



Pearson

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In German (5GN03)
Paper 3H: Reading and understanding
in German.

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GCSE German
Unit 3H: Reading
Examiners Report

Unit 3 (Higher): Reading and Understanding

These papers were offered for the eighth time as part of the suite of papers forming the GCSE 2009 specification.

Assessment Principles and Mark Scheme

A maximum of 40 marks are awarded positively for correct information successfully retrieved and conveyed in each paper. All instructions are in English and no question involves target-language writing. The targeted vocabulary on the Foundation paper is drawn from the minimum core vocabulary list. Centres are reminded that questions appear in a sequence of peaks and troughs to encourage candidates to keep going to the end, and that individual questions often follow the sequence of the text and thus usually appear in chronological order. Grade C/D questions are common to both Foundation and Higher Tiers.

Mark Schemes

A few days after the examination, the Principal Examiner considers any possible versions and variants which have emerged from a large number of scripts prior to the marking process. A definitive mark scheme is drawn up which is published in Results Plus after the publication of results.

All tasks are marked positively, with varying marks available for each question according to the information required in the answer or the difficulty of the question. The number of marks available for each question and sub-question is clearly stated within the paper.

Candidates' Responses

The examiners were agreed that the papers this summer for both tiers as a whole represented a good test, that they were user-friendly and fair to all candidates, with well thought-out and interesting questions. The papers as a whole differentiated well between the weaker candidates and the very able ones. The vast majority of candidates had been entered correctly for the Higher Tier.

Question 1

This was the first crossover question which is common to both Foundation and Higher papers and the vast majority of candidates at the A/B borderline fared well although those at the C/D borderline found the question 1iv more challenging. Some candidates had difficulties identifying the attitude of Martin's girlfriend as disappointing. They often opted for nasty which ignored the phrase 'Wie schade!'.
If candidates crossed more than four items than marks were deducted for each extra item. This rule applies to all similar questions on the paper.

Question 2

The second crossover question on 'Future plans' posed no challenge to the best candidates but slightly weaker candidates were often less sure about question 2iv. They were less able to identify the lexical items needed for voluntary work 'freiwillige Arbeit'.

Question 3

The topic of 'Winter holidays' was well-handled by the best candidates but those below grade A found the concept of dealing with different time phrases more difficult in general.

Question 4

Parts of Question 4 proved quite challenging to most candidates as they were too imprecise with their answers and henceforth could not score a point here. Some candidates gave too much information and as the first answer counts they missed out on a mark with erroneous information being written before a correct answer. However, there were also a number of questions this year where even weaker candidates had a good chance of gaining a mark, particularly 4bi and 4e. Question 4a was the hardest question. Although there were several correct answers available, candidates often targeted 'sie verkaufen sich extrem gut' which would be a correct answer if it was rendered successfully into English. Candidates, however, translated it often as 'they have a high price' or 'they cost too much' and could therefore not gain a mark. On the whole, all sections distinguished well between stronger and weaker candidates which is the aim of this type of question requiring individual candidate answers in English.

Question 5

This was the third crossover question and the more able candidates were generally successful in scoring four points in this question, the most difficult part for slightly weaker candidates was section 5iv where the notion of Leisure needed to be connected to coming home late from a party at the weekend.

Question 6

The fourth crossover question was on the whole handled well by most candidates; section 6b required the understanding of German time phrases in order to eliminate a wrong answer. The most able candidates were successful in doing this, it proved more of a challenge to those on the C/D borderline.

Question 7

This question with the topic Bavaria was reasonably well handled and most candidates were able to gain three marks. However, even strong candidates found it quite difficult to connect 'Seglern' and 'bayrische Seen' with 'water sport' and often did not tick the correct box for this item. If candidates ticked or crossed more than the required four boxes, then one mark was deducted from their score for each superfluous box ticked or crossed.

Question 8

The last question on the German Language Olympiad targeted the most able candidates and this was obvious in the number of points scored for the whole section. The most able candidates scored an average of 6 or 7 points whereas weaker candidates often scored only two or three. Therefore, the question differentiated very well. The hardest parts seemed to be the first couple of questions for all candidates whereas 8v was the easiest for all abilities.

Advice and Guidance

Superfluous information, information not contained in the printed target-language material, and self-contradictory combinations of correct and incorrect information earn no credit. Similarly, non-synonymous alternatives can be given no credit. Candidates are encouraged to cross through any alternative answer rather than leaving examiners with a choice, though crossed-out work will be marked where the candidate has not replaced it with an alternative response. Candidates should be aware that if just one mark is on offer, as throughout most questions, they should be giving only one item of information in the answer. However, if it is clear that more than one item of information is being solicited (e.g. Paper 3H question 4biii), then candidates must ensure that they produce the required number of items in their response. Candidate scripts are marked on-screen for this paper and the examiners struggled to read a number of scripts. Some candidates used very faint ink and there were scripts where the quality of the handwriting was extremely poor. Candidates should be reminded to use black ink and to write as clearly as possible. Many responses indicate that candidates are not reading the texts carefully enough. For those candidates aiming at a higher grade it is imperative that they pay attention to the actual content of the texts and that they do not make assumptions. Especially for the task requiring answers in English, candidates should ensure that what they have written is relevant to the question and can be supported by the text. Candidates should also be encouraged to keep their answers as concise as possible as the first answer given will count. It is not advisable for candidates to put down everything they have understood, as this may lead to their losing the mark if they hedge their bets. The space given for the answer is deemed adequate for a full and complete response.

