



Pearson
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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level

In German (WGN04)

Paper 01: Research, Understanding and

Written Response

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Section A – Listening

Question 1 (Integration)

This opening multiple-choice question caused few problems for most candidates. However, a small number struggled to gain the full 4 marks, particularly by missing the point of part (c). Some candidates chose option, wrongly assuming that Ahmad had no experience in his profession.

Question 2 (Ein Kochprojekt in Neiderberg)

Part (b) proved to be the most challenging. Perhaps the subtlety of in der Grundschule in the question paper as opposed to vor einer Grundschule in the recording was not picked up. However, many candidates scored full marks here.

Question 3 (Die digitale Schule)

The most common wrong answers were at (c) with Arbeitsstunden often chosen rather than Kosten and (d) with many random guesses made rather than the correct gesichert. As always with this question, those who were able to insert a grammatically appropriate word in the gap had a greater chance of success.

Question 4 (Musiktherapie)

Many candidates scored the full 8 marks and managed to give the correct answer without quoting directly from the recording. The least successful candidates simply often tried to transcribe what they heard without listening for the exact detail to answer. While parts (a), (c), (e) and (f) were almost universally correct, parts (b) and (d) occasionally confused candidates: in (b) some only wrote Depressionen or Schlafstörungen which did not give enough detail for the marks; and at (d) some suggested that people were seeking to develop an emotional connection to pop music through the therapy rather than that the emotional connection existed for them already.

Section B – Reading and Grammar

Question 5 (Naturkatastrophe in Sachsen)

As with the multiple-choice questions in Section A, this question was very accessible. Parts (d) and (e) caused problems for a significant number. In (d) it was sometimes assumed that the problems had recently worsened and in (e) that the conditions were worse in Spring.

Question 6 (Rechte am Arbeitsplatz)

Many candidates scored well here, even in (b) which had the more complex question with an imperfect subjunctive with a modal verb. The most common error was in answer to (a) where candidates often did not read the text carefully enough and gave the answer *gemütlich* rather than *ungemütlich* which had to be inferred or *langweilig* which is not stated in or implied by the text.

Question 7 (Obdachlosigkeit)

This more challenging reading task produced a wide spread of marks. To gain full marks it is necessary to read the question carefully and to answer it with precise detail. For example, in (b) candidates often omitted to mention that the tips given by Caritas were practical or that the questions they answered were ethical ones rather than general. Another common problem was in (d) where candidates often simply lifted material from the text rather than answering the question: it was necessary to produce an active verb (eg *werfen* or *schmeißen*) to gain the mark. The phrase *im Müll landet* quoted from the text without any manipulation did not answer the question.

Question 8

Most candidates understood what was expected of them in this question although only a few were able to score full marks. Some less successful candidates omitted all or part of this section or wrote an interpretation of the original sentence rather than manipulating the grammar as the question required.

8(a): Many managed this with ease, but some failed to produce the noun with a dative -n ending.

8(b): The present tense *einschreitet* was well-known, but some failed to gain the mark by simply reproducing *aktives*.

8(c): This was generally well answered but occasionally candidates omitted the infinitive *geben* at the end.

8(d): Only the most successful recognised the need for a subjunctive verb to indicate reported speech.

8(e): The majority managed to manipulate the construction and to give the required nominative masculine article with *Arbeitgeber*.

8(f): This was almost universally successful, with most candidates managing the adjectival nouns *Wohnungslose* or *Obdachlose* or a relative clause.

8(g): The mark was often withheld because the irregular present tense *empfiehl*t omitted a letter.

8(h): The infinitive construction with *zu* was well managed.

8(i): Only a few candidates were unable to produce the correctly spelled past participle *bewiesen*.

8(j): Many recognised that the *sich* in the stem required the infinitive *interessieren* and scored the mark if this was spelled correctly.

Section C

Marks are awarded in Section C for Content and Communication (out of 15) and Critical Analysis, Organisation and Development (out of 20) as well as for Quality of Language (out of 5). Whilst many can write fluently in German using a wide range of complex structures and therefore gain high marks for Quality of Language, there is often a tendency to resort to narrative accounts which lack incisive critical analysis of the question or a failure to select relevant detail from knowledge of the topic, text or film. Some candidates simply write down everything they know about their chosen work regardless of relevance to the question. The most successful answers are incisive and thoughtful, have a clear paragraph structure in which the first sentence of each paragraph indicates clearly the next step of the argument and contain a wealth of carefully selected detail without extraneous irrelevant material.

Geografisches Gebiet

9(b) was answered more successfully than 9(a). In the latter, many were able to describe a festival but did not explore its relevance to the modern world adequately. For example, descriptions of the Oktoberfest were often full of details about beer tents, attractions and tourist numbers, but did not explore the differences and similarities between the historical origins of the event and its present-day economic importance for Munich. Question 9(b) gave rise to interesting explorations caused by environmental, socio-economic or demographic changes in a variety of regions ranging from Berlin to Stuttgart to Switzerland. The most successful essays had a wealth of detail and critical analysis supported by evidence of research into the topic including, for example, recent statistics or information from reliable news sources.

Geschichtliche Studien

It is important that the period of historical study refers to a German-speaking country. Essays about the successes of an American president or general essays about the industrial era which are not rooted in a German-speaking country cannot be awarded any marks.

10(b) was slightly more popular, and both 10(a) and 10(b) usually focused on the perceived successes of the Nazi regime or the aims of Adolf Hitler after the failure of the Weimar Republic. Candidates who concentrated on the era of the GDR often failed to make clear

exactly what historical period they were writing about. Some claimed to be writing about the whole period of the GDR's existence but wrote only about the fall of the Berlin Wall. However, essays on history were successful when the candidate grasped the relevance of the key word *inwiefern* and took the opportunity to evaluate both sides of the question. To gain marks in the top bands candidates need to do more than simply describe events or give historical narrative: it is more important to explore the issues arising from the question from a personal point of view.

Literatur

Der Besuch der alten Dame and *Stern ohne Himmel* continue to be the most popular texts and there was a broad range of performance from the very weak to the outstanding.

Particularly in response to the play many candidates cannot resist to give irrelevant details about the performance history or to relate the whole plot without actually focusing on details from the play which help make points about the essay title. However, there were many convincing and interesting essays on 12(b) about Claire's experiences as a woman. These focussed on her rejection from the town, her experiences in Hamburg, the death of her child and her subsequent marriage followed by an assessment of her present state of mind, her treatment of men and her demands for Ill's death. Only the best responses weighed up the extent to which these consequences were understandable.

Essays on *Stern ohne Himmel* were equally divided between option (a) and option (b). Many candidates who wrote about Abiram's situation were able to describe this well and also to explain what the young people did after finding him in the cellar. Only a few went further and described the emotional and psychological effect that the discovery had and drew conclusions about the moral changes in the characters in the novel. Those who chose option (b) were usually aware of the issues and wrote about various characters but rarely managed to produce a coherent argument which separated the strong moral characters from the weaker ones. As a result, the essays tended to be disjointed and often failed to reach a strong conclusion.

Film

A good selection of essays was presented on all five films.

It was notable that in comparison to the literature section, fewer candidates showed an inability to analyse. This year, *Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei*, the most popular choice of film, produced some interesting evaluations, particularly in response to 20(a) about the theme of capitalism. Many candidates were able to analyse the role of Hardenberg and the young people's protests in this context and to evaluate how much sympathy the viewer had for the message of the film. Essays on the role of Jule were more likely to resort to a retelling of the plot. Many were able to explain her role in the film, but only the most successful managed to evaluate her strengths and weaknesses.

Die Fälscher and Almany, Willkommen in Deutschland also gave rise to some interesting responses. Candidates had no difficulty describing the conditions in which the counterfeiters were working; but many essays then missed the opportunity to explore the various reactions to these conditions and categorise them in abstract terms without simply describing what characters did. Those who wrote about the use of language in the Samardeli film fell into a similar trap: anecdotal evidence about Fatma's shopping trips or Cenk's experiences in Turkey were all clear but there were few who managed to explore the second, more important part of the essay question by concluding, for example, that language is crucial for true integration, but can occasionally prevent people from engaging with their cultural heritage.

Conclusion

To prepare for success in this paper, candidates should:

- Familiarise themselves with all topic areas listed in the specification.
- Develop as wide a range of vocabulary as possible.
- Practise reading and listening to passages of German with a view to extracting the most important information and become used to rewording the details in the written or spoken text succinctly.
- Become familiar with German grammatical usage, concentrating on complex verb forms and the fine details of declension of adjectives and nouns.
- Study their chosen topic, literary text or film in detail, considering various aspects in the course of their studies.
- Practise the skill of planning and writing an essay in clear paragraphs which focus on analysis rather than on narrative.

