

**General**

The aim of this question is to test candidates' ability to write a continuous response of about 150 words in German. Examiners will not count the words and everything a candidate writes will be assessed. However, it should be stressed that a piece of 150 words will be able to access the full assessment criteria and if it is well-crafted could attract full marks. In many cases, overlong pieces tend to become repetitive and often irrelevant and communication starts to deteriorate due to growing inaccuracy. Candidates should be encouraged to keep to about 150 words.

Candidates select one writing task from a choice of three, each with bullet points (or questions within in a short stimulus) which must be addressed, although not necessarily in equal measure.

The 20 marks available for this question are sub-divided into:

10 marks	Communication and Content
5 marks	Knowledge and Application of Language
5 marks	Accuracy

The mark grids are printed on page 13 of the Specification (Issue 1).

The grade descriptions for grades A, C and F are printed in the specification on pages 23 – 24. These give a general indication of the required outcomes at the specified grades. The 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph in each set of descriptions refers to the writing. Here is the description of the required outcomes in writing at grade A:

*They write for different purposes and contexts about real or imaginary subjects. They express and explain ideas and points of view. They use a variety of vocabulary, structures and verb tenses. Their spelling and grammar are generally accurate. The message is clear but there may be some errors, especially when they write more complex sentences.*

Task : Sie schreiben einen Bericht über Ihre Familie (ungefähr 150 Wörter) mit folgenden Informationen:

- einige Details über Ihre Familie
- wie Sie sich mit Ihrer Familie verstehen und warum
- was Sie neulich zusammen mit Ihrer Familie gemacht haben
- warum Ihre Familie für Sie so wichtig ist.

**Commentary**

The essay is well constructed: the candidate addresses each bullet point in turn in the order given. This is the best strategy as it makes for a more coherent piece of writing. This candidate has written over 200 words, so this piece of writing can access the full assessment criteria.

**Communication and content:**

The mark for Communication and content will be awarded first. Examiners will read the essay through and consider to what extent the response

- a) is clear (Communication)
- b) addresses all aspects of the task (Content).

#### Communication

Information relating to all 4 bullet points is generally communicated clearly. However, there are a couple of examples of contextual ambiguity:

*...Heutzutage vorbereite ich seine Lieblingsessen.....*  
*...Meine Familie sind so wichtig für mich, weil sie mich kümmern.*

Therefore, we would start by considering the band 7 – 8 *Clear communication with occasional ambiguity* which fits well. The descriptor in the 9 – 10 box *Clear communication with no ambiguity* does not fit quite as well, but we would be looking up towards this box rather than down towards the 5-6 band.

#### Content

This candidate has covered all bullet points relevantly and there is some excellent development in bullets 1, 2 and 3. Bullet 4 is very thin however – in fact, there is just one sentence: *Meine Familie sind so wichtig für mich, weil sie mich kümmern*. The rest of the final paragraph, whilst not exactly irrelevant, does not add anything to the development of the bullet point. The candidate would have been better advised to rein in some of the information in the first 3 bullets to make room for more detail in this final bullet. Nevertheless, the candidate does express and explain ideas and points of view throughout the whole piece.

Again, we would start by looking at the descriptor in the 7 – 8 band *The response is relevant and addresses most aspects of the task*. This seems to fit the piece very well. However, we would again be looking towards the descriptor in the 9 -10: *The response is relevant and fully addresses all aspects of the task*.

#### Overall mark **Communication and Content**

We have to look for the *best fit* mark here i.e. one that best reflects the candidate's performance in both communication and content. A mark of **8** was awarded.

#### **Knowledge and application of Language**

This assessment grid rewards candidates for the range of both vocabulary and structures which they attempt to use. In addition, it rewards their use of a range of tenses. It is important to stress here that the accuracy of these structures is assessed separately in the *Accuracy* grid.

The range of structures and tenses is considered in relation to the defined list of **Linguistic structures for German** (Appendix 1 on pages 29 – 30 of the specification).

#### Range of vocabulary:

This candidate uses a pleasingly wide variety of lexis, both topic related and in general e.g. *Verwandte, Zeitverschwendung, vorbereiten, leiden, heutzutage, glücklicherweise*. There are a couple of good idiomatic phrases: *geht mir auf die Nerven, ich habe die Nase voll*. The overall

impression is most sophisticated and we would certainly be considering the criterion in the 5 band here: *uses a wide range of vocabulary, including some complex lexical items.*

Range of structures:

This candidate deploys an extensive range of structures e.g.

- Inversion
- Coordination with *und, aber,*
- Subordination with *dass, weil, damit*
- Relative clauses
- Um ...zu
- Modal verbs – *sollen, wollen*
- Separable verbs - *auskommen*
- Negatives – *nie, nicht*
- Verbs with the dative
- Pronouns
- Qualifiers - *ziemlich, wirklich*

and so on and so forth. This piece of writing exemplifies a mark of 5 for range of structures.

Range of tenses:

The candidate is able to use a range of tenses most confidently. There are examples in the present, the perfect (with both *haben* and *sein*) and the imperfect tenses. The tenses are skilfully interwoven at times e.g. *Ich habe entdeckt, dass meine Mutter sagt...*The task has no bullet point which specifically requires a use of the future or the conditional, but in the final paragraph the candidate does introduce the future, and also uses the construction *ich hoffe....* which is a future time reference. We would again be looking at a mark of 5 for range of tenses.

### Overall mark for Knowledge and application of Language

This candidate confidently uses a wide range of vocabulary, structures and tenses and this deserves a mark of 5.

### Accuracy

Here we assess how accurate the candidate has been in his/her in the range of language used.

We should bear in mind that this candidate has used a wide range of ambitious structures, as well as sophisticated lexis. There are errors e.g. in the spelling of *eifersüchtig* or in the *um .... zu* clause where the *zu* is omitted, *vorbereiten* is treated as an inseparable verb, but this candidate demonstrates a very firm command of the German language at GCSE level and we must award this 5 for accuracy

### Conclusion

This piece of writing would score 8 + 5 + 5 = 18

It is not a perfect piece of writing: there are flaws in the way the content was exploited, there are more structures in the list of *Linguistic structures for German* which could have been deployed and

the errors in the language could have been corrected, but at this level, performance by a candidate who chose the task wisely based on what s/he knew s/he could write about and for which s/he knew s/he had the linguistic resources.