



Pearson

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In German (4GN0)
Paper 2: Reading and Writing

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Publications Code 4GN0_02_1706_ER

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4GN02 International GCSE/KGN02 Pearson Edexcel Certificate German Paper 2: Reading and Writing

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In general candidates had been well prepared by centres and they were able to meet the requirements of both the Reading and Writing tasks.

Question 1 (Holidays)

This topic area proved to be a good entry level question to the paper with the vast majority of candidates achieving four or five marks. Items (ii) *Hauptstadt* and (v) *auf das Land* were the least well known. Many candidates, perhaps surprisingly, were familiar with (iii) *Zelt*.

Question 2 (House)

Question 2 proved somewhat challenging to D/C and below level candidates this year and centres may want to spend more time on this area of vocabulary. Whilst candidates appeared more familiar with the lexical items relating to larger appliances or furniture such as dishwasher and cupboard, *Tassen* (i), was known by relatively few. *Dosenöffner* (iv) also presented problems, as did *Dach* (v).

Question 3 (Free Time)

(a) (Who says what?)

This question is targeted at candidates in the C/D grade bands. Candidates below that level were able to answer (i) correctly, probably because of the two key words *Stadtbibliothek* and *Leseratte*. (iii) was also given correctly by the vast majority of candidates, who were clearly able to link *Geld verdient* with *gejobbt*. It was felt that this question discriminated particularly well as (ii), (iv) and (v) were generally only answered correctly by stronger candidates.

(b) (What do you like to do in your spare time and why?)

Candidates are expected to write approximately 50 words in German on the topic given. As in previous years, this question offered all candidates a chance to score high marks. All candidates understood the question and were able to provide some relevant response. The topic was one on which candidates – even the weakest – were able to find plenty to write and most responses scored high marks.

Candidates mentioned predictable hobbies, with many mentioning sports. A large number played football, but rowing, basketball, rugby, cricket and netball were also listed. Apart from sports, the hobbies included going to

the cinema/going out/meeting with friends, shopping and computer games. Higher level candidates were able to discuss a wide range of interests, chores and responsibilities at home and at school, showing that they were capable of interpreting the question beyond hobbies and interests. One candidate even stated, "*Ich denke, dass Freizeit sehr wichtig für Jugendliche ist aber wir sind immer extrem beschäftigt und haben keine Zeit.*"

In general, parts of the text in Q3a were used to an extent by many students but there were hardly any examples of wholesale lifting. Some candidates used *außerdem* or *Mitglied*, but adapted the context.

Many stronger candidates wrote much longer answers than the required 50 words. Whilst the entire response is read by the examiner, there is no point in writing vastly above the required word count.

As always, the stronger candidates used a variety of tenses, inversion, subordinate clauses with *obwohl*, *wenn*, *weil* and even subordinate clauses at the beginning of the sentence with these structures often being used correctly. Weaker candidates also tried to use some of these, but were less successful.

Many responses included the phrase *wenn ich mehr Zeit hätte, würde ich mehr* or *wenn ich mehr Geld hätte, würde ich öfter ...*. The phrase *es macht Spaß* is still problematic for many; *weil es ist Spaß* was often given. There were a high number of spelling errors in words with the diphthong ei: *wiel*, *Ziet*, *leibe*, *leiber*, *speile* are all incorrect spellings which were seen relatively frequently.

Q4 (Food)

This question targets higher grades (C and B). The topic area is certainly one with which candidates are familiar and there were many correct responses with candidates achieving all five marks. Weaker candidates were able to accurately identify A and C as being correct, but frequently gave E and I as correct responses as well, which they were not.

Q5 (School)

It is acceptable for candidates to give short answers, as comprehension only is tested and candidates' language is not assessed provided it communicates without ambiguity. It is also acceptable for candidates to use language from the text, provided it is a 'targeted lift', i.e. the exact response to a question.

Centres are advised to ensure candidates can use personal pronouns and possessive adjectives correctly. Many candidates lost marks due to an incorrect personal pronoun which led to ambiguity and so could not be awarded marks. An incorrect reflexive, however, was accepted, provided the initial personal pronoun was correct, e.g. *Er fühlt mich noch nicht als Erwachsener.*

- a)** Quite a number of responses lost the mark here because of a vague and/or short answer: *8 Jahre/ weniger Zeit/G8 System/neues System* or because an incorrect lift without a subject was used which did not communicate the correct concept.
- b)** There were many correct answers here, mostly *der Schultag ist länger*. Some also gained the mark by lifting the sentence: *Im Winter muss er*
- c)** There were enough correct answers for one mark, usually for *der Unterrichtsstoff hat sich nicht reduziert*. The responses which gained both marks mostly gave a direct lift of the whole sentence. Incorrect responses either lifted only the second part *es gibt nicht so viel Zeit dafür* without any indication of what the *dafür* referred to, or offered *keine freien Nachmittage*.
- d)** It was not necessary for candidates to use the correct tense in this response. The phrase *der Fall war* proved tricky for many, as it was added to many responses: *Er hatte mehr freie Nachmittage der Fall war*.
- e)** There were many correct responses, with some candidates lifting the whole sentence: *Einerseits gibt es jetzt ...*. Incorrect responses stated: *ein ganzer Jahrgang fällt weg* or *die Schüler sind motivierter* and a few wrote, *es gibt weniger Stellen für Schüler*.
- f)** A number of candidates gave the correct answers for g) and vice versa. The connection between *schneller Geld verdienen* in the text and *Arbeitsstelle* in the question was missed by quite a lot.
- g)** This was answered correctly by many, but some linked *profitieren* in the question to *schneller Geld verdienen*, which they gave for their answer. A number of candidates ignored *Aber bei dem alten System* and therefore used what followed as their answer. Some candidates answered: *Mit dem alten System hatte man mehr Zeit nachzudenken*, an incorrect response.
- h)** Many lost at least one mark here because they referred to Max wanting to spend another year with his friends, when the question referred to his parents' home.

This year there was again an increase in responses which scored no marks at all on Question 5. This question targets the A/B grades.

Question 6

The most successful answers were well structured and covered bullet points in the same order as the rubric. Very strong candidates often wrote more than the required 150 words. Examiners saw a great range of tenses and complexity of language produced by many candidates at this level; clearly candidates are being very well prepared by their centres.

Of the three topics 6b) proved by far the most popular. In all three questions there was a wide range of outcomes from extensive, interesting

and fluent pieces to less ambitious answers that still featured tenses, a variety of vocabulary and subordinate clauses. A number of candidates confused forms such as *konnte/könnte*, *wurde/würde* and *musste/müsste* and incorrect auxiliaries with *sein* past tenses were also quite common. A few weaker candidates stuck to the present tense throughout. Various incorrect versions of *Meiner Meinung nach* and *es macht Spaß* were common. There were relatively few very poor answers, although some of the weaker candidates ignored the topics given and delivered an essay, which they had clearly planned in advance. Often this was on the topic of school.

a) There were many enthusiastic responses about the environment where many were able to talk in quite complex terms about environmental issues, both locally and globally. There were some solid answers in both the imperfect and perfect tenses about what they had done last month to help the environment. Where candidates struggled to assimilate answers in past tenses, they were able to gain points for content and communication. Some failed to include the third bullet point or misunderstood it but many tackled the fourth point and employed the conditional correctly. Indeed, many scored high marks because there were complex sentences in the conditional, even if they had only included one or two sentences in past tenses. In general, candidates referred to improvements within their schools such as installing recycling bins, not using so much paper, meat free days at the canteen and more ambitious plans for solar panels and wind turbines. Some candidates wrote in the form of a blog.

b) Weaker candidates often gave a stock description of a friend and then failed to understand the second point, often confusing *lernen* with *kennlernen*. This bullet point also distinguished between students who were able to directly address the question and those who gave simple responses of times spent in the past with their friend. Again, less able candidates talked about how important their friend was to them, rather than describing why it is important in general to have good friends. Stronger candidates were able to achieve high scores by including conditional sentences here. There was a good amount of future tense used for the last bullet point and even lower ability candidates often scored well in employing the tense correctly. The most able generally were able to write beyond the brief to produce some exceptional responses.

c) This question was a popular choice for the middle to high ability candidates this year and provided a range of good quality essays on the topic. The best candidates were able to write at length about their towns and it was pleasing to note some use of passive sentences when addressing the second bullet point about what had recently happened in their town. This is very ambitious at IGCSE level. The ablest candidates and several native speakers chose to write about recent terror attacks in London and Berlin in response to this bullet point. However, a number of candidates misinterpreted this as what they had recently done in town and therefore lost marks for Communication and Content.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>