

GERMAN

Paper 9717/01
Speaking

Key messages

- The presentation topic, while reflecting the candidate's personal interests, should clearly relate to the culture or society of a German-speaking country;
- A presentation should last three to three and a half minutes and include both facts and opinions;
- Candidates should ask the Examiner at least two questions in both the topic conversation and the general conversation, and if necessary they should be prompted to do so by the Examiner;
- The Speaking test should be completed within twenty minutes and the two conversations should be of approximately equal length, at around eight minutes each;
- Candidate and Examiner should be equally audible to anyone listening to the recording, and the recording equipment should be tested and placed accordingly.

General comments

Most candidates were appropriately entered at this level and the majority were well aware of the requirements of the speaking test. However, at some Centres, candidates did not ask the Examiner sufficient questions and were not always prompted to do so. Nearly all candidates were responsive and most were spontaneous. Very few relied on prepared responses. Many Centres had just one or two candidates, but there were a few larger entries. Marking of the tests was largely accurate. Most Centres used the mark-scheme correctly. Recording quality was usually very good, but at some Centres either the candidate or the Examiner was less audible, owing to poor placement of the recording equipment.

Specific comments on the sections of the examination

Section 1 (Presentation)

- If the delivery of the presentation is lively and confident, and if the ideas and opinions required by the mark-scheme are evident, nine or ten marks may be awarded for content.
- However, if a presentation is far too long, or is delivered hesitantly, it should not receive nine or ten marks, as it cannot be considered to be "well organised" as in the published mark scheme criteria.
- For a mark of five for pronunciation a candidate does not have to be a native speaker.
- A well-prepared candidate should be able to access at least 4 marks for Language, as the criteria mention a "reasonable range" of structures and (topic-specific) vocabulary, delivered "fairly fluently", and provided there is no ambiguity of meaning.
- There was again a good range of interesting and often up-to-date presentation topics, including the following:

Die Alzheimer-Krankheit, Kinderschutz, Michael Schuhmacher, die Flüchtlingskrise, Extremsport, Goslar, die Bundeswehr, der Film „der Untergang“, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, die Medien, Mode, deutsche olympische Sportler, Weihnachten, Videospiele.

Section 2 (Topic Conversation)

- The whole of this conversation should deal with the candidate's presented topic, and the issues raised in the presentation should be discussed primarily.
- It should not be expected that a candidate knows additional factual information.
- Issues more suitable for the General Conversation should not be raised until **Section 3**.

- The questions a candidate puts to the Examiner to “seek information”, should be varied. “Was denken Sie?” or “Was ist Ihre Meinung?” are useful questions, as they can be used to move the conversation along, but a wider range of questions is expected.
- If a candidate asks only one question during a conversation the maximum mark is three for Seeking Information.
- Similarly, a maximum mark of three should be awarded for Providing Information if the candidate can deal with basic situations and concepts, but not more complicated ones.

Section 3 (General Conversation)

- This section should be clearly distinct from **Section 2**. It should not be much shorter, but of a similar length to the Topic Conversation.
- The switch to general Conversation should be announced by the Examiner and there should be a complete change of topic.
- Personal details, such as the candidate’s future and interests, could feature briefly but should not form the main element of this discussion. It is better to move fairly swiftly on to more complex or wider issues, in order to allow the candidate access to the higher marks available for Comprehension and Responsiveness or Providing Information and Opinions.
- Open questions by the Examiner are more effective than closed ones in drawing the required kind of response from a candidate. Brief questions, such as *Warum?* or *Inwiefern?* are particularly useful.
- It should not be expected that the candidate will know any specific information on an unexpected topic chosen by the Examiner, perhaps a topic of current affairs. It would be better to switch quickly to a different topic if a candidate is clearly unhappy with or uninformed about the original topic suggested.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9717/21 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

Question 1: seek a word (or words) in the text to match the one in the question perfectly.

Question 2: start or complete the sentence with the prompt provided, making all necessary grammatical changes in the new sentence.

Questions 3 and 4: candidates should formulate answers in their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.

Question 5: respect the word limit; in **part (b)** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text) in a concise way.

Language: when preparing for the examination, candidates should revise adjective endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

General comments

All scripts were very clearly presented, and response to the two texts was generally good.

Candidates should make sure that they label all questions clearly and that any later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to asterisks or numbers in the main body of the text.

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold (specific details and examples are listed in the next section). The number of marks allocated for each question serves as a clear indicator of how many separate ideas need to be included in the answer in order to gain full marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word (or words) that fit(s) perfectly in the place of the one from the text/question. On the whole this question was completed quite successfully by candidates. Care should be taken with spelling as incorrectly spelled words cannot be credited.

- (a) This was often answered incorrectly; many candidates replaced the adjective with a noun.
- (b) This was answered correctly.
- (c) This was usually answered correctly; however some candidates used an incorrect word from the text.
- (d) This was often answered correctly.
- (e) This was answered correctly.

Question 2

The purpose of this exercise was to change a sentence grammatically, with the help of a prompt. On the whole this question was completed to a good standard by most candidates. However, more care needs to be taken with spelling.

- (a) This sentence was mostly completed correctly; however some candidates struggled with the correct preposition to introduce the passive voice.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (c) The spelling of the verb *stärken* presented a difficulty in this question for some candidates.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly and used many different but correct answers.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, to show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in their own words. Comprehension of the text was generally good, although some candidates restricted themselves to copying the relevant section from the text. This cannot gain marks on either content or language and has to be avoided.

Question 3

- (a) Many candidates did not mention the fact that you can practise *Parcour* in the gym hall.
- (b) Most candidates coped well with this question. However, very few candidates mentioned that *Parcour* can be practised anywhere, and instead gave the very specific location of the pedestrian area.
- (c) Most candidates coped well with this question.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates managed to answer part of this question well; however, the majority of candidates were not able to put the argument into the school context and generally talked about the contrast between traditional and modern sports.

Question 4

Again, comprehension of the text was generally good and most candidates managed to back up this comprehension with good grammatical and lexical knowledge in their answers.

- (a) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly – however, some candidates could not be awarded full marks in this question as they did not give specific examples from the text as required.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly. More care was needed in explaining the reasons, as many candidates just stated that being sporty makes you better at Latin and Maths.
- (d) The majority of candidates managed to answer this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 5

This question required candidates to summarise the discussion about the introduction of popular sports like dancing, skateboarding and *Parcour* into school sport lessons in Germany in **part (a)** (advantages of modern sports and disadvantages of traditional sports) and then to give their own opinion on the subject in **part (b)**.

- (a) Most candidates managed to summarise at least some of the points drawn from the two texts. Some candidates, however, did not produce a summary, simply quoting sentences directly from the text. A number of candidates completely overlooked the context of school sports lessons and wrote generally about the advantages of sport.
- (b) The majority of candidates stated a preference for traditional or modern sport supporting it with a variety of reasons drawn from their personal experience.

Quality of Language

The quality of language ranged from excellent to very basic, with some candidates finding it very difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form.

When preparing for the examination candidates should in particular revise adjective and case endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9717/22 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

Question 1: seek a word (or words) in the text to match the one in the question perfectly.

Question 2: start or complete the sentence with the prompt provided, making all necessary grammatical changes in the new sentence.

Questions 3 and 4: candidates should formulate answers in their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.

Question 5: respect the word limit; in **part (b)** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text) in a concise way.

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- (c) This was usually answered correctly; however some candidates used an incorrect word from the text.
- (d) This was often answered correctly.
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- (d) The majority of candidates managed to answer this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly.

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- (a) Most candidates managed to summarise at least some of the points drawn from the two texts. Some candidates, however, did not produce a summary, simply quoting sentences directly from the text. A number of candidates completely overlooked the context of school sports lessons and wrote generally about the advantages of sport.
- (b) The majority of candidates stated a preference for traditional or modern sport supporting it with a variety of reasons drawn from their personal experience.

Quality of Language

The quality of language ranged from excellent to very basic, with some candidates finding it very difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form.

When preparing for the examination candidates should in particular revise adjective and case endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/23
Reading and Writing

Key messages

Question 1: seek a word (or words) in the text to match the one in the question perfectly.

Question 2: start or complete the sentence with the prompt provided, making all necessary grammatical changes in the new sentence.

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Question 5: respect the word limit; in **part (b)** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text) in a concise way.

Language: when preparing for the examination, candidates should revise adjective endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

General comments

All scripts were very clearly presented, and response to the two texts was generally good.

Candidates should make sure that they label all questions clearly and that any later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to asterisks or numbers in the main body of the text.

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word (or words) that fit(s) perfectly in the place of the one from the text/question. On the whole this question was completed quite successfully by candidates. Care should be taken with spelling as incorrectly spelled words cannot be credited.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word (or words) that fit(s) perfectly in the place of the one from the text/question. On the whole this question was completed quite successfully by candidates. Care should be taken with spelling as incorrectly spelled words cannot be credited.

- (a) This was often answered incorrectly; many candidates replaced the noun with either *Vordermann* or *Namen*
- (b) This was answered correctly.
- (c) This was usually answered correctly.
- (d) This was often answered correctly.
- (e) This was answered correctly.

Question 2

The purpose of this exercise was to change a sentence grammatically, with the help of a prompt. On the whole this question was not completed to a good standard by many candidates, and the answer was often lacking in grammatical accuracy. More care also needs to be taken with spelling.

- (a) This sentence was sometimes completed correctly; however, some candidates struggled with the correct word order.
- (b) Very few candidates answered this question correctly; the passive voice presented a problem for many.
- (c) The ending of the indefinite article presented a difficulty in this question for some candidates.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question incorrectly; the past participle of *reiten* was frequently incorrect.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, to show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in their own words. Comprehension of the text was generally good, however, some candidates still restrict themselves to copying the relevant section from the text. This cannot gain marks on either content or language and has to be avoided.

Question 3

- (a) Many candidates did not mention the reason why Martin is mentioned at the beginning of the text.
- (b) Most candidates coped well with this question.
- (c) Most candidates coped well with this question.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) Some candidates managed to answer part of this question well; however, the majority of candidates restricted themselves to copying out a section of the original text without any reference to the question.

Question 4

Again, comprehension of the text was generally good and a number of candidates managed to produce answers showing good grammatical and lexical knowledge.

- (a) The majority of candidates managed to answer this question correctly.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly – however, some candidates quoted the wrong side of the argument (some critics say that ...)
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates managed to answer this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 5

This question required the candidates to summarise the discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of all-inclusive holidays in **part (a)** and then give their own opinion on the subject in **part (b)**.

- (a) Most candidates managed to summarise at least some of the points drawn from the two texts. Some candidates, however, did not attempt a summary and only quoted sentences directly from the text.

A number of candidates overlooked the context of all-inclusive holidays and generally wrote about the advantages of going on holiday.

- (b) The majority of candidates gave their preference, backing it up with a variety of reasons and drawing from their personal experience.

Quality of Language

The quality of language ranged from excellent to very basic, with some candidates finding it very difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form.

When preparing for the examination, candidates should in particular revise adjective and case endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/31
Essay

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- select the title with which they feel most comfortable
- write a response that is clearly relevant, well-illustrated, coherently structured and well informed
- use German which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as demonstrate a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-related vocabulary
- use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

Many candidates took time to plan and organise their ideas before starting to write, but some seemed to react so strongly to the title that they just set out their opinions as they came to mind. The best essays demonstrated insight, and opinions were backed up with well-chosen evidence. However, candidates would be well advised to study the essay question carefully so that they are clear about what they are being asked to discuss. This avoids the problem of addressing only a part of the question. Some candidates form their letters so indistinctly that many words in their essays are very difficult to decipher.

Many candidates had an excellent command of German and achieved marks for Language in the Very Good category. They had an impressive array of vocabulary at their disposal, both general and topic-specific, and were ambitious in their use of structure. Others demonstrated adequate vocabulary, but insufficient grammatical knowledge impeded effective communication of all but the simplest ideas. Candidates of all abilities are advised to leave some time at the end of the examination to check for avoidable language errors.

Common errors included:

- confusion between *man*, *Mann* and *das*, *dass*
- lack of punctuation
- confusion between possessives
- lack of capitalisation of nouns
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions
- incorrect but phonetic spelling
- use of *mehr* with an adjective to create a comparative

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Die heutige Jugend ist glücklicher als vorige Generationen, weil sie so viele Chancen im Leben hat. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?

This was the most popular title. The more thoughtful candidates approached the issues separately: they agreed that in the developed world most young people had greater opportunities than in previous generations but were less sure that they were any happier. Some candidates find it difficult to focus on more than one idea and by the time they had finished detailing the opportunities today's young people have, the comparison with previous generations and the notion of happiness had been dropped.

Question 2

*Wir brauchen heute keine professionellen Journalisten mehr, da alle Leute durch moderne Kommunikationstechnologie über Weltereignisse berichten können.
Wie stehen Sie zu dieser Aussage?*

There was strong support for journalists in the responses to this title. Most essays were thoughtful, well-argued and well-expressed.

Question 3

*„Warum legt man so viel Wert auf Mathe als Schulfach? Andere Fächer sind genauso nützlich für das spätere Leben, finde ich.“ Tanja, 14 Jahre
Was meinen Sie?*

Candidates did not unanimously support the position of Maths as the key subject in the curriculum. They presented quite varied evidence to support their position but few thought to consider the age of Tanja when deploying their arguments.

Question 4

Mit jeder technologischen Innovation werden wir abhängiger. Ohne Technologie könnte heutzutage keiner mehr überleben. Was halten Sie von diesem Standpunkt?

This was quite a popular title but a good number of candidates did not fully address the two elements: dependency and survival. The more thoughtful candidates sought to define what technological innovation meant to them before setting down their point of view. Some candidates limited themselves to the latest communication technology but others ranged from the earliest technology to the latest medical equipment.

Question 5

Wir leben alle, als ob Klimawandel eine Illusion wäre. Finden Sie das auch?

Candidates who chose this title often had strong opinions on this subject and wrote spirited essays supporting this statement. Others took the time to mention the organisations which attempt to promote environmental awareness but reluctantly came to the same conclusion.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/32
Essay

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- select the title with which they feel most comfortable
- write a response that is clearly relevant, well-illustrated, coherently structured and well informed
- use German which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as demonstrate a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-related vocabulary
- use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

Many candidates took time to plan and organise their ideas before starting to write, but some seemed to react so strongly to the title that they just set out their opinions as they came to mind. The best essays demonstrated insight, and opinions were backed up with well-chosen evidence. However, candidates would be well advised to study the essay question carefully so that they are clear about what they are being asked to discuss. This avoids the problem of addressing only a part of the question. Some candidates form their letters so indistinctly that many words in their essays are very difficult to decipher.

Many candidates had an excellent command of German and achieved marks for Language in the Very Good category. They had an impressive array of vocabulary at their disposal, both general and topic-specific, and were ambitious in their use of structure. Others demonstrated adequate vocabulary, but insufficient grammatical knowledge impeded effective communication of all but the simplest ideas. Candidates of all abilities are advised to leave some time at the end of the examination to check for avoidable language errors.

Common errors included:

- confusion between *man*, *Mann* and *das*, *dass*
- lack of punctuation
- confusion between possessives
- lack of capitalisation of nouns
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions
- incorrect but phonetic spelling
- use of *mehr* with an adjective to create a comparative

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Die heutige Jugend ist glücklicher als vorige Generationen, weil sie so viele Chancen im Leben hat. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?

This was the most popular title. The more thoughtful candidates approached the issues separately: they agreed that in the developed world most young people had greater opportunities than in previous generations but were less sure that they were any happier. Some candidates find it difficult to focus on more than one idea and by the time they had finished detailing the opportunities today's young people have, the comparison with previous generations and the notion of happiness had been dropped.

Question 2

*Wir brauchen heute keine professionellen Journalisten mehr, da alle Leute durch moderne Kommunikationstechnologie über Weltereignisse berichten können.
Wie stehen Sie zu dieser Aussage?*

There was strong support for journalists in the responses to this title. Most essays were thoughtful, well-argued and well-expressed.

Question 3

*„Warum legt man so viel Wert auf Mathe als Schulfach? Andere Fächer sind genauso nützlich für das spätere Leben, finde ich.“ Tanja, 14 Jahre
Was meinen Sie?*

Candidates did not unanimously support the position of Maths as the key subject in the curriculum. They presented quite varied evidence to support their position but few thought to consider the age of Tanja when deploying their arguments.

Question 4

Mit jeder technologischen Innovation werden wir abhängiger. Ohne Technologie könnte heutzutage keiner mehr überleben. Was halten Sie von diesem Standpunkt?

This was quite a popular title but a good number of candidates did not fully address the two elements: dependency and survival. The more thoughtful candidates sought to define what technological innovation meant to them before setting down their point of view. Some candidates limited themselves to the latest communication technology but others ranged from the earliest technology to the latest medical equipment.

Question 5

Wir leben alle, als ob Klimawandel eine Illusion wäre. Finden Sie das auch?

Candidates who chose this title often had strong opinions on this subject and wrote spirited essays supporting this statement. Others took the time to mention the organisations which attempt to promote environmental awareness but reluctantly came to the same conclusion.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/33
Essay

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- select the title with which they feel most comfortable;
- write a response that is clearly relevant, well illustrated, coherently structured and well informed;
- use German which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as demonstrate a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-related vocabulary;
- use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

There was a good distribution of essays across the topics. Most candidates are aware of the need to have an outline plan before starting to write. Almost all candidates wrote an introductory paragraph and organised their ideas into paragraphs, but some need to check that they are still addressing the demands of the title when they write their conclusion. Candidates should study the essay question carefully so that they are clear about its meaning. The best essays demonstrated insight, and backed up opinions with well-chosen evidence. Less successful essays failed to integrate the material they had prepared on the topic into an essay which addressed the actual title set.

Many candidates had an impressive German vocabulary but their attempts to communicate were impeded because of inaccuracy and a rather shaky grasp of German grammatical structure. Some, however, wrote clearly and succinctly. Candidates of all abilities are advised to leave some time at the end of the examination to check for avoidable language errors.

Common errors included:

- confusion between *man* - *Mann* and *das* - *dass*;
- nouns without articles;
- confusion between *sollen* - *sollten*
- difficulties forming the passive;
- confusion between singular and plural verb endings;
- lack of punctuation;
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions;
- use of *mehr* with an adjective to create a comparative.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Junge Leute heutzutage sind eher materialistisch als idealistisch. Wie stehen Sie zu dieser Aussage?

Nearly all candidates came to the conclusion that young people nowadays are materialistic and produced evidence to support their point of view. Very few candidates gave any consideration to idealism and failed to make clear what they understood by the term. In order to debate an issue posed by an essay title successfully all elements should be taken into consideration, rather than the candidate taking sides in the introduction and focusing on justifying this one point of view in the essay.

Question 2

Die Benutzer der sozialen Netzwerke kommunizieren so viel miteinander, dass sie keine Zeit haben, sich über politische Ereignisse zu informieren. Stimmen Sie dem zu?

Most candidates came to the conclusion that it was a lack of interest in politics rather than a lack of time that prevented social network users from informing themselves about political events. The best essays pointed to the rise in this use of social networking sites by politicians themselves and the ubiquity of news on the internet in general.

Question 3

**„Es ist oft schwer, in meiner Klasse zu lernen, weil so viele Schüler den Unterricht stören. Ich finde es unfair, dass die überhaupt hier sind!“ Aleksander, 14 Jahre
Finden Sie das auch?**

There were some thoughtful essays written in response to this title but some reduced it to a discussion about class size.

Question 4

In der Zukunft werden alle Zahlungen elektronisch durch geführt werden. Bald wird es keine Geldscheine und Münzen mehr geben. Sehen Sie diese Entwicklung als positiv oder negativ?

All the candidates who chose this title were very familiar with electronic payments and found them to be mostly advantageous. Most neglected any real consideration of the role of coins and notes in society and limited their essay to the advantages and disadvantages of virtual money.

Question 5

Wir sollten alle fossilen Brennstoffe durch Atomkraft ersetzen, wenn wir die Umwelt schützen wollen. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?

This topic area requires specific knowledge and vocabulary to back up opinions with evidence. Many candidates had prepared themselves to write about the environment. Those who had knowledge of energy production in particular, produced well-argued essays backed up by detailed evidence and generally concluded that nuclear energy was not the definitive solution. Some candidates concentrated solely on the need to protect the environment and failed to address the specific issues referred to in the title.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/41
Texts

Key messages

Choose one question from each section first, then decide on the third question.

Make sure you read the question carefully and understand its focus.

Divide your time equally between the three answers.

Label each essay with section and question number, not forgetting any sub-questions.

Use paragraphs: one main idea and some supporting evidence per paragraph is ideal.

Evidence does not have to be a precise quote, but should show that you have read the text in detail, not just a summary of the plot (or watched the film, if available).

Make sure you have an introduction, main part and conclusion in your essay.

Throughout each essay make sure that your language is formal, eg *herunter*, not *runter*, *nichts* not *nix*, *etwas können* instead of *was drauf haben*, etc.

At the end, read through each essay and check your spelling, particularly in respect of names of characters.

General comments

In this section of the examination candidates are expected both to demonstrate knowledge of the texts and an understanding of how the texts work. Candidates who did well were able to show good knowledge of the text, choosing good examples to illustrate points made and structuring their argument well. They also clearly linked the points made back to the question of the essay title. The majority of the candidates had good knowledge of the texts and many were able to marshal their thoughts into coherent, relevant essays. A number of the difficulties encountered by candidates were similar to those highlighted every year: relevance to the question and an ability to organise their essays coherently are crucial.

Layout and Labelling: The majority of the candidates labelled their work well, but in some cases it would have helped greatly if both overall question and sub-questions, in particular, were clearly shown for all three chosen essays. Those candidates who labelled their work clearly often went on to produce well-paragraphed answers and an organised and structured approach.

Following Instructions: A small minority of candidates only wrote two essays rather than the three demanded for this paper. It should also be noted that three different books have to be covered, one from each section and a further one from either section so two questions may not be answered on the same text.

All three essays should have a length of about 500 words each. Quite a few answers were significantly shorter than this and candidates penalised themselves therefore by not mentioning enough detail to access the higher marks.

Focus on the terms of the question: The essay titles are carefully worded and the candidate's first task when tackling an essay must be to decide what is expected. A generic, pre-learnt essay or an accumulation of knowledge in the form of a list does not constitute a good essay, however accurate the knowledge may be. It can be helpful to the candidate to copy down the question and regularly refer back to it to check that the points made are relevant.

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ß (still required after long vowels and diphthongs) and ss (after short vowels)

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Register/style: the language is sometimes too informal. There is a definite issue to be addressed here, relating to candidates not being able to differentiate between spoken/colloquial and written/formal language. (rum instead of *herum*; runter instead of *herunter*, nix instead of *nicht*, taff (tough) instead of *hart/abgehärtet*)

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Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Timm – Die Entdeckung der Currywurst

The majority of candidates who wrote on this book chose to answer (a).

- (a) (i) Good answers took into consideration that Frau Brücker has an ambivalent attitude to her husband and her marriage. She found her husband attractive and exciting, but knew about his cheating and illegal activities. She knew his reputation and his tendency to let her serve him, but balanced this with her fear to be alone. His ability to make her feel warm inside and his entertainment value were positive factors that made her stay with him up to a point.
- (ii) Her previous experiences make her keep Bremer longer as she does not want to be alone; Bremer does things for her that her husband did not do (in the house) and he makes her feel attractive and loved. He also lies to her like her husband did and leaves her at the end, but she knows this is inevitable. Her decision to “keep” him could be based on her fear of loneliness, but also on the moral decision that if he lies to her it is fair for her to lie to him.
- (b) Fewer candidates chose this question and most candidates thought that Frau Brücker’s decision to throw her husband out had to do with his infidelity and his misogynistic attitude. He used her as a base for being looked after, but did not provide much in return. Better candidates mentioned that Frau Brücker had experienced love and tenderness with Bremer and had learnt to stand on her own two feet financially. The best candidates also mentioned the changing role of women during the war and suggested that a newly found self-confidence might have encouraged Lena in her decision to throw her husband out.

Question 2

Lenz – *Fundbüro*

Again, the majority of the candidates chose question (a).

- (a) (i) The first part question asked the candidate to look at Henry's encounter with the bikers. Excellent candidates would have worked out that Henry has no wish to interfere and wants to keep out of the conflict, in contrast to his sister. He is interested in the group and the reason for their behaviour, but sees it as a behaviour unconnected to his own.
- (ii) During the story, Henry learns that when other people's behaviour infringes on our own or on those we care for, that a different attitude needs to be developed. He gradually changes his attitude towards the gang and stands up to them in order to defend the people he cares for. This change in attitude also extends to his job where he accepts the promotion and tries to rescue a colleague from redundancy – Henry learns that not all things are replaceable and certainly people are not.
- (b) Most candidates who chose this question found several aspects they could consider: his attitude towards the biker gang, his attitude towards his colleagues and towards the people who claim things back from lost property, as well as towards his family and friends. Henry learns that involvement is sometimes needed to protect his nearest and dearest, but he also realises that in some instances, eg his female colleague, he needs to stay at a distance. Henry gets involved at the beginning out of sheer curiosity, but then learns to invest time and effort on behalf of others, because they come to matter to him.

Question 3

Kafka – *Die Verwandlung*

The majority of candidates chose question (a).

- (a) (i) Most candidates described how the room changed, but good candidates did so in the right order and made some suggestions as to how this reflected Gregor's state of mind and his ability to deal with the situation.
- (ii) Gregor's relationship with his family deteriorates during the story, but each family member reacts a little differently. The better candidates were able to show how this was and pointed out that, for example, that the father was mainly aggressive towards him and that his sister cared the longest, but then turned against him; the mother was loving, but too weak to influence the course of events.
- (b) The second question was answered by fewer candidates and good candidates referred not only to the father but also to the lodgers and to Gregor's boss. The men are all more aggressive and are the cause of changes (the room to let changes Gregor's situation, the apple throwing causes his death). On the other hand, the women are more caring at the beginning and deal with the situation in a practical way (at least try to) and then adapt during the course of the story. The sister looks ahead and decides what happens next, whereas the men are more reactive.

Section 2

Question 4

Kehlmann – *Die Vermessung der Welt*

The majority of candidates who answered on this text chose (a).

- (a) The obvious relationship which candidates commented on was the one between Gauß and Eugen. Their relationship is fraught as Gauß does not credit Eugen with enough intelligence and is not interested in Eugen's interests (gymnastics, politics). Better candidates mentioned Gauß' relationship to his mother, his first and second wife and Humboldt, contrasting his love for his mother and Johanna to Minna and his disrespect for Humboldt or any other fellow scientist. Excellent candidates also mentioned his teacher. Many candidates generally commented on his grumpiness and inability to cope in society without relating it enough to other people.

- (b) Some essays in this section contained elements of the answer above as the contrasting perspective obviously allows the reader to look at the different way the men handle their relationships. Better answers included that the men were shown both alternately and individually so that their childhood and upbringing and the beginnings of their career can be seen without jumping backwards and forwards in time. This enables a direct comparison and shows both men as individuals who have a totally different approach to science and thinking.

Question 5

Klüger – *Weiter leben*

Very few essays were written about this book.

Both questions were subject to quite a generic approach. Candidates tended to write what they knew about the book and its plot, but this material was insufficiently focused on the specific questions asked. Their approach tended to lack in detail.

- (a) Better candidates clearly understood that the main protagonists were women and that men featured in minor roles only, often just in aggressive, threatening parts. The whole book is seen through Ruth's eyes and therefore the reader has a female perspective only. The concentration camps are populated with females and even the new family member the mum chooses is also female, so the male role is marginalised. Whether this matters for readers of the book who are interested in this era and its problems is a question which needed careful evaluation.
- (b) Some candidates only wrote about the superficial information the book provides, eg the dad dies as does the brother, she remembers little of him and misses him. The fact that the family is in a state of imbalance, the mother does not cope well and Ruth has to grow up in difficult times without the guidance of one parent would have been points worth making in candidates' responses.

Borchert – *Kurzgeschichten*

Both (a) and (b) were answered in equal measure.

- (a) The better candidates related their answers to three and more stories and gave a variety of incidents to exemplify how people can be affected by the war. Episodes mentioned were young people dying far away from home, siblings being killed, young people losing their homes or relationships becoming distrustful and damaged. Borchert uses all these different aspects to show his readers how war turns people into victims and the better candidates managed to successfully categorise the victims: there is loss of life, loss of innocence and childhood, physiological and psychological damage.
- (b) Borchert divides the brutality into the things we expect to happen in a war (loss of life and limbs) and things which are less obvious (loss of mental faculties, innocence and trust). He depicts this brutality by confronting us with short, gruesome stories of nightmares or simple scenarios which exemplify these losses: the brutality of sending someone to their death deliberately (*Mein bleicher Bruder*) shows that war can result in the loss of people's normal moral compass; the nightmares about battles (*Bleib doch*, *Giraffe* and *Radi*) which never leaves soldiers, even when they try to return to normality; and bombings make people grow old before their time (*Die Küchenuhr*, *Nachts schlafen die Ratten doch*). His language stays simple throughout and often day to day items (a kitchen clock, bread, a piece of material) signify all that a person has lost.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/42
Texts

Key messages

Choose one question from each section first, then decide on the third question.

Make sure you read the question carefully and understand its focus.

Divide your time equally between the three answers.

Label each essay with section and question number, not forgetting any sub-questions.

Use paragraphs: one main idea and some supporting evidence per paragraph is ideal.

Evidence does not have to be a precise quote, but should show that you have read the text in detail, not just a summary of the plot (or watched the film, if available).

Make sure you have an introduction, main part and conclusion in your essay.

Throughout each essay make sure that your language is formal, eg *herunter*, not *runter*, *nichts* not *nix*, *etwas können* instead of *was drauf haben*, etc.

At the end, read through each essay and check your spelling, particularly in respect of names of characters.

General comments

In this section of the examination candidates are expected both to demonstrate knowledge of the texts and an understanding of how the texts work. Candidates who did well were able to show good knowledge of the text, choosing good examples to illustrate points made and structuring their argument well. They also clearly linked the points made back to the question of the essay title. The majority of the candidates had good knowledge of the texts and many were able to marshal their thoughts into coherent, relevant essays. A number of the difficulties encountered by candidates were similar to those highlighted every year: relevance to the question and an ability to organise their essays coherently are crucial.

Layout and Labelling: The majority of the candidates labelled their work well, but in some cases it would have helped greatly if both overall question and sub-questions, in particular, were clearly shown for all three chosen essays. Those candidates who labelled their work clearly often went on to produce well-paragraphed answers and an organised and structured approach.

Following Instructions: A small minority of candidates only wrote two essays rather than the three demanded for this paper. It should also be noted that three different books have to be covered, one from each section and a further one from either section so two questions may not be answered on the same text.

All three essays should have a length of about 500 words each. Quite a few answers were significantly shorter than this and candidates penalised themselves therefore by not mentioning enough detail to access the higher marks.

Focus on the terms of the question: The essay titles are carefully worded and the candidate's first task when tackling an essay must be to decide what is expected. A generic, pre-learnt essay or an accumulation of knowledge in the form of a list does not constitute a good essay, however accurate the knowledge may be. It can be helpful to the candidate to copy down the question and regularly refer back to it to check that the points made are relevant.

Structuring the essay: An essay should be seen as an argument. The writer is seeking to persuade the reader of the validity of the argument he/she is putting forward. An argument must be properly structured, introducing the theme, presenting evidence and leading to a conclusion. Some candidates omitted the introduction or started their essay with what would effectively be their conclusion. Other candidates did not come to any conclusion, partially because they seemed to have run out of time.

Clear paragraphing also helps to structure a coherent argument. Candidates should use one paragraph for each main point they wish to make. Some candidates wrote whole essays without any paragraphing at all, which made it difficult for the reader to see the development of the argument. Often this also led to unnecessary repetition. Good candidates made relevant points in paragraphs, supported those with relevant examples and gave a good evaluation or analysis of what they had read.

Language: Most of the candidates were able to produce the level of language required to write essays that could be followed easily. It was noticeable that even candidates with a very secure grasp of vocabulary and grammar made an array of spelling mistakes not expected at this level.

Examples of particular weaknesses:

ß (still required after long vowels and diphthongs) and ss (after short vowels)

meanings of words sometimes not clear: “dementierter Vater” instead of *dementer Vater*

confusion between ä and e: eg “Probläme” instead of *Probleme*, “Kajäre” instead of *Karriere*

Wrong pronoun endings: eg sorgen für sein Sohn (*seinen* Sohn) hat jemandem, der er liebt, verloren (hat *jemanden, den* er liebt, verloren)

Register/style: the language is sometimes too informal. There is a definite issue to be addressed here, relating to candidates not being able to differentiate between spoken/colloquial and written/formal language. (rum instead of *herum*; runter instead of *herunter*, nix instead of *nicht*, taff (tough) instead of *hart/abgehärtet*)

Anglicisms: often candidates who had weaknesses in their vocabulary used English phrases and translated them literally into German: “In meiner Meinung” instead of *Meiner Meinung nach*, “für seine Familie versorgen” instead of *für seine Familie sorgen*, “Entwicklungen nehmen statt” instead of *Entwicklungen finden statt*

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Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Timm – Die Entdeckung der Currywurst

The majority of candidates who wrote on this book chose to answer (a).

- (a) (i) Good answers took into consideration that Frau Brücker has an ambivalent attitude to her husband and her marriage. She found her husband attractive and exciting, but knew about his cheating and illegal activities. She knew his reputation and his tendency to let her serve him, but balanced this with her fear to be alone. His ability to make her feel warm inside and his entertainment value were positive factors that made her stay with him up to a point.
- (ii) Her previous experiences make her keep Bremer longer as she does not want to be alone; Bremer does things for her that her husband did not do (in the house) and he makes her feel attractive and loved. He also lies to her like her husband did and leaves her at the end, but she knows this is inevitable. Her decision to “keep” him could be based on her fear of loneliness, but also on the moral decision that if he lies to her it is fair for her to lie to him.
- (b) Fewer candidates chose this question and most candidates thought that Frau Brücker’s decision to throw her husband out had to do with his infidelity and his misogynistic attitude. He used her as a base for being looked after, but did not provide much in return. Better candidates mentioned that Frau Brücker had experienced love and tenderness with Bremer and had learnt to stand on her own two feet financially. The best candidates also mentioned the changing role of women during the war and suggested that a newly found self-confidence might have encouraged Lena in her decision to throw her husband out.

Question 2

Lenz – *Fundbüro*

Again, the majority of the candidates chose question (a).

- (a) (i) The first part question asked the candidate to look at Henry's encounter with the bikers. Excellent candidates would have worked out that Henry has no wish to interfere and wants to keep out of the conflict, in contrast to his sister. He is interested in the group and the reason for their behaviour, but sees it as a behaviour unconnected to his own.
- (ii) During the story, Henry learns that when other people's behaviour infringes on our own or on those we care for, that a different attitude needs to be developed. He gradually changes his attitude towards the gang and stands up to them in order to defend the people he cares for. This change in attitude also extends to his job where he accepts the promotion and tries to rescue a colleague from redundancy – Henry learns that not all things are replaceable and certainly people are not.
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Kafka – *Die Verwandlung*

The majority of candidates chose question (a).

- (a) (i) Most candidates described how the room changed, but good candidates did so in the right order and made some suggestions as to how this reflected Gregor's state of mind and his ability to deal with the situation.
- (ii) Gregor's relationship with his family deteriorates during the story, but each family member reacts a little differently. The better candidates were able to show how this was and pointed out that, for example, that the father was mainly aggressive towards him and that his sister cared the longest, but then turned against him; the mother was loving, but too weak to influence the course of events.
- (b) The second question was answered by fewer candidates and good candidates referred not only to the father but also to the lodgers and to Gregor's boss. The men are all more aggressive and are the cause of changes (the room to let changes Gregor's situation, the apple throwing causes his death). On the other hand, the women are more caring at the beginning and deal with the situation in a practical way (at least try to) and then adapt during the course of the story. The sister looks ahead and decides what happens next, whereas the men are more reactive.

Section 2

Question 4

Kehlmann – *Die Vermessung der Welt*

The majority of candidates who answered on this text chose (a).

- (a) The obvious relationship which candidates commented on was the one between Gauß and Eugen. Their relationship is fraught as Gauß does not credit Eugen with enough intelligence and is not interested in Eugen's interests (gymnastics, politics). Better candidates mentioned Gauß' relationship to his mother, his first and second wife and Humboldt, contrasting his love for his mother and Johanna to Minna and his disrespect for Humboldt or any other fellow scientist. Excellent candidates also mentioned his teacher. Many candidates generally commented on his grumpiness and inability to cope in society without relating it enough to other people.

- (b) Some essays in this section contained elements of the answer above as the contrasting perspective obviously allows the reader to look at the different way the men handle their relationships. Better answers included that the men were shown both alternately and individually so that their childhood and upbringing and the beginnings of their career can be seen without jumping backwards and forwards in time. This enables a direct comparison and shows both men as individuals who have a totally different approach to science and thinking.

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Very few essays were written about this book.

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GERMAN

Paper 9717/43
Texts

Key messages

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Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

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- (ii) Her previous experiences make her keep Bremer longer as she does not want to be alone; Bremer does things for her that her husband did not do (in the house) and he makes her feel attractive and loved. He also lies to her like her husband did and leaves her at the end, but she knows this is inevitable. Her decision to “keep” him could be based on her fear of loneliness, but also on the moral decision that if he lies to her it is fair for her to lie to him.
- (b) Fewer candidates chose this question and most candidates thought that Frau Brücker’s decision to throw her husband out had to do with his infidelity and his misogynistic attitude. He used her as a base for being looked after, but did not provide much in return. Better candidates mentioned that Frau Brücker had experienced love and tenderness with Bremer and had learnt to stand on her own two feet financially. The best candidates also mentioned the changing role of women during the war and suggested that a newly found self-confidence might have encouraged Lena in her decision to throw her husband out.

Question 2

Lenz – *Fundbüro*

Again, the majority of the candidates chose question (a).

- (a) (i) The first part question asked the candidate to look at Henry's encounter with the bikers. Excellent candidates would have worked out that Henry has no wish to interfere and wants to keep out of the conflict, in contrast to his sister. He is interested in the group and the reason for their behaviour, but sees it as a behaviour unconnected to his own.
- (ii) During the story, Henry learns that when other people's behaviour infringes on our own or on those we care for, that a different attitude needs to be developed. He gradually changes his attitude towards the gang and stands up to them in order to defend the people he cares for. This change in attitude also extends to his job where he accepts the promotion and tries to rescue a colleague from redundancy – Henry learns that not all things are replaceable and certainly people are not.
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Question 3

Kafka – *Die Verwandlung*

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- (a) (i) Most candidates described how the room changed, but good candidates did so in the right order and made some suggestions as to how this reflected Gregor's state of mind and his ability to deal with the situation.
- (ii) Gregor's relationship with his family deteriorates during the story, but each family member reacts a little differently. The better candidates were able to show how this was and pointed out that, for example, that the father was mainly aggressive towards him and that his sister cared the longest, but then turned against him; the mother was loving, but too weak to influence the course of events.
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Section 2

Question 4

Kehlmann – *Die Vermessung der Welt*

The majority of candidates who answered on this text chose (a).

- (a) The obvious relationship which candidates commented on was the one between Gauß and Eugen. Their relationship is fraught as Gauß does not credit Eugen with enough intelligence and is not interested in Eugen's interests (gymnastics, politics). Better candidates mentioned Gauß' relationship to his mother, his first and second wife and Humboldt, contrasting his love for his mother and Johanna to Minna and his disrespect for Humboldt or any other fellow scientist. Excellent candidates also mentioned his teacher. Many candidates generally commented on his grumpiness and inability to cope in society without relating it enough to other people.

- (b) Some essays in this section contained elements of the answer above as the contrasting perspective obviously allows the reader to look at the different way the men handle their relationships. Better answers included that the men were shown both alternately and individually so that their childhood and upbringing and the beginnings of their career can be seen without jumping backwards and forwards in time. This enables a direct comparison and shows both men as individuals who have a totally different approach to science and thinking.

Question 5

Klüger – *Weiter leben*

Very few essays were written about this book.

Both questions were subject to quite a generic approach. Candidates tended to write what they knew about the book and its plot, but this material was insufficiently focused on the specific questions asked. Their approach tended to lack in detail.

- (a) Better candidates clearly understood that the main protagonists were women and that men featured in minor roles only, often just in aggressive, threatening parts. The whole book is seen through Ruth's eyes and therefore the reader has a female perspective only. The concentration camps are populated with females and even the new family member the mum chooses is also female, so the male role is marginalised. Whether this matters for readers of the book who are interested in this era and its problems is a question which needed careful evaluation.
- (b) Some candidates only wrote about the superficial information the book provides, eg the dad dies as does the brother, she remembers little of him and misses him. The fact that the family is in a state of imbalance, the mother does not cope well and Ruth has to grow up in difficult times without the guidance of one parent would have been points worth making in candidates' responses.

Borchert – *Kurzgeschichten*

Both (a) and (b) were answered in equal measure.

- (a) The better candidates related their answers to three and more stories and gave a variety of incidents to exemplify how people can be affected by the war. Episodes mentioned were young people dying far away from home, siblings being killed, young people losing their homes or relationships becoming distrustful and damaged. Borchert uses all these different aspects to show his readers how war turns people into victims and the better candidates managed to successfully categorise the victims: there is loss of life, loss of innocence and childhood, physiological and psychological damage.
- (b) Borchert divides the brutality into the things we expect to happen in a war (loss of life and limbs) and things which are less obvious (loss of mental faculties, innocence and trust). He depicts this brutality by confronting us with short, gruesome stories of nightmares or simple scenarios which exemplify these losses: the brutality of sending someone to their death deliberately (*Mein bleicher Bruder*) shows that war can result in the loss of people's normal moral compass; the nightmares about battles (*Bleib doch*, *Giraffe* and *Radi*) which never leaves soldiers, even when they try to return to normality; and bombings make people grow old before their time (*Die Küchenuhr*, *Nachts schlafen die Ratten doch*). His language stays simple throughout and often day to day items (a kitchen clock, bread, a piece of material) signify all that a person has lost.