

GERMAN

Paper 9717/01
Speaking

Key messages

- The Speaking Test begins with an uninterrupted presentation from the candidate. The content of the presentation must clearly relate to the culture or society of a German-speaking country, whilst also reflecting the candidate's personal interests.
- Presentations should last for around three minutes, up to a maximum of four minutes; no questions should be included in the content of presentations, unless they are rhetorical.
- Candidates should ask the examiner at least two questions in both the topic conversation and the general conversation, ideally spontaneously, the examiner should prompt them to do so if necessary.
- No marks may be awarded for Seeking Information if no questions are asked.
- The two conversations should be of approximately equal length, at around eight minutes each, and the whole test should be completed within twenty minutes.

General comments

Most candidates were appropriately entered at this level and were aware of the requirements. Presentation topics mostly referred to issues in a German speaking society and many were interesting and informative. On the other hand, some presentations referred only briefly to Germany, Austria or Switzerland, which was not really sufficient to achieve a high mark for Content. Some specific detail is expected, with ideas and opinions, as well as factual points. A number of centres had not ensured that their candidates' presentations mentioned a German speaking country at all, and marks for Content should have been lower to reflect this.

It was evident that not all candidates are aware that they must ask the examiner a minimum of two questions per conversation. Nor are all examiners aware that they should prompt them to do so if necessary. It was sometimes the case that candidates did not ask any questions spontaneously, and if they were not prompted to do so by the examiner, they were unable to access the marks available for Seeking Information. Some examiners did prompt their candidates but only at the very end of a conversation, questions should if possible be integrated and arise naturally, during the discussion. There were some centres that awarded marks for Seeking Information even though no questions had been asked.

Candidates were mostly responsive and spontaneous. If candidates rely mainly on prepared material, they should be placed no higher than in the 'Satisfactory' box for Comprehension and Responsiveness. Apart from some incorrectly awarded marks for Seeking Information, most centres used the mark-scheme correctly and fairly accurately. Some marks for the Content of the Presentation were pitched slightly too high, but the criteria for marking the linguistic categories were usually interpreted reasonably correctly. Some centres allowed the tests to last too long, twenty minutes should be the maximum duration of a test. Recording quality was usually good, but at some centres either the examiner or more usually the candidate was less audible, owing to incorrect placement or use of the recording equipment.

Specific comments on the sections of the examination

Section 1 (Presentation)

- If the presentation contains ideas and opinions, refers in reasonable detail to the culture or society of a German-speaking country and is delivered in a fluent and confident fashion, nine or ten marks may be awarded for content.
- If there are only brief references to a German-speaking country a lower mark for content should be considered.
- Presentations that are far too long, even if confidently delivered, should not receive nine or ten marks for content, as they cannot be considered to have been 'well organised', as in the mark-scheme.
- 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. What is required is a 'reasonable range' of structures and (topic-specific) vocabulary, delivered 'fairly fluently', and without ambiguity of meaning.
- There was again a wide range of up-to-date and relevant presentation topics including:

Einfluss der Technologie auf Kinder; soziale Berufe; Korruption im Sport; Krieg und Frieden; der Ukraine-Krieg / Einfluss auf Deutschland; Universitäten in der Schweiz; Feminismus;

Section 2 (Topic Conversation)

- In this conversation issues raised in the presentation should be followed up and discussed.
- Candidates should be able to defend any ideas and opinions already expressed and ought also to have prepared some additional points; however, examiners should not expect them to know any specific factual information over and above what has been presented.
- Any issues more suitable for the General Conversation should be raised later in **Section 3**.
- The issues covered in the Topic Conversation should not be returned to.
- The questions a candidate puts to the examiner to 'seek information', should be as varied as possible. *Was denken Sie?* or *Sind Sie der gleichen Meinung?* are useful questions to move the conversation along, but a wider range is expected for marks of four or five.
- If a candidate asks only one question during a conversation the maximum mark for Seeking Information is three; if no questions are asked, even after prompting, the mark should be zero.
- A maximum mark of three should be awarded for Providing Information if the candidate can deal with basic situations and concepts but finds more complex ones difficult.

Section 3 (General Conversation)

- This section should be distinct from **Section 2**. It should not be shorter, but of a similar length to the Topic Conversation at around eight minutes.
- The examiner should clearly inform the candidate that the Topic Conversation is over and should introduce a completely different topic for the General Conversation. At least two different topics should be covered in reasonable depth in this section.
- Examiners should not put a series of questions requiring relatively short responses, or at least not until after two main topics have been thoroughly discussed.
- Mainly complex issues should be discussed in order to allow candidates to access the higher marks available for Comprehension & Responsiveness or Providing Information and Opinions.
- Questions, such as *Warum?* or *Inwiefern?* are particularly useful in prompting in depth discussion.
- It should not be expected that candidates will know specific information on a topic chosen by the examiner. If a candidate is clearly unhappy with any topic suggested, the examiner should quickly suggest a different area of discussion.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In this paper, candidates read two texts with a common theme (increasing amounts of rubbish worldwide; the experiences of a citizen who is trying to reduce the amount of rubbish they produce in their daily lives).

Candidates must then answer vocabulary questions for **Question 1** and grammar questions for **Question 2**.

In **Questions 3 and 4**, candidates answer comprehension questions about the two texts. In **Question 5**, candidates are asked to summarize the two texts with reference to what problems are caused by the increasing amounts of rubbish and who/what is responsible for this problem. They should then briefly give their own opinion.

General comments

The majority of candidates coped well with the demands of this exam and showed a fair understanding of the two texts as demonstrated by the answers to **Questions 3 – 5**. The quality of language varied from excellent to very poor. Whilst some candidates wrote confidently using their own words, others restricted themselves to copying large chunks of the original text without attempting to rephrase ideas and opinions. This cannot be credited. **Questions 1 and 2** also presented a difficulty for candidates who did not have a sufficient command of vocabulary and grammar for this level and simply guessed an answer.

In **Question 5**, candidates should be reminded to keep the summary task in mind and not just rephrasing both texts without reference to the task. Simply copying sentences from the text does not gain marks as it does not demonstrate summary skills.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates coped well with this question and were able to find the correct synonym.
- (b) Many candidates had no problems with this question and were able to find the correct synonym.
- (c) Many candidates struggled with this question as they did not understand the original word they were given and were thus unable to find a synonym in the text.
- (d) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) The majority of candidates coped well with this question and were able to find the correct synonym in the text.

Question 2

- (a) Many candidates answered this question incorrectly as they were unable to change the verb 'verlangsamen' into a noun.
- (b) A significant number of candidates did not answer this question correctly and did not use the required '-er' ending.
- (c) Many candidates answered this question incorrectly as they used the wrong sentence structure after 'weil'.
- (d) Only very few candidates coped well with this question and answered correctly; however many candidates did not recognise 'darstellen' as a separable verb.
- (e) This question was answered correctly by many candidates who were change the verb 'transportieren' from the active to the passive mode.

Question 3

- (a) A straightforward warm-up question that presented little difficulties for most able candidates. However, some candidates only identified 2 out of 3 possible points.
- (b) Some candidates answered this question correctly and were awarded full marks. Some candidates however just copied details from the text (die Qualität des Mülls) that did not make sense without context. This can not be credited.
- (c) This question presented no difficulty for the majority of able candidates and they were awarded full marks.
- (d) The question presented some difficulty, as some candidates did not explain the the significance of water and air carrying toxix waste across borders.
- (e) This question was answered correctly by the majority of candidates and two points awarded.

Question 4

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to identify all three necessary points for the answer.
- (b) Many candidates coped well with this question and mentioned at least two out of the three required details. Some candidates did not mention the annoyance that lead to Mrs Fisch' decision.
- (c) A significant number of candidates coped well with this question and were able to identify at least two of the required three points.
- (d) The majority of candidates gained two marks and were able to identify the change in the amount of rubbish producdx by Mrs Fisch.
- (e) Most candidates identified at least two out of the possible four details. Some candidates misunderstood the advice about never leaving the house without a bag and waterbottle.

Question 5

Some candidates coped well with this task and were able to identify many consequences of the growing quantity of waste in the world; they were also able to name who or what is responsible for this growing problem. However, the often very poor quality of language made it very difficult to understand some candidates' summaries at times. Many candidates also attempted a summary without paying attention to the exact task.

Candidates should be reminded to adhere to the word limit – any points after the 150-word cut-off will not be credited. The aim of this question is to produce a concise summary; candidates should be discouraged from copying sentences verbatim from the text; instead, they should summarize points briefly and succinctly.

In **Question 5b**, some candidates were able to give a relatively well-founded opinion on the topic and supported their opinion with valid reasons, often drawing on their own experience. The majority of candidates however restricted themselves to writing short general platitudes without giving personal opinion or simply repeating answers from previous questions – this is to be discouraged as it does not demonstrate that the candidates have understood and engaged with the text.

GERMAN

**Paper 9717/23
Reading and Writing**

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/32

Essay

Key messages

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

- select a title that they feel most confident about answering.
- write a response that is clearly relevant, well informed, supported with examples and coherently structured.
- use accurate German at an advanced level, demonstrating a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-specific vocabulary.
- use sentence structures that show complexity but that are still easy to follow.

General comments

Most essays were coherently argued. Many candidates began with a clear statement of intent in their introduction and an attempt to draw their ideas together in a conclusion. Most essays were of the appropriate length. The strongest candidates showed a mature understanding of the topics they addressed, with balanced arguments and appropriate evidence.

Many candidates had an excellent command of German, and so achieved language marks in the Very Good category. Many candidates showed an impressive command of vocabulary and idiom and so read well. Occasionally, candidates either slightly misunderstood or wrote what they wanted to say about the topic rather than focused precisely on the question.

Common errors included:

- lack of punctuation
- lack of capitalisation of nouns
- errors in using the dative plural
- word order errors
- gender errors
- errors with the genitive case.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates struck the right balance between considering the value of parents supporting their children into and beyond adult life and the need for the parents to let go and allow the children to develop into independent functioning adults. Many focused on the emotional aspects of the question and some on the financial support that parents can lend.

Question 2

Many candidates highlighted the benefits both to individuals and for society in general of investing in support programmes to combat addiction. Many considered the reasons why people succumb to drug addiction and emphasised how not investing in support would only exacerbate the problem.

Question 3

Many candidates' responses reflected a good awareness of the environmental impact of mass tourism. Candidates were able to give specific examples of how tourism spoilt destinations with e.g. littering on the beach etc. Perhaps more might have been made of the fact that Dirk is 17 and this might reflect the idea that the next generation is more aware of this issue than previous generations.

Question 4

Some candidates agreed completely with the premise and so were unable to provide a balance argument. The stronger candidates, whilst optimistic about the many problems technology will solve in the future, were aware of the dangers inherent in AI, for example, and recognised the downside of technology in terms of our physical health and the challenges it poses in terms of social interaction. The strongest candidates were able to articulate a more balanced view.

Question 5

The strongest responses to this question recognised that helping poorer countries in developing environmental projects was only one aspect of the support needed. Some candidates recognised that poorer countries had to be politically and financially stable in order to be in a position to address environmental concerns. Many candidates also recognised that global support for all countries in protecting the environment was in the interests of all countries and that the richer countries would themselves be impacted adversely by inaction.

GERMAN

**Paper 9717/33
Essay**

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

GERMAN LITERATURE

Paper 9717/42

Texts

Key messages and General comments

In the Literature section of the German exam the candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the texts. To achieve a very good result it is desirable that candidates are also able to show that they can see the texts in the context of the time they were written in and display some understanding of the author's intentions and effect on the audience.

Capable candidates were able to show very good knowledge of the text, chose good examples to illustrate their arguments and structured their answers well. Most candidates' command of German was good to very good. On the other hand, there was a small number of candidates where the command of German was poor which in turn had an influence on how well they were to answer the questions (lack of vocabulary, poor grammar knowledge).

When writing their answers/essays candidates should focus on a clear structure of their argument/essay. There should be an introduction: introducing the theme; main part: presenting evidence and a clear argument leading to a conclusion. Candidates should use one paragraph for each main point they wish to make, avoid repetition and use relevant examples from the texts to illustrate their point. Most structured their essays clearly. Proper paragraphing, organisation and linking of arguments and a structured approach in writing always resulted in a better analysis/answer/essay. This approach should be encouraged. Good planning makes for a better essay.

Summary of good practice for candidates:

- Choose one question from each section first, then decide on a third question.
- Make sure to read each question carefully and identify what is required.
- Divide your time into three equal parts and start working on the first essay.
- Label each essay with the section and question number.
- Plan your essay before you start to write.
- Think about paragraphs: present one main idea and supporting evidence per paragraph.
- Make sure to have an introduction, main part, and conclusion to each essay.
- Make sure all you are writing is relevant to the question and avoid repetition.
- Watch your spelling, grammatical accuracy, and use of vocabulary.
- When you have finished writing, read through each essay, and check for grammatical or spelling mistakes and make sure names of characters/authors are spelled correctly.
- Watch your handwriting. Make sure it is legible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The most popular text in this section of the exam was *Tschick. Die Physiker* and *Zweier Ohne* received about a similar number of responses. Mostly candidates answered questions well with some candidates relying too much on narration/not focusing enough on the question in hand/not answering the question in a focused manner. If the question includes a text passage, mostly candidates engaged well with the text passage. Where candidates could improve is to look more beyond the text itself and consider the author's possible intentions and the time a text was conceived.

Question 1

(a)(i) and (ii) Candidates usually coped very well with this part of the question, placing the scene within the plot and being able to see the scene in the context of the whole play. The better candidates were able to characterize Fräulein Doktor von Zahnd well and were also able to describe her character as we first meet her and what changes we see throughout the play. However, some failed to look at the complexity of the character.

Too often candidates relied on recounting the story and failed to interpret the scene and the text as a whole. Although, candidates are given credit in the mark scheme for knowledge of the text candidates do need to go beyond that to get very good marks.

(b) Not many candidates picked this question. To answer this question adequately candidates needed to place the text within the time it was conceived; something that candidates rarely do. Often, they stayed on the surface with their interpretation looking simply at the 'story as it is told'. The task demanded the candidates to look at the author's intentions and how and where his criticism of society can be seen in the whole text.

Question 2

(a)(i) and (ii) Overall, candidates answered this question well. They all placed the scene within the narrative of the book and were able to interpret Maik and Tschick's feelings well. There were also some good examples of close reading with candidates being able to relate the descriptions in the scene and how they symbolised events in the book.

(b) This question was not chosen as often. All in all, candidates were able to relate characteristics of the novel well to common characteristics of an adventure novel, they found it a little more difficult to define the term literary road movie. Answers by and large included well chosen examples of adventures Maik and Tschick experience, the nature of their journey, encounters and mishaps.

Question 3

(a)(i) and (ii) Candidates answered this question well, were able to place the scene within the narrative of the book and made good attempts to interpret the scene. However, here again there would have been room for improvement in regards to close reading. What happens? How are the characters described in the scene? What do they think or say? And what does that tell us in this case about Johann's first impression of Ludwig. Candidates who picked this question showed good knowledge of the book and Johann as a character, his background, family situation, characteristics, wishes and hopes, to be able to give his motivations for wanting to gain Ludwig as a friend.

(b) When chosen, again candidates answered this question well. Better answers did not only focus on events in the book and characteristics of Johann and/ or Ludwig to reason for why they saw one or the other as the main character but were able to also draw on their knowledge of literary means such as who is the narrator.

The question does ask for a personal opinion and candidates did read the question correctly and answered accordingly.

Section B

Question 4

This was by far the most popular book in this section. Although candidates showed good knowledge of the book independent of whether they chose to answer (a) or (b), many stayed too much on the surface and heavily relied on narration of the story and falling short when it came to interpreting the events. By and large, they did not go beyond the novel, did not look at the historic circumstances and failed to see how these are connected.

Question 5

There were only very few answers on *Demian*. Candidates did find it more challenging to answer these questions and go beyond some surface level interpretation.

Question 6

- (a) Only very few candidates picked this question. The answers were good but again lacked in detailed interpretation. Candidates did know the book well and were able to draw comparisons between Professor Unrat's life at school and outside of it.
- (b) This question was not chosen by any candidate.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/43

Texts

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.