

CONTENTS

<p>Group 1 Languages</p>
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FIRST LANGUAGE GERMAN	2
Paper 0505/02 Reading and Directed Writing	2
Paper 0505/03 Continuous Writing	3

FIRST LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0505/02

Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

All candidates had something to write in response to every question. Their success depended partly on their ability to understand and write German, but also on their ability to read questions closely in order to work out what response was required. The majority of candidates showed through their responses that they had understood both texts and questions.

The standard of candidates' work ranged from excellent to satisfactory; many candidates coped well with **Question 1** and were able to write a good essay for **Question 2**. In **Question 3**, all candidates were able to use an appropriate register, with only a very few candidates writing too little.

Grammar and spelling appeared to be much improved with some exceptions (e.g. capitals for nouns, use of *ss* and *ß*), but punctuation was in, many cases, careless (a large number did not use any commas, some omitted several full stops).

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates found both texts accessible and there were only very few misunderstandings. On the whole the quality of summaries was good. A lack of structure and lifting of chunks from the texts made a very few answers or parts of answers to this question more or less incoherent or unsatisfactory. Good candidates were able to compare the stimuli with linguistically sound observations. Some candidates omitted the comparison and lost out on valuable marks. Better candidates were aware of the correct register and understood that colloquialisms and informal language should be avoided in summaries, unless quoted from the text.

Question 2

On the whole, the answers to this question were good and some candidates produced well-structured essays in which they made valuable points. All answers were clear in their description of a perfect family, but only some were able to provide well-founded reasons in their arguments. Nobody misunderstood the task and the register was, on the whole, pitched well. Only one or two answers used colloquialisms which were inappropriate to the task.

Section B

Question 3

This question produced a good response. All candidates were aware of what an entry in a diary would look like and how it should be presented. The best diary entries described what was going on in Felix's life and expressed how he felt about it. The colloquialisms used were appropriate and almost all answers showed a sympathetic and careful approach to the task set.

General comments

Generally, candidates demonstrated a very good command of German and the ability to present personal points of view in a convincing fashion. Unfortunately, these qualities were occasionally overshadowed by largely unnecessary linguistic mistakes, e.g. capital letters being overlooked frequently in nouns, punctuation not being implemented correctly and incorrect verb endings. There were, however, very few errors in the application of the *Umlaut*, and the overall control and presentation was of a fairly high standard.

On the whole, although the entry was relatively small, there was a marginal improvement in performance.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Only one candidate attempted this question. The candidate demonstrated good control of the language, highlighting some fundamental issues. However, the argument lacked strength and explanation, and was, as a result somewhat unconvincing.

Question 2

Candidates demonstrated adequate control of vocabulary, syntax and grammar. Fundamental errors in spelling (e.g. *Biologi*, *Chemi*, *Phisik*, *almaelig*) and consistent use of the verb *machen* impacted negatively on the quality of the essays.

Question 3

Candidates who chose this topic showed admirable linguistic ability; they demonstrated excellent control of vocabulary, and used complex grammatical structures. The essays were well organised and presented clearly.

Question 4

Work on this topic was of a high quality, demonstrating a good use of complex and diverse vocabulary and structure. However, capital letters for nouns were consistently overlooked. Nevertheless, arguments and ideas were presented in a logical fashion, and advantages and disadvantages were assessed skilfully before satisfactory conclusions were drawn.

Question 8

Consistent rudimentary spelling mistakes and grammatical errors marred performance on this topic. The distinction in use between *Das/dass* and difficulties with basic sentence structure caused some confusion. Candidates did, however, demonstrate attempts to express thoughts and opinions convincingly, but due to the fundamental flaws in their use of the language, these attempts were not coherent enough to communicate effectively.

Question 9

Even though this was a very challenging topic, candidates attempted to use a complex style of writing, including quotations from relevant sources. Important points were identified but were not always reinforced with explanations or reasons. Despite some linguistic errors, candidates demonstrated an excellent ability in writing an impartial and detailed critique.