

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

Overall, candidates performed well on this paper. Most of them responded to both parts of the examination with detailed, well-written answers. Presentation was generally good, but candidates should make sure that later additions to answers are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to numbers or asterisks in the main body of the answer.

Candidates are reminded that they should answer in full sentences and should not copy extensively from the passages in order to access the higher mark bands for Accuracy of Language; candidates are encouraged to use their own words when answering questions. Quoting at length from the passages is also discouraged as it tends to waste time, which could be spent on proofreading and eliminating mistakes.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) This was a straightforward question and the vast majority of candidates gave at least one correct point, but many did not give enough details to be awarded two marks.
- (b) Most candidates gained the marks available here although a considerable number missed out one part of the information required.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly and were awarded full marks.
- (d) Most candidates answered this question well although in some answers it was not clear that the Ramms were still unemployed.
- (e) This question was not answered well by candidates. Many managed to get the second point in the mark scheme (they didn't have jobs in Australia), but didn't mention the fact that the family had given up secure jobs and were not worried about their situation. Some candidates misunderstood the question and answered in reference to security/terror threats in Germany and Australia but these were not mentioned in the text.
- (f) The majority of candidates gained full marks in this question. Only a minority did not mention enough details to be awarded full marks.
- (g) Again, most candidates managed to gain the available marks here.

- (h) This question tested a wider comprehension of the text. Many candidates were able to gain one mark, but many candidates over-generalised which was not sufficient to score all of the available marks.

Question 2

Most candidates structured their summaries effectively and there were very few instances of linguistic analysis and interpretation of the texts, which are not part of a summary. Some candidates included their own opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of emigrating, which likewise could not be credited.

Candidates are reminded to keep to the word limit – any points made after the 250-word cut-off cannot be awarded marks.

Many summaries did not include the level of detail that was required by the mark scheme.

It was encouraging to see that nearly all candidates finished the summary exercise, and the work in general did not appear to have been rushed. In a small number of cases candidates had taken a long time to produce a detailed draft of their summary and did not have time to mention all the points they had made in their drafts.

Accuracy of Language

Candidates generally scored well for Accuracy of Language. Most candidates wrote in fluent, correct German and handled their responses to **Question 1** and the summary appropriately.

Many candidates struggled with the correct spelling of German words and used phonetic spelling. Also, a number of candidates did not use capital letters for nouns. This is not acceptable in German and is taken into account when awarding the mark for Accuracy of Language.

A number of candidates used a colloquial register for the summary. Candidates are advised to use formal language in the examination and the use of informal abbreviated words should be avoided. A clear distinction should be made between written and spoken German.

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

- confusion between *dass* and *das*;
- adjectives endings were often incorrect or missing;
- incorrect genders were used;
- wrong cases were sometimes used, especially after prepositions.

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 essays were those where candidates had planned their essays in detail and used transitions to lead the reader seamlessly and coherently from one point to another. Structuring the essay into paragraphs, including the correct use of punctuation, proved to be a challenge for many candidates.

There was evidence from the essay plans that many candidates had thought carefully about what they were going to write, for example by including what they could see, hear, taste and touch in relation to the descriptive essays.

Candidates need to be careful with spellings and choice of vocabulary. Some words could not be identified at all; others took a long time to decipher or interpret. For example, '*Deutschland hat eine der niedrigsten arbeitslosen Ratten*' and '*viele Unangestellte*' (meaning '*Arbeitslose*'). In addition, candidates need a greater awareness of English structures which influence the German language.

The following were also often noted by Examiners:

- incorrect use of comparatives, e.g. *mehr neugierig*, *mehr aufgeregt*, *mehr erfolgreich*;
- inaccurate positioning of speech marks;
- English spellings of cognates, e.g. *specialisieren*, *Machine* and German spellings of imported English words such as *Chat-Plattform*.

Phonetic spellings were frequently used, such as *Meedresher*, *froindlich*, *interagieren* (for *integrieren*), *komanitzieren* (for *kommunizieren*). *Fühlen* instead of *füllen* was also often used.

Many candidates used shortened words, which are not suitable for a formal piece of writing. Examples included, *raus* meaning *hinaus*, *rauf* meaning *hinauf*, *was* meaning *etwas*, *mal* meaning *einmal*. A number of candidates did not start nouns with a capital letter.

Some candidates appeared to have difficulties using phrases which require the infinitive with 'zu' + 'verb', such as *es war interessant, ihn zu treffen*; *ich begann, mit den Händen zu zittern*; *ich war gerade dabei, nach Hause zu gehen*.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1 Diskussion und Erörterung

Question 1

- (a) This was a popular topic. The quality of the essays was best when candidates showed detailed knowledge or established some detailed and strong points of view. It was helpful when candidates expressed opinions with examples, figures or scenarios.
- (b) Many candidates approached this question by weighing up the pros and cons of computer games and social networks which was not what the question asked. Candidates should read their chosen question carefully and make sure they continually refer back to it when developing their essays.

Other candidates had visions of loneliness from an all-online version of human relationships.

There were a number of spelling mistakes in responses to this title: *wiederspiegeld* meaning *widerspiegelt*; *Shopinturren*, meaning *Shopping-Touren*; *Jugentliche* meaning *Jugendliche*; *fortwickelnde Technologie* meaning *Weiterentwicklung der Technologie*.

- (c) Some candidates supplied information about car manufacturing production lines; others had visions of how people would react to fully automated homes. The best essays gave a comprehensive view of the topic and presented a balanced argument.
- (d) The majority of candidates established that women still are not equal to men and need to work an extra 40 days a year to earn as much money as men. Working mothers are more likely to be saddled with childcare duties than working fathers, even if both work equal hours outside the house.

Better essays demonstrated good comprehension and engagement. In many cases, more details would have enabled candidates to access the higher mark bands. For example, *Frauen wollen keine Jobs, weil sie sich schmutzig machen* needed to be more closely related to some supporting points and/or evidence.

Section 2 Schilderung und Erzählung

Question 2

- (a) This was one of the most popular topics and there was a wide range of responses. A few candidates described moments during the date whereas the question required them to describe their thoughts and feelings *vor dem Treffen*.

Essays contained many wonderful moments of success and/or glory and nearly all of them expressed peace and love. There were a huge number of different scenarios. Even the odd date which did not take place in the end was depicted with great clarity and engaging language.

Some unusual phrases were noted by Examiners in responses to this title:

Mein schokoladen-braunes Haar sprießt aus meiner Kopfhaut und wuchert wie ein verlassener Garten!

Mein Herz schlägt mich.

Das wunderschöne Meer steht mir ins Gesicht.

Ich sitze hier im wolken-weißen gelben Sand.

Die Ungeduld zerfraß mich, denn ich konnte es nicht abwarten, ihn zu sehen.

In contrast, some candidates were able to use some impressive phrases, such as:

Literweise Schweißperlen rollten an meiner Stirn herunter.

Ich schaue meinem Spiegelbild tief in die türkisblauen Augen und ermahne mich nochmals, mich so cool wie möglich zu verhalten.

- (b) Many candidates produced good concise essays in response to this title. Some described how people from all different interests came together as one in order to help those in need. Others wrote about football, 'one of the most popular sports anyone can play', and in particular about things which made a match very special. Several essays presented a memorable time in someone's life.
- (c) Having gained all the super-natural powers a person could possibly possess, many candidates chose to write comical stories and these were often very well-written and sustained the reader's interest. Weaker essays seemed to lack ideas or did not use the required level of language to effectively communicate the message.
- (d) Some breathtaking adventures and wonderfully comical moments were presented in essays in response to this question. There were many exciting essays, which explored very good ideas and created vivid pictures in the reader's mind. Some weaker essays were not well structured and therefore were unable to access the higher mark bands.