

FIRST LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0505/01
Reading

Key messages

To do well in this paper, candidates should:

- read the questions carefully in **Question 1**, taking into account the number of marks available;
- use their own words as far as possible in order to be eligible for higher marks for Language;
- produce a structured response to **Question 2**, making each point briefly, rather than expanding on each point.

General comments

Most candidates responded to both passages with extensive, well-written answers. Presentation was generally good, but candidates should make sure that they label all answers clearly and that later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to numbers or asterisks in the main body of their response. Candidates should also ensure their answers are legible; some scripts were very difficult to decipher and if Examiners cannot read a response, marks cannot be awarded.

The quality of the language used when answering the questions was good or excellent in the majority of cases. Some candidates did quote at length from the text rather than using their own words – this is not advisable and affects the mark awarded for Accuracy of Language.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) This was a straightforward question, which the majority of candidates answered correctly although many didn't give sufficient detail to be awarded full marks.
- (b) Most candidates were awarded full marks here; only a few missed out one part of the answer required and some took information from the wrong part of the text.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates scored at least two of the available three marks; however some candidates found it difficult to paraphrase the answer and not copy directly from the text. The word *Abschottung* occasionally proved challenging and some candidates understood it to mean the exact opposite.
- (e) This question did not pose a problem for candidates and was generally answered well.
- (f) This question presented no difficulties and the majority of candidates gained full marks.
- (g) Most candidates managed to gain at least one of the two available marks here. Candidates who were unable to explain the idea with their own words were less successful.
- (h) Most candidates were able to gain at least one mark.

- (i) The majority of candidates found this question challenging. Many mentioned that the author uses only negative examples, but very few commented on the very negative choice of words and included an example, and even fewer noticed the ironic title of the text.

Question 2

Most candidates structured their summaries effectively, but there were a few instances of linguistic analysis and interpretation and/or comparison of the texts, which are not part of a summary. Similarly, a great number of candidates included their opinions about casting shows and these could not be credited either.

Many summaries did not include the level of detail required to score marks.

Nearly all candidates finished the summary question and the work in general did not appear to have been rushed. In a small number of cases candidates had clearly spent a long time producing a detailed draft of their summary but in their final response did not have time to mention all the points they had made in their drafts.

Accuracy of Language

The accuracy of language used by candidates was generally good. Most wrote in fluent, correct German and handled their responses to both questions appropriately. Others did not use capital letters for nouns and many used too colloquial a register for the summary. Candidates are required to use more formal language in this examination and the use of informal abbreviated words should be avoided. A clear distinction should be made between written and spoken German. A number of candidates used half-sentences without a verb, which was not appropriate in this context.

Some general language mistakes were noted in both parts of the paper:

- confusion between *dass* and *das* and *f* and *v*;
- adjective endings were often incorrect or missing;
- for unusual or difficult words, candidates often used phonetic spelling which made understanding very difficult; it is important to spell words correctly.

FIRST LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0505/02
Writing

Key messages

To perform well on this paper candidates should:

- allocate their time evenly between **Section 1** and **Section 2** and take time to choose a title that is best suited to their knowledge and linguistic ability;
- plan their work in order to achieve an effective and focused development of their ideas;
- ensure that each aspect of the title is addressed appropriately and relevantly;
- include a range of ideas which are relevant to the title they are responding to;
- use appropriate vocabulary such as effective verbs and varied and ambitious adjectives and adverbs which paint a picture in the reader's mind;
- write within the prescribed word limit on each of the two questions they have chosen to answer.

General comments

The best discursive/argumentative essays presented the chosen argument with supporting evidence, and indicated in a short paragraph that there is another side to this argument. Opinions were reiterated throughout and essays ended with a good conclusion.

One of the keys to writing a descriptive essay is to create a picture in the reader's mind by engaging all five of their senses: What does it look like? How does it smell? How does it taste? How does it feel? What sounds can you hear? Candidates should not make up a story; essays need to reflect things which have really happened and seem as true as possible.

The best narrative essays were not necessarily ones which presented entertaining stories, but ones which had a point to make or a purpose to convey, in order to show the importance of the experience and the influence it has had on the narrator.

Comments on specific questions

Erster Teil – Diskussion und Erörterung

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates addressed the essential details and wrote with considerable fluency, including very good idiomatic usage and a variety of good expressions. Opinions were clearly communicated. There were also many examples of excellent use of more complex structures.

The quality of some candidates' handwriting was often poor making the work difficult or sometimes impossible to read. This affected the marks awarded and candidates are therefore advised to write clearly and legibly.

- (b) This was very popular and answered well on the whole. There were a range of personal responses with many very well-argued viewpoints.

A few candidates had difficulties expressing what they wanted to say, e.g. *die Wahrheit ist nett und man sollte sich keinen Kopf darüber machen*.

- (c) Many candidates made obvious points as to why it was good to buy organic products, considering various health factors. They chose a wider range of concrete examples which added greater depth to their essays. Some candidates used very impressive phrases, such as *in exorbitanter Höhe zahlen*.

A few candidates did not make use of comparative adjectives, e.g. they used *mehr gesund* instead of *gesünder* and *mehr neugierig* instead of *neugieriger*. A number of words were also used incorrectly such as *entforschen* instead of *erforschen*, *enthalten* instead of *erhalten*, and *benachrichtigen* instead of *berücksichtigen*.

- (d) There were a range of responses to this question. Some included complex language, showing competence in vocabulary and very good use of grammar and punctuation. Others lacked innovation and inspiration.

Some candidates had difficulties phrasing sentences correctly, e.g. *es gibt heute viele mehrere Jobs; arbeitenverstärkungsgebräuchiger; Spezialision; es kommt oft in den Fall; tiefere Zahlungen; Eltern haben auch die Macht zu entschlimmern, wo ihre Kinder arbeiten werden*.

Zweiter Teil – Schilderung und Erzählung

Question 2

- (a) Essays ranged from slightly irrelevant to very insightful. The best were those with excellent creativity and where candidates were able to express their ideas in accurate and fluent German.

Common problems included the incorrect use of personal pronouns or inadequate ability to develop the task, e.g. *Man kann seine eigenen Gedanken nicht hören* and *die Schule strömte förmlich aus dem Gebäude*.

- (b) This question was the most popular. The vast majority of candidates had had some experience of sitting in a waiting room and the feelings this might evoke. Many candidates used a wide variety of vocabulary along with some advanced structures in an attempt to convey imaginative ideas. A few candidates were able to manipulate their content but struggled with their own ideas, while others had difficulties with the concept of the description. For example, *ich höre das Radio an aber mein Kopf liegt woander; er schaut mich an, ich schaue zurück; die Zeit flog hinter mir her; die Träne lief leise über meine Wange*.

- (c) This essay gave candidates the opportunity to use creative, inspirational and successful words to convey what they were imagining. There was some good use of grammar and a wide range of vocabulary, which demonstrated thorough understanding and control of the German language.

Weaker essays were a little monotonous and lacked style and imagination. Speech marks and commas were often omitted or positioned in the wrong place.

- (d) There were some good responses to this question with most candidates providing successful outcomes and happy endings.

Many candidates managed to control the structure and presentation of this task while also maintaining a high standard. Some spent too much time setting the scene at the expense of developing the quality of the story to a higher standard. There were a number of spelling and punctuation errors, such as confusion between *das* and *dass* and incorrect use of speech marks and commas.