



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
June 2011**

German

GERM3

(Specification 2660)

Unit 3: Listening, Reading and Writing

Report on the Examination

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Unit 3

General Comments

The vast majority of students were entered appropriately for this examination and there were some very pleasing performances across the range of questions.

Although a handful of students did not finish the translation into English, the level of completion and the length of some of the responses in Section B were evidence of the accessibility of the paper. It must be said, however, that some students did not indicate the number of the question they had chosen to answer in Section B and they should be reminded that this information needs to be entered in the box provided.

Very few scripts were difficult to read because of poor handwriting but students should still be reminded of the importance of legibility in a written paper.

Section A

Question 1

This proved to be a successful introduction to the paper and although 1(c) caused a little difficulty the vast majority of students scored high marks.

Question 2

Students were asked to identify six correct statements from a list of twelve and the exercise required careful listening, so it is pleasing to report that 82% of students scored at least four marks here.

Question 3

Again there was evidence of careful listening on this exercise, although some students possibly did not read the instructions or example closely enough and had underlined a set of words or transcribed lengthy sections. The vocabulary was clearly within the grasp of the vast majority of students and even *Überschwemmungen* in 3(d) caused few problems.

Question 4

Most students performed well on this question, although only 75% scored on 4(d), where they might have been unsure of the word *Reichweite*. All students adhered to the instructions and only entered the required letters in the box provided.

Question 5

Questions (a) and (f) caused the most difficulty here, but overall this question proved to be very accessible. It could be that those who did not score on (a) had problems with *abgeschafft* and in (f) with *in kirchlichen Einrichtungen*. Otherwise the vocabulary was very specific to the topic and seemed to be familiar to most students.

Question 6

Again, this was well answered with over 80% of students scoring at least four marks of the six available.

Question 7

This question discriminated most clearly amongst the non-verbal responses. Questions (a) and (e) were the least accessible. Perhaps students were not familiar with some of the vocabulary, such as *Fernziel*, *ausgestattet* and *gesteuert*, although it could be argued that the context could have provided some assistance.

Question 8

There was a high level of attainment here, with 90% of students scoring at least three of the five marks available by correctly identifying the themes of the text.

Question 9

As expected, the translation proved to be a discriminator and marks awarded ranged from 0–10. The excellent and very good translations not only revealed deep knowledge of vocabulary and grammar but also an ability to express the passage in fluent and coherent English. Others struggled with structures and verb tenses which are clearly identified in the specification. *Bauen lassen*, for example, caused many difficulties and was known by few students.

Some translations left gaps at the start of the second paragraph, where *beschlossen* and *Ausstieg* were not widely known and *Bis zum Jahr 2020* was often inaccurately translated. Translation requires very careful reading of the material and some students did not translate *diese Kernkraftwerke* as “these nuclear power stations” and *die Bundesregierung* as “the Federal / German government”. Similarly, the adverbs *sicher* und *zuverlässig* were frequently translated as adjectives. These details are important when it comes to accurate translation skills.

One of the most positive aspects of most students’ work was the knowledge of topic-specific vocabulary, such as *Stromgewinnung*, *Atomkraftwerke*, *fossile Energieträger*, *sich erneuern* and it can be assumed most centres had covered the topic quite thoroughly.

Question 10

Each sentence has four elements each worth one mark, but the need for grammatical knowledge is clear if students are to score highly. This year the paper tested subordinate clauses, word order, passive voice, compound nouns, use of cases, adjectival endings, conditional and *Wenn-Sätze*. Students need to be aware of the need for accuracy, which includes capitalisation and the correct use of “ss” and “ß”. The main topic area covered was Energy (*Environmental Issues in Specification*).

- (a) The main difficulties were found in items of vocabulary - *resources*, *unlimited*. Some students avoided the word order issue by *meinen* followed by usual word order. This was perfectly acceptable.
- (b) Many students confused *Kohle* with *Kohl*. Whilst many recognised and correctly offered the passive, others used *man* in order to avoid it. Again, this was perfectly acceptable.
- (c) “A more important role” was found to be beyond many students whether because of the construction itself or the adjectival ending.

(d) Surprisingly perhaps this question was the least well done. The definite article was often omitted and *Umweltverschmutzung* and *ernst zu nehmen* were rendered correctly by a minority of students.

(e) On the whole this question was tackled very successfully and the vast majority of students scored at least two of the four marks available.

Section B

It is very pleasing to report that there were some outstanding responses to the set questions. Students were largely very well prepared and many students wrote lengthy answers, which were focussed and relevant. There were, however, some responses where immediate comprehension was hindered by poor German and others which did not specifically answer the set question. The bullet points at the start of the Section should be reinforced by teachers as it clearly advises students on how to gain the highest marks. Students need to be aware that the content of the essay will have a bearing on the marks awarded for vocabulary, structure and accuracy.

Q11 was the least popular choice of topic and Q15 the most popular.

Question 11(a)

The Ruhr, Bavaria and Berlin were common choices. Some answers showed a detailed knowledge of economic development in the region and then gave an opinion about the possible future outlook. These essays offered specific examples to support well-analysed arguments. On the other hand, some responses described the types of industry in the region and were rather too general to score highly on content.

There were too few answers on 11(b) to offer a meaningful report.

Question 12(a)

The essays which clearly defined and adhered to a specific period of time were the most successful in their aims. The highest scoring answers revealed knowledge of the main events of the period and displayed an impressive level of analysis of the consequences of these events and, inevitably, those that were merely narrative did not score highly on content.

Question 12(b)

There were some excellent answers to this question, giving strong reasons as to why students would or would not have liked to live through the defined period. These answers described events or people of the time and analysed the effect they had on individual lives. Although some students attempted to use the conditional perfect, they were unable to do so accurately, meaning that communication of ideas was sometimes unsuccessful.

Whichever of the two questions students decide to answer they would be well advised to remember that those who choose a very wide time frame are unlikely to be able to give a detailed enough analysis or write in enough depth to score high marks for content.

Question 13

Both questions in this option were generally well done. In (a) the better answers did not merely describe the character of the *Hauptfigur(en)* but analysed their role in the work and

how important they were in influencing the plot or conveying the author's main points. In **(b)** the most impressive answers showed an awareness of what the author was trying to achieve and were supported by accurate reference to the work, whereas the poorest answers simply related the "story".

Question 14(a)

This was by far the most popular choice of the two questions available. It allowed students to explore several themes before declaring which one they found to be the most important. Answers which concluded that all the themes were equally important also scored marks in the highest band. Some students displayed excellent evaluation in this essay. Dürrenmatt and Brecht were common choices but there were some very impressive answers on *Frühlings Erwachen* by Wedekind.

Question 14(b)

Although fewer students chose this question, there were high-scoring answers which referred to stage directions, the use of humour, the effect on the audience of the characters' physical appearance, scenery and the element of surprise, all supported by examples from the works. The second part of the question elicited very good personal reaction as to whether the *Dramatiker* had been successful in capturing audience interest.

On both questions some answers spent the first page or two giving the biography of the playwright at the expense of concentrating on the actual set question. Students need to be reminded to keep to the set question.

There were very few answers on poets in this option.

Question 15(a) (b)

Both questions required students to offer a personal reaction to the work(s) studied, although there was a slightly different focus to each. Those who chose films – *Das Leben der Anderen*, *Goodbye Lenin*, *Die Welle*, for example – showed a very thorough knowledge of the content and offered many and varied reasons for their personal positive or negative reaction or for what they had found interesting. There were some high scoring answers where the candidate had disliked the work studied but had fully justified this view and that is a totally legitimate approach to questions of this sort.

The question provided some original pieces where students had written about the architecture of Hundertwasser and Gropius and the Bauhaus artists, but some students wrote only of the artist's personal life and background and these responses lacked relevance to the task.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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