

# FIRST LANGUAGE GERMAN

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Paper 0505/01  
Reading

## Key messages

This paper tests reading comprehension and summary skills.

In **Question 1**, quite a number of candidates copied whole passages from the text. This does not show understanding and therefore cannot be credited.

In **Question 2**, candidates must write within the specified word limit of 200 – 250 words.

One challenge faced by candidates was choosing the correct register: many candidates were not able to differentiate between written and spoken language and wrote in a register inappropriate to the task. Expressions like *eine Party schmeissen* do not belong in a piece of formal writing and therefore had an impact on the language mark awarded.

## General comments

On the whole, candidates coped well with this paper. There were a number of very good performances and candidates' linguistic ability was mostly good or above.

Most candidates managed to summarise the main points in **Question 2** and some candidates achieved full marks in this task. It is important to note that this is a summary task – some candidates still include an analysis and/or their own opinion, neither of which can be credited.

It is also important to take careful note of the word limit given in the rubric for the summary task. Marks were not awarded for any valid points made after the upper limit of 250 words. A summary is an exercise in writing in a precise and succinct style – overlong answers do not fulfil this task.

If candidates write their answers anywhere other than the designated answer space, they must use asterisks or numbers to clearly indicate which question the additional information relates to.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) This was a straightforward question and most candidates achieved full marks.
- (b) Again, this was a straightforward question which most candidates answered successfully. Some candidates did not notice the word *Lage* and talked about the general differences between Airbnb and hotels.
- (c) The majority of candidates coped well with this question. They talked about Airbnb flats that have little 'quirks' although it was not necessary to list all of the quirks in detail.
- (d) Many candidates did not understand that tourists – even when staying in someone's flat – would not be exposed to the inhabitant's daily problems and instead said that tourists did not want to experience those daily problems.
- (e) The majority of candidates coped well with this question and many were able to mention at least two out of the three points required. A high number of candidates did not appear to know the

expression *sich die Klinke in die Hand geben* and took it literally, thinking that the flat was in a bad state of repair and that the door handle kept falling off.

- (f) Most candidates scored at least two out of three points here. However, many quoted at length from the text, writing, for example, about ‘naked tourists running around Barcelona’, whereas it would have been better to summarise the point by saying ‘tourists get into trouble with local people because of their behaviour’. Many candidates did not show understanding when talking about the ‘hotel lobby’ and just copied the corresponding sentence from the original text.
- (g) This was the most challenging question as candidates had to look beyond the literal meaning of the words in the text and analyse the language used by the author. A number of answers were restricted to listing the disadvantages of Airbnb, quoting directly from the text without looking at the language. However, some candidates picked up on the tone of the text and found evidence of sarcasm.

## Question 2

In this part of the exam candidates are required to write a brief summary of both texts and must make sure they stay within the upper word limit of 250 words. The majority of candidates adhered to the word limit, but there was still a number of candidates who exceeded it. Any valid points mentioned after the 250-word limit cannot be credited and overlong answers will also have an impact on the mark awarded for Style and Organisation.

It is unnecessary to include a lengthy introduction or any introduction at all. There is also no need to include personal opinion as this cannot score any marks.

The majority of candidates followed a very clear structure of first listing advantages, and then disadvantages. Some candidates tried to compare both texts which made the structure of the essay very difficult to follow.

In this part of the exam, it is very important not to go into too much detail. For example, when stating that Airbnb is more flexible than hotels, it is not necessary to talk at length about breakfast times and check-in. The task is to summarise as succinctly as possible and stay within the word limit – in a summary, it is not necessary to give an example for every point.

It is worth noting that candidates who achieved high marks had often spent time on a plan/list before starting their summary.

## Accuracy of Language

Most candidates produced fluent, correct German, handling the tasks well. There were, however, many instances of phonetic and/or incorrect spelling. As mentioned above, there was an increased use of inappropriate register.

Some candidates did not know the basic rules of punctuation and there was also a high number of incorrect genders, cases (usually after prepositions), word order and confusion between *das* and *dass*.

# FIRST LANGUAGE GERMAN

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Paper 0505/02  
Writing

## Key messages

This year's best essays were produced by candidates who planned their essays in detail and who used flawless transitions to lead the reader seamlessly and coherently from one point to another.

All paragraphs should be placed in a logical and consistent order and this should feel progressive rather than list-like.

Some candidates would benefit from keeping sentences short and succinct, particularly those who had difficulties in correctly placing commas to separate items or to join together main and/or subordinate clauses.

Candidates must write legibly as Examiners cannot consider anything which is illegible when awarding marks.

## General comments

There were some problems with the accuracy of verb formations, particularly with strong verbs, e.g. *verbindeten*, *schlafte*, *biegte*, *grabte*, *geflechtet*, *ausgegleicht*.

There continue to be a few candidates who use abbreviated words such as *raus* for *hinaus*; *rauf* for *hinauf*; *was* for *etwas* and *mal* for *einmal*. This is not appropriate in a formal piece of writing.

Candidates are encouraged to add interest to their essays by using a range of vocabulary when connecting relative clauses. *Wo* was either overused or not accurately used.

There was some evidence of problems concerning the use of the infinitive + *zu*.

Examiners also noted the use of English spelling in some candidates' work, e.g. *Atmosphäre* instead of *Atmosphäre*; *Hobbies* instead of *Hobbys*; *introduziert* instead of *vorgestellt*. Some candidates also concluded with *anschließend* instead of *abschließend* and *alles in einem* instead of *alles in allem*.

Very often, candidates switched between *du* and *man* within the same sentence, e.g. *Es stimmt, dass man dein Leben gut führen kann*.

Structuring an essay in paragraphs still proved to be a major challenge for many candidates.

## Comments on specific questions

### ***Erster Teil – Diskussion und Erörterung***

#### **Question 1**

- (a) This was a popular question and there were many excellent essays. A high number of candidates were convinced that grades are not the measure of a person nor are they the sole measure of an academic accomplishment; they are only one rather imperfect reflection of how much they have learned at school. Others stated that in many schools good grades or being the best are most important and allow access to universities. A few candidates insisted that people can learn a great deal and acquire a good education without wanting to be the best and achieving high grades.

- (b) This was a straightforward question weighing up the pros and cons of whether sportspeople earn too much money although some candidates' essays did not fully relate to the question. Candidates are advised to read their chosen question carefully.

In other cases there were a range of good-quality essays which discussed very carefully how some sports are much better paid than others.

The general view of most candidates was that sports stars, especially footballers, are paid far too much for what they do whilst others aren't supported financially. For example, *Alles, was ein Fußballer wissen muss, ist, wie man einen Einwurf macht, schießt, und den Ball hält.*

- (c) This topic area proved to be a more challenging one. A small number of candidates produced very good essays, writing about the hobby of their choice such as a sports activity, particularly football, or the music they play. Many talked about hobbies as a way of releasing stress and also tried to relate their hobby to a job and how it fits into their life, asking the question: 'Is there a difference between a good and bad waste of time?'

Others discussed professional athletes and footballers and their professional development in comparison. A few candidates found hobbies fun and said it helped them to get rid of their bad habits.

- (d) Many candidates managed to show very good comprehension of and engagement with this title, establishing very quickly that more and more people nowadays cannot imagine living without the internet. They explained that as we already live in such a complex world it will never be easy to cope without it.

Some candidates agreed with the title but felt it was not a necessity and was only good for communication and entertainment. Weaker essays included phrases such as 'I can live without food, but not without the internet!' but did not expand any further and therefore could not access the higher mark bands.

Other essays contained more thoughtful reflections such as, *Am Ende zählen die Momente im Internet. Die Momente des wahren Glücks liegen in der Liebe und Zuneigung, die sich Menschen untereinander im Internet schenken.*

## **Zweiter Teil – Schilderung und Erzählung**

### **Question 2**

- (a) This question was very popular in this section of the paper. There were a wide range of outcomes from extensive, interesting and fluent pieces to less ambitious answers.

Many wonderful moments contained success and/or glory and nearly all of them expressed peace, beauty and love, describing wonderful settings. An astonishing number of different scenarios were evident too.

Examples of excellent use of descriptive language:

In Paris: *Die roten Blüten bilden mit den weißen Häusern und dem blauen Himmel eine moderne Version der französischen Flagge.*

In New York: *Die Wolken gleiten durch den azurblauen Himmel, wie grandiose Vögel des Jenseits.*

- (b) Candidates generally performed very well in this question. They were able to clearly link their thoughts of being stuck in a traffic jam, and what most of them wanted to do was put their foot on the accelerator and get where they needed to go.

Whilst sitting and staring at the car in front of them, some creative thoughts crossed their minds:

*Die Sonne spiegelt sich in ihren rosigen Panzern, obwohl die Autos vermutlich alle unterschiedlich lackiert sind, sehen sie von hier identisch aus, wie eine Armee von Kakerlaken.*

- (c) There were some weaker essays in response to this question with unfocused sentences and a few inadequate conclusions. Some essays were not very well developed: narratives need to follow a consistent progression leading to a coherent, well thought-out conclusion.

A common mistake was to tell the story in too much detail without regularly referring back to the title. For example, in an essay about a group outing, details such as when they left home, where they stopped for petrol and food, a description of the scenery and so on had little to do with the title „Aua! Das tut mir weh“.

- (d) This question was the least popular in this section of the paper. There were a range of responses in which candidates tried to express their reaction when they heard the good or even the best news of their life.

There were some interesting essays which gave either an account of a difficult decision that they had to make or wrote about an event that marked a turning point in their lives or an experience that changed their viewpoint on a somewhat controversial issue.