
A-LEVEL GERMAN

7662/2: Paper 2 - writing
Report on the Examination

7662
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General

There were responses to all texts and films in this year's paper, in varying numbers.

The number of students who did not complete the paper in the time allowed or only attempted one question was in low single figures, indicating that the paper was accessible and that students were appropriately entered, on the whole.

There were two sections to the paper. Section A consisted of prescribed literary texts and section B of six films. Students were asked to choose either one question from section A and one from section B or two questions from section A. Although the majority chose to respond to one question in each section, some students did answer two questions from section A. Unfortunately, there were some rubric infringements, the most serious of which was answering two questions on the same work or answering on two films. These are not permitted combinations. The specification and instructions on the front cover sheet of the paper inform students clearly how to answer, and they should be advised to read the rubric carefully before attempting the paper.

Similarly, too many students did not accurately complete the boxes to show which question was attempted (*for example 11.1, 07.2 etc*) and this sometimes made it difficult to identify answers until well into the essay.

In section A *Der Besuch der alten Dame* and *Der Vorleser* were the most popular texts and a good number selected *Andorra*. Other texts attracted considerably fewer responses. In section B *Goodbye Lenin!* and *Das Leben der Anderen* were comfortably the most common choices and elicited some excellent responses.

A number of scripts were escalated to senior examiners because of poor handwriting and, although this does not affect the mark awarded, students need to be reminded of the importance of legibility in a written paper.

In terms of AO3 the standard was variable. Those scoring in the lower bands of AO3 produced too many errors of a basic nature, including incorrect verb forms even in the present tense. In questions on *Goodbye Lenin!* very few students knew the past participle of *fliehen* and *lügen*.

There was inaccurate use of cases – *sein Sohns Verwandlung* – and frequent misuse of possessive adjectives *sein/ihr*.

In all essays across the board, the same errors occurred. For example, a host of 'invented' words, such as *preventieren* and other English words with *ieren* added were sprinkled across essays.

There were examples of 'anglicised German', such as *sie sprechen über es, wenn Christa-Maria ist treffen mit Hempf* to name just two of many. Some students thought that *putzen* meant 'to put' and it was not uncommon to see *will* used for the future tense. Such language at this level is disappointing and needs to be addressed.

Quite a number of students were not aware of the difference between *Tod/tot, töten/sterben bekommen/werden, streng/stark, einige/eigene/einzige, kennen/wissen*.

Answers where such errors abound and where such an uncertain grasp of grammar is evident cannot access the middle or higher bands for AO3. Basic errors meant that it was difficult, at times,

to decipher exactly what the student was trying to say and immediate comprehension was hindered.

On the other hand, more able students were able to write fluently in accurate German, using a wide range of vocabulary and structures and successfully attempting complex structures. *Nachdem sie Tötges erschossen hatte, fühlte sich Katharina schuldlos, in dem von Becker gedrehten Film, ihr wurde geholfen, and vor dem gnadenlosen Richter blieb sie ihrer religiösen Überzeugung treu* are examples of impressive use of the language at A-level.

There was a similar variation in levels of critical and analytical response (AO4). However, it must be said that examiners were more impressed this year by the depth of knowledge of the content of both texts and films.

In essays awarded marks in the lower bands there was some irrelevance. Students should focus on the set question instead of writing whatever they know about characters or events of the work studied. There was not a general tendency to reproduce pre-learned essays, but there were examples of students answering a different question from the one on the paper.

A number of essays on the texts and films spent too much time giving details of the author/director, dates of publication and awards or prizes won. Such details can be irrelevant unless used in the right context in the main body of an answer. The most effective introductions were those which outlined the main points of the answer to come and how the title was to be addressed.

Conclusions were sometimes merely a repetition of points made in the main body of the essay. No credit was given for repetition.

Some students wished to strengthen or illustrate a point by use of quotation. If the quotation is accurate, this can be a very powerful tool, but if inexact in both accuracy and grammar, as some were, the impression was not at all positive.

The most impressive answers made lots of points clearly and concisely, kept focus on the title and supported statements by detailed reference to the work. Issues were evaluated and personal opinion offered. Arguments did not have to coincide with any predetermined view. Students' assessments and opinions were totally valid as long as there were attempts at justification and analysis. For example, in Question 15.1, many students disagreed that the courtroom scene is the most important scene in *Sophie Scholl – die letzten Tage*, but their answers were very well-argued and deservedly scored in the highest band. The lower-scoring responses often relied on pure narrative at the expense of evaluation and analysis.

Examiners noted thorough knowledge of the text or film in many cases, even if students had difficulty expressing themselves at times. Many essays were several pages long, but with conciseness, relevance, support from the text or film and personal evaluation it is possible to access the highest mark bands with a response in the 300 words advised on the front cover of the paper.

Section A

There were some outstanding answers on *Der Vorleser*, a very popular choice. In Question 10.1 the most impressive responses took the view that Hanna's *Schwäche* was not only her illiteracy, but that illiteracy was at the root of all her problems: moving so often, poor job prospects, feelings of guilt, lack of relationships. Answers which simply concentrated on aspects of her relationship

lacked the depth and sophistication of more complete essays. Knowledge of this work was displayed in Question 10.2 with full answers mentioning not only Hanna, but Gertrud, Sophie, Michael's family and the effect Michael's relationship with Hanna had on his ability to form bonds in his later life.

Both questions on *Der Besuch der alten Dame* elicited responses at both ends of the spectrum. In Question 03.1 students explained the gradual *Verfall der Moral* and linked it to capitalism and the effect of Claire's relentless quest for money. The link between Claire and the poverty in Gullen was recognised by some students and all answers commented on the link between power and the importance of money. Less effective answers highlighted Claire's pursuit of so-called justice but were unable to relate the answer to the question set.

Question 03.2 was less popular, but well done in the main. Grotesque elements were illustrated well, but less effective answers discussed the *Verfremdungseffekt*, thereby ignoring the first part of the question and not supporting points made by any of the many examples in the play.

Section B

In many answers it was obvious that students had really enjoyed watching *Goodbye Lenin!* and were able to write at some length on both questions. There were excellent responses to Question 11.1 where Christiane was seen as the catalyst for comic elements, but was essentially a tragic figure. Her husband had fled to the West; she had to look after the children on her own; she lied to them; she suffered depression and had serious health problems leading to her death. Some students expressed sympathy for her as she was a staunch socialist who died at the same time as the demise of the GDR.

In Question 11.2 it was not always clear if all students understood *enttäuschend*. Some less effective answers concentrated on the availability of goods in the shops and on the greater freedom afforded by the West. Fuller responses detailed Alex's disappointment, frustration and anger and the various reasons for these emotions.

In Question 12.1 the most effective answers commented on music and colour throughout the film and gave numerous examples together with opinion on the effect of both, cinematically and on the viewer. Weaker answers mentioned only the difference in colour and brightness / darkness between Dreyman's and Wiesler's apartments and the only reference to music was the Sonata.

The most popular question on *Das Leben der Anderen* was 12.2, with some very interesting responses. Dreyman and Wiesler were both seen as heroes in their own way. Wiesler was the more worthy in many eyes as he had sacrificed more than Dreyman and had been instrumental in Dreyman's act of heroism. Wiesler's heroic deeds were even recognised by Dreyman, who dedicated his book to him. Most referred to Jerska's suicide and the playing of the Sonata as the turning-point, but where students gave quotations, they were often inaccurate.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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