



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In German (9GN0)

Paper 2: Written response to works and translation

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Introduction

All candidates were able to approach the questions.

In Question 1 all candidates had access to some or most of the lexis, despite some slips. Most were able to produce at least some grammatically accurate elements. The strongest had a good grasp of word order, tense formation, verb conjugation, gender, case and endings. Particular areas for improvement are subject-verb agreements and paying attention to tense. It was not uncommon for candidates to translate into the present tense, whatever the tense in the original text.

In the essays, all candidates were able to give at least some information about the works they had studied. A significant minority focused on telling the story, which was not a productive strategy. Most were able to express some opinions or offer convincing interpretations in response to the questions. The strongest candidates offered cohesive, linking arguments with consistent critical analysis in response to the questions, supported by relevant, well-selected evidence from the texts.

Most candidates were able to use a range of language including at least some complex language. Stronger candidates used a wide range of lexis and structures, including language appropriate to literary and film analysis. This includes essay language (*im Lauf des Werkes, es könnte argumentiert werden*), technical language (*Szene, Bühne, Einstellung, Froschperspektive*), and language specific to a particular work (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung, verwandelt, verwandten*).

As ever, some candidates attempted to express complex ideas using language that was significantly dependent on the structures of another language, which limited the range of German structures and often severely affected comprehensibility.

As last year, there was an increase in the number of candidates including contrived, artificial structures, which often contributed little to the critical analysis and tended not to improve the range mark. This was often the case with if-clauses and sentences using Konjunktiv II, eg, *Wenn sie es nicht getan hätte, wäre alles anders*. This can come across as stilted rather than articulate and hence fit a lower level on the marking criteria than a more natural phrase. In addition, candidates tend to misremember such sentences under exam conditions.

As in previous years, short, focused essays were usually of higher quality than six-page long essays which often did not select appropriate evidence or omit irrelevant material. Candidates are encouraged to select and focus on what is relevant. However, examiners do not count words and candidates should certainly not omit good, relevant points because they are worried about exceeding the suggested word count.

Candidates could improve by preparing short segments which can be adapted to the question which is asked, allowing more relevance, rather than preparing whole essays, which are harder to adapt to the question. Another improvement would be that candidates should avoid easy, safe ground and find scope for discussion, disagreement and deeper evaluation.

If a work is of sufficient depth to be studied for A-Level, no statement is likely to be true for all of the characters for the whole length of the work – there will be change and nuance. Sweeping statements should be replaced by observation of that change and nuance.

Really understanding word order and verb formation would help many candidates to significantly improve their language. Knowing the gender and plural of key terms relating to the work or theme would also be useful.

Finally – *vorschlagen* was once again widely misused this year. It does not mean suggest in a literary critical sense. It means to offer a suggestion or (perhaps) a solution or alternative. Candidates would be better off using: *zeigen*, *auf etw hindeuten*, *verdeutlichen*, *veranschaulichen* usw.

Question 1

Section 1. This was generally well done. Some candidates wrote *Schülerin*, which, in a university context, was the wrong meaning.

Section 2. Some candidates were able to produce a correct version of this section. Many did not use a reflexive verb in German or a suitable alternative. Many used an incorrect preposition or case following the preposition.

Section 3. Some candidates used *soll* instead of *sollte*. A significant proportion used the wrong gender or case with *Protest* or *Demonstration*. Some used *nach*, which is inappropriate with a protest. A few wrote *morgens*, which changed the meaning.

Section 4. Many candidates were able to correctly translate this element, although many others used the present tense or were unable to correctly form the plural.

Section 5. Many candidates were able to correctly translate this element, although a significant minority used the present tense.

Section 6. Some candidates were able to correctly translate this element. Most used *ändern* or *verändern*. A significant proportion were unable to find a correct version of politicians. A significant proportion omitted the grammatical umlaut on *würden*. Some candidates wrote *alles* instead of *etwas*, which changed the meaning.

Section 7. Many candidates were able to provide a correct translation of this element, although a substantial minority used the present tense. A smaller minority offered an incorrect ending.

Section 8. Many candidates were able to offer a correct version of this element, although a substantial proportion omitted the definite article, which was necessary in German in this instance. A minority did not use the correct word order. Some candidates incorrectly added a grammatical umlaut to *musste*.

Section 9. Many candidates were able to offer a correct version of this element, although some omitted *werden* and others used a word for ‘argued’ which changed the meaning, such as *bestritten*. In this context, ‘argued’ means ‘supported the claim, strongly said that’, whereas *bestritten* means ‘argued **against** the claim that’.

Section 10. Many candidates were able to correctly translate this element.

Section 11. Many candidates successfully translated this section.

Section 12. Tenses in this element were not always correctly translated.

Section 13. Tenses in this element were not always correctly translated. Most candidates offered a reasonable attempt at *Umweltingenieur*, and a range of spellings was accepted, although many simply wrote *Engineer*, which was not accepted.

Section 14. Some candidates offered a correct translation. The most common errors were in word order and writing *entwickelt*.

Section 15. This section was generally well translated, although some candidates omitted either the *um* or the *zu*. Most knew *Luftverschmutzung*.

Section 16. The most common errors here were to make *Problem* feminine and to use the present tense.

Section 17. Most candidates offered an acceptable version of train ticket, although a substantial proportion gave the wrong gender.

Section 18. Many candidates offered a correct translation here. The most common errors were to use *Freundin* (despite ‘he’ in the next clause) or to use the present tense.

Section 19. Common errors here included omitting the grammatical umlaut from *würde* and use of *zu* instead of *nach*. Many candidates used *dass*, some of them with the correct word order.

Section 20. A small minority of candidates used the dative with *helfen*.

Section B

2a Candidates were well able to discuss the symbolism in *Andorra*. Many offered thoughtful critical analysis.

2b Candidates were able to talk about family relationships in *Andorra*. Some limited themselves to describing the relationships. Most linked them to the themes of death, truth, and personal identity.

3a Candidates were mostly able to address the question. A substantial minority described the events of the play. A significant proportion conflated responsibility with moral or lack of responsibility with guilt / blame. Some discussed who was responsible for what happened. Many, however, considered what it meant to accept responsibility, often with reference to the avoidance of responsibility. Some candidates considered only one character, which was limiting.

3b Most candidates were able to discuss the use of the chorus with reference to its function and thematic purposes – drawing attention to the increasing sameness of the townsfolk. Some candidates did not distinguish between the chorus and the townspeople and so did not identify the increasing homogeneity. Most candidates were able to refer to alienation, but a substantial proportion then listed other devices used to create alienation instead of exploring the chorus in this respect. Many identified that the chorus was related to ancient Greek tragedy. Some, however, went on to say (often with a contrived Konj. II) that without the chorus, the play would not have been a tragedy, which is not the case.

4a There were very few responses, but those there were showed a strong understanding of the role of the singer.

4b There were too few responses to comment.

5a Many candidates simply narrated the parts of the story relating to Michael's and Hanna's past. Stronger responses considered the ways in which each character came to terms with their past (or failed to do so), and the themes of Germany's relationship with its past and the relationship between generations. A few responses considered the multiple layers of the past embedded in the narrative structure. These were usually complex and well done.

5b There were few responses to this question. Those candidates who did respond were able to discuss some aspects of symbolism of Hanna's house. However, there was a tendency to then list other symbols in the work, which was irrelevant.

6a There were too few responses to comment.

6b There were too few responses to comment.

7a There were too few responses to comment.

7b There were too few responses to comment.

8a Only a few candidates responded to this question. They were generally able to refer to surrealism but needed to give more precise examples and explanations of the details.

8b Candidates were generally able to apply what they had learned about family relationships and the themes of the work to answering the specific question. Some responses focused on how each family member treated Gregor and linked this to whether they deserved his deathbed expression of love. Others considered a wide range of themes with insufficient focus on the question.

9a There were too few responses to comment.

9b There were too few responses to comment.

10a Some candidates effectively considered whether the book portrays East and West in a clichéd way, at times with nuance. Others listed the differences with little comment, and some told the story.

10b Candidates were generally able to comment on the ways in which Thomas and Maria function in the work and their relationship to the themes of East-West, friendship and family. Some merely narrated the parts of the work in which these characters appeared.

11a There were too few responses to comment.

11b There were too few responses to comment.

12a There were too few responses to comment.

12b There were too few responses to comment.

13a There were too few responses to comment.

13b There were too few responses to comment.

14a There were very few responses to this work, but they responded effectively to the question, with a strong understanding of the sense of place created of Tonio's hometown and of Munich. Where they were less effective, it was in focusing too strongly on the themes of north and south rather than on the creation of the sense of place.

14b There were very few responses to this work, but they responded effectively to the question about Tonio's emotional journey.

Section C

15a There were few responses to this question. Candidates tended to talk about the importance of Hüseyin to the plot, some narrating and describing with little critical analysis. Some candidates effectively explored the figure in relation to the themes of family, migration and integration. Few candidates explored the nuances of the character, or the significance of guest workers as embodied by Hüseyin.

15b There were too few responses to comment.

16a Strong responses considered both ways in which Dreymann could be considered not complex and ways in which he could be argued to be complex, referring to his naivety and lack of awareness of what's going on around him (Sieland, the observation) and to his emotional development and rebellion. Some suggested that emotional responses, for example his kindness rather than anger towards Sieland, could be seen to be a form of emotional maturity and therefore complexity. Some responses simply narrated.

16b Candidates made some thoughtful points about the relevance of the film today, often picking out themes and arguing that they were universal – art, freedom, love. Some mentioned the repressive regime and suggested that this was historical in its specifics, but a warning about political control which was important today. Others referred to surveillance and related this to internet surveillance today – arguing either that there were relevant similarities, or that the oppressive feeling of your neighbours spying on you was worse. Some candidates could see nothing relevant in the discussion of abuse of political power or the issue of surveillance.

17a There were too few responses to comment.

17b There were too few responses to comment.

18a There were too few responses to comment.

18b There were too few responses to comment.

19a There were too few responses to comment.

19b There were too few responses to comment.

20a There were too few responses to comment.

20b There were too few responses to comment.

21a Most candidates offered a thoughtful discussion of whether going too far was Tim's greatest weakness and how it was related to his insecurity and social exclusion. Most referred to sharing drugs with his 'homies', climbing the tower, the incident with the gun and his suicide at the end. Some simply narrated these incidents. Others used them effectively to discuss issues relating to the

question. Some swiftly dismissed the idea of going too far and discussed only insecurity and social exclusion, with insufficient focus on the question.

21b Candidates who selected this question were strong on the relationship between camera angle and hierarchy / power and on the contrast between camera angles showing Wenger in the car at the beginning and end of the film. They talked about group shots and Karo alone in the corridor. Some simply detailed the shots, but most were able to discuss how the camera angle contributed to the portrayal of themes.

22a Most responses focused on tragedy as sad things happening, or as ways in which complex, sad emotions were elicited in the viewer. Some simply related the sad things that happened. Others offered perceptive analysis of the loss of a home and country, the bitter truth about Alex's parents, the death of Christiane and the GDR as the focus of the film. Most candidates discussed the comedic aspects of the film. Some candidates focused too much on the funnier elements, thus not fully addressing the question. A minority offered thoughtful discussions of how the humour threw the sadness into sharper relief, effectively highlighting the tragic aspects.

22b Candidates offered thoughtful responses relating to the parallel worlds of East and West, the changes in East Germany and the importance of the reunification of Germany, often with reference to football and the *gesamtdeutsches Baby*. Some candidates merely narrated the events, whilst more successful responses explored the themes and importance.

23a There were a few responses, some of which offered thoughtful analysis and evaluation of fate, usually with reference to the flash-forward sequences and the casino. As with other questions, some candidates narrated the events in different versions without sufficient comment.

23b There were too few responses to comment.

24a There were too few responses to comment.

24b There were too few responses to comment.

25a There were too few responses to comment.

25b There were too few responses to comment.

26a There were too few responses to comment.

26b There were too few responses to comment.

Tips for the future

- Emphasise word order and verb formation
- Learn genders and plurals of key words for each work and theme
- Use what you know to address the question
- Select only what is relevant to address the question
- Think, argue, discuss, explore!
- Focus on articulacy and coherence rather than grammatical exercise-type variety
- Use relatively simple language effectively rather than over-complicated language incomprehensibly

