

OxfordAQA

International AS/A-level

Chinese – First Language (9680)

Scheme of work

For teaching from September 2026 onwards

For International AS exams in May/June 2027 onwards

Introduction

This scheme of work has been designed to provide you with comprehensive support and guidance for teaching the OxfordAQA International AS and A-level Chinese (First Language) specification. Its purpose is to help you construct a coherent and effective teaching programme that ensures full coverage of the specification content over a two-year period, while also developing your students' linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness, and critical thinking skills.

You are encouraged to adapt this scheme to suit your own teaching context, the specific needs and abilities of your students, and the resources available at your centre. The following pages offer one possible approach, outlining a logical progression through the themes, grammar, and literary works.

Assumed coverage (teaching time)

The OxfordAQA International A-level is designed around 360 guided learning hours. The International AS level, which can be taken as a stand-alone qualification or as the first half of the full A-level, is designed around 180 guided learning hours.

The table below provides a suggested allocation of teaching hours across the two-year course. This is a guide only, and you may adjust the timings based on your students' prior knowledge and the pace at which they learn. The study of set texts is concentrated in the second year (A2), but introductory exposure to literary extracts can begin earlier.

Topic / Skill Area	Suggested Learning Time (hours)
Year One (AS Focus)	
Theme 1: Society	36
Theme 2: Education and Work	36
Theme 3: Culture	36
Theme 4: Science and Technology	36
Theme 5: Global Dimension	36
Year Two (A2 Focus)	
Set Text Study (Unit 3: Poems or Short Stories)	60
Set Text Study (Unit 4: Novel)	60
Writing Skills: Open Letter & Narrative (A2)	30
A-level Exam Preparation, Revision and Mocks	30

Structure of the Scheme of Work

The scheme of work is organised into 60 weeks, following a clear thematic structure based on the five themes outlined in the specification (Society; Education and Work; Culture; Science and Technology; Global Dimension). Each section is designed to integrate language learning with cultural and literary study.

Each block of time typically includes:

- **Learning Objectives:** A clear statement of what students will be able to understand and produce by the end of the unit.
- **Theme and Topic:** The specific area of study from the specification, providing a focus for reading and discussion.
- **Articles and Texts to Read and Study:** Suggestions for the types of authentic or adapted texts students can engage with. These are drawn from a range of sources (news media, blogs, reports, literary extracts) to build reading comprehension skills (AO2) and provide models for writing.
- **Chinese Grammar Focus:** The specific grammatical structures (from the list in Specification 3.2) to be introduced or consolidated. Grammar is taught in context, linked to the thematic content, to ensure it is meaningful and applicable. Key structures are revisited and built upon throughout the course.
- **Teaching Activities:** A range of suggested tasks designed to develop the key skills assessed in the four units. These activities are not prescriptive but are intended to stimulate ideas for classroom practice. They include:
 - **Reading comprehension tasks**, mirroring the styles found in Unit 2 (e.g., idiom definition, cloze tests, identifying correct statements, critical analysis).
 - **Listening and writing preparation**, building towards the discursive essay task in Unit 1.
 - **Speaking and discussion activities**, which are crucial for formulating and rehearsing ideas before writing, and for developing analytical thinking.
 - **Creative and critical writing tasks**, preparing students for the specific demands of Unit 3 (literary analysis and open letter) and Unit 4 (novel essay and narrative composition).
 - **Independent learning (I) and formative assessment (F) opportunities** are indicated where appropriate.

Preparing for the Assessments

A core aim of this scheme of work is to prepare students systematically for all four assessment units.

- **For Unit 1 (Listening and Writing):** Activities include listening to audio extracts on relevant themes, note-taking, and practising the synthesis of spoken ideas into a well-structured discursive essay.
- **For Unit 2 (Reading):** Students will regularly engage with a variety of text types. Specific activities are included to practise the discrete skills tested in Section A (Chinese language, including idioms and cloze tests) and Section B (critical reading and analysis of literary texts).
- **For Unit 3 (Short-form Literature and Writing):** The second year of the course dedicates significant time to the in-depth study of either the eight set poems or the three set short stories. Activities focus on textual analysis, understanding authors' techniques, and formulating critical personal responses (AO5). Students will also practise the distinct genre of the open letter.
- **For Unit 4 (The Novel and Writing):** A substantial block of time is allocated for the study of one of the three set novels. Students will explore character, theme, context, and authorial method. Alongside literary analysis, they will develop their creative writing skills by practising narrative composition, learning how to structure a story and use descriptive techniques effectively.

Resources

The "Articles to Read and Study" column provides suggestions for the types of texts you could source. These can be found in published textbooks, online news outlets, cultural websites, and literary anthologies. Past papers and specimen materials for OxfordAQA 9680 will be essential resources for familiarising students with exam formats and expectations.

We hope this scheme of work provides a valuable foundation for a successful and stimulating Chinese course, enabling your students to develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to excel in their exams and beyond.

Key: Grammar points marked with **(AS)** are essential for the AS level and will be consolidated and built upon at A2. Grammar points marked with **(A2)** are more advanced and introduced in the second year.

Year One (AS Level Focus: Building Foundations)

Week

1-2

Specification reference

Theme 1: Society

Specification content

Topic: Health and well-being

The Media

Articles to read and study

- Read articles on traditional Chinese medicine vs. modern medicine.
- Read about changing attitudes towards mental health in urban China.
- Study public health campaigns and their language.
- Compare articles from different news sources (e.g. People's Daily, South China Morning Post).
- Read opinion pieces on the role of social media in society.
- Analyse the language of advertising and propaganda.

Chinese grammar focus

- **词类:** 实词与虚词, 名词, 动词, 形容词。
- **词组:** 联合词组, 偏正词组。
- **单句:** 主谓句, 陈述句。

Resources

[《让千年古方焕发“新生”，专家解码守正创新中的中医药传承与发展》](#)（新华网 2025.6.10）

[中国政府网《习近平在中共中央政治局第二十三次集体学习时的讲话》](#) + [光明网《媒介素养蓝皮书》发布报道](#)（中国政府网 2025.11.29） + （光明网 2023.3.23）

Week

3-4

Specification reference

Theme 1: Society

Specification content

Topic: Social issues and trends

Articles to read and study

- Compare articles from different news sources (e.g. People's Daily, South China Morning Post).
- Read opinion pieces on the social trends in society.

Chinese grammar focus

- **词类:** 数词, 量词, 代词。
- **词组:** 数量词组, 补充词组。
- **单句:** 疑问句 (各种形式: 是非问、特指问、选择问、正反问)。

Resources

[全球发展趋势与中国的国际环境](#)

Week

5-6

Specification reference

Theme 1: Society

Specification content

Topic: Economic development

Transport and infrastructure

Articles to read and study

- Read in-depth analyses of China's economic growth and its social impacts.
- Study texts about the development of infrastructure (e.g., Belt and Road Initiative).
- **Literature:** Introduce the set poems OR short stories for Unit 3. Read and discuss first impressions.

Chinese grammar focus

- **修辞 (A2 Depth):** 双关, 反语。Analysing their effect in articles and literary texts.
- **复句 (A2 Depth):** 多重复句的分析与使用。

Resources

[我国加快交通强国建设支撑经济社会高质量发展](#)

Week

7-8

Specification reference

Theme 2: Education and Work

Specification content

Topic: School life and routines

Preparing for exams

Articles to read and study

- Read blog posts or articles describing a typical day in a Chinese high school (e.g. Gaokao preparation).
- Study comparative articles on international education systems.
- Analyse texts about the pressures and rewards of academic life.

Chinese grammar focus

- **单句**: 祈使句, 感叹句。
- **修辞**: 比喻, 比拟。

Resources

[《这十年，普通高中教育如何发力》](#) (教育部官网 2022.7.6)

Week

9-10

Specification reference

Theme 2: Education and Work

Specification content

Topic: Higher education and lifelong learning

Articles to read and study

- Read articles about university life, choosing a major, and the job market for graduates.
- Study texts about adult education and the concept of "终身学习" (lifelong learning).
- Analyse interviews with professionals about their career paths.

Chinese grammar focus

- **词类:** 连词, 助词。
- **词组:** 联合词组, 主谓词组, 动宾词组。
- **复句:** 并列复句 (也, 又, 一边... 一边...)。
- **修辞:** 夸张, 借代。

Resources

[《我国高等教育进入普及化阶段》](#) (教育部官网 2023.1.11)

Week

11-12

Specification reference

Theme 2: Education and work

Specification content

Topic: Work, career and ambitions

Articles to read and study

- Read complex articles about the gig economy, "996" work culture, and changing career aspirations.
- **Literature:** Continue in-depth study of set poems/short stories. Focus on thematic analysis and the author's techniques.

Chinese grammar focus

- **写作手法:** 抒情。 Identifying and analysing lyrical passages in literature and non-fiction.
- 巩固复句的使用, 增强文章的论述逻辑

Resources

[新时代青年的职业选择与理想追求](#)

Week

13-14

Specification reference

Theme 3: Culture

Specification content

Topic: Arts, literature and entertainment

Articles to read and study

- Read reviews of films, concerts, or art exhibitions.
- Study short articles about contemporary Chinese artists or musicians.
- Analyse the language of cultural criticism.
- Introduce excerpts from short stories to build familiarity.

Chinese grammar focus

- **词组**: 固定词组, 方位词组, 同位词组。
- **单句**: 非主谓句。
- **复句**: 偏正复句 (因果复句: 因为...所以...; 转折复句: 虽然...但是...).
- **修辞**: 对偶, 排比。

Resources

新时代文艺繁荣发展: 扎根人民、守正创新的精神滋养

核心出处: 光明网 [《文艺创作如何更好实现价值引领》](#) (光明网 2026.3.20)

Week

15-16

Specification reference

Theme 3: Culture

Specification content

Topic: Travel, tourism and regional diversity

Articles to read and study

- Read travel blogs and articles about different regions of China (e.g., Yunnan, Tibet, Xinjiang).
- Study texts about the protection of ethnic minority cultures.
- Analyse the language used in tourism promotion.

Chinese grammar focus

- **词类:** 拟声词, 兼类词辨析。
- **复句:** 偏正复句 (条件复句: 只要...就...; 假设复句: 如果...就...).
- **写作手法:** 叙述, 描写。

Resources

[新华网旅游](#)

Week

17-18

Specification reference

Theme 3: Culture

Specification content

Topic: Celebrity culture and fashion

Articles to read and study

- Read critical essays on consumerism, celebrity influence, and fashion trends.
- **Literature:** Finalise study of set poems/short stories. Practise writing critical responses (Unit 3, Section A).

Chinese grammar focus

- **语法复习与应用:** 在文学分析中识别和讨论作者的语法选择（如特定句型或修辞的运用）

Resources

[《明星婚礼，别办成消费 “封神榜”》](#)

[《文化为魂、品牌为桥、青年为力 三大力量助力国潮腾飞》](#)

Week

19-20

Specification reference

Theme 4: Science and Technology

Specification content

Topic: Social Media and Artificial Intelligence

Articles to read and study

- Read articles about the impact of platforms like WeChat and Weibo on daily life.
- Study texts discussing the development and ethical implications of AI in China
- Analyse opinion pieces on facial recognition technology.

Chinese grammar focus

- **词类复习与整合:** 综合运用各类实词和虚词。
- **复句:** 偏正复句 (目的复句: 为了...; 让步复句: 即使...也...).
- **修辞:** 设问, 反问。

Resources

[中国政府网《人工智能生成合成内容标识办法》解读](#) (中国政府网 2025.3.16)

Week

21-22

Specification reference

Theme 4: Science and Technology

Specification content

Topic: Technology in education and work

Scientific research

Articles to read and study

- Read about the use of technology in Chinese classrooms.
- Study articles on China's space programme or high-speed rail network as examples of innovation.
- Analyse texts about the future of work in an automated world.

Chinese grammar focus

- **复句整合:** 区分并使用各种类型的偏正复句。
- **写作手法:** 说明 (下定义、举例子、作比较等)。

AS Exam Technique

Focus on Unit 2, Section A (Idioms, Cloze Test).

Resources

[教育部《数字技术打造教学新场景》报道](#) (教育部官网 2025.5.16)

[中国政府网《关于实施中华优秀传统文化传承发展工程的意见》](#) (中国政府网 2017.1.25)

[《推进传统文化的数字化传播》](#) (中国社会科学网 2024.10.21)

Week

23-24

Specification reference

Theme 5: Global Issues

Specification content

Topic: Climate change and environmental issues

Articles to read and study

- Read news reports on pollution in Chinese cities and government policies to combat it.
- Study articles about desertification, wildlife protection, or renewable energy projects.
- Analyse persuasive texts from environmental groups.

Chinese grammar focus

- **复句**: 紧缩句 (越...越..., 不...不...).
- **修辞**: 反复, 对比。
- **写作手法**: 议论。

Resources

[国务院新闻办公室《碳达峰碳中和的中国行动》白皮书](#)

[中国政府网生态环境保护专题](#)

Week

25-26

Specification reference

Theme 5: Global Issues

Specification content

Topic: Sustainable living and poverty

Articles to read and study

- Read about sustainable lifestyle movements in China.
- Study texts about China's efforts in poverty alleviation (脱贫攻坚).
- Analyse personal stories and case studies.

Chinese grammar focus

- 总复习 (**AS Grammar**): 词类, 词组, 单句, 复句。
- **AS Exam Technique**: Focus on Unit 2, Section B (Critical Reading).

Resources

[中共中央国务院《乡村全面振兴规划 \(2024—2027 年\) 》](#) (中国政府网 2025.1.22)

Week

27-28

Specification reference

Consolidation and revision

Specification content

AS Mock exams and review

Articles to read and study

- Use specimen papers for Unit 1 (Listening & Writing) and Unit 2 (Reading).
- Analyse results and revisit weak areas.
- Practise writing discursive essays (Unit 1, Section B) on topics from all five themes.

Chinese grammar focus

- Targeted grammar revision based on mock exam performance.
- Focus on sentence structure and complexity in essay writing.

Week

29-30

Specification reference

AS Exams preparation

Specification content

Final AS exam preparation

Articles to read and study

- Intensive listening practice.
- Timed reading and writing exercises.
- Review of key vocabulary and idioms.

Chinese grammar focus

- Final consolidation of all AS grammar points.

Year Two (A2 Level Focus: Depth, Literature and Analysis)

Week

31-32

Specification reference

Unit 3 (poems or short stories) – first readings

Specification content

If poems: 《天上的街市》(郭沫若), 《纸船》(冰心).

If short stories: 《百合花》(茹志娟)

Teaching techniques:

- **‘First Impressions Gallery’** – Students read the text silently, then write one word or phrase on a sticky note to describe their emotional reaction. Share on the board and discuss patterns.
- Identifying **speaker, tone and setting**.

Writing activities:

- Open letter stimulus: ‘Write an open letter to a young person living in a time of social change, using the poem/story as inspiration.’

Chinese grammar focus

- **修辞 (A2 Depth):** 双关, 反语, 比喻, 拟人. Analysing their effect in articles and literary texts.
- **复句 (A2 Depth):** 多重复句的分析与使用。

Week

33-34

Specification reference

Unit 3: Deeper analysis of the same works.

Specification content

Finish 《天上的街市》+ 《纸船》 (or 《百合花》)

Introduce second poem/story: 《再别康桥》(徐志摩) or 《北京折叠》(郝景芳).

Teaching techniques

- **‘Colour Coded Annotation’** – Use three colours: ● for imagery, ● for emotional language, ● for cultural references. Then write a 3-sentence summary of the author’s message.
- **Literature:** Continue in-depth study of set poems/short stories. Focus on thematic analysis and the author’s techniques.

Writing activities

- Plan a Unit 3 Section A essay (poem/short story question). Write an introduction with a clear thesis.

Chinese grammar focus

- **写作手法:** 抒情。Identifying and analysing lyrical passages in literature and non-fiction.
- 巩固复句的使用, 增强文章的论述逻辑

Week

35-36

Specification reference

Comparative skills within Unit 3

Specification content

Third & fourth poems: 《秋天》(何其芳), 《黄河颂》(光未然)

OR

complete all three short stories

Teaching techniques

- **‘Two-Circle Venn Carousel’** – In groups, students create a large Venn diagram comparing two poems (e.g., 《黄河颂》 vs 《祖国啊，我亲爱的祖国》). Then rotate to add to other groups’ diagrams.
- Comparing **themes, tone and imagery** across texts.

Writing activities:

- Write a full comparative paragraph using a given sentence starter: “Both X and Y explore ..., but X uses ... whereas Y relies on ...”

Chinese grammar focus

- **语法复习与应用**: 在文学分析中识别和讨论作者的语法选择 (如特定句型或修辞的运用)
- **修辞**: 夸张, 借代

Week

37-38

Specification reference

Exam technique for poem/short story question

Specification content

Fifth & sixth poems: 《你是人间的四月天》(林徽因), 《我看》(穆旦)

OR

revision of all short stories.

Teaching techniques

- ‘PEEL Roll the Dice’ – Students roll a dice to determine which part of a PEEL paragraph to write: 1=Point, 2=Evidence, 3=Explain, 4=Link, 5=Add a technique name, 6=Rewrite more concisely.
- Evaluating effectiveness of a technique (not just naming it). Use sentence stems: “This is effective because ...” / “The author’s choice of ... creates a sense of ...”

Writing activities

- Timed an essay on one of the studied poems/stories.

Chinese grammar focus

- 修辞：双关、反语 (analyse irony in a short story).

Week

39-40

Specification reference

First reading of chosen novel (《边城》 《活着》 or 《家》)

Specification content

Read first 3–4 chapters. Focus on **character introduction and setting**.

Teaching techniques

- “**Character Hot Seating**” – One student plays a character (e.g., 翠翠, 福贵, 觉慧). Class asks questions about their motivations and conflicts. Helps students infer subtext.
- Narrative point of view (first-person in 《活着》 vs third-person in 《边城》).

Writing activities

- Narrative composition (Unit 4 Section B) – write a character description inspired by the novel’s protagonist.

Chinese grammar focus

- 写作手法：叙述与描写 (differentiate showing vs telling in the novel).

Week

41-42

Specification reference

Identify major themes and author's message

Specification content

Novels: Chapters 5–8

Teaching techniques

- **“Theme Graffiti Wall”** – Put large paper on the wall with theme titles (e.g., 命运, 家庭, 爱情, 反抗). Students add quotes and page numbers with markers. Then a gallery walk.
- **Literature (Novel)** - Tracing a theme across multiple chapters.

Writing activities

- Plan a Unit 4 Section A essay (novel question) using a theme-based outline.

Chinese grammar focus

- 修辞：对偶、排比 (find examples in narrative passages).

Week

43-44

Specification reference

Analysing **how** the author conveys meaning (form, structure, language)

Specification content

Novels: Chapters 9–12 (final third)

Teaching techniques

- **‘Technique Bingo’** – Create bingo cards with techniques (象征, 对比, 伏笔, 抒情, 讽刺, 反复). As students read a chapter, they mark off techniques they spot. First to get a line explains their findings.
- Foreshadowing (伏笔) and symbolism (e.g., the river in 《边城》, the shadow puppet box in 《活着》).
- **Literature (Novel)**: In-depth analysis of key passages. Focus on how the author conveys the message of the work.

Writing activities

- Write a single paragraph analysing one technique from a key scene. Peer critique using the mark scheme’s AO5 criteria.

Chinese grammar focus

- 写作手法: 抒情 (identify direct vs indirect lyricism).

Week

45-46

Specification reference

Timed essay practice for Unit 4 Section A.

Specification content

Complete the novel. Review all characters and key quotes.

Teaching techniques

- **‘Quote Quest’** – Give students 5–6 exam-style prompts. In pairs, they race to find the best 3 quotes to support each prompt. Share and justify choices.
- Integrating **textual evidence** smoothly.
- **Literature (Novel)**: Comparative study. How does this novel compare to the short-form literature studied?

Writing activities

- Full timed essay (30 marks, 45 minutes) on the novel. Self-assess using a simplified rubric.

Chinese grammar focus

- 修辞：反复、对比 (analyse how repetition creates emotional impact in the novel’s climax).

Week

47-48

Specification reference

Writing effective open letters (discursive/argumentative)

Specification content

Revise 2–3 poems or short stories that connect to social issues.

Teaching techniques

- “Structure Strip” – Give students a strip of paper divided into: 1. Hook & issue, 2. Explanation of problem, 3. Reference to literature (optional), 4. Proposed solution, 5. Call to action. They write directly onto the strip.
- Achieving a consistent, persuasive tone (formal but passionate). Avoiding emotional rant.

Writing activities

- Write one open letter (300 characters) in response to a past-paper scenario.

Chinese grammar focus

- 复句：多重复句 (use complex sentences to link causes and solutions).

Week

49-50

Specification reference

Creative writing from a given starter sentence

Specification content

Re-read the opening pages of the novel.

Teaching techniques

- ‘Sentence Starters Carousel’ – Place 5 different starter sentences around the room. Students spend 5 minutes at each, writing a vivid opening paragraph. Then vote on the most effective.
- Showing not telling (描写 vs 叙述). Use sensory language.

Writing activities

- Complete a **narrative composition (500 characters)** from a chosen starter. Partner swaps to identify one “golden line”.

Chinese grammar focus

- 紧缩句 (contracted sentences) for pace and tension in dialogue.

Week

51-52

Specification reference

Full A2 mock

Specification content

All poems/stories + novel

Teaching techniques

- Complete both units under timed conditions.
- Detailed feedback and target setting.
- Focused revision on weak areas identified in mocks.

Week

53-54

Specification reference

Revision: closing knowledge gaps and memorising key details

Specification content

Group poems/stories by theme: Nostalgia (《纸船》《再别康桥》), Patriotism (《黄河颂》《祖国啊》), Nature (《秋天》《我看》), Society (short stories).

Teaching techniques

- 'One-Pager Revision' – On A3 paper, students create a single page per poem/story including: title, author, 3 key quotes, 2 techniques, 1 theme, 1 hand-drawn symbol. Display in classroom.

Writing activities

- Comparative essay: Compare how two poems from your list explore the idea of home.

Chinese grammar focus

- Quick-fire quiz on 修辞 terms (match term to example).

Week

55-56

Specification reference

Revision: preparing for any type of novel question (character, theme, technique).

Specification content

Create detailed plans for 6 likely questions (2 per type).

Teaching techniques

- “Revision Clock” – Draw a clock. In each hour segment, write: 1 key character, 1 key theme, 1 key quote, 1 technique, 1 context point, 1 alternative interpretation. Revise from the clock in 5-minute bursts.

Writing activities

- Write an essay introduction in 15 minutes.

Chinese grammar focus

- Review 写作手法 – students label a past essay with the techniques they used.

Week

57-58

Specification reference

Open letter and narrative writing

Specification content

Perfecting the two writing tasks

Teaching techniques

- 'Write & Revise in 3 Colours' – Students write a first draft (black). Then revise for structure (blue), then for technique (green), then for accuracy (red). See the revision process visually.

Writing activities

- Write an open letter and a narrative essay under timed conditions.

Chinese grammar focus

- Final check: common character errors (的/得/地), punctuation variety.

Week

59-60

Specification reference

Final Revision & Exam Readiness

Specification content

Light-touch consolidation and exam strategy.

Teaching techniques

- 'Walking Mock' – Place 4 stations (U3A, U3B, U4A, U4B). Students spend 15 minutes at each, writing just a plan or opening paragraph. Then walk to next station. Builds stamina and reduces fear.

Chinese grammar focus

- Quick recall of 10 key rhetorical terms – students give examples from memory.