

GERMAN

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

Key messages

- The Presentation must clearly relate to the culture or society of a German-speaking country.
- 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 each 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

Presentation topics mostly referred to issues in a German speaking society, though some presentations referred only briefly to Germany, Austria or Switzerland, which was not really sufficient to achieve a high mark for Content. A few centres had not ensured that their candidates' presentations mentioned a German speaking country at all, and marks awarded for Content should have been lower to reflect this. Most presentations lasted 3 or 4 minutes, as expected, but a few were shorter, or much longer. Some centres allowed candidates to ask questions of the examiner during presentations, but these should not have been responded to and should not have been awarded any marks.

It was again evident, despite this being a Key Message after every series, that not all candidates are aware that they must ask the examiner a minimum of two questions in each of the conversations. 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. Questions should, if possible, arise naturally during the discussion. There were a few examiners who awarded marks for Seeking Information even though no questions had been asked.

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.

Candidates were mostly very responsive and nearly all were 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 the previously mentioned problem of incorrectly awarded marks for Seeking Information, most centres used the mark-scheme in satisfactory fashion. Some marks for the Content of the Presentation were pitched slightly too high, but the criteria for marking the linguistic categories were usually interpreted fairly accurately.

Specific comments on the sections of the examination

Section 1 (Presentation)

- A presentation containing ideas and opinions and referring in reasonable detail to the culture or society of a German-speaking country may be awarded nine or ten marks for content, if it is fluently and confidently delivered.
- However, 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.
- Marks should also be lower if there is little reference to a German-speaking country, and if there is no reference at all the mark should be lower still.
- Presentations should be uninterrupted by questions, unless they are rhetorical.
- 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 good range of interesting, up-to-date or relevant presentation topics, including the following:

Formel 1 in Deutschland; Tischtennis; Mode; Arbeitslosigkeit; Energiekonsum; Rugby; Abtreibung; Naturschutz; die Fußball-Bundesliga and künstliche Intelligenz;

Section 2 (Topic Conversation)

- Candidates should be able to follow up issues raised in the presentation and to defend any ideas and opinions expressed. They ought also to have prepared some additional points, but 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 not be raised until later, in **Section 3**.
- The main issues of the Topic Conversation should not be returned to in the general Conversation.
- The questions a candidate puts to the examiner to 'seek information', should be as varied as possible in order to achieve higher marks, and should not just be 'Was meinen Sie?', or the equivalent.
- 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 is 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 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 the two main topics have been thoroughly discussed.
- Although there can be brief discussion of something comparatively straightforward, such as hobbies or future plans, it is important to cover some reasonably complex issues in the General Conversation, in order to allow candidates to access the higher marks available for Comprehension and Responsiveness or Providing Information and Opinions.
- Questions, such as *Warum?* or *Können Sie mehr darüber sagen?* are particularly useful in prompting a more detailed 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

<p>Paper 8683/22 Reading and Writing</p>
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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 has understood and engaged with the text.



GERMAN LANGUAGE

Paper 8683/23
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In this paper, candidates read two texts with a common theme (alternative forms of living: tiny houses vs eco village).

They 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 the advantages of these alternative forms of living and what challenges/problems they entail). Candidates are then asked to briefly give their own opinion.

General comments

The majority of candidates coped well with the demands of this exam and showed a good 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) Many candidates did not cope well with this question and were unable to find the correct synonym.
- (b) Many candidates struggled with this question and could not find a synonym in the text.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly
- (d) Some 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.
- (e) The majority of candidates coped well with this question and were able to find the word 'kostengünstig' in the text.

Question 2

- (a) The majority of candidates did not answer this question correctly and used a wrong sentence structure.
- (b) A very significant number of candidates did not answer this question correctly and used an incorrect sentence structure.

- (c) Only very few candidates coped well with this question and answered correctly; however many candidates did not recognise the required structure.
- (d) Some candidates did not use the required word order after 'denn'.
- (e) This question was mostly answered incorrectly; and candidates did not cope with the required structure.

Question 3

- (a) A question that presented little difficulties for most candidates.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly and were awarded full marks.
- (c) This question was mostly answered correctly. Some candidates, however, only gave one or two pieces of the required information.
- (d) This question presented no difficulty for the majority of candidates and they were awarded at least 2 out of the available 3 marks.
- (e) This question presented no difficulty, and most candidates referred to at least two of the three required pieces of information.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates were only able to identify one of the two necessary points for the answer; they struggled to answer the question in their own words.
- (b) Many candidates did not cope well with this question; they were unable to explain the connection between the toilets and the showers: compost from the toilets used to aid growth of trees which in turn produce wood, which is used to heat water for the showers.
- (c) Most candidates identified at least two out of the possible four details
- (d) A great number of candidates coped well with this question and were able to give details about the living situation of the Würfel family.
- (e) A significant number of candidates did not cope well with this question and were unable to identify three points. The majority only made reference to one point (shared car); eating dinner together has no relation to private property.

Question 5

Some candidates coped well with this task and were able to identify many advantages and challenges/problems connected to the two alternative forms of living. However, the sometimes very poor quality of language made it very difficult to understand some candidates' summaries at times.

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. Some candidates however restricted themselves to writing short general platitudes without giving personal opinion or simply repeating sentences from previous questions – this is to be discouraged as it does not demonstrate that the candidates has understood and engaged with the text.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 8683/32 Essay</p>
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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 spoils 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 balanced 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 LANGUAGE

Paper 8683/33
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 benefits of having the company of a sibling during childhood and the support of a sibling into adult life; and the less beneficial aspects of lack of parental attention and the requirement, for instance, to look after younger siblings.

Question 2

This was not one of the more popular questions with candidates. Those who did address this question were able to articulate a balance between the need to have appropriate punishments for serious crimes and the need to rehabilitate offenders for the wider benefit of society.

Question 3

The stronger candidates articulated the environmental impact of spending holidays abroad and also provided coherent arguments for staying at home. These included the fact that many people developed a heightened awareness of the cultural and historical attractions in their own country. Candidates also highlighted additional advantages, such as lower costs and not having to negotiate language barriers. Equally, candidates also successfully argued in favour of foreign travel in terms of the enriching aspect of experiencing other cultures. The weaker candidates sometimes misread the question and focused solely on the benefits of foreign travel.

Question 4

The stronger candidates were able to interpret the first part of Renate's statement from both a positive and negative viewpoint. The many benefits of mobile phones were articulated in terms of rapid access to information. Some candidates identified the benefits in third-world countries where schools could not afford expensive hardware but mobile phones could be used instead. The negative aspects of mobile phone use, in terms of a lack of social interaction and the impact on family life were well argued. There was some confusion about the difference between the word psychisch and physisch, which resulted in more of a focus on how mobiles result in young people taking too little exercise. There might have been more of a consideration, perhaps, of the age of the person making the statement as this could have led to an interesting discussion on generational differences.

Question 5

This question was frequently selected and many candidates were well versed in the many problems caused by plastic both in its initial production and in the damage it causes once discarded. The effects of plastic pollution on marine life was frequently cited and well explained. Many candidates also offered viable alternatives to plastic use and there was a strong sense in the responses of the urgency of the problem.