



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

German

46652

(Specification 4665)

Unit 2: Reading

Report on the Examination

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Reading – June 2011

Foundation Tier

Question 1

The question was well done, with most students giving the correct answer to all parts. However, there were some very badly formed figures which often made it difficult for the examiners to decide whether the answer was correct or not. Students should be reminded that their answers are read by people who are not familiar with their handwriting and should make sure that numbers (and letters where applicable) are correctly formed.

Question 2

Most students recognised the correct month in part (a), but other parts of the question caused greater difficulty. In part (b) almost 10% of the students appeared to refer to the wrong day (Monday instead of Tuesday) and gave the incorrect answer C, while 17% chose answer A (Dancing) – an activity which was not mentioned in the text at all. In part (c) 30% of students chose the answer B. In part (e) 14% chose answer A (Football) despite the fact that the two activities on Saturday were signposted with the words *Vormittag* and the time 16.00 hours.

Question 3

In part (a), while 73% of the students gave the correct answer, a further 10% gave the answer D. Parts (b) and (c) were correctly answered by 89% and 88% of the students respectively.

Question 4

All parts of this question were answered correctly by a large majority of the students.

Question 5

Despite the fact that the topic of the environment is now common in most German text books, significant numbers of students chose the wrong answer to parts (a) and (b) in particular. In (a) a fifth of students chose Tip 3, while in (b) only 77% gave the correct answer (Tip 6: Duschen Sie!), while 10% chose Tip 4 ('Put out the light when you leave the room').

Question 6

In question 6a many varieties of the answer 'for university' were correctly given (80%). 90% of students gave the correct answer to 6(b), although some incorrectly interpreted the reference to *einkaufen* to mean that Mehmet was going to work in a shop. The answer to 6c required a direct reference to the text (Work with children) and answers which were too specific (e.g. babysit) could not be given credit. 58% gave the correct answer to this question. In 6d the vocabulary items *fleißig* and *gut gelaunt* seemed to pose a problem to students. Only 28% gave a correct answer and there were many guesses such as reliable, flexible, and punctual. Students who did not know *gut gelaunt* often offered an answer such as good listener, good learner or good mannered.

Question 7

This question required students to identify positive and negative aspects within a longer text. 67% gained both marks in part (a), while 63% were successful in identifying both features in part (b).

Question 8

Part (a) was well done, with 87% of students gaining two marks, while 65% gained both marks for part (c). Part (b) appeared to pose more of a problem. Only 11% of students gained both marks, while a further 50% scored one. The weather response seemed to pose most difficulty here, with many students offering either answer C or D. Students seemed either not to be familiar with the word *Gewitter*, or they had only read the second sentence of the text (*Aber das Wetter ist leider nicht so gut*) and had chosen their answer on the basis of the information suggested there.

Higher Tier

Question 1

As always in these 'overlap' questions, performance was better than in the equivalent question at Foundation Tier. Parts (a), (b) and (c) were answered correctly by the large majority of the students. Performance on part (d) also improved, but students' vocabulary knowledge again appeared to be somewhat lacking. Only 47% of students gained a marked for part (d).

Question 2

Students at this level were more successful in identifying the correct aspects of Franziska's town. 91% of students gained two marks for both parts (a) and (b).

Question 3

In parts (a) and (c) a majority of the students gained both the marks, but part (b) again proved to be a problem (presumably for the reasons suggested in Foundation Tier Question 8, above) and only 34% gained both marks.

Question 4

52% of students gained all four marks for this question. D (*Zigaretten*) was often offered as a word to fill the second gap. It may well be that students had understood *also* as the English word 'also' and thought that the text was merely referring to items which were bad for health. It is important in completing these cloze test questions that students relate their choice of answer to the text preceding or following the gap.

Question 5(a)

There appeared to be an assumption by many students suggested that the paper had been recycled, although the text did not say so. In answering questions at Higher Tier there is a need to read carefully and to answer using the actual information given in the text (here *billig*). Only 25% of students gained a mark for this question.

Question 5(b)

The most striking feature about answers to this question was the students' inability to spell the word brochure. Many were misled by the German spelling. Again, it was important to render the information in the text accurately. Many students failed to gain the mark by offering some form of paraphrase such as 'show it to your family' or 'share the leaflet with others'. 72% of students gained a mark for this question.

Question 5(c) (i)

This question was only moderately well done (45% correct). Lots of other water saving or health tips were given, such as 'have a short shower'; 'turn the tap off when cleaning your teeth'; 'only drink bottled water'. It was even suggested that visitors to Tunisia bring their own water. A lot of students offered generalities such as saving or not wasting water, which could not be credited. Some students got the shower/bath idea the wrong way round and suggested that visitors should have a bath rather than a shower.

Question 5(c) (ii)

This question was reasonably well done (71% correct). Most understood the idea of re-using the plastic bags. It was important to distinguish between 're-use' and 're-cycle', as the latter suggests disposal of the bag, and was not considered to be correct. There were also some other suggestions e.g. only use one bag; don't use plastic bags at all – but sadly they were not mentioned in the text.

Question 5(c) (iii)

Although only 27% of students gained a mark for this question it was pleasing to see that many students could correctly understand the phrase '*entsorgen Sie ihre Batterien richtig*'. In attempting to render the second possible answer to this question (take the batteries home with you), many students did not appear to recognise the phrase *nach Hause* and suggested keeping the batteries in the house. There were again many generalisations or suggestions that visitors should use rechargeable batteries. The suggestion that visitors should sort their batteries was a common answer.

Question 6

Answering this question required students to scan a range of texts for the relevant information. As several texts may contain information relevant to the answer, it is always important, having found a potential answer, to check that other sections of text do not contain material which is more correct than the one chosen. Part (a) was the question in which students performed best (91% correct) - perhaps because the text contained the word *Arbeitspraktikum*. Students were least successful (42% correct) on part (b). Here several respondents refer to the number of applications they have sent off, but only Stefan states that he is considering more than one *type* of job. Parts (c), (d) and (e) were correctly answered by 70%, 78% and 67% of the students respectively.

Question 7(a)

Part (a) was extremely well done, with 93% of students giving a correct answer. Most offered the answer 'three nationalities', but there was a scattering of other acceptable answers also.

Question 7(b)

Part (b) was less well done, with only 32% of students giving a correct answer. Many suggested that Italian was a language which the parents only used privately or when the children were not there. This appeared to derive from a misunderstanding of *verstehen* as 'to stay'. Those who misread the same verb as *aufstehen* suggested Italian was used when the children would not get up. Sometimes the syntax of the sentence was not correctly understood and led to the answer 'when the children don't understand'.

Question 7(c)

Part (c) A requirement of Grade A is that students should be able to read for detail. In consequence, students who offered answers based on a single word (unemployment, holidays, boss).did not gain a mark. The required answers were: mother's unemployment; next holiday; who the boss of house is. 26% of students gained two marks for this question, while a further 36% scored one mark. Some students combined the words the words they recognised in their own individual way and suggested that the mother's boss was coming to visit.

Question 7(d)

This question also revealed that focussing on individual words is not a good strategy at Higher Tier. Having found the key words relating to a question, there is a need to read around them. Here, answers consisting of single words such as 'humour' or 'respect' could not be credited. It was the relationship between the family members which was important. 60% of students gained a mark for this question.

Question 7(e)

In order to gain a mark for this question, students simply needed to demonstrate that one of the two examples from the text had been understood. Many, however gave vague generalisations and there were also many answers which could not be substantiated from the text: they don't discuss religion; the children choose which religion they want to belong to; they each keep to their own religion. There was confusion between *aufwachsen* and *waschen*.

Question 7(f)

This was one of the more difficult questions and it discriminated effectively. It was answered correctly by 25% of the students. Most were satisfied with stating that the family got on well, and did not draw a link with society, as the text implied, and as the question asked them to.

Question 8

This question was well done, with 86% of students scoring either three or four marks.

Question 9(a)

It seemed to the examiners that words from the text were assembled in every possible order to provide answers for this question. Students constructed their answers around the words which they recognised. Detailed reading was required and it was necessary to make mention of both 'two months' and 'first novel' in order to gain the mark. The word *Roman* did not appear to be known and there were many students who made reference to Kerstin Duken writing about the Romans.

Question 9(b)

This question aimed at testing students' understanding of the sequencing words *vorher* and *davor* in order to put the jobs into the correct order. 40% of students scored a mark on this question.

Question 9(c)

Examiners were surprised at the number of students who failed to give the correct answer to this question. Ten years (the time she worked for the agency in Hamburg), three years (presumably achieved by subtracting 19 from 22), and a month (from *Monate* in the previous paragraph) were common incorrect answers. This illustrates the danger of locating a time expression in the text and assuming it to be the correct answer without reading the context in which it appears.

Question 9(d)

51% gave the correct answer to this question, but there was also a lot of answers which were not related to the text at all. Again there were many answers based on the recognition of single words e.g. *schreiben* led to the answer 'she wanted to write'. Once again the necessity of giving sufficient detail in answers to Higher Tier questions cannot be over-emphasised.

Question 9(e)

Again it was necessary to give sufficient detail (a reference to the evening, plus the amount of time). Careless errors often cost students the mark: the number of hours was sometimes wrong, and *Abend* was often rendered as 'afternoon' or even 'weekend'. Students should also be aware that the use of the word 'night' for *Abend* is ambiguous.

The key word here was *Regel*. Some students either did not see this word, did not know it, or did not read far enough and gave answers built around the cognate *Hobby* ('keep it as a hobby'). *Stunden* was often rendered as paragraph, chapter, or page, while other students (presumably knowing the word from the school context) understood it as 'period'. 54% of students gained a mark for this question.

Question 9(f)

Mitternacht did not always appear to be known by the students and was often rendered as 'in the middle of the night'. The answer 'after midnight' did not give sufficient detail and once again students needed to take the context of the key word into account (When she gets home after midnight). Students should also be advised that at Higher Tier a 'when' question might not simply require a time answer. The answer at this level may be a statement or sentence beginning with 'When.....'.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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