modernism or Writers and the Victorian World). Oral and written assessments focus on understanding, analysis, engagement, and awareness of the ways in which style and form convey meaning. Candidates are also required to respond to an unprepared text in a critical appreciation exercise in the written examination.

In terms of **writing**, the OIB English examination demands extended analytical responses in essay form to A-level-style questions about works of literature. Qualities of argument, control of formal and critical language, structure and clarity of expression are assessed.

The 30-minute OIB oral examination gives a full assessment of the candidate's **speaking and listening** through an analytical, reflective response to literature. The candidate has to give a formal presentation analysing an extract from any part of the Shakespeare play. (S)he then faces questions on the presentation, and on the play as a whole. An exploratory discussion of the synoptic topic, through detailed reference to the texts studied, follows.

More information about the international sections and the OIB can be found at: [www.asiba.fr](http://www.asiba.fr).