

Individual Oral Commentary

April 1 - April 9th 2008

General Reminders

- Bring a blank regular size cassette tape with your name on the cover and the tape itself to your IOC.
- Report punctually to **F-3** (come five minutes before your preparation time begins).
- Know the titles & authors of the works since neither will be included on the passages (the titles will be included only on the poems).
- Check and double-check your IOC time.
- When you cite textual evidence, use the line numbers provided in the extract.
- The works you could draw are *The Great Gatsby*, *Macbeth*, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, and the poetry of T.S. Eliot (excluding *The Waste Land*), and Sylvia Plath.
- Time Reminders:
 - 20 minutes of uninterrupted preparation time with passage
 - 15 minutes total IOC
 - wrap up your commentary at 12-13 minutes to provide time for my follow-up questions to make sure your response is as complete as possible
- Passages that we did Practice IOC's on cannot be used again for the real IOC (I saved the good ones for the real deal).

Ideas for Review

- Go over pertinent Source Book entries in small groups.
- Find interesting, potential passages from works and complete a practice IOC with a partner (and use the rubric to review the criteria).
- Reinterpret and create interesting arguments/interpretations for poems we did not spend a lot of time on as a class with a partner.
- Review the Literary Terms list and Traditional Symbols chart.
- Review helpful sections in the red *IB Handbook* on style, poetry, prose, drama, the IOC, etc.
- Reread my "IOC Guidelines" handout.
- Reread criticism (in back of room and online) and your criticism notes

First things first

When you begin the IOC, you will read the following into the tape (I will provide this transcript at the IOC)

My name is _____.
I am a student at Mira Loma High School in Sacramento, CA.
I am enrolled in Mr. Quale's IB 1 Language A class.
Today is April _____, 2008
I will be commenting on _____ by _____.

When giving your IOC, remember to . . .

Stay within the context of the passage: "You must not be tempted to discuss everything you know about the whole text. Your commentary must focus on the specific extract that you are given for discussion. You should relate it to the work only where relevant—for example, to establish context, or discuss its importance to the work as a whole" (*English for the IB Diploma Handbook*).

Guiding questions encourage you to look at aspects such as . . .

- Presentation & role of characters
- Presentation of relationships
- Theme(s)
- Use of language
- Significance of the extract to the development of the plot or text as a whole
- The effects created by the structure, style, and techniques employed by the writer

Advice from the IB Moderators (an excerpt from our feedback from two years ago--italics mine)

The commentaries should focus more on the literary aspects of the actual passages. While most candidates successfully placed their extracts in the context of the whole work, some did not display truly sensitive understanding of the passages they were discussing. Most candidates tend to concentrate on the plot, i.e. on what is happening in their passage rather than on the author's way of describing it.

It is important to remind the candidates that their main task during the IOC requires concentrating on the actual text of the extract they are given. After placing the fragment in the context of the whole work, the passage should then be read with a magnifying glass, as it were, bearing in mind that every word or phrase was carefully chosen by the author in order to produce a particular effect.

Candidates, as informed and sensitive readers, are expected to show their appreciation of the writer's art. The time limit of the independent commentary, however, obliges the candidates to learn to choose the most relevant features and to organize them in the most effective way. Related points, for example, should be discussed together, rather than analyzing the passage "from top to bottom". The proper use of quotations to illustrate the candidates' ideas – instead of reading and interpreting parts of the text – is also very important.

What to do during "IOC Week" (April 1-9th)

The most important thing to remember is that we need to create and maintain an environment during IOC's that is conducive for students who want to study.

1. Prepare for your IOC (study groups, practice IOC's, Source Book reviews, etc.)
2. Read Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*
3. Begin brainstorming and writing your prompt-less poetry essay
4. Work on work from other classes
5. Nap
6. Zone out

April, May and June ● IB Juniors

*You don't lead by pointing and telling people some place to go.
You lead by going to that place and making a case. --Ken Kesey*

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
30	31 • Review and Relax • Prompt-less Poetry Essay	April 1 IOCs	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Open House (Minimum Day)	10 <i>Jandek on Corwood</i>	11 <i>Jandek on Corwood</i>	12
13	14 Guest Poet: Mr. Thomas-Glass	15 IB Learner Profile <i>Jandek & Mr. T-G</i> debrief	16 <i>Cuckoo's Nest</i> Reading Test	17 The Combine Walking Tour	18 Nonfiction Film Project Introduction	19
20	21 Prompt-less Poetry Rough	22 STAR 1 <i>Berkeley in 60's</i>	23 STAR 2 <i>Berkeley in 60's</i>	24 "The Combine" Reflections Due	25 "Hustling to Some Purpose" Notes Due	26
27	28 Prompt-less Poetry Final	29	30	May 1	2 Borges Logs Due (first 5)	3
4	5 <i>Cuckoo's IOPs</i> Extra Credit Due	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Borges Logs Due (last 6) Borges Quiz	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Oppression to Empowerment	22	23 Nonfiction Film Screening	24
25	26 Memorial Day (no school)	27 Borges IOPs	28 "Empowering the Nest" Due	29	30	31
Jun. 1	2 Final Review	3 Cumulative Final	4 Finals 3 / 4	5 Finals 5 / 6	6 Funtivities	

Jorge Luis Borges

Open Book Reading Quiz: May 12th

Reading List

from *Garden of the Forking Paths*

- The Forward (no log required)
- "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" ∞∞∞
- "Pierre Mernard, Author of the *Quixote*" ∞∞∞
- "The Circular Ruins" ∞
- "The Library of Babel" ∞∞
- "The Garden of the Forking Paths" ∞∞∞

from *Artifices*

- The Forward (no log required)
- "Death and the Compass" ∞∞
- "The South" ∞

from *The Aleph*

- "The Immortal" ∞∞∞
- "Emma Zunz" ∞
- "The Zahir" ∞∞
- "The Aleph" ∞∞

Difficulty The stories have also been ranked using the following difficulty key in case students would rather read them by difficulty level instead of chronologically.

∞ = not too difficult to understand / "a good yarn"

∞∞ = somewhat confusing and / or thought-provoking; a possible labyrinth

∞∞∞ = advanced Borgesian ideas that will make your brain hurt (in a good way) / impossible to get to the "center" of this labyrinth.

Reading Log Entries should be detailed, 1-2 pages in length, handwritten, and include:

- a. At least three important quotes and explanations as to why they are important (You may just cite the page number of the highlighted quote if you are marking in your own book).
- b. Characters and analysis of their important traits.
- c. Important narrative elements (plot, setting, narrator, etc.)—this may include diagrams, sketches, notes, etc.
- d. At least one important motif, theme or symbol and how it is developed in the short story.
- e. Three questions that you have/questions for discussion.

We will also read supplemental criticism and literature I have class sets of the following:

- John Barth's essay "The Literature of Exhaustion"—notes should be taken in your Source Book on his main argument, and specifically how it relates to Borges.
- Borges' Lecture on *The Thousand and One Nights*, from the collection *Seven Nights*—Study questions will be provided and need to be completed in your Source Book.
- Julio Cortazar's short story "The Night Face Up"—we will read this in conjunction with our discussion of "The South."