

Paper 1 Essay Guide

1 — Read the texts

While reading any text in the IB English A: Language & Literature course, you need to focus on the latter. More precisely, you need to focus on the **big 5** of reading and analysing texts:

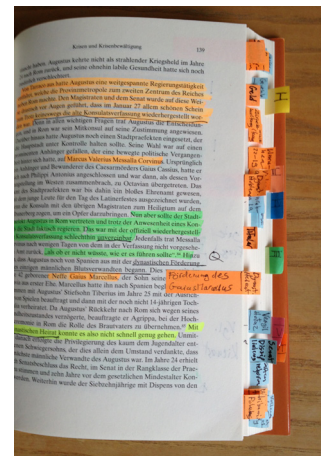
Analytical Tools – The Big 5	Questions
Audience and Purpose	Who wrote the text? Who was it written for? Why did the writer write it?
Content and Theme	What is the text about?
Tone and Mood	What is the writer's tone? How does the text make the reader feel?
Stylistic Devices	What stylistic devices does the writer use?
Structure	What kind of text is it? What structural conventions are used?

2 — Annotate the text(s)

A good essay can provide evidence to make its case, to support **all** its arguments. Evidence can only be found on the scene of the crime, or in this case, the text(s). It is crucial to carefully annotate and highlight key phrases or statements while reading. Label and / or colour-code your annotations systematically (according to the Big 5) so that you can quickly find them again while writing your essay.

3 — Use **all** your time wisely

Remember, SL students have 90 minutes and HL students (HL) have 120 minutes to write your essay. Divide your time up like this:

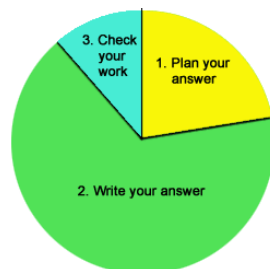


Standard Level:

- 20 minutes to **read** and **plan** your essay
- 60 minutes to **write** your answer (**do not** write a first draft!)
- 10 minutes to **proof-read** your answer

Higher Level:

- 30 minutes to **read** and **plan** your essay
- 60 - 75 minutes to **write** your final answer
- 15 minutes to **proof-read** your answer



4 — Use the PIE Essay Structure

Remember that when you make a point, you need to support it with a quotation and then explain exactly how the quotation highlights what you want to show. This is also known as the PIE essay structure (Point — Illustration — Explanation) and can be used for any type of essay.

Standard Level: The outline below is for an analysis of **one** of the texts in a **SL Paper 1**:

Introduction (1 paragraph)	A	Attention Grabber (holistic, intriguing, thought-provoking first statement)
	B	Introduce text and link it to your Attention Grabber
	C	Thesis Statement (three aspects of Big 5 linked to purpose / effect)
Body 1 (1-2 paragraphs)	P	Topic Sentence (text type / content / themes , linked to purpose / effect)
	I	Provide / Integrate quotes to illustrate point
	E	Explanation & Analysis (reinforces topic sentence, thesis statement)
Body 2 (1-2 paragraphs)	P	Topic Sentence (structure / tone / mood linked to purpose / effect)
	I	Provide / Integrate quotes to illustrate point
	E	Explanation & Analysis (reinforces topic sentence, thesis statement)
Body 3 (1-2 paragraphs)	P	Topic Sentence (stylistic features linked to purpose / effect)
	I	Provide / Integrate quotes to illustrate point / argument
	E	Explanation & Analysis (reinforces topic sentence, thesis statement)
Conclusion (1 paragraph)	A	Summary of topic sentence arguments (return to thesis statement / Big 5)
	B	Final argument(s) & observations about the texts
	C	Thought-provoking final statement

Higher Level: The outline below is for a **comparative analysis** of two texts in a **HL Paper 1**:

Introduction (1 paragraph)	A	Attention Grabber (holistic, intriguing, thought-provoking first statement)
	B	Introduce texts and link them to your Attention Grabber
	C	Thesis Statement (3-part structure that compares & contrasts both texts)
Body 1 (1-2 paragraphs)	P	Topic Sentence (focus on one of the Big 5 , compare both texts)
	I	Provide / Integrate quotes to illustrate point / argument
	E	Explanation & Analysis (reinforces topic sentence, thesis statement)
Body 2 (1-2 paragraphs)	P	Topic Sentence (focus on one of the Big 5 , compare both texts)
	I	Provide / Integrate quotes to illustrate point / argument
	E	Explanation & Analysis (reinforces topic sentence, thesis statement)
Body 3 (1-2 paragraphs)	P	Topic Sentence (focus on one of the Big 5 , compare both texts)
	I	Provide / Integrate quotes to illustrate point / argument
	E	Explanation & Analysis (reinforces topic sentence, thesis statement)
Conclusion (1 paragraph)	A	Summary of central comparisons (return to thesis statement)
	B	Final argument(s) & observations about the texts
	C	Thought-provoking final statement