

International General Certificate
of Secondary Education

Revised Syllabus

FIRST LANGUAGE CHINESE 0509

For examination in June 2010

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First Language Chinese

Syllabus code: 0509

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Notes

This syllabus has been revised for first examination in June 2010.
This syllabus is available in the June examination only.

Exclusions

This syllabus must not be offered in the same session with the following syllabus:

0547 Mandarin Chinese

INTRODUCTION

International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) syllabuses are designed as two-year courses for examination at age 16-plus.

All IGCSE syllabuses follow a general pattern. The main sections are:

- Aims
- Assessment Objectives
- Assessment
- Curriculum Content.

The IGCSE subjects have been categorised into groups, subjects within each group having similar Aims and Assessment Objectives.

First Language Chinese falls into Group I, Languages, of the International Certificate of Education (ICE) subjects.

AIMS

The aims of the syllabus are the same for all students. The aims are set out below and describe the educational purposes of a course in a First Language for the IGCSE examination. They are not listed in order of priority.

The aims are to:

- 1 enable students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in writing;
- 2 enable students to understand and respond appropriately to what they read;
- 3 encourage students to enjoy and appreciate the variety of language;
- 4 complement the students' other areas of study by developing skills of a more general application (e.g. analysis, synthesis, drawing of inferences);
- 5 promote the students' personal development and an understanding of themselves and others.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

READING

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- R1 Understand and collate explicit meanings;
- R2 Understand, explain and collate implicit meanings and attitudes;
- R3 Select, analyse and evaluate what is relevant to specific purposes;
- R4 Understand how writers achieve effects.

WRITING

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- W1 Articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined;
- W2 Order and present facts, ideas and opinions;
- W3 Understand and use a range of appropriate vocabulary;
- W4 Use language and register appropriate to audience and context;
- W5 Make accurate and effective use of paragraphs, grammatical structures, sentences, punctuation and spelling.

SPECIFICATION GRID

Assessment Objective	Paper 1		Paper 2
	Question 1	Question 2	
R1	✓	✓	
R2	✓	✓	
R3	✓	✓	
R4	✓		
W1			✓
W2		✓	✓
W3		✓	✓
W4		✓	✓
W5	✓	✓	✓

ASSESSMENT

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

All candidates take Components 1 and 2 and are eligible for the award of grades A* to G.

Candidates will take:

	Duration of Examination	Weighting
Component 1 Reading	2 hours	60%

and:

	Duration of Examination	Weighting
Component 2 Writing	1 hour 15 minutes	40%

DESCRIPTION OF PAPERS

The question papers will be set entirely in the target language.

Texts and questions will be printed in both traditional and simplified characters on the question paper. Candidates will be able to choose the form they prefer in the examination and may write their answers in either traditional or simplified characters.

Dictionaries may not be used in the examination.

Component 1: Reading (2 hours)

Questions will relate to two passages of approximately 1200-1400 characters in total, linked by a common theme. These passages will be printed on the question paper.

- **Question 1** (25 marks) will be divided into a series of sub-questions requiring answers of different lengths. These will be based on Passage 1.

Questions will test Reading Objectives 1-4 (20 marks). In addition, 5 marks will be available for the accuracy of the language in which answers are expressed.

- **Question 2** (25 marks), which may be sub-divided, will require candidates to write a summary of approximately 225-275 characters based on Passage 1 and Passage 2.

Up to 15 marks will be available for Reading Objectives 1-3 and 10 marks for Writing (5 marks for Style and Organisation and 5 marks for Accuracy of Language).

Component 2: Writing (1 hour 15 minutes)

Candidates will be required to write one composition to be chosen from either of the following two sections.

- **Section 1** – Discussion and Argument.
- **Section 2** – Description and Narration.

8 titles will be set in total. Candidates will be required to write between 400 and 600 characters on their chosen title.

40 marks will be available for Writing Objectives 1-5.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

All students follow the same curriculum.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE

All students should be able to:

Students who are aiming for Grades A to C, in addition should be able to:*

Reading

- demonstrate understanding of words within extended texts
- scan for and extract specific information
- identify main and subordinate topics, summarise, paraphrase, re-express
- show some sense of how writers achieve their effects
- recognise and respond to simple linguistic devices including figurative language

- show a more precise understanding of extended texts
- recognise the relationship of ideas
- evaluate effectiveness, draw inferences, compare, analyse, synthesise
- show understanding of how writers achieve their effects
- recognise and respond to more sophisticated linguistic devices

Writing

- express thoughts, feelings and opinions in order to interest, inform or convince the reader
- show some sense of audience
- demonstrate adequate control of vocabulary, syntax and grammar
- exercise care over punctuation and spelling
- write accurate simple sentences
- attempt a variety of sentence structures
- recognise the need for paragraphing
- use appropriate vocabulary

- show a wider and more varied sense of different styles to interest, inform or convince the reader
- show a clear sense of audience
- demonstrate a sophisticated use of vocabulary and structures
- demonstrate accuracy in punctuation and spelling
- write accurate complex sentences
- employ varied sentence structures
- write in well-constructed paragraphs
- use imaginative and varied vocabulary

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall, and may conceal weakness in one aspect of the examination that is balanced by above-average performance on some other.

Grade A

- Candidates understand and communicate information at both a straightforward and a complex level.
- Candidates understand facts, ideas and opinions, and order and present in detail what is relevant for specific purposes.
- Candidates describe and reflect upon experience and detail, analysing effectively what is felt and what is imagined.
- Candidates recognise implicit meanings and attitudes of a writer.
- Candidates show a clear sense of audience and an understanding of appropriate uses of language.
- Candidates write in well constructed paragraphs, using a full range of appropriate sentence structures and showing accuracy in spelling and punctuation.

Grade C

- Candidates understand and convey information both at a straightforward level and at a more complex level.
- Candidates understand basic facts, ideas and opinions, presenting them with a degree of clarity and accuracy.
- Candidates evaluate material from texts and select what is relevant for specific purposes.
- Candidates describe and reflect upon experience and express effectively what is felt and what is imagined.
- Candidates recognise the more obvious implicit meanings and attitudes of a writer.
- Candidates show a sense of audience and an awareness of appropriate uses of language.
- Candidates write in paragraphs, using sentences of varied kinds and exercising care over spelling and punctuation.

Grade F

- Candidates understand and convey information at a straightforward level.
- Candidates understand basic facts, ideas and opinions, presenting them with a degree of coherence.
- Candidates select material from texts and comment upon it at a literal level.
- Candidates describe experience in concrete terms and express intelligibly what is felt and what is imagined.
- Candidates recognise clear meanings and explicit attitudes of a writer.
- Candidates show awareness that language is used in different ways in different circumstances.
- Candidates write at least in simple sentences – weaknesses in spelling and punctuation and the construction of complex sentences will be apparent, but will not seriously impair communication.

APPENDIX: MARK SCHEMES

COMPONENT 1

Question 1

- 20 marks will be available for Reading: these will be awarded according to a detailed mark scheme written specifically for each question paper.
- 5 marks will be available for Writing (see table below).

Writing: Accuracy of Language

5 (Excellent)	Clear, carefully chosen language with complex syntax where appropriate. Varied, precise vocabulary. Hardly any or no technical errors.
4 (Good)	Clear, appropriate language. Appropriate vocabulary. Few technical errors.
3 (Adequate)	Language generally appropriate, but unsophisticated and generally simple syntax. Adequate vocabulary. Some technical errors.
2 (Weak)	Unsophisticated language, not always appropriate. Very simple syntax with some clumsiness. Thin vocabulary. A number of technical errors.
1 (Poor)	Thin, inappropriate use of language. Confused and obscure. Many errors.

Question 2

- 15 marks are available for Reading: each relevant point extracted by the candidate from the texts is ticked. A mark is awarded for each tick up to a maximum of 15 marks.
- 10 marks are available for Writing (see tables below).

Writing: Style and Organisation

5 (Excellent)	Excellent expression and focus with assured use of own words. Good summary style with orderly grouping of ideas; excellent linkage. Answer has sense of purpose.
4 (Good)	Good expression in recognisable summary style. Attempts to focus and to group ideas; good linkage.
3 (Adequate)	Satisfactory expression in own words. Reasonably concise with some sense of order. Occasional lapses of focus.
2 (Weak)	Limited expression but mostly in own words. Some sense of order but little sense of summary. Tendency to lose focus (e.g. by including some anecdote); thread not always easy to follow.
1 (Poor)	Expression just adequate; maybe list-like. Considerable lifting; repetitive. Much irrelevance.

Writing: Accuracy of Language

5 (Excellent)	Clear, carefully chosen language with complex syntax where appropriate. Varied, precise vocabulary. Hardly any or no technical errors.
4 (Good)	Clear, appropriate language. Appropriate vocabulary. Few technical errors.
3 (Adequate)	Language generally appropriate, but unsophisticated and generally simple syntax. Adequate vocabulary. Some technical errors. Some lifting.
2 (Weak)	Unsophisticated language, not always appropriate. Very simple syntax with some clumsiness. Thin vocabulary. A number of technical errors OR language is almost entirely lifted.
1 (Poor)	Thin, inappropriate use of language. Confused and obscure. Many errors.

COMPONENT 2

Candidates will be awarded marks in two categories for the composition that they write:

- the first mark is out of 20 for Style and Accuracy: see Table A;
- the second mark is out of 20 for Content and Structure: see Table B1, B2 or B3 (depending on the type of composition: Argumentative, Descriptive or Narrative).

TABLE A – STYLE AND ACCURACY

Band 1	18-20	• Fluent; variety of well made sentences, including sophisticated complex sentences where appropriate, used to achieve particular effects. • Wide, consistently effective range of vocabulary with appropriately used ambitious words. • Assured use of grammar and punctuation, spelling accurate.
Band 2	15-17	• Mostly fluent; sentences correctly constructed, including a variety of complex sentences. • Vocabulary often effective, sometimes complex, mostly varied. • Grammatically correct; punctuation mostly correct between and within sentences; very occasional spelling mistakes.
Band 3	12-14	• Occasional fluency; sentences of some variety and complexity, correctly constructed. • Appropriate and accurate vocabulary with occasional examples of choice made to communicate precise meaning or to give interest. • Simple grammatical constructions correct; sentence separation mostly correct but other forms of punctuation sometimes inconsistently used; occasional spelling mistakes – but no error of any sort impedes communication.
Band 4	9-11	• Sentences tend to be simple and patterns repetitive. Where more complicated structures are attempted there is lack of clarity and inaccuracy. • Vocabulary communicates general meaning accurately. • Some errors of punctuation including sentence separation; several spelling and grammatical errors, rarely serious.
Band 5	6-8	• There may be the occasional grammatically complex sentence but mostly these are simple and repetitively joined by 'and', 'but' and 'so', with other conjunctions being used ineffectively, if at all. • Vocabulary communicates simple details/facts accurately. • Many errors of punctuation, grammar and spelling, but the overall meaning is never in doubt.
Band 6	3-5	• Sentences are simple and sometimes faulty and/or rambling sentences obscure meaning. • Vocabulary is limited and may be inaccurate. • Errors of punctuation, grammar and spelling may be serious enough to impede meaning.
	0, 1, 2	• Meaning of the writing is often lost because of poor control of language; errors of punctuation, grammar and spelling too intrusive to award a mark in Band 6.

TABLE B1 – ARGUMENTATIVE/DISCURSIVE TASKS

Band 1	18-20	- There is a consistent quality of well developed, logical stages in an overall, at times complex, argument. - Each stage is linked to and follows the preceding one. Sentences within paragraphs are soundly sequenced.
Band 2	15-17	- Each stage of the argument is defined and developed, although the quality of the explanation may not be consistent. - The stages follow in a generally cohesive progression. Paragraphs are mostly well sequenced, although some may finish less strongly than they begin.
Band 3	12-14	- There is a series of relevant points and a clear attempt is made to develop some of them. These points are relevant, straightforward and logical/coherent. - Repetition is avoided, but the order of the stages in the overall argument can be changed without adverse effect. The sequence of the sentences within paragraphs is satisfactory, although opportunities to link ideas may not be taken.
Band 4	9-11	- Mainly relevant points are made and they are developed partially with some effectiveness. - The overall argument shows signs of structure but may be sounder at the beginning than at the end. There may be some repetition. It is normally possible to follow sequences of ideas, but there may be intrusive ideas or misleading sentences.
Band 5	6-8	- A few relevant points are made and although they are expanded into paragraphs, development is very simple and not always logical. - Overall structure lacks a sense of sequencing. Paragraphs used only for obvious divisions. It is sometimes possible to follow sequencing of sentences within paragraphs.
Band 6	3-5	- A few points are discernible but any attempt to develop them is very limited. - Overall argument only progresses here and there and the sequence of sentences is poor.
	0, 1, 2	Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.

TABLE B2 – DESCRIPTIVE TASKS

Band 1	18-20	- There are many well defined, well developed ideas and images, describing complex atmospheres with a range of details. - Overall structure is provided through devices such as the movements of the writer, the creation of a short time span, or the creation of atmosphere or tension. Focus is description (not storytelling). Repetition is avoided and the sequence of sentences makes the picture clear to the reader.
Band 2	15-17	- There is a good selection of interesting ideas and images, with a range of details. - These are formed into an overall picture of some clarity, largely consistent. There may be occasional repetition and opportunities for development or the provision of detail may be missed. Sentences are often well sequenced and the description is often effective.
Band 3	12-14	- There is a selection of effective ideas and images that are relevant to the topic and which satisfactorily address the task. An attempt is made to create atmosphere and to provide some details. - The description provides a series of points rather than a sense of their being combined to make an overall picture, but some of the ideas are developed successfully, albeit straightforwardly. Some sentences are well sequenced.
Band 4	9-11	- Some relevant and effective ideas are provided and occasionally developed a little, perhaps as a narrative. There is some feeling of atmosphere, but most of the writing is about events or description of objects or people. - There is some overall structure, but the writing may lack direction and intent. There may be interruptions in the sequence of sentences and/or some lack of clarity.
Band 5	6-8	- Content is relevant but lacking in scope or variety. Opportunities to provide development and detail are frequently missed. - Overall structure, though readily discernible, lacks form and dimension. The reliance on identifying events, objects and/or people sometimes leads to a sequence of sentences without progression.
Band 6	3-5	- Some relevant facts are identified, but the overall picture is unclear and lacks development. - There are examples of sequenced sentences, but there is also repetition and muddled ordering.
	0, 1, 2	Rarely relevant, little material and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.

TABLE B3 – NARRATIVE TASKS

Band 1	18-20	- The narrative is complex and sophisticated and may contain devices such as subtexts, flashbacks and time lapses. Cogent details are provided where necessary or appropriate. - The different sections of the story are carefully balanced and the climax carefully managed. Sentence sequences are sometimes arranged to produce effects such as the building up of tension or providing a sudden turn of events.
Band 2	15-17	- The writing develops some features that are of interest to a reader, although not consistently so. Expect the use of detail and some build-up of character or setting. - The writing is orderly and the beginning and ending (where required) are satisfactorily managed. The reader is aware of the climax even if it is not managed completely effectively. The sequencing of sentences provides clarity and engages the reader in events or atmosphere.
Band 3	12-14	- A straightforward story (or part of story) with satisfactory identification of features such as character and setting. - While opportunities for appropriate development of ideas are sometimes missed, the overall structure is competent, and features of a developed narrative are evident. Sentences are usually sequenced to narrate events.
Band 4	9-11	- A relevant response to the topic, but largely a series of events with occasional details of character and setting. - The overall structure is sound although there are examples where a particular section is too long or too short. A climax is identified but is not effectively described or led up to. Sentence sequences narrate events and occasionally contain intrusive facts or misleading ideas.
Band 5	6-8	- A simple narrative with a beginning, middle and end (where appropriate). It may consist of simple, everyday happenings or unlikely, un-engaging events. - Unequal or inappropriate importance is given to the sections of the story. Dialogue that has no function may be used or over-used. There is no real climax. Sentence sequences are used only to link simple series of events.
Band 6	3-5	- Stories are very simple and narrate events indiscriminately. Endings are simple and lack effect. - The shape of the narrative is unclear; some of the content has no relevance to the plot. Sequences of sentences are sometimes poor, leading to a lack of clarity.
	0, 1, 2	Rarely relevant, little material, and presented in a disorderly structure. Not sufficient to be placed in Band 6.