

The Four-stage Process: A Snapshot

In the development of the final essay, the Literature A syllabus asks all students to go through a series of stages which address issues relevant to the main objectives of this part of the course. It is very important to understand the nature and aim of each stage in order that these objectives are fulfilled and the students' chances of doing well in their final essay made as high as possible. Attached pages provide more detailed analysis of the format for each stage, but the following notes hopefully provide a coherent overview of what is expected.

Stage 1: The Interactive Oral

At some point during the study of a Part 1 work, students must engage in class oral that is prepared, introduced and led by them. This oral must address aspects of context, whether cultural, historical, political, literary or biographical, in which the work was written, and it is also likely (perhaps desirable) that the discussion explores the role of similar contexts in which the work is being read and discussed.

Stage 2: The Reflective Statement

Once the Interactive Oral has taken place, all students in the group must write a Reflective Statement in response to this prompt: How was your understanding of cultural and contextual considerations developed through the Interactive Oral? The 'statement' must be 300-400 words in length and focus on aspects of culture and context that emerged during the discussion.

Stage 3: Supervised Writing

At this point, there is a notable shift away from aspects of context and towards more literary elements that define the work. On a particular, given day, students are provided by their teacher with 4-5 written prompts that focus on various literary features. Students will write for around 50 minutes in response to their choice of one of these prompts and their writing is then kept on file by the teacher until the time comes for the Written Assignment to be discussed.

Stage 4: Writing the essay

The topic of the essay will emerge from an aspect that has been written about directly or indirectly in the Supervised Writing. Ideally, students will propose the topic themselves and then set about note making, planning and writing with support and guidance from their teacher. Only one essay is written and the relevant reflective Statement (on the same work they have decided to complete their coursework) is sent along with it to an external examiner. The RS is marked out of 3 and the Written Assignment itself out of 22, giving a mark out of 25 in total.