



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In German (1GN0) Paper 1F: Listening and
Understanding in German

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Introduction

This unit was worth 50 marks and was divided into two sections, A and B. The first 12 questions, Section A, were set in English. The final two questions, Section B, were set in the target language.

Students had 30 minutes in which to complete their answers; this included 5 minutes' reading time at the start of the examination.

The current specification features some topics eg the environment which are fairly new to GCSE Listening. It was encouraging to see that for the most part students coped well with these. Centres are reminded that the targeted vocabulary on the Foundation paper is drawn from the minimum core vocabulary list and also that the vast majority of words on the list will feature in examinations over a period of time.

Centres entered their students appropriately at Foundation level for the most part. The Foundation paper differentiated well between students of varying abilities. Weaker students were able to identify key words and messages from topics with which they were familiar. Most questions which require the recognition of single lexical items or short phrases were well done, although some individual items of vocabulary caused problems. Stronger performances showed the ability to make simple conclusions and differentiate between different time frames.

Section A

Question 1 (Food)

Students were asked to identify the three correct statements about food from a given list of seven. This question tested students' understanding of key vocabulary items listed in the minimum core vocabulary and proved a successful introduction to the paper for the majority of students.

The most frequent correct answers given were *I do not always eat breakfast* (B) and *I often eat with friends* (F). Less successful students suggested *I like all fruit* (A) as a correct answer rather than *I do not like pears* (D). They heard and understood the introductory phrase *ich esse gern Obst* but did not appreciate the significance of the subsequent qualifying phrase *nur keine Birnen*. It is important even at this level that students listen to the entire answer rather than jumping to a false conclusion just based on hearing key vocabulary that they recognise.

Question 2 (Hotel)

Students listened to a conversation at a hotel reception desk. This question featured a familiar test type. Students were asked to select the correct answer from four possible ones. This question was done well by almost all students. Most students were able to identify *Einzelzimmer* as a single room and the *Freizeitzentrum* as the leisure centre. However, as always, less successful students struggled with the time, *halb sieben* often being assumed to mean 7.30. Time is a basic topic that will occur in future years and therefore further practice on this topic would not go amiss.

Question 3 (Work)

Students were asked to listen to three people talking about their work and identify one key fact for each person from a list of seven statements.

The most frequently correct answer was Sebastian (C) I work outdoors. Less successful students found it difficult to make the connection for Burak between *ich verdiene leider nur wenig Geld* and being badly paid. For those students who did not know the meaning of *verdiene* there was an additional hint in the first part of Burak's statement when he says he has expensive hobbies.

Some students ticked too many boxes, thereby failing to score any marks for this question. Many students find this test type quite challenging as it requires them not only to choose a correct statement but also to select the correct speaker. As a result only a small minority of students were able to score full marks. Further practice of this test type is strongly recommended as it will continue to feature in future examinations.

Question 4 (Friends)

This question featured an identical test type to Q03. The main difference was that this question featured one speaker, a teenager talking about her friends and their leisure time interests, rather than three different speakers. Students not only had to identify the correct statements but also which friend was being referred to. Unlike Q03 this question required a simple level of inference rather than just the understanding of key vocabulary.

The most frequent correct answer was (G) training for a competition. Many students realised that *nächsten Monat schwimmt sie für die Schweiz gegen Italien* implied a competition. Less successful students did not know the meaning of *Schlagzeug* although the verb *angefangen* was a further clue that (C) has taken up a new hobby was the correct answer for Susi. Those students who knew *Bergsteigen* or who at least recognised the first element *Berg-* answered correctly with (A) likes to be outdoors for Max, although they were in the minority.

Question 5 (New music)

Students were asked to answer four English questions about a forthcoming album release. This open response question targeted specific items of basic vocabulary, eg the days of the week and musical instruments, all of which can be found in the minimum core vocabulary for Foundation Level. All four parts of the question required only a single word answer.

Successful students were able to correctly identify all four items of vocabulary without difficulty. *What she loves* was a common but unsuccessful answer for Q05(b), as it is not the same thing as *Liebe*. The most challenging part was Q05(c) as many students failed to identify *Klavier* correctly. The list of musical instruments in the key vocabulary is very restricted. It does not include the most frequent incorrect answer ie clarinet, although it is obvious why many students chose this as their answer. Perhaps surprisingly, a number of students were unsure of the days of the week, often identifying *Dienstag* as Thursday. *Fernsehen* was sometimes unknown, often appearing as a place name.

It is important to read the questions very carefully in the five minute reading time before the recording is played. Examiners saw a number of examples in which students answered "where" to a "when" question and vice versa.

Question 6 (Holidays)

Students were asked to identify some key information about young people's holidays. They had to complete simple sentences choosing from a selection of given words.

This question was done well by most students. The most successful section was Q06(a) where most students proved able to deduce that Sara disliked noise from *leider war der Verkehr dort so laut*. Less successful students did not know the meaning of *Strand* and were thus unable to say what Kristof disliked. This question also required students to understand that *dreckig* was a negative adjective. It was clear to most students that the phrase *ein schönes Zimmer* indicated a positive opinion about the accommodation.

Question 7 (Social media)

This question required students to identify the three correct sentences from a list of seven in a recording about use of social media.

Successful students were able to make sensible deductions from the information given eg by realising that *ich sollte mein Passwort öfter wechseln* implied that Joshua rarely changes his password (F). Most students also managed to identify that *sehr wichtig* indicated that Joshua valued internet security (C). In this type of question it is particularly important to listen out for simple negatives eg *kein* or *nie* which enable students to eliminate some of the distractors in the question.

Question 8 (Mathematics)

Students had to answer English questions on a recording about maths in school. Open-ended questions requiring students to answer in English continue to be challenging for some. Imprecise and ambiguous use of English played a significant role in this question, leading many students to drop marks unnecessarily.

Q08(b) proved to be the most accessible, requiring students to understand *meine Mutter hilft mir*. Some students strayed too far from the actual words used in answering Q08(a). It was not uncommon for examinations to be mentioned; examiners did not credit any mention of examinations because it strayed too far from the recording where it was stated merely that the speaker's grades were bad. Some students made deductions which were to some degree sensible but unfortunately strayed too far from what was actually said. Q08(c) required students to understand the whole sentence and not just individual words or phrases. Unfortunately many students heard the negative *nie* in the phrase *werde ich nie Lehrerin* but did not take into account the overall meaning of the sentence ie I want to be a teacher but if I do not pass my exams I will not be able to achieve my ambition.

Question 9 (Graz)

Students listened to some promotional material about the city of Graz and then completed a multiple choice exercise. Students found Q09(i) and Q09(iv) the most accessible parts of this question. Q09(i) required the link to be made between *Gebäude* in the recording and architecture in the question. Many students clearly understood the meaning of the key word *Aussicht* in Q09(iv). Few students were able to recognise *Hügel* in Q09(iii) despite it being listed in the Foundation vocabulary in the specification.

Question 10 (Twin towns)

Students were asked to listen to a radio report about twin towns and answer English questions on the recording. Although much of the vocabulary was fairly straightforward it was not easy for some students to work out which information was relevant to the questions asked. Some students were unsure of the nationality of the students mentioned in the report and also found it difficult to work out what was beneficial for students and what was beneficial for the tourist office.

Q10(a) caused problems for many students. Some answers were rather implausible eg 960 - if an answer seems strange it is unlikely to be correct! Q10(b) was targeting the word *Arbeitspraktikum*, a key word for this topic area and listed in the minimum core vocabulary at Foundation Level. In Q10(c)(i) an ideal answer would have been "practise the German language" but "learn German", an answer frequently encountered by examiners, was considered close enough to be credited. In Q10(c)(ii) the crucial detail was that the blog was in English.

Question 11 (Hurricane in the Caribbean)

Students were asked to identify detailed information about a hurricane in the Caribbean. They then had to select the three correct statements from a given list of seven sentences. The topic of The International Dimension is still comparatively new and clearly not one about which every student feels confident yet. However, the test type helped to ensure that almost all students gained some credit here and the most successful students scored full marks.

Two of the three correct answers (E + F) were well signposted and just required the understanding of key vocabulary ie *Überschwemmungen* and *finanzielle Probleme*. However, it is not necessarily straightforward to identify the correct words in a very dense text. Only the most successful students were able to link *jahrelang Hilfe brauchen, um ihre Häuser zu reparieren* with (B) there was a lot of damage to property. Less successful students heard houses mentioned and presumed that (C) must be the correct answer.

In this style of question it is likely that students who listen out just for vocabulary they recognise will not score as highly as those who have an understanding of the whole sentence.

Question 12 (Being green in school)

Students listened to a podcast about protecting the environment in school and then answered open response English questions. This topic is a recent addition to the GCSE

topic list and some students were clearly not that familiar with it. The most successful students were able to extract material relevant to the individual questions. Those who found the topic more taxing were likely to include environmental lessons they had had in school and hope they were relevant here.

In Q12(a) examiners were looking for the idea that rubbish must be separated for recycling. Only the most successful students gained credit here. Many students listed what they themselves had learnt about recycling rather than what was on the podcast. The key to Q12(b) was the word *weniger*, which was known only by a few. The required answer was how to produce less rubbish. In Q12(c), some students said that it was a mistake to open the windows. However, it was necessary to mention the heating, both elements being essential to gain the mark. Less successful students blamed teachers' failure to recycle or to teach the class properly.

Section B

Question 13 (Ausbildung)

Students had to listen to Carl discussing his career plans and then fill in the gaps in target language sentences. Answers were chosen from a list of 12 words.

This style of target language question poses significant challenges for students at Foundation Level. The first of these is to understand the possible answers in the box and then the language in the questions. More successful students chose words which fitted grammatically into the sentences whereas those who were less successful often picked words completely at random. Answers often require simple deductions eg in Q13(d) *in Frankreich oder den USA arbeiten* indicates that Carl wants to work abroad (*im Ausland*). On other occasions eg Q13(b) a more specific phrase in the listening material (*mein Onkel*) leads to a more general one as the answer, on this occasion family member (*Familienmitglied*). These two questions proved accessible to the greatest number of students. Students were less successful in connecting *Zeitungen* and *Fernsehen* with the career of journalist. In Q13(e) a common assumption was that the most important aspect of a career is getting rich.

Students would be well advised to use the 5 minute reading time at the beginning of the examination to ascertain which words could possibly fit in each gap and make grammatical sense, thereby making the actual listening task a little more straightforward.

Question 14 (Schüleraustausch)

Students listened to two pupils discussing a recent school exchange visit to Germany. The question required students to fill the gaps in target language sentences by choosing the correct answer from a list of four possibilities. One of the four possible answers had to be used twice. Students did not have to supply their own words to complete the sentences but were only permitted to use one of the four words provided. Each of the possible answers was a place visited during the exchange visit.

Some questions involved understanding simple German synonyms eg in Q14(a) *Dom/Kathedrale* and *besonders interessant/faszinierend*. This was the question answered most successfully by most students. In other questions eg Q14(b) the phrasing of the answer sentence (*war viel zu kurz*) paraphrases *ich wollte länger bleiben* in the listening

extract. Least well answered was Q14(d) where students had to work out whether food was more expensive in the cathedral or the museum.

There is still a small minority of students who do not use the words provided but their own suggestions, thereby inevitably scoring 0 for this question.

Advice for future performance

- students should ensure that they are familiar with the full range of vocabulary contained in the Foundation Level minimum core vocabulary
- students should use the five minutes' reading time at the beginning of the examination to read the questions extremely carefully, paying particular attention to the question words.
- students should focus on understanding whole sentences rather than just individual words.
- students are advised to listen carefully for qualifying adjectives and adverbs, in particular for negatives *nicht* and *kein*, to help them in particular to eliminate distractors when answering multiple-choice questions.
- simple synonyms are often the key to success in the target language questions.