

Key concepts

Key concepts promote the development of a broad curriculum. They represent big ideas that are both relevant within and across disciplines and subjects. Inquiry into key concepts can facilitate connections between and among:

- courses within the language and literature subject group (intra-disciplinary learning)
- other subject groups (interdisciplinary learning).

Table 1 lists the key concepts to be explored across the MYP. The key concepts contributed by the study of language and literature are **communication, connections, creativity** and **perspective**.

Aesthetics	Change	Communication	Communities
Connections	Creativity	Culture	Development
Form	Global interactions	Identity	Logic
Perspective	Relationships	Systems	Time, place and space

Table 1
MYP key concepts

These key concepts provide a framework for language and literature, informing units of work and helping to organize teaching and learning.

Communication

Communication is the exchange or transfer of signals, facts, ideas and symbols. It requires a sender, a message and an intended receiver. Communication involves the activity of conveying information or meaning. Effective communication requires a common “language” (which may be written, spoken or nonverbal).

Through exploring texts, we exchange, express, analyse and transform information, facts, ideas, meanings and opinions. Communication is the basis of what makes us human and bridges communities across the globe; it is the essence of this discipline.

Connections

Connections are links, bonds and relationships among people, objects, organisms or ideas.

Linguistic and literary connections exist across time, texts and cultures. This concept is central to the study of language and literature. Due to the universal nature of language and literature, connections and transfer exist within and across narratives. This allows for the exploration of language and relationships between text, creator and audience.

Creativity

Creativity is the process of generating novel ideas and considering existing ideas from new perspectives. Creativity includes the ability to recognize the value of ideas when developing innovative responses to problems; it may be evident in process as well as outcomes, products or solutions. In MYP language and literature, it is the process of synthesizing ideas with language that is a vehicle for creativity. It is the result of interaction and reflection, whether with the self or the wider community. This process is difficult to define and difficult to evaluate. It rests, however, on an appreciation of the process with which the individual engages, and the impact of the final product on the audience.

Perspective

Perspective is the position from which we observe situations, objects, facts, ideas and opinions. Perspective may be associated with individuals, groups, cultures or disciplines. Different perspectives often lead to multiple representations and interpretations.

Perspective influences text, and text influences perspective. Through students' language and literature studies, multiple perspectives and their effects are identified, analysed, deconstructed and reconstructed. An understanding of this concept is essential in order to develop in students the ability to recognize and respond to over-simplistic and biased interpretations. Seeking and considering diverse opinions and points of view is an important part of developing complex and defensible interpretations.

Other key concepts can also be important in language and literature; including **identity, culture, form, time, place and space**.

Related concepts

Related concepts promote deep learning. They are grounded in specific disciplines and are useful for exploring key concepts in greater detail. Inquiry into related concepts helps students develop more complex and sophisticated conceptual understanding. Related concepts may arise from the subject matter of a unit or the craft of a subject—its features and processes.

Table 2 lists related concepts for the study of language and literature. Teachers are not limited to the related concepts listed in this chart and may choose others when planning units, including from other subject groups.

Audience imperatives	Character	Context	Genre
Intertextuality	Point of view	Purpose	Self-expression
Setting	Structure	Style	Theme

Table 2
Related concepts in language and literature

A glossary of these related concepts for language and literature can be found in the “Appendices” section of this guide.

Global contexts for teaching and learning

Global contexts direct learning towards independent and shared inquiry into our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. Using the world as the broadest context for learning, MYP language and literature can develop meaningful explorations of:

- identities and relationships
- orientation in space and time
- personal and cultural expression
- scientific and technical innovation
- globalization and sustainability
- fairness and development.

Teachers must identify a global context for teaching and learning, or develop additional contexts that help students explore the relevance of their inquiry (why it matters).

Many inquiries into language and literature concepts naturally focus on personal and cultural expression, and identities and relationships. However, courses in this subject group should, over time, offer students multiple opportunities to explore all MYP global contexts in relation to the aims and objectives of the subject group.