

GERMAN PRINCIPAL COURSE

<p>Paper 9780/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

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 natural and spontaneous discussion.

General comments

The Speaking test was tackled successfully by the majority of the candidates. Most candidates approached both parts of the test with confidence and were able to cope with their demand due to their careful preparation and the valuable guidance they had received from their teachers. All candidates (including those in the centres new to this specification) were familiar with the format of the test.

The key to success in the oral component of the Pre-U exam is effective communication. This depends on the candidates' ability to demonstrate factual knowledge, as well as their readiness to offer opinions, both on the topic of their chosen article and their discussion topic. Candidates need to have a wide range of structures and vocabulary at their disposal, and they need to be confident about using the linguistic structures they have acquired in both parts of the exam. For the highest marks it is also important that candidates show creative versatility in responding to unexpected questions.

Comments on specific parts of the test

Part 1: article and related themes

Candidates were given a choice between four cards at the start of their preparation time. The themes of all cards proved sufficiently accessible, and candidates presented a range of ideas and personal views on their chosen card. All cards were chosen, although *Sollten wir mehr aus unserer Geschichte und unserem Kulturerbe lernen?* (Education) and *Die Gefahren der Computersucht wachsen* (Patterns of daily life) were chosen more frequently than the other texts.

Many candidates engaged in in-depth discussions, both on issues arising directly from the text as well as on wider issues arising from the general headings. The level of complexity and depth achieved in some discussions was of a very high standard and both candidates and centres must be congratulated on their achievement.

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. All candidates arrived in the exam room with only a few notes and used them wisely.

The format of this part of the examination caused no problems, because candidates had clearly been well prepared by their centres and knew what to expect. After choosing their card in the first two minutes of the preparation period, candidates studied the article in the knowledge that they were expected to give a brief summary of the main points raised in the article first, before discussing issues arising directly from the article and broader issues related to the general heading on the card. Most candidates showed they could

approach the topics from a variety of angles and that they could discuss views which were not necessarily their own.

Many candidates were able to score good marks for Range and Accuracy, as well as for Pronunciation and Intonation. It was evident that they had been taught the linguistic skills needed to communicate competently in an unscripted discussion, and many candidates used their linguistic skills to good effect.

For the highest marks, candidates are expected to take the initiative in developing and expanding the discussion and being able to argue convincingly on their own point(s) of view. Many candidates showed good awareness of this requirement and took pains to show initiative.

Comments on specific texts

Card 1: *Sollten wir mehr aus unserer Geschichte und unserem Kulturerbe lernen?*

Most candidates who chose this text summarised it without difficulty and presented a range of thoughts and opinions on the issues arising from it. Questions on the text covered the importance of practical skills and values in education, the importance of creative subjects and the importance of teaching subjects such as classical literature, the arts and music. Questions on wider issues dealt with the importance of qualifications, the value of education in preparing for adult life and future careers, the (dis)advantages of modern technology in education and whether computers will ever be able to replace teachers.

Card 2: *Die Gefahren der Computersucht wachsen*

This was the most frequently chosen card. Many candidates were passionate about the issues raised in the article. Several of the discussions on the potential advantages and dangers of engaging in a virtual world were quite outstanding. Questions on the text covered whether dependence on computers amounted to an addiction, advantages and disadvantages of always being online and contactable and comparisons with other addictions. Wider issues included communication in a virtual world, the question of whether modern communication is relaxing or conducive to stress and modern life styles.

Card 3: *Nationale sportliche Erfolge als Anreiz für sportliche Betätigung*

The quality of the discussions on this card was very good. Several candidates engaged in sport themselves. Questions on the text touched on sportsmen/women as (un)successful role models, links between the general fitness level of a population and success as a nation in international competitions and the levels of activity of young people today. Wider discussions covered the dangers of doping, difficulties in combatting the use of doping, the role of money in today's sport and the respective values of competitive sport and sport purely for one's own health and fitness.

Card 4: *Türkische Manager widerlegen das Klischee*

This text was approached from a wide variety of angles and many discussions were excellent. Summarising the text caused few difficulties. Questions on the text covered reasons for the success of Turkish firms in Germany, the integration of foreign nationals and advantages and disadvantages of multicultural societies. Wider discussions were held on the immigration crisis of 2015 and how different countries dealt/are dealing with it, the rise of nationalism in some European countries and discrimination against ethnic groups and minorities.

Card 5: *Grüne Dächer über Deutschland*

This card approached the topic of the environment from the perhaps unusual angle of rooftop gardens, which led to a variety of interesting discussions. Summaries of the text were usually given without any major difficulties. Questions on the text covered the potential value of rooftop gardens, contributions individuals can make to protection of the environment and ways of reducing our carbon footprint. Wider discussions dealt with the responsibilities of individuals and governments for protecting the environment, sources of renewable energy and the question of whether protecting the environment is better served through better technology or through a change in attitude towards energy use and the use of natural resources.

Card 6: *Debatte über die Entkriminalisierung aller Drogen in der Schweiz*

Candidates who chose this card tended to do so because they held strong views on the subject. Again, summarising the text caused very few difficulties. Questions on the text covered the issue of decriminalising drugs and its potential effect on society, the extent to which drug use and crime are related and whether drug use should be seen as an illness. Wider issues raised included the role of the police in relation to drug use and drug dealing, issues of crime and law enforcement in our modern world, the increasing use of surveillance cameras in our towns and cities and methods of punishment.

Part 2: *Prepared topic*

This section of the speaking test was done very well. Topics chosen reflected the wide range of personal of this year's candidature. The best discussions rewarded detailed preparation, analysis and evaluation. Themes were discussed maturely and often with finesse. Only very few topics were offered by more than one candidate.

At the start of the topic discussion, candidates were invited to give reasons for their choice of topic. The discussions then followed the 5–8 headings listed on their topic submission form. The large majority of candidates had excellent factual knowledge at their fingertips. In addition, candidates coped well with questions asking for clarification, analysis, comparisons and personal opinions relating to their chosen topic. Many of the discussions were highly impressive in terms of content and linguistic competence. Good factual knowledge was usually matched by an ambitious range of idiom and linguistic structures, as well as good pronunciation and intonation.

The range of topics was again very wide and included various aspects of literature, music and the arts, historical figures and events, films, political and current affairs issues, as well as social and environmental topics.

The following specific titles (in no particular order) give an impression of the breadth of choice:

Das Leben und Werk von Wolfgang Borchert
Kafkas Kurzgeschichten
Thomas Mann: Der Tod in Venedig
Thomas Mann: Sein Leben und seine Bücher
Stefan Zweig
Friedrich Nietzsche
J.S. Bach – Großvater der Orgelmusik
Wagner und sein Vermächtnis
Eine Sichtweise auf „Winterreise“ und „Der Lindenbaum“
„Der Erlkönig“ von Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Robert Schumann
Krautrock
Rammstein – der beste Export Deutschlands seit den Scorpions
Die Kaiserin Elisabeth von Österreich
Harmloses Mädchen oder Nazimörderin? Das Leben und Vermächtnis der Eva Braun
Heinrich Schliemann – Vorbild der Altertumswissenschaft?
Die Gebrüder Grimm
Friedrich der Große und seine Kulturpolitik
Martin Luther und die Reformation
Bismarck
Alois Alzheimer und die Alzheimerkrankheit
Die Dada Künstlerin Hannah Höch
Niki Lauda
Helmut Newton
Bauhaus
Die Versenkung der Wilhelm Gustloff
Der Neanderthaler
Die Berliner Mauer
Die Stasi: Schild und Schwert der Partei
Die Hohenstaufen
Deutsche Einwanderer in New York im 19. Jahrhundert
Das Wirtschaftswunder in Deutschland
Bayern – die Verwandlung vom armen Bauernstaat in eines der erfolgreichsten Bundesländer Deutschlands

Die Einwanderung in Deutschland nach dem 2. Weltkrieg
Thematisierung der Flüchtlingskrise im deutschen Magazin „Focus“ nach Köln
Die aktuelle Migrantenkrise und ihre Auswirkungen auf Deutschland
Der Volkswagen Skandal
Sonnenallee
Das Leben der Anderen
Die soziale Darstellung in „Angst“ essen Seele auf“
Deutschland 83
Der Untergang
Alkohol in Deutschland
Wie war das Leben für Frauen in der DDR?
Die Entwicklung der Situation von Lesben, Schwulen und Transsexuellen in Deutschland
Die Inklusion von behinderten Kindern im deutschen Schulsystem
Frauen-Gleichberechtigung in Deutschland
Die deutsche Sprache – Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft
Gentechnik in Deutschland
Das deutsche Gesundheitssystem
Die Kluft zwischen Armen und Reichen in Deutschland
Der Nürburgring
Kommerz im deutschen Fußball
Die Bedeutung von Fußball während der Teilung Deutschlands
Vergangenheitsbewältigung
Die positive Seite von Einwanderung in Deutschland
Die Bayer AG

Communication with centres prior to the examination was efficient and effective. Agreement about exam dates was reached easily 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 time for the examiner to be well prepared and made the process of examining a much more creative process.

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, making what could be a nervous situation into a highly successful dialogue. It is very satisfying to be able to reward such positive attitudes appropriately.

GERMAN PRINCIPAL COURSE

<p>Paper 9780/02 Reading and Listening</p>
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Key messages

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 in English on the third recording. The questions are carefully worded and require an equally precise response. Overall, the candidates performed very well and achieved good results this year.

Comments on specific questions

Part I – Lesetext 1

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

Question 1

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 2

Some candidates provided answers that were not specific enough, neglecting to refer to the idea of competition. A good answer, for example, was: *Sie arbeiten nachts, damit sie im Vergleich mit anderen Firmen schnell und produktiv genug sind.*

Question 3

(a) Some candidates invalidated their otherwise correct answers by misquoting the figures from the text.

(b) There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 4

Most candidates answered this question correctly, but some answers were not specific enough. For example, the answer: *'Sie haben keinen Wach-Schlaf-Rhythmus'* was not awarded a mark. Candidates needed to indicate that night workers' sleep patterns are not *normal* or *natürlich*.

Question 5

Many candidates answered this question correctly, but some had misunderstood the information in the passage. Employers are legally obliged to pay for regular medical examinations (every three years), not for health care and medication if workers become ill.

Question 6

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Part I – Lesetext 2

Overall, this exercise produced good answers in English.

Question 7

- (a) Some candidates were not awarded a mark for this question because their answer was too vague, e.g. 'They want to change their bodies.'
- (b) Some candidates were not awarded a mark because they responded that people get tattoos in order to belong to society, instead of to a community.

Question 8

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 9

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 10

Most candidates were awarded the first mark for saying that young people want to differentiate themselves, to stand out from the crowd, but some candidates misunderstood the expression *Entscheidungsgewalt über den eigenen Körper* (the power to make decisions about their own bodies).

Question 11

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 12

A high proportion of candidates answered this question correctly, although some did not specify the exact nature of the prejudice against people with tattoos, i.e. that tattoos were often associated with criminals.

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.

Question 13

With the exception of one instance where the pluperfect was required (after *nachdem*) 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 infinitive reflective use of *lassen* (*sich ... tätowieren zu lassen*), the passive (*geboren wurde*) and genitive objects (*den Namen seines Sohnes; den Plan ihres Mannes*). Vocabulary and idiom which caused particular problems included *das Ereignis, über etwas nachdenken, gegen jdn. Vorurteile haben, sogar*.

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 14

While many candidates answered this question correctly, some answers were not specific enough by not mentioning *Gefängnisstrafen*. Answers like '*Viele Leute glauben, es ist die einzige Lösung*' were not awarded the mark, as it was not clear what 'es' referred to. Also, some answers seemed to indicate that Dr. Siebert thinks prison is the only possible measure against crime.

Question 15

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 16

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 17

This question required candidates to present two ideas in order to be awarded full marks. Some candidates struggled with the word *Milieu*, but most candidates understood that this referred to criminals' social background (*Hintergrund* or *Herkunft* were acceptable synonyms).

Question 18

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 19

Most candidates received the first mark for the idea of *praktische Wiedergutmachung*. Some candidates, however, then referred to a *Traum* (dream) instead of *Trauma* (trauma) and could not be awarded the second mark.

Part II - Hörtext 2

Question 20

Most candidates provided the correct answer.

Question 21

This question was generally answered correctly, although some answers claimed the Chancellor herself had been robbed (as opposed to Germany as a country). Such answers were not awarded the first mark.

Question 22

There were no particular difficulties with this question,

Question 23

This question was generally answered correctly. Some candidates, however, responded that 'the objects would not be sent back to Russia', whereas the passage merely states that Germany has not guaranteed it would return the artworks.

Question 24

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 25

Some candidates provided insufficiently precise answers for this question. Answers that stated that 'there is less art in German museums' were not awarded a mark as it was not clear what the amount of art in German museums was being compared to.

Question 26

There were no particular difficulties with this question,

Part II - Hörtext 3

In order to do well in this exercise, candidates had to be disciplined and 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 clearly any notes or rough work.

Question 27

- *requirements for gathering personal data on the internet*

Most candidates received marks for listing these requirements as: advanced technical knowledge, complex equipment and financial backing. The claim that it requires specialist software was not awarded a mark as this was not mentioned in the passage.

- *the data gathering done by governments*

This bullet point did not pose any particular difficulties for most candidates. In some cases, however, problems with expression made the answer ambiguous. For example, 'economical spying' was not awarded a mark.

- *Kröger's causes for concern*

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

- *Kröger's advice*

Some candidates lost marks for this bullet point because their answers were vague or relied too much on general knowledge. For example, Kröger does not advise against storing important documents online, but against storing confidential documents. Also, he warns not to send financial information by e-mail, whereas some candidates claimed he advises against sending bank card details over the internet in general (which would imply that we should not pay for anything online by entering card details on websites' payment systems).

GERMAN PRINCIPAL COURSE

Paper 9780/03
Writing and Usage

Key messages

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

- in **Part I**, choose a title and a topic 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 a well-structured and persuasive argument
- in **Part I**, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in **Part II**, read first the rubrics and then each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in **Parts I and II**, carefully proof read all 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 tests their skill in expressing their ideas in German but also their ability to marshal their thoughts on paper coherently and 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 required 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 demand detailed and thorough knowledge of grammar, as well as confidence in its application. Furthermore, in **Part I** candidates have to demonstrate the ability to describe, illustrate analyse and evaluate in response to the title and topic of their choice.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive Essay (Question 1)

One of the five possible topics was particularly popular this year: many candidates chose topic **(b)** where they had to write about wind turbines and whether they should be removed from the countryside immediately. Two other topics were also popular, namely **(c)** on whether older people should be allowed to stay in their jobs while youth-unemployment is growing and topic **(d)**, where they were asked to discuss whether stating that the Holocaust never happened should be made illegal across the whole world.

In order to write successful essays, candidates need to read the questions carefully and ensure that what they are writing addresses all aspects raised by the question. This proved particularly relevant for essays on topic **(b)** on the subject of wind turbines. Some candidates only answered the question in part before proceeding to discuss more general issues with regards to pollution and the environment.

In many cases (and across all five questions) conclusions were prematurely drawn in the introduction, followed by a discussion which lacked or had weak paragraphing. These essays would usually list all points in one long paragraph without offering further exploration or evaluation. In some cases the conclusion of an essay contradicted the preceding argument. A number of essays were too long, resulting in repetition and veering off topic. There were essays which would have benefitted from more concision and more time spent on planning and proof reading.

Some essays depended heavily on a number of learnt phrases, which did not necessarily improve the quality of the essay, especially in cases where there was an accumulation of such phrases, e.g. *'Ich werde über die Punkte dafür und dagegen sprechen, weil es ein interessantes Thema ist und das außer Zweifel steht.'*

Some responses showed a lack of relevant lexis. In terms of grammar, problems with the use of reflexive verbs (e.g. *'Man kann nicht vorstellen wie schrecklich die Umstände waren...'* and with comparatives (e.g. *'Es ist mehr wichtig, dass....'*) were apparent. Other difficulties arose with subject-verb agreements and the use of umlauts.

Factual information supports the argument if it is correct, but unless candidates are sure of their information, they should avoid using it.

The majority of candidates explored the main issues of their chosen topics successfully and the best essays provided a balanced view in coherently organised paragraphs. The best essays devoted one paragraph for each main point, avoided repetition and framed ideas and arguments with clear introductions and conclusions.

Part II: Usage

Many candidates did well in this part of the paper. The most challenging questions were **Question 6**, where reported speech was required, **Question 8**, where some candidates omitted part of the sentence, and especially **Question 10**.

Übung 1 (Questions 2–6)

Many candidates completed this task successfully. All candidates followed the instructions and wrote the whole sentence. Some candidates did not attempt to use *dass* in **Question 2**, which was not accepted. In **Question 4** some candidates struggled to fit in the reflexive and some changed the word order by writing the verb at the end of the sentence. Very few candidates copied key words of the sentence wrongly.

Übung 2 (Questions 7–11)

The second exercise in Part II proved, as always, more challenging than the first. Most candidates successfully manipulated the sentence in **Question 7**. However, a few responses used the present tense after *Nachdem*. **Question 8** proved to be a stumbling block to some because they omitted *trotzdem* or inserted it in a place in the sentence where it changed the meaning. In **Question 9** the reflexive posed a problem to candidates who placed *sich* in the wrong place. In **Question 10** some candidates confused *das Ablaufen* with *der Ablauf*. The vast majority of candidates used the *Kunjunktiv sei* correctly.

Übung 3 (Questions 12–31)

Candidates generally did very well in the cloze test where they had to choose the correct word from four options.

GERMAN PRINCIPAL COURSE

Paper 9780/04
Topics and Texts

Key messages

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

This year all five Topics were chosen by candidates and it was clear that they had derived much benefit from their study of the various films and texts on offer. The vast majority of candidates engaged very well with the spirit of this part of the paper, demonstrating excellent skills in comparing and contrasting the works through precise textual reference. Even in relatively weaker scripts it was clear that candidates had responded well to the themes of their chosen works and found the material stimulating and rewarding to study. As last year, if perhaps in a more pronounced way, the Topics essays scored higher than the Text essays. It is still the case, however, that some weaker scripts in the Topics of the paper did not show enough knowledge, understanding and illustration of the thematic and comparative issues in the works. Weaker scripts tended to a more generalised and superficial reading of works, at times leading to narrative and padding. Sometimes a generic introduction started the essay, thereby throwing the candidate off the precise terms of the question. Planning is central to success in both parts of the paper and it was evident in the most successful scripts that detailed plans led to the most comprehensive responses. Given the demands of writing in the target language, linguistic planning (key vocabulary, constructions etc.) is also an important skill for candidates to learn and employ at this level. Thinking through the comparative nature of the questions is also a key element of the mark scheme and this was not always apparent in answers. Focus on the terminology in the 'good' and 'very good' boxes should be included in the delivery of the paper.

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 considerable length whilst maintaining complete focus on the terms of the questions set. Some candidates did write long responses but also tended to lose sight of the parameters set, lapsing into narrative or pre-determined points as a result. As ever, there were many more basic linguistic errors and Centres would be well-advised to take heed of such common problems and put in place measures to eliminate them. A sample of them is included here (error type and/or corrections are given in brackets):

'Die Jüde' (die Jüdin)
'winnen' (gewinnen)
'Nazisten' (Nazis)
'Ein Tur' (das Tor)
'bekommen' (sometimes used as to become, werden)
'Er müß' (er muss)
'das Volk' (die Bevölkerung)
'die Restriction' (made up)
'Verrat' (gender)
'Nicht ein' (kein)
'ein Leben leben' (führen)
'Band' (gender and plural)
'glauben an' + acc
'die Figur' (gender and plural)
'gender and plural of Film

'**darstellen**' (sep.verb)
'**wer**' (used as a relative pronoun)
'**beeinflussen**' (need for a double e)
'**das Thema**' (gender and plural)
'**Erwachsene/Jugendliche**' (problems of adjectival nouns)
'**kontrollieren**' used instead of *unter Kontrolle halten/bringen*
'**Wieder**' confused with *wider*
'**man**' confused with *Mann*, sometimes spelled as '*mann*'
'**stattfinden**' (misconjugated)
'**als**' confused with *wenn*
'**Glück**' (gender)
'**dass**' and '**das**' confused
'**Gesetzt**' (instead of *Gesetz*)
'**Pfaffer**' (instead of *Pfarrer*)
'**der Charakter**' (spelling)
'**könnte**' and '**konnte**' confused
'**die Tat(-en)**' (incorrect plurals)
Sabotieren (not '*sabotagiert*')
'**Falscher**' (without umlaut)
'**er weiß**' (often misconjugated)
'**müssen**' (often without umlaut)
'**die Stadt**' (confused with *Staat* and *statt*)
'**Bar**' (gender)
'**die Exhibition**' (for *Ausstellung*)
Misspelt character names, for example '*Lehman*' instead of *Lehmann*

Some weaker candidates lacked a core working vocabulary pertinent to their texts and films. In the delivery and preparation of the Topics section, candidates would be well-advised to build up and learn a solid topic-specific vocabulary base so that they can be confident in conveying their views.

There was good targeting of the precise terms of the questions, although there was a handful of instances in which previous essay titles had obviously figured heavily in a candidate's thinking with the result that memorised padding, narrative, or too many historical aspects not pertinent to the terms of the question distracted candidates from the task at hand. In almost every answer a good balance was struck between the two texts/films. Precise reference, through extensive allusion and/or quotation allied to analysis, was very much in evidence in the best responses and this year there were a number of exceptionally strong answers. For weaker candidates generalisations were often given where detailed knowledge and reference would have strengthened answers significantly. In the vast majority of scripts it was clear that it has been well understood that word limits are for guidance only and that candidates do not need to worry about an upper limit. In a small number of scripts it was evident that candidates were counting words as they went thus often losing focus on the depth and strength of their arguments. Every line of an essay, however long, will be read and can thereby gain credit, so long as the response is targeted at the terms of the question.

The stated aim of the Texts Section, of encouraging literary appreciation through detailed textual analysis, also produced a good range of responses, with answers on five of the eight texts offered, Brecht's *Der Gute Mensch from Sezuan* proving the most popular. It is obvious that many candidates are at home writing in English, with the structuring of essays again very much in evidence amongst the best scripts. There was strong evidence to show that candidates have become more accustomed to planning and so they are better equipped to answer the question set instead of a rehearsed answer. Candidates would be well advised to use the time the examination gives 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 examination is designed not to be time-pressured so there is space to plan accordingly. The best answers gave sustained analysis with a broad take on the question. Quotations were again used well, as were direct allusions and paraphrasing. Weaker candidates tended not to plan their answers effectively and drifted towards narrative and generalisation rather too readily. There is no upper word limit in this examination, but some very long essays did struggle to maintain the required focus. Close reading of the mark scheme should form part of the preparation of candidates, focussing on the stipulations of the Good and Very good boxes. Unfortunately, there is still a tendency to see introductions as a means of voicing generalisations or a way of restating the question. It is important for candidates to define their approach to the question set in their introductions and then lay out their essay accordingly.

This year the majority of candidates wrote a thematic essay, with fewer offering commentaries. Results for the latter were a little mixed. It is vital to realise that a close reading of the extract given with sustained analysis is what is required. The rubrics for these questions are also designed to give the candidates a steer with regard to the focus of the analysis, for example 'dramatic techniques' for Brecht (11 A), or 'use of language and tone' for Zweig (10 A). Weaker scripts tended to restate the narrative of the extract and offer a superficial analysis of certain aspects; a critical commentary of an extract is very much distinct from a commentary of what is happening. If opting to choose such questions, it is vital that this distinction is made in the delivery of the syllabus in Centres. As stated in previous reports, candidates attempting such questions should be encouraged to refer to the line numbers given on the paper, for there is little mileage in copying long sections of the printed extract. Some of the best answers showed sustained analysis of the particular extract and also proved skill in linking the extract to the wider aspects/themes of the texts in question. In delivering the syllabus, practicing such tasks is a very fruitful way of engaging with the text if done in a critical way. Candidates should be reminded that quotations on their own do not make points; rather analyses of any quotations are required.

It is important for candidates to mark the number of the question they are attempting. Writing out the title also helps to focus the mind. It would help if candidates would start a new side in their answer booklet for their second essay. Some answers also went onto continuation booklets. In such cases, care should be taken in collating the books effectively. Some candidates tended to insert later paragraphs via asterisks, when better planning might have avoided the need to do this. Handwriting was good, with far fewer cases of scripts which were difficult to read, but it is important to be clear with endings in German. Candidates should be strongly encouraged to ensure the legibility of their scripts and again Centres can help with this by asking their candidates to handwrite their regular assignments rather than use computers.

Part I: Cultural Topics

All five Topics attracted answers this year. Reports will only be given on those questions attempted by more than one candidate.

The standard of written German showed an improvement over last year's session with all candidates able to respond to the tasks set. At the top there were some excellent answers, revealing sustained fluency, nuanced readings and sophistication in argument and comparisons. At the other end there were problems with basic verb conjugation and syntax. At times cases were also less than secure and it would seem that the linguistic element of the Topics essay was not fully appreciated by some. As stated, a core vocabulary was not always in evidence and this is an area to work on. The gender of a few key nouns was not always known (*Novelle, Buch, Film*) and the wrong terminology for certain works was sometimes used (*Film* when a book was the work set). Some common conjunctions (*als/wenn/wie*) caused problems. Candidates should be reminded that it is customary to use the present tense as the default tense when discussing action in the text or film. There was no shortening of characters names this year and it was good to see this point heeded by all Centres. It should be conveyed to candidates that they do not need to state what works they have chosen, nor give a potted summary in their introductions.

Question 1

- (a) This was the second most popular question from the Topics section. Candidates displayed good familiarity with the films and generally gave considered critical responses. Some weaker candidates tended to place too much emphasis on historical setting rather than the films themselves and as a result slid into a narrative/generalised approach. Some candidates made overly long general references to Nazi or Prussian ideology rather than foregrounding the actions and contrasting ideas of the characters in the films themselves. Some introductions were a little formulaic, with too much background given and candidates would be well-advised to work on the technique of introduction writing.
- (b) Candidates responded quite well to this question. At times the take was rather narrative, especially with reference to Nord Wand and the moral dilemmas of Toni, Andi or Luise were not always explored in detail as a result. Equally, the political pressures faced by the protagonists in all three films were somewhat underplayed or omitted. In Berlin 36 the particular problems faced by both Gretel and Marie were not always explored as much as they might have been within the parameters of the question. More on Prussian militarism, nationalism and education would have enabled a more sophisticated take on Konrad Koch's position.

Question 2

- (a) Candidates were often successful in exploring contrasts between the two works they chose. Discussion and analysis of the different effects of Nazi ideology were well written. *Die Fälscher* proved a popular film, with the Sorowitsch providing the focus for most answers, although his transformation in the course of the film was sometimes a little underdeveloped. Discussion of *Jugend ohne Gott* was a little less successful, with knowledge of the text (not film) not as secure as it could have been. Tracing the Lehrer's witnessing of the ideology's effect on himself and, crucially, on others formed the backbone of the best answers. *Hitlerjunge Salomon* also featured and was well handled in the main.
- (b) Some candidates struggled to maintain their focus on the notion of survival, as there are contrasts between the treatments of this theme in the three works. *Jugend ohne Gott* gives a sense of moral survival as well as individual survival. In Sorowitsch there was certainly much to discuss with regard to the question, yet a number of candidates did not explore his shifting moral position, with the survival of the individual pitted against the survival of the group – a point not always acknowledged by candidates.

Hitlerjunge Salomon was rather better handled, although details of Solly's journey of survival were not always given. Important contrasts between the different protagonists were usually highlighted to good effect.

Question 3

- (a) The best answers were very wide-ranging in their take on the question, showing extensive knowledge and understanding of the levels of mistrust evident in all three works. In weaker scripts *Der Tunnel* proved to be rather more problematic, with the array of characters not always correctly identified and hence the need for trust not always properly established. Equally, the sense of distrust at state level, most clearly illustrated through the Stasi officer Krüger, was not always identified. The role of both the CIA and Stasi was also occasionally underplayed or omitted in discussions of *Liebe Mauer*. Some candidates also tended to fall back on memorised material with an emphasis placed on to the erection of the Wall and Ulbricht's statements on this rather than on foregrounding the films themselves. Whilst historical background is important, it should be the works which take centre stage.
- (b) This question attracted a small number of responses, with candidates capably describing the differences in perspective very well. In *Der Mauerspringer* the symbolic aspects and psychological impact of the Wall was not always addressed. With regards to *Der Tunnel* candidates were more successful in outlining the various distinctions, but as in **3 A**, reference to the different characters' views was not always evident.

Question 4

- (a) This proved the most popular question in Part 1, with some very strong answers. The contrast between the different communities was well explored, with good analysis of the social mechanisms behind them. Many candidates explored various aspects of the communities, such as hierarchy, family, love, friendship, treatment of women and religion, yet on occasion a lengthy exploration of these aspects proved a distraction to the task at hand. Some answers were highly cogent and convincing, with the best candidates writing at length and with steady focus; others wrote too much and lost sight of the question at hand. Candidates responded particularly well to *Das weiße Band*, identifying the main themes very convincingly. At times, assertions about the work's link to the Nazi generation were made but without supporting evidence from the film. Likewise, assertions were made about Herr Sommer and the demons of the Nazi past, or of him as a victim of the Nazis or as a symbol of lost innocence, without precise reference to the text itself. The best answers reached a very high standard indeed.
- (b) This question attracted a good number of answers. When discussing *Das weiße Band* candidates often successfully analysed the teacher's position and standing within the community and his development as central figure. Candidates also often proved convincing in their account of *Herr Sommer*, although a more detailed examination of the text would have revealed that the world, whilst obviously far more welcoming to children than in *Das Weiße Band*, is not as idyllic as some candidates surmised. A reading of the figure of Herr Sommer as a reflection of the narrator proved a fruitful line of inquiry for some candidates.

Question 5

- (a) Weaker scripts struggled to show more than superficial knowledge of Kaminer's *Schönhauser Allee* and the same advice as last year holds: with a collection of short stories it would be more advisable for candidates to focus on a set number (three or four perhaps) in which they can show readings which are pertinent to the title. With *Herr Lehmann* too, there were problems with inadequate references to the film. Most candidates did draw good comparisons between the two works. Discussion of *Der Himmer über Berlin* was not always assured, with the depiction of modern life and Daniel's engagement with it not always fully developed.

Part II: Literary Texts

Five texts attracted responses: *Der zerbrochne Krug*, *Frühlings Erwachen*, *Schachnovelle*, *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* and *Die Entdeckung der Currywurst*. Reports are only given on those questions attempted by more than one candidate. In a minority of scripts there were rather woolly introductions which gave potted plot summaries or made vague allusions to the texts rather than focusing on the terms of the question.

The use of English was rather stronger this year, but some candidates had a weak critical vocabulary. As in the Topics section, some formal learning of appropriate terms and register would be good practice.

Question 7

- (a) Responses to this question were solid, but at times rather lacked the analytical angle required for a critical commentary, with some candidates giving a running narrative of what is happening in the scene, verging on translation, rather than fulfilling the criteria of the question. The rubric centred on Eve's situation. It is vital therefore to read and analyse the lines of the scene with this in mind. As the rubric states, the content and style of the extract – its comic value, for example – should also feature. The extract should also be linked to the rest of the play, e.g. with reference to the next and final scene.
- (c) Candidates showed a sensitive approach to the notion of justice as depicted in the play. Sustained analysis and excellent reference to the text were the hallmarks of such responses, summoning good examples; more analysis of quotations would have boosted scores even further.

Question 9

- (a) The rubric stipulated precise areas for discussion: Melchior's and Wendla's situation, the use of language and tone and any further aspect of content or style considered of interest. The dramatic nature of the encounter was sometimes underplayed. Appropriate linking with other scenes in the play would also have boosted marks further. In some cases, biographical references to Wedekind took the place of sustained focus on the extract.

Question 10

- (b) This proved a popular question. What differentiated the quality of the answers was the degree of success in interpreting the central chess metaphor. At the top end there was a clear understanding of the depth of the metaphor and its dynamic nature in the text. Rather than a mere board game there is a distinct psychological and ideological dimension to chess as it is presented in the *Novelle*. At the weaker end chess was seen as just a game with no further connotations. In such answers the narrow level of interpretation made it hard to develop a sophisticated argument. Overuse of biographical information in some instances did not help to advance the argument.
- (c) Candidates identified the context of the quotation and most were able to substantiate their points about the comments from the *Selfmademan*, acknowledging his rather materialistic view of the world. The best candidates identified the narrative strands which make up the story and hence could place the comment both in its immediate context but also in the wider structure of the *Novelle*. Less successful candidates took a more personality-driven approach and tended towards narrative, relaying elements of Dr B's backstory rather than critically engaging with the text. Equally, the ending of the work posed problems of interpretation for them which were either simplified or omitted altogether. Certain biographical elements were summoned, yet the simplification of such material did not advance a particularly considered line of argument in terms of responding to the question set.

Question 11

- (a) This question was attempted by a handful of candidates. As in **6 A**, there was a tendency to recount what was in the extract, rather than to pay heed to the precise terms of the rubric, which asked 'what was revealed about the situation of Shen Te and the other characters' and also sought comments 'on the dramatic techniques employed'. As a result, overly narrative approaches missed the aims of the question. In this extract the tone of language and the manner in which the lines are delivered are critical to the engagement of the audience, both on an emotional and on an intellectual level. The acting technique needed to deliver the lines is vital in understanding how the interaction between the stage and the audience works. It is important for candidates to explain how *Episches Theater* effects work in the context of the passage rather than just explaining the techniques generically, e.g. with reference to the importance of lines 16–17. At the end of a commentary, it is important to link the extract to the rest of the play.
- (b) This proved a popular question, eliciting a wide range of responses. The best answers offered a broad take on the question, but weaker answers struggled to define optimism, especially within the context of *Episches Theater*. Many candidates identified the key notion of the possibility of a change in circumstances and the denial of 'human nature' in *Episches Theater* but then struggled to link these ideas to the details of the play itself. In weaker scripts candidates erred towards a personal engagement with Shen Te's situation instead of offering a reflection on the wider implications of the play. Little mention was made of the trial scene and some scripts slid into padding and narration and the focus on optimism was lost. As a result there was some limitation of insight in some answers.
- (c) This was the most popular question in the paper and attracted a wide range of responses. What differentiated answers was the ability or inability to illustrate in detail how theatrical techniques work, or not, as the case may be, in the context of the play. Generalisations and definitions of *Episches Theater* were sometimes not backed up with precise references to the text. For example, 'alienation' ('estrangement' is perhaps a more fruitful word to use with reference to Brecht's plays) tended to be explored in the abstract. Weaker candidates fell back on recalled theory or poetical lines, rather than a conception of the text as a whole. The strongest candidates managed to give a broad take on the question, providing many examples to evaluate the different theatrical techniques employed. The ending and a full interpretation thereof proved somewhat problematic for some candidates.

Question 12

- (b) There was a small number of answers to this question. Some responses tended to retell the story, with little analysis of the terms of the question. The interrelated themes of happiness and bitterness were not always fully explored. Specifically, the precarious nature of happiness within the *Novelle* was also somewhat underplayed with candidates tending to catalogue Lena's unhappy life and not probing the notion of bitterness, if that is indeed what it is, further. The role of the narrator was alluded to, but more depth was required to arrive at a proper assessment.