

Syllabus

Cambridge International A & AS Level

Chinese Literature Syllabus code 8669

Chinese Language Syllabus code 8681

Chinese Syllabus code 9715

For examination in November 2011



Note for Exams Officers: Before making Final Entries, please check availability of the codes for the components and options in the E3 booklet (titled "Procedures for the Submission of Entries") relevant to the exam session. Please note that component and option codes are subject to change.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Why choose Cambridge?

University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) is the world's largest provider of international qualifications. Around 1.5 million students from 150 countries enter Cambridge examinations every year. What makes educators around the world choose Cambridge?

Recognition

A Cambridge International A or AS Level is recognised around the world by schools, universities and employers. The qualifications are accepted as proof of academic ability for entry to universities worldwide. Cambridge International A Levels typically take two years to complete and offer a flexible course of study that gives students the freedom to select subjects that are right for them. Cambridge International AS Levels are accepted in all UK universities and carry half the weighting of an A Level. University course credit and advanced standing is often available for Cambridge International A/AS Levels in countries such as the USA and Canada. Learn more at www.cie.org.uk/recognition.

Support

CIE provides a world-class support service for teachers and exams officers. We offer a wide range of teacher materials to Centres, plus teacher training (online and face-to-face) and student support materials. Exams officers can trust in reliable, efficient administration of exams entry and excellent, personal support from CIE Customer Services. Learn more at www.cie.org.uk/teachers.

Excellence in education

Cambridge qualifications develop successful students. They not only build understanding and knowledge required for progression, but also learning and thinking skills that help students become independent learners and equip them for life.

Not-for-profit, part of the University of Cambridge

CIE is part of Cambridge Assessment, a not-for-profit organisation and part of the University of Cambridge. The needs of teachers and learners are at the core of what we do. CIE invests constantly in improving its qualifications and services. We draw upon education research in developing our qualifications.

1. Introduction

1.2 Why choose Cambridge International A & AS Level Chinese?

Cambridge International A and AS Level Language syllabuses are accepted by universities and employers as proof of linguistic ability and understanding. Successful language students gain lifelong skills, including:

- the ability to communicate confidently and clearly in the target language
- a sound understanding of the nature of language and language study, and of the skills and abilities required for further study, work and leisure
- insight into the culture and contemporary society of countries where the language is spoken
- better integration into communities where the language is spoken
- a positive attitude towards language learning, towards the speakers of other languages, and towards other cultures and societies
- skills which can be used in other areas of learning, such as analysis and memory skills.

1.3 How can I find out more?

If you are already a Cambridge Centre

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels, e.g. CIE Direct. If you have any queries, please contact us at **international@cie.org.uk**.

If you are not a Cambridge Centre

You can find out how your organisation can become a Cambridge Centre. Email us at **international@cie.org.uk**. Learn more about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge Centre at **www.cie.org.uk**.

2. Assessment at a glance

Cambridge International A & AS Level Chinese Syllabus codes 8669, 8681, 9715

Centres and candidates may choose to take an assessment at either

- Advanced (A) Level or
- Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level.

Candidates wishing to take an A Level must take **all units** of assessment in the **same** examination session. **It is not possible for candidates to follow a staged assessment of the qualification.** Centres can offer an AS qualification either as a stand-alone assessment, or as a means of testing candidates' skills and competence before they enter for the A Level exam. See Section 5 for an outline of the components.

Note: The use of dictionaries is not permitted in any assessment.

2.1 Scheme of assessment summary

	Component 2 Reading and Writing		Component 3 Essay		Component 4 Texts		Component 5 Prose	
	duration	weighting	duration	weighting	duration	weighting	duration	weighting
A Level	1 hour 45 mins	ca. 35%	1 hour 30 mins	ca. 20%	2 hours 30 mins	ca. 35%	45 mins	ca. 10%
AS Language	1 hour 45 mins	ca. 70%	1 hour 30 mins	ca. 30%				
AS Literature					2 hours 30 mins	100%		

2. Assessment at a glance

2.2 Availability

Syllabuses 8669, 8681 and 9715 are available for examination in **November** only.

2.3 Exam combinations

A Level: Candidates take Components 1, 2, 3 and 4.

AS Level Language: Candidates take Components 1, 2 and 3.

AS Level Literature: Candidates take Component 4.

Where a component is common to two qualifications, grading of each qualification is carried out separately.

2.4 Exam exclusions

Candidates may combine the syllabuses in this booklet in an examination session with any other CIE syllabus except syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

In addition, where a component contributes to different awards, candidates may not take more than one of those awards in the same examination session:

- A Level candidates may **not** take an AS Level qualification in the same language in the same session
- AS Level candidates may **not** take the A Level qualification in the same language in the same session.

3. Syllabus aims and assessment

3.1 Aims

Cambridge International A and AS Level Language syllabuses aim to:

- develop the ability to understand a language from a variety of registers
- enable students to communicate confidently and clearly in the target language
- form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure
- develop insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries where the language is spoken, including the study of literary texts where appropriate (this does not apply to AS Language qualifications)
- encourage positive attitudes to language learning and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations
- support intellectual and personal development by promoting learning and social skills.

3.2 Assessment objectives

The examinations are designed to assess candidates' linguistic competence and their knowledge of contemporary society. In the exams, candidates will be expected to:

- understand and respond to texts written in the target language, drawn from a variety of sources such as magazines, newspapers, reports, books and other forms of extended writing
- manipulate the target language accurately to demonstrate a capacity to choose appropriate examples of lexis and structures
- select information and present it in the target language
- organise arguments and ideas logically.

4. Topic areas

All textual material used in the examinations will be drawn from the topic areas below, with reference to the country or countries where the language is spoken. More guidance on the topic areas is given in Section 6.

- Human relationships
- Family
- Generation gap
- Young people
- Patterns of daily life
- Urban and rural life
- The media
- Food and drink
- Law and order
- Religion and belief
- Health and fitness
- Work and leisure
- Equality of opportunity
- Employment and unemployment
- Sport
- Free time activities
- Travel and tourism
- Education
- Cultural life/heritage
- War and peace
- The developing world
- Scientific and medical advances
- Technological innovation
- Environment
- Conservation
- Pollution
- Contemporary aspects of the country or countries where the language is spoken

5. Description of components

5.1 Component 2: Reading and Writing

1 hour 45 minutes, 70 marks

Two passages in the target language are set which deal with related themes.

Candidates answer specific and general comprehension questions on the two passages, and respond to a task requiring a summary or comparison of issues raised. The target language will be used for all questions and answers.

The passages will have been written during the last twenty years, and will reflect the international scene. In addition:

- the two passages, taken together, will not exceed 750 characters
- on the first passage, two tests (5 marks each) will cover vocabulary recognition and grammatical manipulation. These will be followed by a series of comprehension questions (15 marks for content and 5 marks for quality of language)
- on the second passage, there will be a series of comprehension questions (15 marks for content and 5 marks for quality of language)
- the last question will require candidates to write about 200 characters, drawing information from both passages and adding their own opinions, (10 marks for information drawn from the passages, 5 marks for personal response to the material, and 5 marks for quality of language).

5.2 Component 3: Essay

1 hour 30 minutes, 40 marks

A list of five topics, selected from the topic areas in Section 4, is published annually in the syllabus, and changes every year. A question will be set on each of the five topics; candidates choose **one** question and write an essay in the target language of 300–450 characters. Of the 40 marks available, 24 are for the quality of the language and 16 for the content.

5. Description of components

Set topics for 2011:

- 1 Family
- 2 Law and order
- 3 Sport
- 4 Employment and unemployment
- 5 Technological innovation

5.3 Component 4: Texts

2 hours 30 minutes, 75 marks

Candidates answer three questions in the target language. Each question must be on a different text, taken from the list in Section 5.5. The list is divided into two sections: candidates must choose at least one text from each section.

Each question is marked out of 25. Each answer should be around 600–800 characters. Candidates who write more than 800 characters cannot be placed higher than the 16–17 category for that answer (see Section 7 – Mark Schemes).

Unannotated set texts may be taken into the examination room. These texts must not have been written in or marked in any way. Where any Editors' Notes appear at the beginning or end of a set text, these must be separated off with an elastic band.

Section 1

Candidates are given a choice of two questions for each text.

For each text in this section there will be an extended passage taken from the text followed by either a single question or a number of short questions. This will not be a context passage (the location of the passage is given) but a stimulus to allow candidates to bring a focus to their answer. Candidates are asked to comment on particular aspects of the passage and/or to indicate how the passage reflects the book as a whole.

The alternative question will be an essay question, similar to those in Section 2.

Section 2

For each text there is a choice of two questions focusing on issues central to the text. Candidates are expected to display detailed knowledge of the text and to show some awareness of how the author conveys the message of the work.

5. Description of components

5.4 Component 5: Prose

45 minutes, 40 marks

Candidates translate a short passage from English into Chinese.

5.5 Set texts for 2011 (Component 4)

Section 1

1 “Chaguan” by Lao She
《茶馆》老舍

2 Selected Poems by Xu Zhimo (徐志摩)
《诗选》徐志摩

The poems are taken from 徐志摩诗全集 published by 学林出版社, 1997. ISBN 7806163077.

雪花的快乐，这是一个懦怯的世界，婴儿，再别康桥，为谁，我有一个恋爱，春的投生，望月，车上，偶然，去吧，为要寻一个明星，“我不知道风是在哪一个方向吹”，叫化活该。

3 “Benci lieche zhongdian” by Wang Anyi
《本次列车终点》王安忆

Section 2

4 “Wo mei you ziji de mingzi” by Yu Hua
《我没有自己的名字》余华

5 “Chun can” by Mao Dun
《春蚕》茅盾

6 “Kong Yiji” by Lu Xun
《孔乙己》鲁迅

6. Topic areas: further guidance

Teachers can explore the topic areas **in any way they choose**. The following examples (which are not prescriptive) are a useful guide to planning courses. All these suggestions, and other themes chosen by the teacher from within the topic areas, should be studied with reference to countries/communities where the language is spoken.

Human relationships – family – generation gap – young people

- family activities; new patterns of family relationships; the status of the elderly and responsibility for their care
- generation gap; conflicts in the family circle; young people and the older generation; attitudes of young people to the family environment
- young people; young people and their peer group; young people as a target group for advertisers and politicians

Patterns of daily life – urban and rural life – the media – food and drink – law and order – religion and belief – health and fitness

- daily routine; school; the individual's way of life; living conditions
- advantages and disadvantages of urban and rural life; transport and communications; shopping; housing
- the role and influence of the media; the power of advertising
- healthy eating; fast-food; national traditions of eating and drinking
- violence and crime; drug-related crime; the role of the police; law-enforcement
- the place of religion in society; attitudes to religious belief; patterns of attendance; religious minorities
- healthy living; exercise; dieting; drugs; health care provision; stress; AIDS

Work and leisure – equality of opportunity – employment and unemployment – sport – free time activities – travel and tourism – education – cultural life/heritage

- women in society and in the workforce; equality of opportunity for minority groups
- preparation for work and job opportunities; career plans; qualifications and job routines; plight of the unemployed, areas of high unemployment; demise of traditional industries; possible solutions, immigrant workers
- individual and team sports; amateur and professional sport
- value of leisure; balance between leisure and work; planning leisure time
- tourism as a modern phenomenon; friction between tourists and local inhabitants; holidays and foreign travel
- education systems and types of school; patterns of curriculum; relationship between education and training; further and higher education provision; examinations
- the world of the arts; significant figures and trends in the arts; the place of culture and the arts in the life of the nation

6. Topic areas: further guidance

War and peace – the developing world

- conflicts in the world: ethnic, religious, ideological
- problems of developing countries; future trends

Medical advances – scientific and technological innovation

- advances in the treatment of disease; ethical issues of medical and other technologies
- cloning; genetic modifications; modern communications systems

Environment – pollution – conservation

- the individual in his/her surroundings; effect of environment on individuals; protest action to protect one's locality; ways of contributing to environmental awareness
- global warming; acid rain; air pollution; water pollution; noise pollution; destruction of rain forests; damage to animal world; solutions and cost implications
- saving endangered species and landscapes

Contemporary aspects of the country/ies where the language is spoken

- e.g. political, regional, social issues

7. Mark schemes

7.1 Component 2: Reading and Writing

Quality of Language – Accuracy (Questions 3, 4 and 5)

5 Very good Consistently accurate. Only very few errors of minor significance. Accurate use of more complex structures (verb forms, tenses, prepositions, word order).
4 Good Higher incidence of error than above, but clearly has a sound grasp of the grammatical elements in spite of lapses. Some capacity to use accurately more complex structures.
3 Sound Fair level of accuracy. Common tenses and regular verbs mostly correctly formed. Some problems in forming correct agreement of adjectives. Difficulty with irregular verbs, use of prepositions.
2 Below average Persistent errors in tense and verb forms. Prepositions frequently incorrect. Recurrent errors in agreement of adjectives.
0–1 Poor Little or no evidence of grammatical awareness. Most constructions incomplete or incorrect. Consistent and repeated error.

Note re questions 3 and 4: The five marks available for quality of language are awarded **globally** for the whole performance on each set of answers.

A concise answer, containing all mark-bearing components for content is scored on the full range of marks for language, i.e. length does not determine the quality of language mark.

An individual answer scoring 0 for content cannot contribute to the overall Quality of Language mark. This means that the total mark out of 5 available on the whole set of answers is reduced on the following scale:

Answer(s) worth a total of 2 or 3 scoring 0: reduce final assessment by 1

Answer(s) worth a total of 4 or 5 scoring 0: reduce final assessment by 2

Answer(s) worth a total of 6 or 7 scoring 0: reduce final assessment by 3

Answer(s) worth a total of 8 or 9 scoring 0: reduce final assessment by 4

Note: A minimum of one mark for Quality of Language should be awarded if there are any content marks at all (i.e. 0 language marks only if 0 content marks).

7. Mark schemes

Response to the passage (Question 5)

This should be marked as a mini-essay according to the variety and interest of the opinions and views expressed, the candidate's response to the original text stimulus, and their ability to express a personal point of view. Additional guidance on marking specific questions will be given to examiners.

<p>5 Very good Varied and interesting ideas, showing an element of flair and imagination, a capacity to express a personal point of view.</p>
<p>4 Good Not the flair and imagination of the best candidates, but work still shows an ability to express a range of ideas, maintain interest and respond to the issues raised.</p>
<p>3 Sound A fair level of interest and ideas. May concentrate on a single issue, but there is still a response to ideas in the text.</p>
<p>2 Below average Limited range of ideas; rather humdrum. May disregard the element of response to the text, and write a largely unrelated free-composition.</p>
<p>0–1 Poor Few ideas to offer on the theme. Banal and pedestrian. No element of personal response to the text. Repeated error.</p>

7. Mark schemes

7.2 Component 3: Essay

Language (24 marks)	Content (16 marks)
21–24 Very good Confident use of complex sentence patterns, generally accurate, extensive vocabulary, good sense of idiom.	14–16 Very good Detailed, clearly relevant and well illustrated; coherently argued and structured.
16–20 Good Generally sound grasp of grammar in spite of quite a few lapses; reads reasonably; some attempt at varied vocabulary.	11–13 Good Sound knowledge and generally relevant; some ability to develop argument and draw conclusions.
10–15 Adequate A tendency to be simple, clumsy or laboured; some degree of accuracy; inappropriate use of idiom.	7–10 Adequate Some knowledge, but not always relevant; a more limited capacity to argue.
5–9 Poor Consistently simple or pedestrian sentence patterns with persistent errors; limited vocabulary.	3–6 Poor Some attempt at argument, tends to be sketchy or unspecific; little attempt to structure an argument; major misunderstanding of question.
1–4 Very poor Only the simplest sentence patterns, little evidence of grammatical awareness, very limited vocabulary.	1–2 Very poor Vague and general, ideas presented at random.

7. Mark schemes

7.3 Component 4: Texts

Candidates must write their answers in the target language. Examiners will look for a candidate's ability to communicate effectively and will ignore linguistic errors which do not impede communication.

Passage-based questions

Examiners should consider the extent to which candidates have been able to identify the significant issues raised in the passage and, where appropriate, have applied these to the text as a whole. The passage is a stimulus passage, to be used as a springboard to give candidates a starting point for their answer. Examiners should allow candidates to use the passage as they choose, and ask themselves how successfully the candidates have manipulated their material and to what extent they have shown depth of awareness and knowledge of the workings of the text under discussion. This is not an exercise in literary criticism: examiners should reward candidates whose answers show good understanding of how a text works and how an author has conveyed the key issues.

Essay questions

A prime consideration is that candidates show detailed knowledge and understanding of the text.

Extracts from Examiners' Notes

This paper is intended to test candidates' knowledge of a text and their ability to use this knowledge to answer questions in a clear and focused manner. A sophisticated literary approach is not expected (though at the highest levels it is sometimes seen), but great value is placed on evidence of a firsthand response and thoughtful, personal evaluation of what candidates have read. Candidates may have been encouraged to depend closely on prepared notes and quotations: quotation for its own sake is not useful, though it will not be undervalued if used appropriately to illustrate a point in the answer.

Candidates do not tend to show **all** the qualities or faults described in any one mark-band. Examiners attempt to weigh all these up at every borderline, in order to see whether the work can be considered for the category above. At the lower levels, the answer may mention a few 'facts' but these may be so poorly understood, badly organised and irrelevant that it falls into category 10–11; or there may be just enough sense of understanding and focus for the examiner to consider the 12–13 band. Again, at a higher level, an answer may be clear, solid and conscientious (perhaps 18–19), without showing quite the control and attention to perceptively chosen detail which would justify 20 or more.

Examiners take a positive and flexible approach and, even when there are obvious flaws in an answer, reward evidence of knowledge and especially any signs of understanding and careful organisation.

7. Mark schemes

Candidates are expected to write 600–800 characters for each of their answers. Candidates who write more than 800 characters cannot be placed higher than the 16–17 category in the mark scheme.

Marks	Description
22+	Exceptional work. Excellent ability to organise material, thorough knowledge, considerable sensitivity to language and to author's intentions, understanding of some literary techniques. Really articulate and intelligent answers should be considered in this band even if there are still flaws and omissions.
20–21	Very good. Close attention to detail of passages, controlled structure, perceptive use of illustration, good insight when discussing characters. Ability to look beyond the immediate material and to show some understanding of author's intentions and of underlying themes.
18–19	Thoroughly solid and relevant work. Candidate does not simply reproduce information: can discuss and evaluate material and come to clear conclusion. Good focus on passages. Some limitations of insight but coherent, detailed approach and aptly chosen illustrations.
16–17	Painstaking. Sound knowledge of texts; mainly relevant. Some attempt to analyse and compare, some sense of understanding. Possibly not in full control of material; solid but indiscriminate. Many very conscientious candidates fall into this category: they tend to write far too much as they are reluctant to leave out anything they have learnt. Focused, coherent essays which lack really solid detail but convey a good understanding of the text should also be considered for this band.
14–15	Fair relevance and knowledge. Better organised than work in the 12–13 band: the candidate probably understands the demands of the question without being able to develop a very thorough response. Still a fairly simple, black and white approach. Some narrative and 'learnt' material but better control and focus than work in the 12–13 band. Many candidates probably fall into this category.
12–13	Sound, if simple and superficial, knowledge of plot and characters. Makes assertions without being able to illustrate or develop points. Probably still too dependent on narrative and memorised oddments but there may be a visible attempt to relate these to the question. Can extract one or two relevant points from a set passage.
10–11	Some very basic material but not much sense of understanding or ability to answer the question. The candidate rarely reads the set passage but uses it as a springboard for storytelling and memorised bits and pieces about characters. Very general, unspecific approach. Random, bitty structure. Signs of organisation and relevance should be looked for in case the answer can be considered for a mark in the 12–13 band.
6–9	Marginally more knowledge here than in the 0–5 band. The candidate may have read the text but is probably unable to see beyond the barest bones of the plot or half-remembered notes. Insubstantial; very little relevance. The candidate may have problems with the language and will be unable to express ideas comprehensibly.
0–5	No discernible material. Often very inadequate language. Marks in this section are awarded almost on the basis of quantity: up to 3 for a sentence or two showing a glimpse of knowledge, 4 or 5 where there is also a hint of relevance to the question. It is possible for a candidate to write a whole page demonstrating no knowledge at all (have they read the book?), or only misunderstood background facts or very vague general remarks unrelated to either text or question.

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