
AS

GERMAN

7661/1

Report on the Examination

7661

June 2019

Version: 1.0

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General comments

The paper as a whole appeared to be slightly more accessible than its equivalent in 2018, while still producing a wide range of attainment. Some students appeared not to have grasped the very different approach required for 'short answer' questions and summaries. For the 'short answer' questions there are no marks for quality of language and students should not go out of their way to use complex constructions; often it will be sufficient to write a short phrase or even judiciously copy a single word from the stimulus text. For the summaries, where there are 7 marks for content and 5 marks for quality of language, students must still provide accurate answers to the bullet points but should also use a variety of grammatical constructions as appropriate to the task.

Section A

Question 1

Many students found this first listening item on the Berlin Story exhibition quite challenging. While there were some easier statements relating to the gist of the passage, such as B *Es gibt Information über die Vergangenheit der Stadt*, a number of statements tested detailed comprehension of the recording, such as S, where students needed to understand the adverb *anschließend* to realise that the film was not included in the 90-minute tour.

Question 2

This non-verbal task on the topic of family life in Austria proved to be a good discriminator. The more accessible phrases in the recording included *eng miteinander verbunden* and *auf der ganzen Welt verteilt*. Less accessible phrases included *eher auf meine Freunde angewiesen* and *wenn jemand in Not ist, greifen wir praktisch ein*.

Question 3

This question on punk musicians required short answers in the target language. As in 2018, students are reminded that in questions of this type they should only include relevant information and that if they copy out whole sentences they may introduce material that confuses their answer, thereby preventing them from gaining credit. In sub-question 1, it was insufficient to transcribe the phrase *was ist von ihnen geblieben* because it would not be clear who *ihnen* referred to. Sub-question 2 was generally well-answered, although by no means all students transcribed the number 15,000 correctly. In sub-question 3, it was inappropriate to lift the phrase *alte Leidenschaft ... erneuern* because the question targeted Tim's earlier life, not his current project. Sub-question 4 was fairly well-answered, with many students homing in correctly on the key words *Festivals* and *professioneller*.

Question 4

Many students found this listening summary question on the Oberammergau Passion Play difficult. The most successful attempts were generally those where students used the notes space to write key words and phrases relating specifically to each of the three bullet points and then incorporated those words and phrases into a continuous piece of prose on the answer page. Students are reminded that marking stops at the first natural break between 70 and 80 words; therefore they should avoid making general introductory statements which use up words without gaining credit.

In the first bullet point, many students successfully conveyed the idea of a plague or deadly sickness spreading across Europe and reaching Oberammergau, but then struggled to explain the deal that was struck to prevent a reoccurrence of the plague. In the second bullet point, many students showed some understanding of the recording but had difficulty with the phrases *die Suche nach Personal* and *sich ... für die Teilnahme ... melden*. The third bullet point was generally well-answered.

Some students made good use of the many opportunities to use their own language in order to score marks for AO3. In the third bullet point, for example, students could use *um ... zu* and a modal verb construction by writing *Um an den Passionsspielen teilzunehmen, muss man aus Oberammergau kommen oder seit 20 Jahren im Dorf wohnen*. Students are reminded that no credit is gained for making purely lexical substitutions such as replacing *wohnen* with *leben*.

Question 5

This gap fill task on social media discriminated well across the attainment range. For each gap students needed to choose a word that both conveyed an appropriate meaning and fitted the grammatical context. Many of the options ended in: *-n* which could denote either a 3rd person plural form or an infinitive. The sixth gap, where the correct answer was *liegt*, proved to be the most accessible. Only a few students gave the correct answer for the last gap, *verliert*.

Question 6

Many students scored a reasonable number of marks overall for this multiple choice task on the *Basler Fasnacht*. Almost all students chose the correct option in sub-question 1 and many also gave the right answer in sub-question 4. The most difficult item was sub-question 8, where students needed to understand *Einigkeit* in the question and make the correct inference from the conditional sentence *Basel wäre nicht Basel ... nicht einverstanden ist* in the text.

Question 7

This text extolling the benefits of living in Berlin tested students' understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Some of the 'true/false/not given' answers were more accessible than others. Sub-question 5 proved to be straightforward, with most students having understood that *ab halb drei* meant 'from 2.30' and that the sentence *In München fährt der erste Zug des Tages um halb drei* was, therefore, false. Few students scored the mark for sub-question 7, where the correct answer was 'NA' because the text did not specifically exclude the learning of German by visitors to Berlin.

Question 8

Adaptations of literary passages always present a challenge to AS students, even though care is taken to simplify the text where necessary. It is always a good idea to read the title carefully; in this instance the title told us that someone was looking into the future. Many of the questions could be answered with short phrases, in some cases – lifted directly from the text.

8.1: Most students gave the correct answer. A few used *bekommen* instead of *werden* and did not score the mark.

8.2: The success rate in this sub-question was low, because many students wrote *solche Zeichnungen* without specifying what *solche* referred to.

8.3: This sub-question was generally well-answered apart from occasional confusion between *einige* and *eigene*.

8.4: This sub-question was a good discriminator. Those students who tried to use *gefallen* often ran into difficulties.

8.5: Around half the entry gave the correct answer here. Students needed to make the link between *die Situation verbessern* in the question and *Fortschritte machen* in the text. The verb construction *schloss daraus* caused some confusion.

8.6: Many students gave the correct answer. It was acceptable to look at the similarity from either perspective, i.e. either *Sie waren (zuerst) unbekannt* or *Er war unbekannt (wie sie)*.

8.7: The neatest answer here was the directly quoted phrase *alltägliche Gegenstände*. Those students who wrote a longer phrase or sentence sometimes introduced confusion, e.g. by lifting *stellte* without *dar*.

8.8: Again the best answer was a short phrase, *einen Stuhl*. However, to reach that answer students had to understand the last three sentences of the text and to realise that the phrase *fand er nirgends* ruled out *Holzschuhe* as a potential answer.

Question 9

This reading summary task, based on a text about a German architect, proved to be relatively accessible, although the extent to which students responded successfully to the bullet points varied widely. Most students stayed within the required word count. With any reading summary it is tempting to lift whole phrases and sentences from the stimulus text, but students are reminded that this approach can earn no credit towards the AO3 mark, even if the correct ideas are conveyed. When using their own words students need to take particular care with subject and object pronouns, as mistakes in this area can often change the meaning completely.

In bullet 1, many students scored at least two of the three points, often showing good understanding of the phrase *wir legen Wert auf das Aussehen*. Some students included irrelevant information, such as references to the importance of luxury and to the dangers of closely packed tower blocks. A few students seemed to have misinterpreted *günstig* as 'cheap' and there was occasional confusion between *Aussehen* required here and *Aussicht* required in bullet 2.

Many students scored both the available marks for bullet 2, successfully disregarding the references to irrelevant material such as regulating the temperature and spoiling the townscape. Examples of successful rephrasing included *Man kann in die Wohnung nicht einsehen* and *Die Wohnungen bieten eine tolle Aussicht*.

In bullet 3, many students successfully conveyed the first point, referring to a silent air conditioning system. Just a few seemed to have confused *Geräusch* with *Geruch* or *rauchen*. The second point was sometimes muddled: the text referred to communal areas in countries other than Germany - *Die Bedeutung von gemeinschaftlich genutzten Flächen ist anderswo größer als bei uns* - but in order to respond to the bullet students needed to adopt the German perspective, i.e. *Die Bedeutung von gemeinschaftlich genutzten Flächen ist nicht so groß (in Deutschland wie anderswo)*.

Question 10

This translation task on starting a family produced a wide range of attainment. As noted in 2018, it was important to translate rather than paraphrase; those students who translated too loosely tended to lose potential marks because they missed out key words or distorted the meaning in some way. Although the task does not aim to test quality of written English, the student's answer needs to be comprehensible and in a few cases poor English was a barrier to communication.

Words and phrases that were generally well-translated included: *ihr ganzes Leben*, *schwanger werden*, *möglich* and *empfehlenswert*. The different verb tenses used in the passage were often conveyed appropriately. Common sources of error were *beinahe* (sometimes omitted), *Druck* (sometimes mistranslated as 'temptation' or 'desire'), *Forscher* (sometimes treated as a surname), *führten* (sometimes mistranslated as 'led' as if the separable prefix *durch* were not present), *Schluss* (occasionally mistranslated as 'castle') and *sogar* (sometimes omitted).

Summary questions: Advice to students

Students should first read the task on the question paper carefully so they know what the item is about. They should listen to or read the stimulus material in its entirety, identifying which sections of the stimulus material correspond to each of the three bullet points. They should then listen to or read the stimulus material a second time, pausing as necessary to make notes on each bullet point. Students should look at the number of marks available for each bullet point and ensure they identify sufficient pieces of information.

Once they have noted the key information, students should look again at the wording of the bullet points and write their answer on the question paper in such a way as to answer the bullet points directly. This will normally require some manipulation of linguistic structures, such as changing from direct to indirect speech or changing from a subordinate clause to a main clause. However, it is not necessary to find synonyms for individual words or phrases.

Students should count their words and ensure that they stay within the word limit. Anything they write after the first natural break between 70 and 80 words (AS) or 90 and 100 words (A-level) will not be marked. Students should therefore avoid writing an introductory sentence or paragraph, as this would be likely to use up words without scoring marks. They should omit points of detail or examples unless these are specifically targeted by the bullet points.

The two marks available for the summary tasks - Content and Quality of Language - are awarded independently. For Content, students will receive one mark for conveying each of the seven required pieces of information unambiguously. For Quality of Language students will receive a global mark out of five for the successful manipulation of the language.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.