

GERMAN

Paper 9780/01
Speaking

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, consider the issue raised in their chosen article and their own reaction(s) to it
- in Part II, choose a subject which genuinely interests them and which clearly relates to a country where the target language is spoken
- in Parts I and II, be prepared to take the lead in the conversation
- in Parts I and II, be ready to engage in a natural and spontaneous discussion.

General comments

The sixth series of this examination was tackled very successfully by the majority of the candidates. Most approached both sections of the Speaking Test with confidence and were able to cope with their different demands, due to their careful preparation and the valuable guidance they had received from their teachers. All candidates (including those in Centres new to this specification) were familiar with the format of the examination and had obviously been well prepared.

The key to success in the oral component of this exam is effective communication and a willingness on the part of the candidates to demonstrate factual knowledge and to offer views on a variety of topics. Candidates need to have a wide range of structures and vocabulary at their disposal, and they need to be confident about using them. In order to be considered for the highest marks it is also important that they show versatility in responding to unexpected questions.

Comments on specific tasks

Part 1

Four articles under the general headings of travel and tourism, human relationships, war and peace and food and drink were offered, with candidates choosing one at the start of their preparation time. All four articles proved accessible, and candidates presented a wide range of ideas and personal views on each of the topics to which they were linked. All four cards were chosen but the text entitled *Der Tag, an dem Facebook stillstand* (under human relationships) was the most popular. The texts *Gesünder leben – ohne Fleisch und tierische Produkte?* (Food and drink) and *Ökologisch reisen – eine realistische Zukunftsversion* (travel and tourism) were also chosen by a good number of candidates. The text *Das Österreichische Bundesheer im Ausland* (war and peace) was chosen by fewer, but in most cases highly competent, candidates.

Candidates are given the opportunity during the preparation period to make brief notes on a separate sheet of paper. These notes can be used as prompts or reminders during the examination, but must not impede a spontaneous and genuine conversation. The large majority of candidates arrived in the exam room with a concise set of notes and used them wisely.

After choosing their card in the first two minutes of the preparation period, candidates then study the article and prepare to give a brief summary of the main points raised in the article. The preparation period also offers a chance to formulate views on issues arising directly from the article and on broader issues related to the general topic area. Most candidates explored the articles and the wider topic areas very successfully. Although candidates were clear about the fact that no specialist in-depth knowledge was required, the best conversations occurred where candidates had clear and well thought-through ideas and opinions on their chosen topic.

The majority of candidates showed very good to excellent understanding of the articles and offered interesting views on the issues raised in them. Similarly, many candidates were able to score high marks for Range and Accuracy as well as Pronunciation and Intonation. It was evident that they had been taught the linguistic skills needed to communicate competently and spontaneously. It was also clear that candidates were aware that their performance is marked positively and that ambitious use of complex linguistic structures and vocabulary is often rewarded. Most candidates made good, and in some cases excellent, attempts to lead the conversation.

Card 1: Ökologisch reisen – eine realistische Zukunftsvision?

Most candidates who chose this text summarised it without difficulties and presented a range of opinions on the issues arising from it. Questions on the text covered the topics of protecting ecosystems, the dangers to the environment posed by the ski industry in the Alps and the ecological and economic aspects of air travel and sustainable transport. Questions on wider issues dealt with the potential conflict tourism creates between ecological interests and need to develop local economies, the effects of mass tourism on the natural environment, the educational benefits of travel, alternative means of transport and the future of ecotourism.

Card 2: Der Tag, an dem Facebook stillstand

This article was chosen by a good number of candidates. Discussing some of the wider issues that went beyond the scope of the article and the candidate's personal experience with social media proved challenging to a number of weaker candidates. At the other end of the spectrum, candidates explored the role of social media in the Arab Spring and the war in Syria, as well as other aspects related to the interface between social media and current affairs, with great confidence. Questions on the text covered the importance of Facebook and other social media for young people and the potential dangers associated with their use; whether one should be allowed to use the internet for private purposes during work hours; and how candidates themselves would react in the event of Facebook not being available. Wider discussions touched on issues of privacy associated with social media; the potential dangers for young people of hiding in a virtual world; cyber bullying; and the potential drawbacks of virtual (as opposed to face-to-face) communication.

Card 3: Das Österreichische Bundesheer im Ausland

This text was chosen by a relatively small number of candidates, but the quality of the discussions offered on this card was almost invariably excellent in every respect, as most candidates who chose this card had well-argued ideas and persuasively formulated opinions on the topic. Some of the questions on the text touched on possible justifications for the use of soldiers in foreign countries, including the provision of humanitarian aid; and the training of local armies as a means to limit the destruction caused by war. Wider discussions explored the role played by armies in today's world; the dangers of terrorism and ways of combating it; and the contributions that armies (as well as other organisations and individuals) can make to world peace.

Card 4: Gesünder leben – ohne Fleisch und tierische Produkte?

Candidates approached this article from a range of different angles (including from a vegetarian and from an omnivorous angle) and many discussions were excellent. Summarising the text caused no real difficulties. Questions on the text covered the potential advantages of a vegetarian/vegan diet; the importance of producing food organically and ethically; and using fair-trade and local produce. Wider issues raised included healthy food consumption; the potential dangers of fast food; the importance of young people being educated towards living healthily; and the potential advantages and disadvantages of genetically modified food.

Part 2

This section of the speaking test was, with only a small number of exceptions, done very well. Many candidates had evidently chosen and diligently researched topics of genuine interest to them. Without exception, topics were discussed maturely and quite often with a good degree of finesse.

At the start of the topic discussion, candidates were often invited to give reasons for their choice of topic. The discussions then followed the five to eight headings previously submitted. The majority of the candidates had excellent factual knowledge at their fingertips. In addition, many candidates coped well with unexpected questions asking for clarification, analysis, comparisons and personal opinions. Many discussions were highly impressive in terms of content and linguistic competence. Sound factual knowledge

was usually matched by an ambitious range of linguistic structures, as well as good pronunciation and intonation. The range of vocabulary offered by candidates was impressive in many cases.

The range of topics was again wide and included historical figures and events, various aspects of music, the arts, film, literature, politics, current affairs and the environment.

The following list gives an impression of the breadth of choice this year:

- *Mahler – Dritte Symphonie*
- *Richard Strauß: Großer Komponist ohne eine große Persönlichkeit*
- *J.S. Bach: ‘Großvater der Orgelmusik’*
- *Inwieweit präsentiert deutscher Hip Hop die Jugend und Multikulti Kultur in Deutschland?*
- *Jazzmusik in Deutschland vom Kaiserreich bis zum zweiten Weltkrieg*
- *Oskar Kokoschka*
- *Entartete Kunst*
- *Interpretationsmöglichkeiten von Kafkas Roman ‘Das Schloss’*
- *Thomas Mann und Buddenbrooks*
- *Leni Riefenstahl: Künstlerisches Genie oder politischer Schwachkopf?*
- *Gustav Stresemann*
- *Oskar Schindler*
- *Friedrich der Große und die Aufklärung*
- *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: einer der größten Theologen des 20. Jahrhunderts*
- *Sissi*
- *Das Wirtschaftswunder*
- *Die deutsche Wirtschaft zwischen 1919 und 1933*
- *Der 9. November in der deutschen Geschichte*
- *Das Kabinett des Dr Caligari*
- *Welche Auswirkungen hat der Klimawandel auf die Tourismusindustrie in Tirol?*
- *Science Fiction und Deutschland*
- *PEGIDA*
- *Integration der ausländischen Kinder in der BRD: Wird das deutsche Bildungssystem den Migrantenkindern gerecht?*
- *Grafik Design in Deutschland*
- *Das Schweizer Kantonsystem*
- *Deutsche Autos*

Communication with Centres in the lead up to the examinations was generally efficient and effective. Agreement about exam dates was also reached easily in most cases and candidate topic sheets were sent to the visiting examiner in good time. It was really appreciated when centres gave an early indication of their candidates’ topics as this allowed the Visiting Examiner more time to prepare.

Finally, there is no doubt that candidates had taken a great deal of care to prepare in-depth for this examination. Their hard work, enthusiasm and readiness to interact with an unknown Visiting Examiner were evident throughout, ensuring in many cases that what might have been a nervous situation was in fact a highly successful dialogue.

GERMAN

Paper 9780/02

Reading and Listening

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- focus only on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers
- pay particular attention to conveying the required information in unambiguous language.

General comments

In the Reading part of the examination (**Part I**), candidates are expected to answer two sets of questions – one in German, the other in English – and to translate a short passage from English into German. For the Listening part of the examination (**Part II**), candidates listen to three recordings in German. They answer two sets of questions – one in German and another in English – and write a guided summary on the third recording. The questions are carefully worded and require an equally precise response. Overall, candidates performed well this year.

Comments on specific questions

Part I – Lesetext 1

Most candidates produced good answers in this exercise. Weaker candidates struggled to express themselves clearly in German.

Question 1

Some candidates provided answers that were not specific enough to be awarded the mark (e.g. ‘*in Hessen*’). The key bit of information to convey here was that one is not allowed to dance in public (*in der Öffentlichkeit, an öffentlichen Orten* etc.). Several candidates appeared to have misread the question and offered responses that referred to when one is not allowed to dance.

Question 2

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 3

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 4

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 5

Several candidates answered this question by simply quoting from the text (*die Fete des Jahres, feiern bis die T-Shirts qualmen*). Good answers gave evidence that these expressions had been properly understood, for example: *eine gute/heiße/lustige/fröhliche Stimmung*.

Question 6

Many candidates answered this question correctly. Some, however, provided information that did not tie in with the specific focus of the question (for example: *sie lassen Leute rein; sie schenken Alkohol aus*).

Question 7

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 8

Most candidates answered this question correctly, while others did not convey with sufficient clarity that Good Friday is the holiest (*der höchste*) Christian holiday, not just an important holiday, according to Pfarrer Christoph Meier.

Question 9

Most candidates answered the first part of this question correctly, but many did not convey clearly that young people are not aware of the importance of Easter because they do not understand that Western culture is based on Christianity.

Part I – Lesetext 2

Overall, this exercise generated good responses. A good range of vocabulary was important. Candidates whose answers were imprecise missed out on several marks. This was particularly the case in **Questions 10 and 14**.

Question 10

Some candidates were not awarded a mark for this question because they said that using internet services is convenient and cheap. The question required candidates to identify the biggest (*vor allem*) advantage according to the text, which is that it is cheap.

Question 11

Generally, this question was answered correctly. Some candidates responded that the money was paid in cash, which was not relevant to the price charged.

Question 12

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 13

A high proportion of the candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 14

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 15

Two marks were on offer in this question. A number of candidates responded that journeys can be booked at short notice with smaller providers, which was awarded one mark. The second mark was awarded for identifying that smaller providers can offer car-pooling opportunities for short journeys. Some candidates answered that journeys could be booked at short notice and spontaneously with smaller providers. In such cases, only one mark was awarded as these advantages come down to the same thing.

Question 16

A high number of candidates answered this question correctly, although some did not refer to the latest trend but to the average age of the majority of users instead.

Question 17

This question was generally answered correctly.

Part 1 - Lesetext 3

This exercise requires a good range of vocabulary as well as sound grammar. In spite of the challenges, many candidates completed the task successfully. Candidates should remember to cross out their draft answers and/or notes.

Question 18

With two exceptions (pluperfect, future I), the passage required either the simple past or the perfect tense. The most common grammatical difficulties encountered were with verb-subject agreement, possessive articles, adjectival endings and word order. Other grammatical challenges included the use of the infinitive with *zu* (*um ... zu besuchen*), the passive voice (*wurde abgesagt*) and separable verbs (*aus|probieren, an|schauen, Kontakt auf|nehmen*). Vocabulary and idiom which caused particular challenges included: *die Mitfahrzentrale, zu einem von ihnen* and adverbs, such as *leider, letztendlich, schließlich* and *allerdings*.

Part II - Hörtext 1

As with the first two reading exercises, full sentences are usually not required for a correct response. Most candidates did well in this exercise.

Question 19

This question required candidates to provide two pieces of information. While most candidates provided the information that the situation was at its worst in the winter semester, some did not convey clearly that this was due to the fact that more candidates join German universities in the winter semester than in the summer semester. Answers that stated that *viele Studenten* or *mehrere Studenten* join in the winter semester were not awarded the second mark.

Question 20

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 21

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 22

A number of candidates did not understand the phrase *private Vermieter*, as evident from a variety of misspellings.

Question 23

Most candidates answered the question correctly, although some supplied an answer that simply repeated the question (for example: *Weil sie nahe bei der Universität wohnen wollen*).

Question 24

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Part II - Hörtext 2

Question 25

Some candidates struggled to understand the exact circumstances in which Hallerson met the children.

Question 26

Most candidates provided the correct answer.

Question 27

Not all candidates included in their answer the idea that the bundles of sweets were tied to miniature parachutes and were therefore not awarded the mark.

Question 28

In **28(b)** a number of candidates did not convey the idea of Hallerson wagging his plane clearly enough.

Question 29

The majority of candidates were awarded the first mark for this question. Some, however, were not awarded the second mark because of the ambiguous use of the personal pronoun 'he' which opened up the suggestion that the children's letters might have been addressed to the commander.

Question 30

Some candidates invalidated their answers by stating that only one American child sent the pilots sweets and home-made miniature parachutes.

Part II - Hörtext 3

As in previous years, the summary proved to be a particularly challenging exercise for some candidates. Candidates had to be disciplined in order to be able to cover all four bullet points within the word limit. Several candidates lost marks by writing too many words or through lack of precision. Most candidates, nevertheless, did quite well. Candidates should remember to cross out any drafts and/or notes in future.

Question 32

- *activities undertaken by Hausmann's group*

Most candidates received marks for mentioning that Hausmann's group advises cities and companies about their lighting systems and measures light pollution. Not all candidates, however, explained the idea of 'star parks' clearly.

- *effects of light pollution*

This bullet point did not present any particular difficulties for most candidates.

- *suggested courses of action*

This bullet point proved challenging for a fair number of candidates. Some responses were vague on the use of shaded light. Others asserted that churches should switch their lights inside off at night when what was actually proposed was that churches should not be illuminated from the outside.

- *recent developments in European countries*

Most candidates received marks for mentioning the introduction of new laws for the introduction of special street lights in Italy and Slovenia and the fact that many European countries are following suit. Only a few candidates, however, mentioned that this is the first piece of legislation of its kind that has proved to be effective.

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Paper 9780/03
Writing and Usage

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, choose a title on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and lexis
- in Part I, plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments
- in Part I, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in Part II, read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in Parts I and II, carefully proofread their responses.

General comments

The *Writing and Usage* component of the examination consists of two parts:

- In **Part I** candidates have to write a discursive essay which in terms of content not only tests their skill in expressing their ideas in German but also their ability to organise their thoughts on paper successfully. In linguistic terms the essay requires candidates to apply a variety of complex grammatical structures correctly and to show their command of German vocabulary and idiom.
- In **Part II** candidates are asked to conjugate verbs (*Übung 1*), transform sentences (*Übung 2*) and fill in missing words in a continuous text by means of multiple choice (*Übung 3*).

Both parts of the examination require detailed and thorough knowledge of grammar as well as confidence in its application. Furthermore, in **Part I** candidates have to demonstrate the ability to evaluate, describe and analyse the topic of their choice.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive Essay (Question 1)

Two of the five possible topics proved particularly popular this year: topic **(a)** about whose responsibility it ought to be – the family's or the state's – to look after elderly and sick relatives; and topic **(c)** on whether drug-addicted criminals should be sent to prison or placed in rehabilitation clinics.

It is essential that candidates read the questions very carefully and address all aspects, always checking whether what they are writing is pertinent. This proved particularly relevant in the case of topic **(b)** on the subject of the lack of women at the top (*Frauen an der Spitze*). Several candidates wrote good essays about the lack of equality between the genders, but failed to refer adequately to the specific aspect of women in top/senior roles.

Good time-management is equally important. A number of candidates wrote essays which either bore the marks of a hurried and rather unsatisfactory conclusion or which lacked a conclusion altogether.

Candidates should also be wary of using sentences or phrases learnt by heart. A sentence such as '*Dem Thema XYZ wird in den Medien derzeit große Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt*' may look good, but is not necessarily applicable to every topic and may therefore detract from the point or argument the candidate wishes to put across.

The majority of candidates, however, explored the main issues of their chosen topic successfully, with many going on to develop their ideas into coherent arguments and thereby producing very convincing essays.

Structuring the essay

An essay should be seen as an argument. The writer is seeking to persuade the reader of the validity of their argument or arguments. One valid approach is to provide a balanced view of the topic under discussion, e.g. by putting forward counterarguments first and concluding with one's own arguments in order to demonstrate their superiority. Clear paragraphing helps structure a coherent argument. Candidates should use one paragraph for each main point they wish to make in order to avoid repetition and to make it easier for the reader to follow the train of thought.

Part II: Usage

The majority of candidates did well in this part of the paper. The most challenging question was **Question 11**, which required the candidate to transpose direct speech into reported speech. **Question 9** also caused some difficulty as it required candidates to nominalise a verb as well as to turn two main clauses into a main and a subordinate clause.

Übung 1 (Questions 2–6)

Most candidates completed this task successfully. All candidates heeded the instruction to rewrite the entire sentence and most used the correct verb form for **Questions 2** (imperative) and **3** (infinitive with *zu*). Many candidates also did well in **Question 6**, even though the required tense (future perfect) is not very commonly used. **Question 4** proved slightly more challenging, with a number of candidates struggling to distinguish between the ordinary past participle of the verb *werden* (*geworden*) and the passive form (*worden*). Several candidates were unable to form the past subjunctive (*Konjunktiv II*) required for **Question 5**.

Übung 2 (Questions 7–11)

The second exercise in **Part II** proved more challenging than the first. The majority of candidates had no difficulties with **Questions 7** and **8**. However, a significant number of candidates found it difficult to answer **Question 9** correctly. It required them to nominalise the verb *modernisieren* (or to turn it into an adjective). Several correct nominalisations were spoiled by candidates omitting to put them in the right case (accusative because of the preposition *durch*). The most challenging question, as mentioned above, however, proved to be **Question 11**, which required candidates to transpose direct speech into reported speech. The difficulty was compounded by having to conjugate the verb *tun* in the third person of either *Konjunktiv I* (*tue*) or *Konjunktiv II* (*täte*).

Übung 3 (Questions 12–31)

Candidates generally did very well in this gap-filling exercise which required them to choose the correct word (preposition, adverb, verb, case, etc.) from four options.

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Paper 9780/04
Topics and Texts

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the question with care and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close attention to the question
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid simply retelling the story.

General comments

It was good to see a broad range of material in both the Topics and Texts parts of the paper attempted and it was evident that the vast majority of candidates had been both stimulated and challenged by the works studied. Centres showed that they were familiar with the expectations of the examination with a strong cohort of scripts in the most part. Compared to last year, on average, the answers in the Topics section of the paper proved to be slightly stronger. It is still the case, however, that some weaker scripts in this part of the paper did not show enough knowledge, understanding and illustration of the thematic and comparative issues arising from the works. Weaker answers tended towards a generalised and superficial reading of texts and films, which often manifested itself in the retelling of story lines and other forms of padding. Planning was not always in evidence, and further practice in the structuring of essays is therefore advisable. The comparative nature of the questions is reflected in the mark scheme and candidates are urged to keep this in mind at all times when formulating a response and to be wary of neglecting one of the two works they are asked to base their answer on.

The range of German was good in the vast majority of scripts and some candidates proved to be more than capable of composing essays of some length whilst maintaining complete focus on the terms of the question set. However, basic linguistic errors occurred and Centres are advised to take heed of common problems. A sample of common mistakes is included here:

Spelling and agreement of *beide*

glauben an + acc

die Figur (gender and plural)

stark and *stärker* (confusion in the use of the *umlaut*)

gender and plural of *Film*

darstellen (separable verb)

das Mitgefühl (gender and plural)

wer (used as a relative pronoun)

confusion between *die Schule* and *der Schüler*

beeinflussen (need for a double 'e')

das Thema (gender and plural)

Erwachsene/Jugendliche (problems with adjectival nouns)

kontrollieren used instead of *unter Kontrolle halten/bringen*

Faschismus (spelling)

Hemd (gender and adjectival agreements)

für (umlaut missing sometimes)

der Charakter (spelling)

confusion between the use of *könnte* and *konnte*

wählen (without the umlaut)

die Tat(-en) (wrong plurals)

Fälscher (without the umlaut)

er weiß (often misconjugated)

müssen (often without the umlaut)

Fassbinder (not Fassbender)

Nazis (not Nazi's)

ausgegrenzt (often misspelt)

Individualismus (often misspelt)

Gesichte used instead of *Geschichte*)

die Stadt (often confused with and written as 'Staat' and 'statt')

Misspelt character names, for example 'Lehman' instead of Lehmann

Some weaker candidates struggled to command a core vocabulary. In responding to questions in the Topics section candidates would be well-advised to learn and consolidate the words, phrases and idioms necessary to convey their views. Equally, practice in timed conditions may help.

All topics apart from *Kleinstadtleben* were tackled this year. There was good targeting of the precise terms of the questions, although there was a handful of instances in which the use of pre-learnt material, irrelevance and/or overreliance on narrative came into play.

In most answers a good balance was struck between the two works chosen. Detailed reference and/or quotation allied to analysis were very much in evidence in the best responses. It was good to see that candidates at all Centres referred to no more and no less than two works, which clearly helped to improve the focus of answers in this part of the examination in comparison to previous years. Centres should be aware that the word limits are for guidance only in Paper 4. In some scripts it was evident that candidates had been counting words as they went on, which may have distracted them from fulfilling the task with the necessary degree of focus.

The aim of the study of literary texts for the second part of this paper is to encourage literary appreciation through detailed analysis. This year's candidates produced a good range of responses, although the number of texts selected was fewer than in the past. It is clear that candidates are gradually improving answering essay questions in English, with effective structuring of essays very much in evidence amongst the best scripts. Unfortunately, the quality of the planning in general is still rather inconsistent and candidates would be well advised to use the time allowed to think through the implications of the questions and craft a clear line of argument before putting pen to paper for the essay proper. The best answers combined sustained analysis with a sufficiently broad take on the question. Quotations were generally used well as were direct references and paraphrases. Weaker candidates tended not to plan their answers effectively and drifted towards narrative and generalisation rather too readily, as was also the case in the Topics part of the paper. It is recommended that close reading of the mark scheme form part of the

preparation of candidates, with specific focus on the descriptors in the 'good' and 'very good' boxes. There is still a tendency for some candidates to see introductions as a means of communicating generalisations or a means of restating the question. It is important for candidates to define their approach to the question briefly in their introductions and then to lay out their essay accordingly.

This year, reversing a trend of recent times, there were fewer commentaries offered. Performances were a little mixed and some candidates struggled to locate the passage within the work. In a commentary a close reading of the extract is required, coupled with sustained analysis. Weaker scripts tended to retell the narrative of the extract and offered an analysis of certain aspects of the passage which rather lacked in depth. Candidates attempting commentary questions should be encouraged to refer to the line numbers given in the paper to save them the time and trouble of copying long sections of the printed extract. Some of the best answers showed sustained analysis of the extract and skill in linking it to the wider themes of the books in question. In delivering the syllabus, practising commentary is a very fruitful way of engaging with the text, regardless of whether a candidate will end up choosing a commentary question in their examination. Candidates are reminded that quotations on their own are not enough to make a point without proper analysis.

Candidates should be strongly encouraged to number each question carefully. It would also help if candidates would start a new side in their answer booklet for their second essay. Handwriting was fair, with fewer incidences of scripts which were difficult to read, but it is important to be clear with endings in German, particularly with words ending in 'm' or 'n'. Candidates should be strongly encouraged to ensure their scripts are legible. One way in which Centres could help is by asking their candidates to handwrite regular assignments.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Topics

Four topics attracted responses: **Topic 1 *Ideologie***, **Topic 2 *Die NS-Zeit***, **Topic 3 *Einwanderung***, and **Topic 5 *Berlin***. Reports will only be given on questions attempted by more than one candidate.

The standard of written German was fairly good this year, although a little more variable than in previous sessions. At the top there were some finely-crafted answers, revealing excellent fluency and considerable nuance. At the other end there were problems with basic verb conjugation and verb placement. At times cases were also less than secure and it would seem that the need for linguistic accuracy may have been underestimated by some. The gender of a number of crucial nouns was not always known (*Roman, Buch, Film*) and there were some problems with weak masculine nouns (e.g. *Staat, Mensch*) in oblique cases and some common conjunctions (e.g. *als, wenn*). When to use *mann* or *man* continues to be a source of some confusion. Candidates should be reminded that it is customary to use the present tense as the default tense when discussing the action in a text or film. The shortening of names is not appropriate (e.g. 'HL' for Herr Lehmann or AESA for *Angst essen Seele auf*).

Question 1 A

This was the most popular question of the Topics section. Scripts generally displayed an assured grip on the chosen sources, with many different angles on the question taken; some looked at the contrast between the individual and a specific ideology, while others analysed how an ideology influenced the individual; others again looked at how ideologies can develop powerful group dynamics and how these come to dominate individuals. Weaker scripts struggled with the term 'ideology' and did not examine any differentiation of the concept between the works. Some candidates rather tied themselves in knots with abstract notions of ideology and therefore lost sight of the works under discussion. At times this was linked to overlong references to the historical circumstances of the Nazi period and the 1968 generation, which then led to a lack of focus on concrete examples. On the whole, discussion of ideology in *Die Welle* was more assured than that of the other works.

Question 2 A

This proved a popular question. Candidates were often successful in identifying stark contrasts between the two works they chose. Analyses of different forms of resistance were also well elucidated and explained. *Die Fälscher* proved a popular film, with the contrasting actions of Burger and Sorowitsch bringing the question into sharp relief. A handful of candidates did not mention the latter at all and hence missed the chance to describe his evolution into a central figure of resistance. Treatment of *Jugend ohne Gott* was stronger than last year, with the best candidates showing excellent knowledge and understanding. Some

candidates referred to *Hitlerjunge Salomon* and were often successful in contrasting the limited options open to Solly but sometimes overlooked the significance of some of the secondary characters, for example Leni's mother.

Question 2 B

This question attracted a handful of answers. At times the take on the question was rather narrow, with propaganda taken in some scripts as being the only relevant *Methode*. Similarly, some of the approaches taken to *Die Fälscher* focused only on the concentration camps at the expense of other *NS-Methoden* which might also have been usefully discussed. Treatment of *NS-Methoden* depicted in *Hitlerjunge Salomon* was rather better handled. Although *Jugend ohne Gott* was written in 1937, that is before the *NS-Methoden* had reached their brutal pinnacle, they were discussed to good effect in many essays, as was *der Lehrer's* growing awareness of them in the course of the work. Weaker answers tended towards retelling the story after a hasty introduction in which the notion of *NS-Methoden* was barely touched upon.

Question 3 B

This was the more popular question on *Einwanderung*, with some very strong answers in evidence. The notion of isolation was often well-explored, with good analysis of the social mechanisms behind it. Some candidates explored other, related themes, such as love and friendship, countering the contention of the statement presented in the question, yet on occasion a lengthy exploration proved a distraction from the task at hand. *Dreck* was found to have been a stimulating text and the best answers discerned how its monologue form placed its readership in the isolated position of the narrator, making them aware not only of Sad's cruel linguistic and cultural isolation but also of German society's complicity in creating the circumstances he finds himself in. Some candidates wrote well about the sense of isolation created by Fassbinder's camera lens, as well as by 1970s Munich society, and in general were very convincing in their appreciation of the film. Some answers were highly cogent, with the best candidates writing with sustained focus; others wrote too much and lost sight of the question.

Question 5 A

This question elicited some good answers. Weaker scripts struggled to show more than superficial knowledge of Kaminer's *Schönhauser Allee* and drifted towards generalisation. With a collection of short stories it is advisable for candidates to focus their answer on a small number (three or four perhaps) so they can present ideas pertinent to the title in a focused way. With *Herr Lehmann*, too, there were problems with giving precise examples from the film with which to back up arguments. Most candidates were able to compare and contrast the treatment of chaos in the two works they had studied, with chaos understood in different and valid ways. Interestingly, for example, Herr Lehmann's inaction was seen as the opposite of chaotic by some candidates.

Question 5 B

The range of Berliners in *Schönhauser Allee* was impressively handled by the best candidates, but at the weaker end rather too much generalisation was in evidence. Again, as for **5 A**, it was important to give precise examples from the collection, and weaker candidates struggled on occasion to do so, with the titles of stories also not always clear. The West Berlin of *Herr Lehmann* and the unified capital in Kaminer's work were well contrasted in some scripts, but generally more could have been made of the differences between the two representations of the city in a number of other responses. Again the illustration from both texts was rather patchy in weaker scripts and comments made above for **5 A** hold true for this question too.

Part II: Texts

Four texts attracted responses: *Maria Stuart*, *Frühlings Erwachen*, *Schachnovelle* and *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan*. As in previous sessions, a small number of scripts contained rather woolly introductions, often giving potted plot summaries or general references to the work rather than focusing on the specific terms of the question.

Some candidates lacked a sufficiently strong critical vocabulary and, as with the Topics, some formal learning of appropriate terms and register is strongly recommended.

Question 6 A

Some of the responses to this question lacked the analytical angle required for a critical commentary. Weaker candidates gave a general, blow-by-blow account of the scene, with some responses verging on translation rather than a fulfilment of the task to discuss what the passage revealed about Maria's character. It is vital therefore to read and analyse the lines of the scene with this task in mind, looking at the way in which Maria is faced with a situation of great stress and finds herself unable to control her emotions as she builds up to her disastrous meeting with Elizabeth. The extract should also be placed in the context of the rest of the play, for example with reference to the next scene and the changes in Maria's character revealed at the end of the play.

Question 6B

Candidates were generally more successful answering this question than the previous one, with most showing a thoughtful approach to the different challenges facing Elizabeth in the play. Effective comparisons were made with Maria. The wider political problems with which the monarch must grapple in her increasingly isolated position were also discussed in good detail. Candidates made apposite references too but a little more analysis of these references and of the quotations given would have boosted their scores further.

Question 9 B

Candidates responded well to the text and produced solid answers to this question. Interesting parallels between the fates of Melchior and Wendla were drawn well in support of the statement presented for discussion in the question. Some candidates weighed up the statement in a more subtle way by taking secondary characters, such as Moritz, into account, which was impressive. The role of the *vermummte Herr* was not always explored as successfully. Some candidates also looked at the role played by parents and parenting as a key element to the notion of freedom, with some seeing Melchior as free, but only relatively so. Some candidates quoted from the text in English, and future candidates are therefore reminded that quotations must always be in German. Others referred to the work as a novel and seemed not always to appreciate the theatrical nature of the work.

Question 9 C

This question attracted a handful of answers. On occasion it seemed that knowledge of the parents was not always as solid and precise as it should have been. There are different parenting styles at play: those of Moritz' father, Herr and Frau Gabor (often at odds) and Frau Bergmann. Candidates tended to show good analysis of Wendla and her upbringing, but were less sure of the role played by Melchior's parents in his formation. The critical stance taken in the play was not always appreciated. Its ability to shock, perhaps even today, is designed to engage the audience and to prompt it to reflect on a style of parenting at odds with the traditional view of the child-parent relationship.

Question 10 A

Zweig's *Schachnovelle*, new this year, proved popular. The small number of answers on this particular question was generally of a high standard and grappled well with the terms of the question by providing cogent and close readings of the extract, before relating them to the rest of the *Novelle*. Candidates ought to be in the habit of referring to specific line numbers rather than give long quotations, for it is the quality of the analysis of the extract, not the faithful reproduction of the words already provided the examination paper, which gains credit.

Question 10 B

This proved the most popular question on this text. All the candidates exhibited a sound knowledge of the text and wrote clear and full responses. At the top end it was pleasing to see a clear arguments and confident assertions being put forward, with appropriate links to details from the text. Such answers took a coherent approach and showed a good understanding of the complexity of the work. At the weaker end scripts were less successful in being able to substantiate assertions with appropriate references to the book, and there was the occasional tendency to refer hastily to details of Zweig's life as a way to support an argument (e.g. 'He committed suicide after writing the text, so the *Novelle* is pessimistic'). Some candidates struggled to distinguish properly between the different narrative voices, although better scripts showed good understanding of the changes in narrative perspective and the importance thereof. A further problem in

some weaker answers was that the term *pessimism* was often used rather too freely to describe anything negative.

Question 10 C

A number of essays were rather restricted in their understanding of the significance of the ship and tended towards a narrative description of the journey, rather than an elucidating discussion of the importance of the ship motif. Discussion of the ship as the ship of life, neutral ground for the staging of a conflict of minds, a microcosm of the world, a means of escape and/or imprisonment, a symbol of man at the mercy of outside forces, amongst others interpretations of the motif, would have given more scope to many answers. There was also a need for greater sensitivity to the different narrative levels at play in the *Novelle*, as the ship motif is given a different shape at each of these levels.

Question 11 A

As in 6 A, there was a tendency to recount events from the extract, rather than pay heed to the precise terms question, which asked what the passage revealed about the situation of Shen Te and that of other characters and sought comments on the dramatic techniques employed. In this particular extract an understanding of the interplay between the stage directions and the acting technique needed to deliver the lines is vital. It was important for candidates to explain how the techniques of epic theatre operate in the context of the passage (e.g. Shen Te's address to the audience, as well as Herr Shu Fu's) rather than to explain the function of these techniques in general terms. At the end of a commentary it is always good practice to link the extract with the rest of the work.

Question 11 B

This proved a popular question, eliciting a wide range of responses. The best answers identified and analysed contradictions in many aspects of the play, from the obvious Shen Te/Shui Ta split, to the gods, the setting, through to the inherent contradictions of capitalism. Many good answers discussed the way in which epic theatre plays an important role in revealing the contradictions of our present existence. Weaker candidates struggled to explore aspects of contradiction properly, often mentioning *Episches Theater* in opposition to Aristotelian drama and then proceeding towards generalisations about various dramatic techniques. As a result there were limitations of insight in some of the answers given.

Question 11 C

This was the most popular question in the paper and attracted a wide range of responses. As in some of the answers to the other two questions on this text, there was a tendency on the part of some candidates to discuss epic theatre and the historical background of the work in general terms with insufficient reference to the function of the gods in the play. Some candidates saw the gods purely in religious terms, often quoting the line '*Die Religion ... ist das Opium des Volkes*', when in fact the gods play a much more detailed and broader function in the set-up of the play. Others only saw the gods as 'capitalist leaders' and nothing more. Those answers which interpreted the gods either in solely religious terms or solely capitalist terms often ended up giving a rather reductive reading of the role played by the gods in the play. Stronger answers eschewed theorizing about *Episches Theater* and focused on the different functions performed by the gods, such as: providing the premise on which the play is built; supporting Shen Te; providing a site for commentary in the *Zwischenspiele*, and, hence, critical distance; a vehicle for debunking religion and for revealing the inadequacy of absolute ideas and blind faith; the irrelevance of gods in a capitalist system; their role in the trial scene; and their role in relation to comedy, to name a few. The trial scene, a Brechtian set-piece par excellence, was often rather surprisingly omitted.