

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in German (5GN03/3H)
Paper 3H: Reading and Understanding
in German

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GCSE German
Unit 3 Reading and Understanding in German
Examiner Report

Assessment Principles and Mark Scheme

A maximum of 40 marks is awarded positively for correct information successfully retrieved and conveyed in each paper. All instructions are in English and no question involves target-language writing. 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 follow the sequence of the text and thus appear in chronological order. Grade C/D questions are common to both Foundation and Higher Tiers.

Candidates' Responses

The papers this summer for both tiers represented a valid test, which was fair to all candidates. The papers differentiated very 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 fared well. This section required the understanding of different time frames. The most able candidates were successful in doing this. However, it proved more of a challenge to those on the C/D borderline. A number of candidates were unable to identify the vocabulary items 'Ausflug' and 'Fluss' correctly and failed to gain a mark for part 1iv).

Question 2

The second crossover question on the topic of information about a town was handled successfully by the majority of candidates who were able to identify all items correctly and scored full marks.

Question 3

The topic of an exchange partner posed a bit more of a challenge for some candidates. Slightly weaker candidates often missed out on part 3iii) as they could not identify that Nicole's brother was helpful and rather opted for the wrong answer 'positive'.

Question 4

Parts of Question 4 proved quite challenging to most candidates as they were too imprecise with their answers or gave extra and often contradictory information and therefore could not score a mark here. Question 4a) was generally handled well by candidates. They could identify that pupils walked to school and did not have access to technology. Candidates often scored at

least one mark out of two in question 4a) but a high number scored two marks. In question 4b) most candidates managed to score a mark, identifying the concept of 'health' as the correct one rather than just being active as some candidates did.

Most candidates scored at least one mark in question 4c), understanding that parents drove their children to school. A high number of candidates gained a second mark by identifying correctly that parents did not have enough time. Question 4d) proved quite a challenge to most candidates with very few precise answers across the board. Only the very best candidates scored a mark here, correctly identifying that almost all children do sport.

For question 4e), a very high number of candidates were unable to give a satisfactory answer as they often lacked precision, namely mentioning playing often rather than the concept of exerting themselves. The last question was also difficult with only very few candidates including 'passive' in their answer or giving 'wrong food' as the answer which was incorrect. The lexical item 'sondern' seemed to be unknown to quite a number of candidates.

Question 5

This was the third crossover question and the more able candidates were generally successful in scoring four marks in this question. The topic of hobbies seems well-known amongst the majority of candidates and they had no major issues identifying the correct answers although slightly weaker candidates were unable to identify the answers for parts 5ii), 5iii) and 5iv).

Question 6

The fourth crossover question was generally handled well by most, with candidates scoring on average three marks out of four. Weaker candidates often missed out on part G where they were unable to understand the concept that Michael could start work at any time. If candidates ticked or crossed more than the required four boxes, then one mark was deducted from their score for each superfluous box crossed.

Question 7

This question on women's football was generally very well handled. The most able candidates scored four marks here but the slightly weaker candidates found it more difficult to identify all four correct answers; E or F were therefore often not selected as the concepts of salary and role models were not understood.

Question 8

The last question on 'Homework' 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 six or seven marks whereas weaker

candidates often scored only two or three. Therefore, the question differentiated very well.

Weaker candidates had problems across the different sections but the first part was quite a challenge for a good number of candidates. They could not associate the word 'nützlich' when assessing what Tanja thought about homework.

Part 8ii) was often well-handled and most candidates scored a point here. 8iii), however, proved very difficult where most candidates did not select the correct answer. Candidates often opted for answer a) which was incorrect. They seemed not to read the text carefully enough and consider all information given in order to find the correct answer. In 8iv), the concept of 'spielen dabei keine Rolle' was difficult to understand and quite a number of candidates did not score a mark here. Part 8v) was handled better by a number of candidates and more than 50% gained a mark in this section. For question 8vi) candidates again had to read the whole sentence in order to come to the right answer and this proved difficult to quite a few of them. Questions 8vii) and 8viii) also proved quite tricky to most candidates. Candidates are advised to read carefully through the whole section in order to understand the text. Correct answers usually rely on identifying a whole section rather than just understanding a word or two.

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, 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. questions 4a and c), 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. 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 or negate their answer. The space given for the answer is deemed adequate for a full and complete response.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

