

GERMAN LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 8683/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

- The Presentation should last no longer than three to three and a half minutes and should include both facts and opinions.
- The Presentation topic should clearly refer to the culture or society of a German-speaking country and should include some personal input.
- Candidates should ask the Examiner at least two questions in both the Topic Conversation and the General Conversation and they should be prompted by the Examiner to do so.
- In the conversations, natural interchange between the candidate and the Examiner is preferable to learned or prepared responses.
- The 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, and the recording equipment should be tested in advance and placed accordingly.

General comments

Although most candidates seemed well aware of the requirements for the Speaking test, some did not ask the Examiner sufficient questions. At least two questions are required in each of the conversations. At some centres candidates were not prompted to ask any at all and were not, therefore, able to access a potential ten marks for Seeking Information. Most candidates were responsive and spontaneous with very few relying on prepared responses.

There were some centres with a large number of candidates, but most had relatively few. The marking of the tests was mainly accurate at most centres, with appropriate use of the mark scheme, though there was at times a degree of over-marking. Some centres allowed the tests to last far too long, which was not helpful to the candidates.

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, and at others there was external interference which should have been avoided.

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.
- Presentations that are too long should not receive nine or ten marks, as they cannot be considered to have been 'well organised' (see 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', provided there is no ambiguity of meaning.
- There was a particularly good range of interesting and often up-to-date presentation topics, including the following:

Zuckerkonsum, Flüchtlinge, „Was macht einen Deutschen deutsch?“ „Wohnen für Hilfe“, Frauenrechte, das Studentenleben, der Generationskonflikt.

Section 2: Topic Conversation

- The whole of this conversation should deal with the candidate's presentation topic, and the issues raised in the presentation should be discussed primarily.
- Candidates should not be expected to know 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, but a wider range is expected for a mark of five.
- If a candidate asks only one question during the conversation, the maximum mark is three.
- A candidate must be able to respond to unexpected questions. If the material is predominantly memorized by the candidate, the maximum mark for Comprehension and Responsiveness should be from the "Satisfactory" box. A mark from this box can also be awarded if a candidate can deal satisfactorily with basic situations and concepts, but not with more complicated ones.

Section 3: General Conversation

- This start of this section should be announced by the Examiner. It should be clearly distinct from **Section 2** and there should be a complete change of topic.
- Personal details such as the candidate's future plans and his or her interests may feature initially, but it is better to move fairly swiftly on to more complex or wider issues in order to enable the candidate to access the higher marks for 'Comprehension and Responsiveness' or 'Providing Information and Opinions'.
- Open questions by the Examiner are more effective than closed ones. Brief questions, such as *Warum?*, are particularly useful.
- It should not be expected that the candidate will be able to give specific information on an unexpected topic chosen by the Examiner, particularly on current affairs. If a candidate is clearly unhappy with, or uninformed about, the original topic suggested, it is good practice to switch quickly to a different topic.

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Paper 8683/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

This paper consists of 2 texts and 5 questions.

Question 1: seek a word (or words) that fit(s) perfectly in the place of the one from the text/question.

Question 2: start/complete the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful to make the necessary grammatical changes in the new sentence.

Questions 3 and 4: candidates should formulate answers in their own words and try not to copy directly from the text.

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

General comments

Scripts were clearly presented, and response to the two texts was generally good.

However, candidates should make sure they label all questions clearly and make sure that later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, corresponding with 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 is 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 to spell correctly, as incorrectly spelled words cannot be credited.

- (a) This was answered correctly.
- (b) This was mostly answered correctly, although some candidates used the verb *transportieren*.
- (c) This was usually answered correctly.
- (d) This was often answered correctly.
- (e) This was mostly answered correctly; however some candidates missed out the word *von*.

Question 2

The purpose of this exercise is 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, although some candidates struggled with the correct adjective *hoch* and used incorrect versions like *hoher*.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (c) Almost all candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) Very few candidates answered this question correctly; there were many variations of the noun *Bereitschaft*.

Question 3

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

- (a) Many candidates gained the available three marks here.
- (b) Many candidates did not understand the absurdity: that it is cheaper to transport food to Morocco to be processed and then back to Germany to be sold, even though oil prices are rising. Some candidates did not understand the meaning of the word *Subventionen* and just copied the passage from the text.
- (c) Most candidates coped well with this question.
- (d) Most candidates answered part of this question correctly and gained 2 marks – however, many were not able to mention that *Deutsche achten mehr auf Bio* and only mentioned that they are willing to spend more money on regional food.
- (e) Most candidates managed to answer this question well.

Question 4

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

- (a) The majority of candidates managed to answer this question correctly.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates managed to answer part of this question correctly – however some did not mention the reason why perishable, exotic goods are transported by plane, ie consumer demand.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (f) Again, most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 5

This question required the candidates to summarise the discussion about food miles in part **(a)** (advantages of regional products and possible problems), 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 2 texts. A minority of candidates however did not attempt a summary and only quoted individual sentences directly from the text.

- (b) The majority of candidates managed to express their opinion on the topic (regional or imported food), 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. They should also practise answering Reading Comprehension and Summary questions in their own words.

GERMAN LANGUAGE

Paper 8683/23
Reading and Writing

Key messages

This paper consists of 2 texts and 5 questions.

Question 1: seek a word (or words) that fit(s) perfectly in the place of the one from the text/question.

Question 2: start or complete the sentence with the prompt provided. Be careful to make any necessary grammatical changes in the new sentence.

Questions 3 and 4: candidates should formulate the answers in their own words, and try not to copy from the text.

Question 5: respect the word limit. In part (b) candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text).

General comments

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

However, candidates should make sure they label all questions clearly and make sure that later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, corresponding 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 is 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 to spell correctly, as incorrectly spelled words cannot be credited.

- (a) This was usually answered correctly.
- (b) This was often answered incorrectly; some candidates left out the word *als* in their answers.
- (c) This was usually answered correctly.
- (d) This was answered correctly
- (e) This was often answered incorrectly; some candidates did not understand the word and replaced it with an incorrect word from the text.

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 mostly completed correctly.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) A number of candidates struggled with the right case ending in this question.
- (e) Many candidates answered this question incorrectly and left out the word *zu* in front of the infinitive.

Question 3

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

- (a) Many candidates only gained 2 marks because they did not mention that a quota is no longer needed.
- (b) Most candidates coped well with this question, but many did not mention enough detail to gain full marks.
- (c) Most candidates coped relatively well with this question.
- (d) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) Some candidates managed to answer part of this question well; however many candidates restricted themselves to copying out a section of the original text, without showing understanding.

Question 4

Again, comprehension of the text was generally good and a number of candidates managed to back up this comprehension by good grammatical and lexical knowledge in the production of the answers.

- (a) Many candidates managed to answer part of this question correctly; however too many copied the relevant section. without showing understanding.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates struggled to give sufficient detail to answer this question correctly.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 5

This question required the candidates to summarise the texts on the development of German language music and the reasons for its success 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 2 texts. Some candidates however did not attempt a summary and just quoted individual sentences directly from the text which cannot gain content or quality of language marks.
- (b) The majority of candidates managed to express their opinion with regards to German music, backing it up with a variety of reasons and sometimes 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. They should also practise answering Reading Comprehension and Summary questions in their own words.

GERMAN LANGUAGE

Paper 8683/32
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

Most essays had a clear structure with an introduction and a conclusion. Some candidates, however, had not developed their ideas fully before they started to write. Often more original thoughts occurred to candidates as they were concluding their essay. As always, the best essays demonstrated insight, and opinions were backed up with well-chosen evidence.

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 produced essays which were fluent and of an appropriate register. Some had quite sophisticated ideas but were unable to express them because of the limits of their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. There were a number of candidates who form their letters so indistinctly that many words are difficult to decipher.

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

In 50 Jahren werden wir ganz andere Sachen essen und trinken. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?

The candidates who chose this title rarely exploited the potential for widening out the discussion to the environment and the pressures of feeding an increasing population. Some preferred to look back and compare with 50 years ago and then project forward which led them to conclude that there would be greater choice but the situation would not be much different.

Question 2

*Frauen und Männer werden am Arbeitsplatz nie gleichberechtigt sein.
Wie stehen Sie zu dieser Aussage?*

Some candidates reluctantly agreed with this statement but others considered the progress that has already been made and were more optimistic.

Question 3

*„Sport soll gut für die Gesundheit sein. Meiner Meinung nach kann er aber auch schädlich sein“ Michael,
17 Jahre alt.
Finden Sie das auch?*

This was the most popular title and gave scope to candidates who had prepared themselves to write about the health benefits of sport. The damaging effects of sport on health were often less effectively explored. Most candidates concluded that the positives outweighed the negatives.

Question 4

*Welche Voraussetzungen sind am wichtigsten, damit ein Land sich erfolgreich entwickeln kann?
Begründen Sie Ihre Antwort.*

Few candidates responded to this question.

Question 5

*Holz ist ein veralteter Brennstoff – wir brauchen deshalb Bäume und Wälder nicht mehr zu schützen.
Was halten Sie von diesem Standpunkt?*

Candidates were unanimous in rejecting this point of view. There were some passionate and knowledgeable defenders of the forest, others got side-tracked into describing alternative sources of fuel.

GERMAN LANGUAGE

Paper 8683/33
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 were essays on all the topics but *Essen und Trinken* was by far the most popular. It is important that candidates study the essay question carefully and are clear about its meaning before deciding to choose that title. This advice seems to have been heeded by the majority of candidates as there were fewer major misunderstandings of the title this session. It is pleasing that most candidates are aware of the need to have an outline plan before starting to write and organize their ideas into paragraphs with an introduction and conclusion. Some candidates seemed to have prepared a lengthy introductory paragraph for their chosen topic, whether it was relevant to the actual title or not. When they write their conclusion, all candidates need to check that they are still addressing the demands of the title and that their summary of their evidence has not become too general. The best essays demonstrated insight and candidates backed up their opinions with well-chosen evidence. In less successful essays, candidates did not manage to integrate the material which had been prepared on the topic into an essay which addressed the actual title given.

Many candidates produced essays demonstrating an impressive topic-specific vocabulary and ambitious structures. Sometimes communication was impeded because the structures were imperfectly remembered and basic German grammatical structure was not well mastered. Some, however, wrote clearly and succinctly. Candidates should note that the references to *idiom* in the *Language* section of the Mark Scheme do not refer to sayings or proverbs, but to fluent use of the language. Candidates of all abilities are advised to leave some time at the end of the examination to check for avoidable language errors: agreement of subject and verb, consistency of gender, word order, for example.

Common errors included:

- confusion between *man*, *Mann* and *das*, *dass*;
- nouns without articles;
- singular subjects with plural verbs and vice versa;
- Use of *Mann/Männer* to mean *Mensch/Menschen*;
- confusion between *eigene* and *einige*;
- lack of punctuation;
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions;
- use of *mehr* with an adjective to create a comparative.
- confusion in use of *man* – object forms and accompanying verb forms.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

„Ich muss nicht kochen lernen. Man kann fast jedes Gericht im Laden oder im Restaurant bekommen und das spart viel Zeit.“ Katja, 17 Jahre alt. Finden Sie das auch?

This is an accessible topic and the title lay within the life experience of all candidates, so very many of them chose to write this essay. Almost all disagreed with Katja that it is unnecessary to learn to cook. The most obvious point was the cost of eating out, which led into fast food and the health consequences of a bad diet. Some touched on the social aspects and pointed out that cooking is a basic life skill. Very few candidates considered the age and gender of Katja in relation to her opinions. Some candidates were tempted to treat the title as an essay on health and nutrition. Alternative vocabulary to enable the candidates to avoid “Essen essen” would be of great use in preparing for this topic.

Question 2

Die Lebenschancen einer Person hängen direkt von der Schule ab. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?

Most candidates came to the conclusion that although school is important in determining one's life chances, there are other factors to consider. Some wrote very thoughtful essays, others went into too much school detail and lost the equality of opportunity perspective.

Question 3

Um ein erfolgreicher Sportler oder eine erfolgreiche Sportlerin zu werden, muss man auch aggressiv sein. Was halten Sie von diesem Standpunkt?

There was a lack of clarity in the definition of aggressive in this context: whether it applied to the personality of the sportsperson or their attitude towards their sport. Either interpretation was acceptable as long as the candidate could express their ideas and gave relevant examples to illustrate their points.

Question 4

Das Klima spielt die wichtigste Rolle bei der Entwicklung eines Landes. Wie stehen Sie zu dieser Aussage?

There were some coherently argued essays in response to this title, most of which rejected the idea that the climate is the most significant influence on development. A number of candidates did not read the question properly and changed 'climate' into 'climate change'. Some then got distracted into writing an essay on the environment which did not properly address the title.

Question 5

Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach am meisten gefährdet: Wälder, Gebirge, Wüste, Flüsse oder Meere? Begründen Sie Ihre Antwort.

The candidates who chose this title had prepared themselves to write about the environment and used good topic-specific vocabulary. There were different ways of approaching this essay: to go through the dangers to all the features mentioned or state one's opinion in the introduction and concentrate on one feature. Most candidates chose the latter approach so that they could address the issues in sufficient detail and, in general, the essays were well-informed and relevant.