



Pearson

Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In German (8GN0) Paper 3A

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Publications Code 8GN0_3A_1806_ER

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This was the second time that this exam was undertaken and it was good to see that the students have got used to the new format of the examination.

Students' Performances

Task 1

Question 1 is a summary of the main points of the text. Most students were able to say what the text was about and were able to give an outline of the ideas. At times, however, students just read two sentences per paragraph and thought that they had fulfilled the requirements. The texts are structured to allow the students to summarise the main findings without having to retell the whole text.

Question 2 focuses on a detail in the text and the student may have already given an answer as part of the summary, but all four questions should always be asked, even if a student has partially answered the next question in a previous answer.

Question 3 requires an opinion, which some students find difficult to give. This question was very effective in discriminating between able and less able students. There were some extensive and thoughtful answers to the question, which required students to think quickly about the enquiry as well as find the appropriate language for the response.

Students must never see the cards in advance of the examination and the table provided in the instructions to examiners giving the order in which the cards need to be given out must be used. For this reason, it is not expected that the student will begin a response to any question without a few moments of thinking time.

Question 4 should lead into the discussion of the sub-theme. The questions posed in this part of the test must give the student the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the sub-theme in Germany. That means that the answers have to refer to society and culture in Germany. Personal or global questions are not appropriate.

This element is still the most challenging for a number of students as they fail to link their answers to Germany. This is the biggest change from the legacy paper and teachers are advised to root their lessons firmly into the German speaking world in order to comply with this component of the test.

The student and the teacher examiner should respond appropriately to each other's input, whether that be a question, a comment or a remark. To reach the full range of the marking criteria there will be frequent examples of this level of interaction. The student needs to demonstrate the ability to interact within a sub-theme. The best orals develop naturally from the spontaneous responses of the candidates. A mere question and answer approach cannot facilitate a

spontaneous interaction as described above, neither does a series of monologues.

Some tests showed very good interaction, whereas others sounded very stilted where the students kept asking the teacher examiner 'Was meinen Sie?' at various moments during the test. Interaction does not simply mean to ask a question, but to interact within the discussion as described above.

Care should be taken not to spend too much time on the set questions, as the student needs to have the opportunity to show knowledge and understanding of the sub-theme in Germany in the remaining discussion in order to access the full range of marks available.

Specific Comments on the Stimulus Cards in Task 1

Stimulus GN1

Q1: Overall text 1 was well understood with the students being able to summarise the content.

Q2: Most students understood the word *Vorteile*, but not *wirtschaftliche Vorteile*, giving incomplete answers to the question.

Q3: Text 2 was well understood and the students were able to voice their opinions with good justifications.

Q4: A number of students were not able to use this question as a stepping stone into the discussion of the sub-theme

Stimulus GN2

This card was usually well done, with only a few students not understanding the text.

Q4: Most students had something to say about the recycling system in Germany, but not many could qualify the effectiveness.

Stimulus GN3

This stimulus card proved to be a very accessible text and text 2 provided some very good ideas and comments by very able students.

Stimulus GN4

Quite a number of students did not get the idea that the *duale System* was like an apprenticeship or *Lehre*.

Q2: This question was often not answered well, because students did not seem to know the words *bieten* and *Arbeitgeber*.

Stimulus GN5

Again on the whole both texts were understood well, although the words *erleichtern* and *ersetzen* were sometimes not known.

Stimulus GN6

Most students understood the meaning of the texts, and offered some interesting answers to question 3.

Task 2

Because the students had an element of choice, they seemed to feel more secure in the sub-themes. Often they performed better at this task than in task 1. The most popular choice was the sub-theme of Musik, followed by Medien and Feste und Traditionen came last.

The main problem, again, was the link to German speaking countries in order to have full access to marking grid for AO4, Knowledge and Understanding of society and culture.

The questions on the stimulus cards were well received and fulfilled their aim to start of the discussion.

Specific Comments on the Stimulus Cards

Stimulus GN7

It was great to see how much the students knew about music in German-speaking countries. They were able to give relevant examples and develop their answers well in most cases.

Stimulus GN8

This card was well received, however question 2 was often misunderstood, because of a narrow understanding of the verb *verstehen*. Students interpreted it with understanding of the language rather than the meaning of getting on with somebody.

Stimulus GN9

The questions on this card posed no problems.

Stimulus GN10

The words *Bürgerinitiativen* and *zuverlässig* were often not known. *Zuverlässig* was often understood to mean important.

Stimulus GN11

This card did not pose any difficulties and it gave students the opportunity to speak about traditions and its importance to people in the German speaking countries. They were able to give some pertinent examples.

Stimulus GN12

Most students were able show very good Knowledge and Understanding of the target language culture and society.

Summary

On the whole the exams were well conducted and most centres supplied all necessary paperwork correctly filled in. The quality of the recordings was usually of a good standard.

Based on their performance on this paper, students should:

- Make sure that their answers are firmly rooted in German society and culture for Task 1
- Make sure that their answers for Task 2 are rooted in German speaking society, which includes Austria and Switzerland
- Have examples which they can back up
- Practise summarising short texts
- Practise expressing their opinions on various issues

Grade BoundariesCom

Much work has taken place on the comparability of the oral units for French, German and Spanish. The senior examiners have worked closely together to ensure their application of the common oral marking criteria is consistently applied across these three languages. This has been in response to queries from centres about the results at unit level on the oral examinations.

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

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