

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9717/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

- The Speaking Test begins with an uninterrupted presentation from the candidate, clearly relating to the culture or society of a German-speaking country, whilst also reflecting the candidate's personal interests.
- Presentations should last for around three minutes, up to a maximum of four minutes, and should be reasonably detailed.
- No questions should be included in the content of presentations, unless they are rhetorical.
- Candidates should ask the examiner at least two questions in both the topic conversation and the general conversation, ideally spontaneously. The examiner should prompt them to do so if necessary. No marks may be awarded for Seeking Information if no questions are asked.
- The two conversations should be of approximately equal length, at around eight minutes each and the whole test should be completed within twenty minutes.

General comments

Candidates were usually appropriately entered for this examination and most were aware of the requirements. Presentation topics mostly referred to issues in a German speaking society, as required by the syllabus, and many were interesting and informative. However, some presentations referred only briefly to Germany, Austria or Switzerland which was not really sufficient to achieve a high mark for Content. Some specific detail is expected, with ideas and opinions, as well as factual points. In some cases, candidates' presentations did not mention a German speaking country at all, and their marks for Content should have been lower to reflect this. Some centres allowed candidates to ask the examiner questions as part of their presentation, and some examiners even interrupted the presentation to ask questions themselves. Please leave any questions that may arise until the Topic Conversation, as candidates must deliver their presentations uninterrupted and for at least three minutes.

Not all candidates were aware that they must ask the examiner a minimum of two questions per conversation. Nor were all examiners aware that they should prompt them to do so if necessary. It was sometimes the case that candidates did not ask any questions spontaneously, and if they were not prompted to do so by the examiner, they were unable to access the marks available for Seeking Information. Some examiners did prompt their candidates but only at the very end of a conversation: questions should be integrated and should arise naturally during the discussion. There were some examiners who awarded marks for Seeking Information even though no questions had been asked.

Candidates were mostly very responsive and nearly all were spontaneous. If candidates rely mainly on prepared material, they should be placed no higher than 'satisfactory' for Comprehension and Responsiveness. Apart from some incorrectly awarded marks for Seeking Information, most centres used the mark scheme correctly and fairly accurately. As detailed above, some marks for the Content of the Presentation were slightly too generous, but the criteria for marking the linguistic categories were usually interpreted correctly.

Some centres allowed the tests to last too long, and so risked tiring candidates. Twenty minutes should be the maximum duration of a test. Recording quality was usually very good, but at some centres either the candidate or the examiner was less audible, owing to incorrect placement of the recording equipment.

Specific comments on the sections of the examination

Section 1 (Presentation)

- If the presentation contains ideas and opinions, refers in reasonable detail to the culture or society of a German-speaking country, and is delivered in a fluent and confident fashion, nine or ten marks may be awarded for content.
- If there are only brief references to a German-speaking country a lower mark for content should be considered.
- Presentations that are far too long, even if confidently delivered, should not receive nine or ten marks for content as they cannot be considered to have been 'well organised', as in the mark scheme.
- For a mark of five for pronunciation a candidate does not have to be a native speaker.
- A well-prepared candidate should be able to access at least 4 marks for Language. A 'reasonable range' of structures and (topic-specific) vocabulary is required, delivered 'fairly fluently', and without ambiguity of meaning.
- There was as usual a good range of interesting, up-to-date or relevant presentation topics, including the following:

Franz Kafka, Veganer-Ernährung, nachhaltige Mode, Naturschutz (die Jagd), der Verlust unserer Privatsphäre im internet, 'das Wunder von Bern', Hip-hop und Rap: Einfluss auf die deutsche Sprache, Hunde (die emotionale Unterstützung geben), die Automobilindustrie.

Section 2 (Topic Conversation)

- In this conversation, issues raised in the presentation should be followed up and discussed.
- Candidates should be able to defend any ideas and opinions already expressed and ought also to have prepared plenty of additional points. However, examiners should not expect them to know any specific factual information additional to what has been presented.
- Any issues more suitable for the General Conversation should be raised later in **Section 3**, provided that the main issues of the Topic Conversation are not returned to.
- The questions a candidate puts to the examiner to seek information should be as varied as possible. 'Was denken Sie?' or 'Sind Sie der gleichen Meinung?' are useful questions to move the conversation along, but a wider range is expected for marks of four or five.
- If a candidate asks only one question during a conversation the maximum mark for Seeking Information is three. If no questions are asked, even after prompting, the mark is zero.
- A maximum mark of three should be awarded for Providing Information if the candidate can deal with basic situations and concepts, but finds more complex ones difficult.

Section 3 (General Conversation)

- This section should be distinct from **Section 2**. It should not be shorter, but of a similar length to the Topic Conversation at around eight minutes.
- The examiner should clearly inform the candidate that the Topic Conversation is over, and should introduce a completely different topic for the General Conversation. At least two different topics should be covered in this section.
- It is essential to cover mainly complex issues in order to allow candidates to access the higher marks available for Comprehension and Responsiveness or Providing Information and Opinions.
- Questions, such as *Warum?* or *Inwiefern?* are particularly useful in prompting in depth discussion.
- It should not be expected that candidates will know specific information on a topic chosen by the examiner, even a significant topic such as the Corona virus pandemic. If a candidate is clearly unhappy with any topic suggested, the examiner should quickly suggest a different area of discussion.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9717/22 Reading and Writing</p>
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Key messages

Candidates should ensure they read the question carefully to ensure they address the exact demands fully.

General comments

Candidates performed well and were adequately prepared for the tasks. The general level of language was good with many candidates showing a good understanding of German grammar and vocabulary.

Candidates mostly attempted to use their own words to avoid direct lifting from the texts.

The general comprehension of the texts was good.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

In this part of the paper, candidates are given five synonyms for words from the text and then have to find the matching word(s) in the text. All synonyms can be found in the first paragraph of the first text and have to fit into the text appropriately.

The majority of candidates answered this part of the paper well.

Question 2

In this part of the paper, candidates are required to rephrase sentences from Text 1 testing their grammatical knowledge. Many candidates answered well, but some found a particularly challenging (missing out the *zu* in the infinitive of the separable verb).

Question 3

In this part of the paper, candidates have to answer comprehension questions based on the first text. 15 points are awarded for Content and 5 marks are available for Quality of Language. It is important that candidates do not lift passages directly from the text but answer in their own words in order to demonstrate understanding.

- (a) The majority of candidates scored full marks and were able to give a good explanation of both terms.
- (b) The majority of candidates achieved full marks.
- (c) Candidates answered this question well and the majority achieved full marks.
- (d) The majority of candidates achieved full marks.
- (e) The majority of candidates scored full marks in this question.
- (f) This was a challenging question, but most candidates attempted an explanation and were mostly able to score at least one or two marks out of three.

Question 4

In this part of the paper, candidates have to answer comprehension questions based on the second text. Again, 15 points are awarded for Content and 5 marks are available for Quality of Language. It is important that candidates do not lift passages directly from the text but answer in their own words in order to demonstrate understanding.

- (a) Many candidates answered this question correctly.
- (b) The majority of candidates achieved at least one out of two available marks.
- (c) This question required four pieces of information in answers and some candidates only scored three out of four marks as they did not mention one of the required pieces of information.
- (d) This question was answered correctly by the majority of candidates. However, some candidates did not give enough detail and only scored two out of three possible points.
- (e) The majority of candidates scored full marks in this question.
- (f) Many candidates answered this question correctly and scored at least one out of two possible marks.

Question 5

Some candidates used up to 50 words for their introduction, explaining what they were going to do in the following summary. This is not necessary as it inevitably means that candidates go over the word limit. Any points made after the word limit cannot be credited.

It is important to read the question to the end. This question did not ask for just a summary of both texts, but candidates were asked to focus on certain aspects. The focus was on the advantages and disadvantages of a late school start for teenagers. General understanding of both texts was good and the majority of candidates were able to give a structured and succinct summary, while adhering to the word limit.

Candidates finished by giving their own opinion about a later start to school for teenagers. These included many insightful, interesting and personal statements.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/23
Reading and Writing

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9717/32 Essay</p>
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Key messages

Candidates should

- select a title that they feel most confident about answering
- write a response that is clearly relevant, well informed, supported with examples and coherently structured
- use accurate German at an advanced level, demonstrating a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-specific vocabulary
- use sentence structures that evidence complexity but that are still easy to follow.

General comments

Most essays were coherently argued. They were well structured with a suitable introduction and conclusion and had the appropriate length. The strongest essays showed maturity and insight, and opinions were supported with well-chosen evidence.

Many candidates had an excellent command of German, and achieved language marks in the Very Good category. Most showed an impressive range of vocabulary, both general and topic specific. Their language was almost always fluent, idiomatic and read well. Occasionally, it lacked precision, however.

Common errors included:

- lack of punctuation
- lack of capitalisation of nouns
- incorrect, phonetic spelling.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

‘Um in meinem Freundeskreis gut integriert zu sein, muss ich immer den neusten Trends folgen.’ Johanna, 15 Jahre alt. Was halten Sie von Johannas Standpunkt?

Some candidates answering this question agreed and pointed out that young people in particular were under pressure to follow trends in order to be accepted within their peer groups. Others argued, very convincingly, that trends were ephemeral, and that true friendship should not depend on the clothes, possessions or behaviours of an individual.

Question 2

Wenn die Weltbevölkerung weiter wächst, wird es in der Zukunft unmöglich sein, alle Menschen ausreichend zu ernähren. Stimmen Sie dieser Aussage zu?

Many of those who chose this question were of the opinion that scientific progress, such as growing meat in a laboratory or making farming methods more efficient, would help to feed an ever-growing world population.

Question 3

Wer sollte Ihrer Meinung nach heutzutage das meiste Geld verdienen? Begründen Sie Ihre Antwort.

Candidates who selected the topic usually argued that jobs that contributed to and helped society, for example doctors or teachers, should be the best paid.

Question 4

„Ich brauche nicht mehr aus dem Haus zu gehen: Ich kann von zu Hause aus arbeiten, einkaufen und mich unterhalten.“ David, 28 Jahre alt. Ist dies Ihrer Meinung nach eine positive Entwicklung?

Candidates were usually very well informed about the technology that made this development possible but also pointed out the disadvantages of this kind of thinking and the accompanying lifestyle, such as increasing social isolation and mental health issues. Candidates also referred to their own experiences during the Covid pandemic.

Question 5

Die ältere Generation hat unseren Planeten kaputt gemacht. Die Jugend muss ihn retten. Stimmen Sie dieser Aussage zu?

Candidates who chose this question fell into two categories. The first group generally agreed with the statement pointing out where the older generation had gone wrong, and then setting out what the young generation could do to save the planet. The second group did not agree and decided that it would be best if young and old worked together in order to turn around the current situation.

GERMAN

Paper 9717/33
Essay

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

GERMAN LITERATURE

Paper 9717/42
Texts

Key messages and general comments

In this paper of the German exam candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the texts. To achieve a very good result it is desirable that candidates are also able to show that they can see the texts in the context of the time they were written in and display some understanding of the authors' intentions.

Stronger candidates were able to show in depth knowledge of the text, chose good examples to illustrate their arguments and structured their answers well.

Most candidates' command of German was good to very good. On the other hand, some candidates' level of German was poor which in turn had an influence on how well they were able to state their points (lack of vocabulary, poor grammar knowledge, spelling errors).

Candidates should be advised to:

- Choose one question from each section first, then decide on a third question
- Make sure to read each question carefully and identify what is actually required
- Divide their time into three equal parts and start work on the first essay
- Label each essay with the section and question number
- Plan each essay before starting to write
- Think about paragraphs and present one main idea with supporting evidence per paragraph
- Make sure to have an introduction, main part and conclusion to each essay
- Make sure all content is relevant to the question and avoid repetition
- Ensure language is formal: *herunter* instead of *runter*, *etwas können* instead of *was drauf haben*, *bekommen* instead of *kriegen*, etc.
- Read through each essay and check for grammatical or spelling mistakes and make sure names of characters/ authors are spelled correctly.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

The most popular texts in this section of the exam were *Die Physiker* and *Tschick*. Only a very small number of candidates selected *Homo Faber*. Most candidates answered questions well writing good, relevant answers. Some candidates did not focus clearly enough on the question and instead wrote everything they had learned rather than addressing the specific demands of the question. At times more attention could have been paid to the passage provided or more examples of the play/book could have been given.

If the question includes a text passage, candidates need to engage closely with the text passage. Close reading possibly needs to be practised more.

Stronger candidates looked beyond the text itself and considered the author's possible intentions and the time a text was conceived. Candidates should be encouraged to look at secondary literature more in order to facilitate this.

Section B

By far the most popular text was *Als Hitler das rosa Kaninchen stahl*. Overall, most candidates showed detailed knowledge of the text and were able to answer their chosen question well. For both **(a)** and **(b)** most candidates gave good examples to illustrate and support their arguments. For example, for **(a)**, this included the friendships the children have at the Gasthof Zwirn and for **(b)**, focusing on the work the father does, how

he looks after the family, the relationship between him and Anna using the example of her birthday in Switzerland. Weaker candidates tended to retell too much of the story for both **(a)** and **(b)**. Stronger candidates were able to explore the characters and compared their experiences well, considering the historical context. They were therefore able to draw clear conclusions.

There were some very good answers on *Damian* **(b)**, with the candidates demonstrating a strong understanding of the meaning of 'Gottesdienst' and 'Todesdienst' in the book by detailing the two worlds one would have to explore/experience in order to become whole/know oneself. On *Liebesfluchten* answers were good and demonstrated that candidates knew the material well and were able to draw on relevant examples to support their conclusions.

GERMAN LITERATURE

Paper 9717/43
Texts

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.