

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/01  
Speaking

## Key messages

To do well in the test:

- the presentation topic should reflect the candidate's personal interests and should clearly refer to the culture or society of a German-speaking country;
- the presentation should last no longer than 3½ minutes and include both facts and opinions;
- candidates should ask the Examiner at least two questions in both the Topic Conversation and the General Conversation and should be prompted by the Examiner if they do not ask questions;
- the conversation sections should be lively and spontaneous and candidates should not produce chunks of pre-learned material.

## General comments

Most candidates were well prepared and appeared to be aware of the requirements of the Speaking test. Some candidates did not ask the Examiner sufficient questions and were not always prompted to do so. Nearly all candidates were responsive and most were spontaneous, though some relied at times on prepared responses.

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. Centres are reminded to test recording equipment in advance of the examining window.

## Comments on specific sections

### **Section 1: Presentation**

There was again a good range of interesting and often up-to-date presentation topics, including the following: *Die Flüchtlingskrise; der VW-Skandal; die Energiedebatte; das Judentum und andere Religionen; die Fernsehserie 'Hausmeister Krause'; Tierschutz; Fettleibigkeit; Krieg und Frieden; technische Innovation; soziale Beziehungen; die Medien and Gentechnik.*

The best presentations were lively and confident, rather than stilted and hesitant, and included a range of ideas and opinions as well as factual points. Some presentations lasted longer than the allowed 3½ minutes, and were not as well organised as those which adhered to the time limit. Well-prepared candidates were able to access the higher marks for Language by ensuring that they included a wide range of structures and topic-specific vocabulary, delivered fairly fluently, provided there was no ambiguity of meaning.

### **Section 2: Topic Conversation**

The whole of this conversation should deal with the candidate's presented topic, and the issues raised in the presentation should be discussed in more detail. Candidates should be prepared to supply additional factual information if required. 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 in order for maximum marks to be awarded. *Was denken Sie?* or *Was ist Ihre Meinung?* are useful additional questions, as they can be used to move the conversation along, but a wider range of questions is expected. If a candidate asks only one question during the conversation the maximum mark that can be awarded is three.

When responding to questions asked by the Examiner, if a candidate has memorised his or her material entirely or predominantly, a mark from the 'Satisfactory' box should be awarded as a maximum, as it cannot be claimed that he or she is responding to unexpected questions. Similarly a mark from this box should be awarded if the candidate can deal with basic situations and concepts, but not more complicated ones.

### **Section 3: General Conversation**

This section should be clearly distinct from **Section 2**. The start of this section should be clearly announced by the Examiner and there should be a complete change of topic.

Personal details such as the candidate's future and his or her interests should feature briefly but should not dominate this part of the test. It is better to move on fairly swiftly to more complex or wider issues to enable the candidate to access the higher marks for 'Comprehension & Responsiveness' or 'Providing Information and Opinions'.

Examiners are encouraged to ask open questions as these are more effective than closed ones in drawing the required kind of response from a candidate. Brief questions, such as *Warum?* or *Inwiefern?* are particularly useful.

Examiners should not expect candidates to know any specific information on an unexpected topic, perhaps a topic of current affairs. If a candidate is clearly unhappy with or uninformed about a particular topic Examiners should move on to discuss something else.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/21  
Reading and Writing

## Key messages

- **Question 1:** seek a word (or words) in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question.
- **Question 2:** start the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful with the grammatical changes in the new sentence.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** candidates should formulate answers with their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.
- **Question 5:** respect the word limit. In part **(b)** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text) in a concise way.

## General comments

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

Candidates should label all questions clearly and make sure that later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to asterisks or numbers in the main body of the answer.

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold. 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.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word (or words) in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question. On the whole this question was completed quite successfully by most candidates.

### **Question 2**

The purpose of this exercise was to change a sentence grammatically, with the help of a prompt. Generally, this question was completed to a good standard by most candidates.

- (a) Word order was sometimes a problem here as some candidates did not put *ist* at the end of the sentence.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question correctly. However, some included *nach dem Willen* in their answer and thus did not show full understanding of the sentence.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly; there were many different correct answers.
- (d) Many candidates did not use the correct endings for *von einem Sozialpsychologen*.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly; there were many different correct answers.

### Question 3

In **Questions 3 and 4**, to show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in their own words. Comprehension of the text was generally good, although some candidates copied the relevant section from the text which affected marks for both Content and Quality of Language.

Most candidates coped well with **Questions (a) to (d)**. The majority were able to answer part of **Question (e)** well, but many did not mention the fact that people like the idea of *Feierabend*.

### Question 4

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

- (a) Many candidates mentioned too many insignificant details in their answer, for example, the fact that the supermarket has an illuminated sign for their underground car park.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly although a number copied the relevant section verbatim from the text with no attempt to use their own words and therefore could not score any marks for Content. This in turn had a knock-on effect on the mark awarded for Quality of Language.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates responded to this question correctly. Some did not mention the important fact that Herr Scharfe lost his bank job and instead gave too much detail about his supermarket job.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly. Many candidates mentioned the fact that there is free coffee as one of the reasons for going shopping at night – this could not be credited with a mark.

### Question 5

Part **(a)** of this question required candidates to summarise the discussion about flexible working hours in Germany, with a particular focus on shops, and then give their own opinion in part **(b)**.

- (a) Most candidates managed to summarise at least some of the points drawn from the two texts. Some did not attempt a summary and only quoted sentences directly from the text which affected the Quality of Language mark. Many candidates wrote a general summary without specific reference to the focus on shops which was required by the question, and therefore could not access all of the available marks.
- (b) The majority of candidates expressed their opinion regarding flexible working hours, backing it up with a variety of reasons and often 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 exam candidates should revise adjective endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/22  
Reading and Writing

## Key messages

- **Question 1:** seek a word (or words) in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question.
- **Question 2:** start the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful with the grammatical changes in the new sentence.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** candidates should formulate answers with their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.
- **Question 5:** respect the word limit. In part **(b)** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text) in a concise way.

## General comments

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

Candidates should label all questions clearly and make sure that later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to asterisks or numbers in the main body of the answer.

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold. 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.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word (or words) in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question. On the whole this question was completed quite successfully by most candidates.

### **Question 2**

The purpose of this exercise was to change a sentence grammatically, with the help of a prompt. Generally, this question was completed to a good standard by most candidates.

- (a) Word order was sometimes a problem here as some candidates did not put *ist* at the end of the sentence.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question correctly. However, some included *nach dem Willen* in their answer and thus did not show full understanding of the sentence.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question correctly; there were many different correct answers.
- (d) Many candidates did not use the correct endings for *von einem Sozialpsychologen*.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly; there were many different correct answers.

### Question 3

In **Questions 3 and 4**, to show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in their own words. Comprehension of the text was generally good, although some candidates copied the relevant section from the text which affected marks for both Content and Quality of Language.

Most candidates coped well with **Questions (a) to (d)**. The majority were able to answer part of **Question (e)** well, but many did not mention the fact that people like the idea of *Feierabend*.

### Question 4

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

- (a) Many candidates mentioned too many insignificant details in their answer, for example, the fact that the supermarket has an illuminated sign for their underground car park.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly although a number copied the relevant section verbatim from the text with no attempt to use their own words and therefore could not score any marks for Content. This in turn had a knock-on effect on the mark awarded for Quality of Language.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates responded to this question correctly. Some did not mention the important fact that Herr Scharfe lost his bank job and instead gave too much detail about his supermarket job.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly. Many candidates mentioned the fact that there is free coffee as one of the reasons for going shopping at night – this could not be credited with a mark.

### Question 5

Part **(a)** of this question required candidates to summarise the discussion about flexible working hours in Germany, with a particular focus on shops, and then give their own opinion in part **(b)**.

- (a) Most candidates managed to summarise at least some of the points drawn from the two texts. Some did not attempt a summary and only quoted sentences directly from the text which affected the Quality of Language mark. Many candidates wrote a general summary without specific reference to the focus on shops which was required by the question, and therefore could not access all of the available marks.
- (b) The majority of candidates expressed their opinion regarding flexible working hours, backing it up with a variety of reasons and often 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 exam candidates should revise adjective endings, tenses and verb endings as well as word order, prepositions and separable verbs.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/23  
Reading and Writing

## Key messages

- **Question 1:** seek a word (or words) in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question.
- **Question 2:** start the sentence with the prompt provided and be careful with the grammatical changes in the new sentence.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** candidates should formulate answers with their own words and refrain from copying any part of the text.
- **Question 5:** respect the word limit. In part **(b)** candidates should express their own ideas (instead of copying ideas from the text) in a concise way.

## General comments

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

Candidates should label all questions clearly and make sure that later additions are clearly marked with asterisks or numbers, which correspond to asterisks or numbers in the main body of the answer.

Candidates must read the instructions given for each question carefully, paying particular attention to the words in bold. 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.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

The purpose of this exercise was to find a word (or words) in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question. On the whole, most candidates found this exercise challenging and often guessed at a word from the text if they did not understand the original word.

**Question (a)** was answered correctly by most candidates. Not many candidates answered **Question (b)** correctly and incorrect answers included *Wahlalter*. Few candidates responded successfully to **Questions (c), (d) and (e)** – in **(e)** incorrect answers included *vorgestellten*.

### **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 completed to a satisfactory standard by some candidates, but many misunderstood the meaning of the original sentence and therefore found it challenging to manipulate the sentence correctly. Many candidates did not have the grammatical knowledge to change the sentences successfully.

- (a)** The infinitive with *zu* was a problem here, and many candidates left out the word *zu*.
- (b)** Many candidates found this question challenging and were unable to change this sentence into the passive voice.
- (c)** The separable verb *teilnehmen* presented a difficulty for the majority of candidates.
- (d)** Many candidates answered this question incorrectly as they did not use the correct word order after *wie*.

- (e) Not many candidates answered this question correctly by using the impersonal *man* construction.

### Question 3

In **Questions 3** and **4**, to show clear evidence of understanding, it is expected that candidates will rephrase the text to express their answers in their own words. Comprehension of the texts was generally adequate, although in some cases poor grammatical and lexical knowledge resulted in very low marks for Quality of Language. Often, not enough detail was given to access the full range of marks available for Content.

- (a) Many candidates did not mention the fact that politicians' actions do not reach children and young people in Germany.
- (b) Many candidates coped well with the first part of this question but did not answer the second part.
- (c) The majority of candidates coped well with this question, but did not give enough detail to be awarded full marks.
- (d) Most candidates managed to answer this question well.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question successfully.

### Question 4

- (a) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- (b) Many candidates did not understand Simon's role as student representative and did not include the topic of the debate that the two friends organised.
- (c) Many candidates left out the fact that the two boys have a theory that they want to prove.
- (d) Only very few candidates answered this question correctly.
- (e) The majority of candidates answered part of this question correctly.
- (f) The majority of candidates answered part of this question correctly.
- (g) Not many candidates answered the first part of this question correctly as they did not understand that, for Lena, voting at 18 means living under a government that she has not elected. Very few candidates mentioned the second point; namely that only very few people of Lena's age are represented in politics.

### Question 5

This question required candidates to summarise the advantages and disadvantages of voting at 16 in part (a) and then give their own opinion in part (b).

- (a) Most candidates managed to mention at least some advantages and disadvantages drawn from the two texts. Some responses were very generalised which resulted in too much irrelevant detail being given.
- (b) The majority of candidates managed to express their opinion with regards to lowering the voting age, backing it up with a variety of reasons and drawing from their personal experience.

### Quality of Language

The quality of language ranged from good to below average, with some candidates finding it very difficult to express their ideas in a comprehensible form.



# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/31

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

Many candidates took time to plan and organise their ideas before starting to write. Almost all candidates attempted to provide an introduction and a conclusion and organise their points into paragraphs. The best essays demonstrated insight, and backed up opinions with well-chosen evidence. Less successful essays addressed the general topic area rather than the actual title set. Candidates should study the essay question carefully so that they are clear about what they are being asked to discuss.

Some 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 were ambitious in their use of structure. Others demonstrated adequate vocabulary but insufficient grammatical knowledge impeded effective communication of all but the simplest ideas. Candidates of all abilities are advised to leave some time at the end of the examination to check for avoidable language errors.

Common errors included:

- confusion between *man, Mann* and *das, dass*;
- confusion between *wenn, wann, als*;
- confusion between possessives;
- confusion between *mehr, mehrere* and *viele*;
- lack of capitalisation of nouns;
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions;
- confusion between *als* and *wie* in comparative constructions;
- use of *mehr* with an adjective to create a comparative.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

*„Ich lebe schon seit 5 Jahren mit meinem Freund zusammen. Wir haben keine Lust zu heiraten – wir finden das unnötig heutzutage.“ Antje, 28 Jahre alt. Finden Sie das auch?*

Most candidates could find plenty of arguments in support of and against Antje's point of view. There was the expense of a marriage ceremony, the prospect of divorce and the complications of children. The role of religion did not feature widely.

## Question 2

*Die Polizei ist in Film und Fernsehen beliebter als in der Realität. Stimmen Sie mit diesem Standpunkt überein?*

Most candidates did in the end agree with the statement but the essays were quite diverse in their line of argument. There were some interesting examples of varying attitudes to the police around the world. The material that candidates chose to illustrate their opinions was also wide-ranging.

## Question 3

*„Ich bin 85 Jahre alt und noch fit, aber ich fürchte, dass die heutige Jugend infolge ihres Lebensstils nicht so lange leben wird wie ich.“ Ilse Grün. Was halten Sie von dieser Aussage?*

This was the most frequently chosen title. The unhealthy aspects of the life led by modern youth were obvious to all candidates (although they generally excluded themselves from this) but many made the point that young people do not lead identical lifestyles. The best essays gave some consideration to what Ilse's life might have been like in comparison to theirs, as well as to the possible effects of the advances in medicine on life expectancy.

## Question 4

*Jedes Land sollte seine Arbeitslosen finanziell unterstützen. Finden Sie das auch?*

This title produced some interesting essays from candidates whose international perspective provided a variety of examples to illustrate their point of view. Candidates found it impossible to come to a clear conclusion but, with some reservations, generally agreed with the statement.

## Question 5

*Durch Gentechnik wird es in der Zukunft möglich sein, alle menschlichen Krankheiten abzuschaffen. Was meinen Sie?*

This title was chosen by a small minority of candidates. They clearly had an interest in this topic area and commanded sufficient topic-specific vocabulary to argue and illustrate their case.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/32  
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

Many candidates took time to plan and organise their ideas before starting to write. Almost all candidates attempted to provide an introduction and a conclusion and organise their points into paragraphs. The best essays demonstrated insight, and backed up opinions with well-chosen evidence. Less successful essays addressed the general topic area rather than the actual title set. Candidates should study the essay question carefully so that they are clear about what they are being asked to discuss.

Some 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 were ambitious in their use of structure. Others demonstrated adequate vocabulary but insufficient grammatical knowledge impeded effective communication of all but the simplest ideas. Candidates of all abilities are advised to leave some time at the end of the examination to check for avoidable language errors.

Common errors included:

- confusion between *man, Mann* and *das, dass*;
- confusion between *wenn, wann, als*;
- confusion between possessives;
- confusion between *mehr, mehrere* and *viele*;
- lack of capitalisation of nouns;
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions;
- confusion between *als* and *wie* in comparative constructions;
- use of *mehr* with an adjective to create a comparative.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

„Ich lebe schon seit 5 Jahren mit meinem Freund zusammen. Wir haben keine Lust zu heiraten – wir finden das unnötig heutzutage.“ Antje, 28 Jahre alt. Finden Sie das auch?

Most candidates could find plenty of arguments in support of and against Antje's point of view. There was the expense of a marriage ceremony, the prospect of divorce and the complications of children. The role of religion did not feature widely.

## Question 2

*Die Polizei ist in Film und Fernsehen beliebter als in der Realität. Stimmen Sie mit diesem Standpunkt überein?*

Most candidates did in the end agree with the statement but the essays were quite diverse in their line of argument. There were some interesting examples of varying attitudes to the police around the world. The material that candidates chose to illustrate their opinions was also wide-ranging.

## Question 3

*„Ich bin 85 Jahre alt und noch fit, aber ich fürchte, dass die heutige Jugend infolge ihres Lebensstils nicht so lange leben wird wie ich.“ Ilse Grün. Was halten Sie von dieser Aussage?*

This was the most frequently chosen title. The unhealthy aspects of the life led by modern youth were obvious to all candidates (although they generally excluded themselves from this) but many made the point that young people do not lead identical lifestyles. The best essays gave some consideration to what Ilse's life might have been like in comparison to theirs, as well as to the possible effects of the advances in medicine on life expectancy.

## Question 4

*Jedes Land sollte seine Arbeitslosen finanziell unterstützen. Finden Sie das auch?*

This title produced some interesting essays from candidates whose international perspective provided a variety of examples to illustrate their point of view. Candidates found it impossible to come to a clear conclusion but, with some reservations, generally agreed with the statement.

## Question 5

*Durch Gentechnik wird es in der Zukunft möglich sein, alle menschlichen Krankheiten abzuschaffen. Was meinen Sie?*

This title was chosen by a small minority of candidates. They clearly had an interest in this topic area and commanded sufficient topic-specific vocabulary to argue and illustrate their case.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/33  
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;
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## General comments

Many candidates took time to plan and organise their ideas before starting to write. Almost all candidates attempted to provide an introduction and a conclusion and organise their points into paragraphs. The best essays demonstrated insight, and backed up opinions with well-chosen evidence. Less successful essays addressed the general topic area rather than the actual title set. Candidates should study the essay question carefully so that they are clear about what they are being asked to discuss.

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Common errors included:

- confusion between *man, Mann* and *das, dass*;
- nouns without articles;
- confusion between *wenn, wann, als*;
- confusion between *vorher, bevor, vor*;
- confusion between *mehr, mehrere, viele*;
- confusion between *jemand, jeder*;
- confusion between *ob, obwohl, wenn*;
- incorrect word order after subordinating conjunctions;
- confusion between *als* and *wie* in comparative constructions.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

*Das tägliche Leben ohne Smartphone kann man sich heutzutage schwer vorstellen. Stimmt das Ihrer Meinung nach?*

This was by far the most popular title. The smartphone is clearly an object of great interest and utility to young people and only a small minority could envisage life without one. There were some thoughtful and coherently argued essays. The best essays started by defining exactly what a smartphone is and to what extent it is different from other telephones. A large number of candidates focused on the title at the beginning of their essay but then drifted into listing the negative effects of smartphone usage. This led them to a conclusion where they weighed the advantages against the disadvantages, which was clearly not a response to the title.

## Question 2

*Wir reduzieren die Kriminalität in der Gesellschaft nicht, indem wir Verbrecher ins Gefängnis schicken. Wie stehen Sie zu dieser Aussage?*

No candidates chose to write an essay on this title.

## Question 3

*In der heutigen Gesellschaft interessiert man sich nur dafür, Geld mit unserer Gesundheit zu verdienen, statt unsere Gesundheit wirklich zu verbessern. Was meinen Sie?*

A minority of candidates chose this title but many misinterpreted it. Instead of discussing the issues surrounding making money out of people's health, candidates deliberated whether money/work was more important than health or, more commonly, wrote an essay on how to keep healthy which responded to the topic area but not the title. If the content of an essay does not respond to the specific title, it cannot be fully credited for Content.

## Question 4

*Die Tage der körperlichen Arbeit sind vorbei. In der Zukunft wird der Mensch nur noch mit dem Kopf arbeiten. Was halten Sie von diesem Standpunkt?*

This title was also chosen by a minority, who generally agreed with the statement. Although the essays were satisfactorily structured and the content was mostly relevant to the title, the notion was not explored in much depth. It might have helped candidates to define exactly what they understood by the term *körperliche Arbeit* because this aspect of the title tended to be neglected.

## Question 5

*Wissenschaftliche Forschung, die den Zweck hat, Leute auf den Mars zu schicken, nützt der Menschheit gar nichts. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?*

This topic area is probably only attractive to those who are scientifically interested and who know the topic-specific vocabulary required to illustrate points made. Candidates were divided about the utility of space research but generally wrote coherently on the subject.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/41

Texts

## Key messages

To do well in this paper candidates should:

- answer three questions, each on a different text and ensure they have answered at least one question from each section;
- manage their time well to ensure they don't run out of time when writing their third essay;
- indicate clearly which question is being answered;
- think carefully about what the question is asking and plan their answer before they start to write;
- refer to the question throughout the answer, not just at the start and the finish;
- give examples from the text specifically chosen to support an argument;
- avoid narration of the story.

## General comments

The best essays demonstrated good knowledge of the text, with well-structured arguments and good use of examples to illustrate points made. A number of essays were not relevant to the question which was being asked, and were not well organised.

The majority of candidates indicated clearly which question (and sub-questions, where applicable) they were answering, although there were some essays where it was not clear to the Examiner which question had been answered.

A small minority of candidates wrote only two essays rather than the three required. Candidates also need to check that they have answered one question from each section before they answer the third question, which can be from a section of their choice. Candidates should be reminded that they must **not** answer two questions on the same text.

Each essay should be 500–600 words long to allow candidates to make a variety of points which are relevant to the question of their choice. Quite a few answers were significantly shorter than this and did not include enough detail to access the higher marks.

Candidates must ensure that they read the question carefully and address it throughout their answer. A generic, pre-learnt essay or an accumulation of knowledge listed in the answer does not constitute a good essay, however accurate the knowledge may be. Candidates may find it helpful to write out the question before they start their answer so that they can then refer back to it and check whether each point they are making is relevant.

An essay should be seen as an argument. The writer is seeking to persuade the reader of the validity of the argument he/she is putting forward. An argument must be properly structured, introducing the theme, presenting evidence and leading to a conclusion. Some candidates omitted the introduction or started their essay with what would effectively be their conclusion. Other candidates did not come to any conclusion, partially because they seemed to have run out of time.

Clear paragraphing also helps to structure a coherent argument. Candidates should use one paragraph for each main point they wish to make. Some candidates wrote whole essays without any paragraphing at all which made it more difficult to identify individual ideas. Sometimes this led to unnecessary repetition and as no new ideas were introduced, no extra credit could be earned. The best essays consisted of relevant points in paragraphs, supported with relevant examples and good evaluation or analysis.

Most candidates were able to produce the level of language required to write essays that could be followed easily. Whilst the quality of the language used is not separately assessed, candidates should be reminded that they should use formal German – many candidates did not differentiate between spoken/colloquial and written/formal language, e.g. *rum* instead of *herum*; *runter* instead of *herunter*, *nix* instead of *nichts*; *etwas können* instead of *was drauf haben*.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Section 1**

#### **Question 1**

#### **Timm – *Die Entdeckung der Currywurst***

- (a) (i) Good answers took into consideration that Frau Brücker rescued somebody and risked her life in doing so. She evaluates this as a late action that saves Bremer's and other people's lives and she thinks she has done something good at the end of a long war where she maybe could have done more.
- (ii) Good responses weighed up what each of the characters did in this extract: Frau Brücker rescues Bremer to support him, but also because she likes him. In retrospect she might evaluate things differently, but does this take away from her courage to hide someone for an unknown amount of time? The grandmother risks her life in courageous actions, but they are not premeditated and she does all of it publicly, whereas Frau Brücker defends the cook in an interrogation, spoils meals deliberately, but never says anything to other people.
- (b) Candidates who chose this question could have often taken into consideration more than just the given extract. Not only does Frau Brücker hide Bremer, she does not use the Nazi salute, she organises meals that the Gauleiter does not like and she supports the cook when interrogated. Her acts of resistance might be small, but show that she is aware that things are not as they should be. Although she is partially selfish in her rescue of Bremer, she risks her life and evaluates his rescue as an act of protest against a regime she has never fully supported, so at least some of her motivation is a partial resistance against the Nazis.

#### **Question 2**

#### **Lenz – *Fundbüro***

- (a) (i) The first part of this question asked candidates to look at Henry's technique when returning lost property. The best responses identified that Henry followed Harms' advice to the letter, but pushes the proof too far, endangering himself. He is casual about a job which other people have fulfilled diligently and has little regard for Harms' intervention.
- (ii) Harms, as Henry's boss, needs to intervene for health and safety reasons and Henry is seen as irresponsible and naive. He has not yet found a balance between irresponsible behaviour and taking responsibility for his actions.
- (b) The better responses to this question understood that the book overall had several aspects one could consider to answer this question: Henry works out what lost property can mean to people and how important individual items can be. He also realises that some of his values have to change in order to make and maintain friends – he cannot let people get away with antisocial behaviour and needs to support his friends. His easy-going approach to life is changed when jobs are cut and he decides to make a real sacrifice. He finds himself in a job which allows him to find himself. At the end he takes on a little bit more responsibility, both in and outside his job.



### Question 3

#### Kafka – *Die Verwandlung*

- (a) (i) Most candidates analysed the scene here correctly, highlighting the language the sister uses and her intentions. She is the driving force behind the elimination of Gregor and takes over as head of the family.
- (ii) The father stays aggressive towards Gregor and is actually the one who causes the fatal injury to his son. The mother displays passive behaviour and hides behind fainting fits and illness. Her inability to cope with the situation was understood by most candidates. The sister becomes the driving force who turns a passive family into a functioning unit with everyone contributing to the income and support of the family. She sidelines Gregor efficiently and takes centre stage.
- (b) This question was answered well by the majority of candidates who chose it. Candidates clearly grasped that the relationship between brother and sister deteriorates and that the sister uses language which turns Gregor from a human being into an object. Her choice of verbs makes her intentions very clear (*loswerden, nicht ertragen können, es bringt euch noch um*). She tries to make his life more and more unpleasant by cluttering up the room and even her act of opening the window for Gregor could be seen as an encouragement for him to commit suicide. Her language matches her actions – the less food he gets served, the more he is turned into an object and not a human being anymore.

### Section 2

### Question 4

#### Kehlmann – *Die Vermessung der Welt*

- (a) Good essays distinguished between external and internal factors here: the dangers of travelling, death, injury, and (lasting) illnesses were mentioned, but more important was the change the mind undergoes – your experiences leave impressions you cannot delete anymore; those might not allow you to return home to the same set of values you had before; you might not fit into society anymore on your return. As a person you might be irrevocably altered and a return to your old self is impossible.
- (b) Gauß and Eugen clearly do not get on, but this is due to a variety of reasons: Eugen is Minna's son and she is not loved by Gauß, so does his son suffer as a result? As none of Johanna's children play a major part in the story, this seems an almost unimportant aspect, whereas Gauß' treatment of other people – which is always disdainful and bad-tempered – gives us an insight into his mindset: he treats everyone equally badly, unless they are credited with some intelligence he understands. When Eugen shows an interest in topics and areas Gauß does not understand/has no interest in, he derides him and, for example, throws Eugen's book out of the carriage window, and even when Eugen gets arrested, he does not help him. Humboldt is kinder to Eugen than his own father.

Good essays identified the irony when Eugen suddenly has the same reaction to people that his father has previously: he gets impatient when people take a long time to answer questions. Liberated from the presence of his father, he appears to be superior in intelligence to others.

### Question 5

#### Brecht – *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan*

Both Brecht questions were subject to quite a generic approach. Candidates wrote down what they knew about Brecht and often included details which were not needed to address the question.

- (a) Better responses clearly looked at various elements of the play which would be easier to understand on stage or indeed if one read the book. The fact that you can re-read a book, but not re-wind a play (if watched live on stage) was often an argument for reading the play. It was also mentioned that readers would not be put off by having scenery and costumes they had imagined differently in their heads.

Reasons for watching the play were helpful costumes which made identity changes and different roles clearer, stage props which would put you into the right country and town, songs with musical accompaniment which would distinguish the scenes more clearly from one another and add to the *Verfremdungseffekt* and the fact that if all of the above was done you could concentrate on the storyline more and get the message more easily as your imagination did not have to work so hard. All this was linked to examples from the text in the very best essays.

- (b) Some candidates wrote only about the superficial information the play provides: poverty, dishonesty, pressure to help, but not enough means to do so. They omitted to mention Brecht's intentions which were at least a questioning of the status quo, if not a change of heart in the spectator which would be one step closer to creating a more equal society. Better candidates gave a definition of *Vorbild* and then proceeded to give a name and reasoned why even an imperfect being could have this function. Some came to the conclusion that no figure in the play justified this label and supported with relevant evidence that this was a valid stance to take.

## Question 6

### Borchert – *Kurzgeschichten*

- (a) Better responses related their answers to three or more stories and listed a variety of incidents which showed the relevance to today. Episodes mentioned were young people dying far away from home, siblings being killed, young people losing their homes or relationships becoming distrustful and damaged during a war. All these different aspects still happen all over the world today and many candidates mentioned Syria and gave an up-to-date slant to the stories.
- (b) Candidates who chose this question would have done well to think about a definition of *Weltbild*. Many wrote about the plots of the stories, but could have benefitted from writing how that formed Borchert's opposition to all war, how he saw relationships crumbling and disintegrating, but still found aspects of hope in some dim and dark corner which gave people the courage to carry on. His depiction of despair and his characters' inability to form new, normal relationships contributes to his dark view of war and the dismal, long-term effect it has on people.

# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/42  
Texts

## Key messages

To do well in this paper candidates should:

- answer three questions, each on a different text and ensure they have answered at least one question from each section;
- manage their time well to ensure they don't run out of time when writing their third essay;
- indicate clearly which question is being answered;
- think carefully about what the question is asking and plan their answer before they start to write;
- refer to the question throughout the answer, not just at the start and the finish;
- give examples from the text specifically chosen to support an argument;
- avoid narration of the story.

## General comments

The best essays demonstrated good knowledge of the text, with well-structured arguments and good use of examples to illustrate points made. A number of essays were not relevant to the question which was being asked, and were not well organised.

The majority of candidates indicated clearly which question (and sub-questions, where applicable) they were answering, although there were some essays where it was not clear to the Examiner which question had been answered.

A small minority of candidates wrote only two essays rather than the three required. Candidates also need to check that they have answered one question from each section before they answer the third question, which can be from a section of their choice. Candidates should be reminded that they must **not** answer two questions on the same text.

Each essay should be 500–600 words long to allow candidates to make a variety of points which are relevant to the question of their choice. Quite a few answers were significantly shorter than this and did not include enough detail to access the higher marks.

Candidates must ensure that they read the question carefully and address it throughout their answer. A generic, pre-learnt essay or an accumulation of knowledge listed in the answer does not constitute a good essay, however accurate the knowledge may be. Candidates may find it helpful to write out the question before they start their answer so that they can then refer back to it and check whether each point they are making is relevant.

An essay should be seen as an argument. The writer is seeking to persuade the reader of the validity of the argument he/she is putting forward. An argument must be properly structured, introducing the theme, presenting evidence and leading to a conclusion. Some candidates omitted the introduction or started their essay with what would effectively be their conclusion. Other candidates did not come to any conclusion, partially because they seemed to have run out of time.

Clear paragraphing also helps to structure a coherent argument. Candidates should use one paragraph for each main point they wish to make. Some candidates wrote whole essays without any paragraphing at all which made it more difficult to identify individual ideas. Sometimes this led to unnecessary repetition and as no new ideas were introduced, no extra credit could be earned. The best essays consisted of relevant points in paragraphs, supported with relevant examples and good evaluation or analysis.

Most candidates were able to produce the level of language required to write essays that could be followed easily. Whilst the quality of the language used is not separately assessed, candidates should be reminded that they should use formal German – many candidates did not differentiate between spoken/colloquial and written/formal language, e.g. *rum* instead of *herum*; *runter* instead of *herunter*, *nix* instead of *nichts*; *etwas können* instead of *was drauf haben*.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Section 1**

#### **Question 1**

#### **Timm – *Die Entdeckung der Currywurst***

- (a) (i) Good answers took into consideration that Frau Brücker rescued somebody and risked her life in doing so. She evaluates this as a late action that saves Bremer's and other people's lives and she thinks she has done something good at the end of a long war where she maybe could have done more.
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### Section 2

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# GERMAN

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Paper 9717/43

Texts

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### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Section 1**

##### **Question 1**

###### **Timm – *Die Entdeckung der Currywurst***

- (a) (i) Bremer leaves the flat really tidy as if he had never been there. He erases all his traces apart from the cigarette butts, and the folded up cover reminds Frau Brücker of the beginning of their relationship. He has not waited for her to explain anything and has robbed her of the chance of a proper goodbye.
- (ii) Bremer comes to her sausage stall and sees her – she recognises him, but this time around she does not talk to him. He orders a sausage and she looks at him right at the moment where he regains his taste. It remains open whether or not they meet again.
- (b) The candidates who did well in this question defined what a hero is and then ‘measured’ Frau Brücker and the grandmother of the narrator against these criteria. Whereas Frau Brücker executes her little acts of resistance away from the public eye, the grandmother is more open and impromptu about her opinions and actions. Bremer is possibly a coward and maybe a little bit a hero, depending on how candidates view his refusal to fight after his previous war experiences.

##### **Question 2**

###### **Lenz – *Fundbüro***

No candidates responded to the questions on this text.

##### **Question 3**

###### **Kafka – *Die Verwandlung***

All candidates who chose to respond to this text answered the first question.

- (a) (i) Most candidates analysed the scene here correctly, highlighting the decline of Gregor who sees it as his duty to die in order to help his family.
- (ii) The family are relieved about his demise and the sister straight away organises a day out. The new focus of the parents is the successful marriage of the sister whose husband might well then be put into the same position Gregor was in, as the provider for all the family members.

#### **Section 2**

##### **Question 4**

###### **Kehlmann – *Die Vermessung der Welt***

No candidates responded to the questions on this text.

##### **Question 5**

###### **Brecht – *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan***

Both Brecht questions were subject to quite a generic approach. Candidates wrote down what they knew about Brecht and often included details which were not needed to address the question.



- (a) Better responses clearly looked at various themes of the play like greed and capitalism, generousness and socialism, love versus ambition/greed and linked these to examples in the text. Weaker responses included paragraphs on the *Verfremdungseffekt*, which is not a theme, but a means to achieve an end, namely the distance between the audience and the characters/play in order to achieve more objectivity and less emotional involvement.
- (b) Candidates could have given a definition of a purely negative figure and then linked this to the themes this person might represent. Some candidates wrote about only the superficial information the play provides: poverty, dishonesty, pressure to help, but not enough means to do so, but could have linked this information systematically to some of the characters and evaluated whether or not this made someone in the play all good or all bad.

## Question 6

### Borchert – *Kurzgeschichten*

- (a) The language used in some of the answers to this question was very poor and this impeded communication of the points the candidates were trying to make.

Candidates were required to choose three stories and evaluate whether they were invented or could have happened. Dream sequences would have been an obvious reason for the stories having been invented, but on the other hand the realistic description of the people and their expressions and actions would lend stories an undeniable touch of reality, which was based on Borchert's own experiences in the war.

- (b) Candidates who chose this question clearly had an opinion on the topic and were happy to argue either way. Some candidates saw the fact that the stories dealt with the Second World War as a reason for them to not be relevant anymore and they thought that kitchen clocks looked differently nowadays and food shortages would be handled differently. A very superficial reason for people not recommending the stories was that they were read at school and therefore boring. Others decided that wars were an ongoing theme in this world and deprivation and loss were a feature of life in most countries. They thought that traumatised people existed today and saw relevant elements in the stories and therefore thought that people might still be interested in reading Borchert's short stories.