

Examiners' Report November 2008

IGCSE

IGCSE German (4375)

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4375 Paper 01 Listening

Questions 1 - 5 Zu Hause

This section of the examination is designed to be accessible to all candidates as they settle into the examination. It was answered almost universally correctly.

Questions 6 - 10 Gesundheit

This task required candidates to match a picture with a word or concept in a passage of spoken German and a few candidates experienced problems here. In question 7 for example, some were misled by *ich kann nichts essen* into choosing (v) (the teeth) rather than focusing on the *Magenschmerzen* as represented by (vi). In question 10, a common incorrect answer was (vi) - which has clearly nothing to do with a shoulder. This might indicate that lexis connected with common ailments and parts of the body might be an area for development. Candidates should be reminded that they may not use the same icon twice - each answer will require a different icon.

Question 11 Geld

It was evident that the majority of candidates had read the questions carefully and listened carefully for detail. Answers were generally correct with a couple of exceptions: a small handful of candidates selected b), presumably because they failed to appreciate the implications of *früher* and the use of the past tense.

Question 12 Umwelt

Many candidates seemed both uncomfortable and unfamiliar with the environment as a topic and struggled to perform well in this question.

Teil 1

Candidates generally fared better in this section, although for b) the first response was often chosen. Perhaps more attentive listening is called for at this level.

Teil 2

Only the best candidates acquitted themselves well here. Answers were often far too short and lacking adequate detail to represent a meaningful response. There were examples of random lifting from the transcript - whilst lifting of appropriate and correctly transcribed information is allowed in itself, it is not recommended that candidates should lift indiscriminate chunks and just hope for the best. Much of what was lifted in this way, failed to make any sense e.g. *Umweltfreundliche Geduckte/Geduchte, Kaufte Greetin, Schule Mülltrennen*. Environmental issues are listed under Topic area D: The modern world and as such can appear as a theme in questions on either of the set papers.

Question 13 Bahnfahren

Candidates clearly felt themselves to be back on more familiar ground here and there were several instances of excellent performance.

Teil 1

This section was done most successfully - candidates have clearly been trained to discriminate between positive and negative aspects and were able to express themselves clearly and concisely for the most part. However, there is one point worth making. The example is given to help and support candidates, but there can be no mark available for recycling the information given in the example, even if this is paraphrased. Several candidates were ignorant of this fact or perhaps failed to read the example given.

Teil 2

Here again, many candidates enjoyed success, but this section discriminated extremely well. Those who did not listen carefully for detail were tempted to write down what they thought they had heard e.g. *teuer* having failed to process the impact of *keineswegs*. At this level, it is unlikely that a question would require such an obvious answer.

General comments

Now that past papers for several series of the IGCSE German examination are available, it is strongly recommended that teachers use them for practice in class as the types of tests used in the examination are not always those used in class or in class textbooks.

4375 Paper 02 Reading and Writing

Section A - Part One

1 In der Stadt

This question provided an easy way in to the paper and was well-answered.

2 Freizeit

The question about the *Europa-Park* caused some difficulty for weaker candidates who often chose (f) as a correct answer rather than (j).

3 Sport

Many candidates are clearly used to this format of question and have no difficulty picking out the relevant information. Some were even able to interpret *Sinn für Humor* and to describe Birgit as *lustig*. Weaker candidates often omitted the negative *nie* with the answer to (d) and suggested that Birgit did have new hairstyles and tattoos.

Section A - Part Two

4

There were several excellent answers to this question in which candidates were required to write 50 words about a famous personality. Sport stars were most common, but Her Majesty the Queen and Barack Obama also featured. Unfortunately some candidates misinterpreted the rubric and wrote about characters who were not famous or about the qualities that are necessary in a good person. These answers were irrelevant and gained no marks.

Section B - Part One

5 Die Bundespost

This question differentiated well. The most common misunderstanding was about Nicole Krupp who was a *Postangestellte* rather than one of the other two options.

Section B - Part Two

6

This question always poses the greatest difficulty for candidates, few of whom score full marks. It is crucial that candidates realise that they must not simply lift material directly from the text. Although many are able to identify the correct section of text necessary to answer each question, they often cannot relate the ideas in different language. So for example the answer to (a) should have been something like *Sie hatte ein sehr gutes Zeugnis* or *Sie ist sehr intelligent*. Candidates should be

encouraged to think about the question, then identify the section of text which refers to the question, to sit back and think what it means and only then to write their answer. Many fail to gain marks which they clearly could if they took their time. The quality of the German they produce in the rest of the paper suggests that they could do well here if they did not rush.

Section C

7

All three questions were chosen by the candidates entered for this paper and there were some interesting responses. It is crucial that candidates are instructed to produce a wide range of structures in their answers. These should include a range of tenses and verb forms, inversion, coordination and subordination, infinitive clauses and varied vocabulary. Option (c) produced the best answers. However, option (a) often produced rather repetitive answers in which candidates did not take the opportunity to vary their responses by giving personal examples rather than just explaining the statistics.

Statistics

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Grade Boundaries	80	72	64	56	46	37	28	19

Notes

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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