

GERMAN

Paper 9780/01
Speaking

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, consider the issue raised in their chosen article and their own reaction(s) to it
- in Part II, choose a subject which genuinely interests them and which clearly relates to a country where the target language is spoken
- in Parts I and II, be prepared to take the lead in the conversation
- in Parts I and II, be ready to engage in natural and spontaneous discussion.

General comments

The examination was tackled very well by a majority of the candidates. Most approached both tasks with confidence and were able to cope with the demands without any major difficulties as a result of their careful preparation and the valuable guidance they had received from their teachers.

The key to success in this exam is effective communication on various topics. Candidates need to have a wide range of structures and vocabulary at their disposal, and they need to be confident about using the language they have acquired. In order to achieve the best marks it is also important that they have the creativity and versatility to respond to unexpected questions in the text discussion and the topic discussion.

Part 1: Newspaper article and related themes

Four articles under the general headings of Generation gap, Urban and rural life, Religion and belief, and Conservation were offered, with candidates choosing one at the start of their preparation time. The themes of all four topics proved accessible to candidates, most of whom presented a wide range of creative ideas and personal views. It was pleasing to see that all four cards were chosen, with the text on the generation gap proving the most popular by a small margin, and the text on conservation proving slightly less popular than the other three texts. Candidates made good use of the opportunity to make brief notes during the preparation period. These notes can be used as prompts or reminders during the examination but must not impede a spontaneous and genuine conversation.

After choosing the article in the initial part of the preparation period, candidates then study the text, knowing that they are expected first to give a brief summary of the main points raised in the article, then to offer views on issues arising directly from the article, and finally to comment on broader issues related to the general heading on the card. As candidates are by now increasingly familiar with the format of the text discussions, they explored the wider implications of their chosen topics very effectively, with the result that many successful and meaningful conversations ensued, covering many different angles. Most candidates were clear about the fact that no in-depth specialist knowledge is required for the topic discussion, but that the best conversations occur when the candidate has clear and well thought-through opinions on the theme they have chosen.

The majority of candidates showed very good to excellent understanding of the articles and the issues discussed in them. Similarly, most candidates were able to score high marks for Range and Accuracy as well as Pronunciation and Intonation. It was evident that they had been taught the linguistic skills needed to communicate competently in unexpected situations, and that they had at their disposal the linguistic structures necessary to do this successfully. Most candidates made good (in many cases excellent) attempts to lead the conversation. It is worth noting that the mark scheme encourages a fluent and spontaneous conversation and use of a range of complex vocabulary and structures. For top marks

candidates are expected to take the initiative in developing and expanding the discussion and to be able to argue their point(s) of view convincingly.

Comments on the Speaking Cards

Card 1: Kann man Konflikte zwischen den Generationen vermeiden?

The majority of candidates who chose this text summarised it without difficulties. Questions on the text covered the topics of respect shown by young people towards the older generation, the value of traditions, the need to break conventions and for young people to find their own way, even if it means making mistakes, and how the relationship between the generations could be improved. Questions on wider issues dealt with potential differences between growing up now and in the past, today's youth, the role played by the ideal parent in the lives of their children and the importance of freedom as part of the growing-up process.

Card 2: Stadt oder Land? Auf der Suche nach einem erfüllten Leben

Again, summarising the text caused few difficulties. Questions covered reasons for moving to cities and the advantages and disadvantages of living in conurbations and the countryside. Wider discussions touched upon the social and economic aspects of life in cities and rural areas, including issues of multiculturalism and the possibility of ethnic conflict, social the need for a local community, and the stress of city life and the isolation of rural areas, among a wide range of other topics.

Card 3: Jugendliche und Religion in der Schweiz

This text was possibly regarded as slightly more challenging and was consequently chosen by some of the best candidates. The summaries offered were mostly very good. Questions on the text discussed possible reasons for why many young people do not seem to be so interested in religion nowadays, the perceived prejudice some people have about certain religions, and the question of whether religious beliefs still have any relevance in today's world. Wider issues discussed included whether human values of caring and ethical living are achievable without religious beliefs, what values are most important in our age, religious fanaticism, prayer, meditation and Marx's view that "religion is the opium of the people".

Card 4: Umweltschutz: Es gibt auch gute Nachrichten

This text was also summarised without difficulties by most candidates. Questions on the text covered the damage to ecosystems worldwide, climate change, rising sea levels, melting glaciers and discussions as to whether the views presented in the text were realistic. Ways for governments and individuals to protect the environment and the role environmental pressure groups might play in this regard were among the wider issues discussed. The question of the potential cost of protecting nature for future generations, both in financial terms (now) and in environmental terms (the future), was also covered in some detail.

Part 2: Prepared oral topic

This section of the Speaking test was done very well. Perhaps due to the fact that candidates have few restrictions on their choice of topic, other than it having to relate to a target language country and it not coinciding with any of the texts and films prescribed for Paper 4, the large majority of candidates had researched their chosen topics diligently and with evident interest and enthusiasm. Topics chosen reflected personal interests and passions, and consequently candidates showed commitment and depth in their discussions. Themes were often discussed maturely and with finesse.

At the start of the topic discussion, candidates were invited to say why they had chosen their topic. The discussion then generally followed the 5-8 headings chosen previously. Almost all candidates had relevant factual knowledge at their fingertips. In addition, many candidates coped well with unexpected questions asking for clarification, analysis, comparisons and personal opinions. Many discussions were impressive in terms of content and linguistic competence. Good factual knowledge was usually matched by an ambitious range of language and structures, as well as authentic pronunciation and intonation. The range of vocabulary offered by candidates was very impressive in most cases.

The range of topics was even wider than in previous sessions and included historical figures and events, various aspects of music, the arts, films, in-depth discussions of literary texts, politics and current affairs and environmental topics. The following list, which is presented in no particular order, may serve to give an impression of the breadth of the topics offered this year:

Hermann Hesses Siddhartha
Richard Wagner und „Der Ring des Nibelungen“
Die Schachnovelle von Stefan Zweig
Wilhelm II
Die Zeitung Simplicissimus
Wim Wenders „Der Himmel über Berlin“
Robert Schumann
Die nationale Identität der Deutschen
Die Rolle Deutschlands in der EU
Klaus Kinski
Fritz Langs „Metropolis“
Die deutsche Vereinigung unter Bismarck
Die deutsche Wirtschaft zwischen 1990 und 2012
Friedrich Schillers Jugendjahre und „Die Räuber“
Deutsche Musik im 19. Jahrhundert: der Brahms – Wagner Streit
Sonnenenergie – eine falsche Hoffnung?
Sex, Drogen und Tecno: Der Film „Berlin Calling“
Kann der Rap Jugendlichen in Deutschland eine Perspektive geben?
Sollte die NDP verboten werden?
Die Hanse
Das Buch „Die Wolke“ und Kernkraft in Deutschland
Das Peiner Freischießen
Nationalismus, Patriotismus, Rechtsradikalismus
Arbeitslosigkeit in Deutschland
Die Energiewende in Deutschland
Tierversuche
Aussiedler in Deutschland
Hartz IV
Sterbehilfe
Die Olympischen Spiele 1972 in München
Berlin nach dem 2. Weltkrieg
Die deutsche Esskultur
Die Erbschaft der DDR auf das heutige Deutschland
Einwanderer in Deutschland
Deutsche Märkte: Essensmärkte, Bauernmärkte und Weihnachtsmärkte
Friedrich der Große

Communication with most centres prior to the examination was efficient and effective, although it must be said that in some cases earlier entry and communication would have been appreciated for the co-ordination of the examining schedule. Agreement about exam dates was reached easily and most candidate topic sheets were sent to the visiting Examiner in good time.

Finally, there is no doubt that candidates had taken a great deal of care to prepare well for this examination. Their hard work, enthusiasm and readiness to interact with an unknown visiting Examiner were evident throughout the examinations, transforming what might have been a nervous occasion into a highly successful dialogue. It is very satisfying to be able to reward such positive attitudes appropriately.

GERMAN

Paper 9780/02
Reading and Listening

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- focus only on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers
- pay particular attention to conveying the required information in unambiguous language.

General comments

In the Reading part of the examination (**Part I**), candidates are expected to answer two sets of questions – one in German, the other in English – and to translate a short passage from English into German. For the Listening part of the examination (**Part II**), candidates listen to three recorded interviews in German. They answer two sets of questions – one in German and another in English – and write a guided summary on the third interview. The questions are carefully worded and require an equally precise response. Overall, the candidates performed very well and achieved good results this year.

Comments on specific questions

Part I – Lesetext 1

Weaker candidates struggled with the nuanced explanations called for by **Questions 3 (b)** and **6**. But overall, candidates produced good answers in this exercise.

Question 1

Several weaker candidates misunderstood the verb *bedrohen* and thought that it suggested that a change had already taken place, instead of linking it with a potential change in the situation in the future.

Question 2

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were able to convey the minor impact English has on everyday Swiss German usage. Some candidates wrote the answer required for **3(b)** for this question, which meant they were not awarded the mark.
- (b) Weaker candidates struggled with this question. Several candidates mistook what is an issue of language competence for a lack of intelligence.

Question 4

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 5

A high proportion of candidates answered this question correctly. Some candidates, however, failed to convey the historical aspect, which was necessary to obtain the mark.

Question 6

Two marks were on offer in this question. Most candidates understood that Leuscher does not care very much for *Modewörter*, but the weaker candidates failed to convey that he is not worried about their impact.

Question 7

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Part I – Lesetext 2

Overall, this exercise produced good answers in English. A good range of vocabulary was important. Candidates whose answers were imprecise missed out on several marks. This was particularly the case in **Questions 8, 9 and 13**.

Question 8

A number of candidates struggled to express the comparison implied in *noch nie* and wrote 'a lot of' or 'too much money', which was not correct.

Question 9

This question was generally answered correctly. However, several candidates omitted to mention the help provided was supposed to benefit the young in later life, and were therefore not awarded the mark.

Question 10

(a) This was generally answered correctly, although some candidates mentioned 'helping children achieve their dreams' which was too vague to score a mark.

(b) Most candidates were able to answer this question correctly.

Question 11

Several candidates appeared not to understand what the word *Sozialhilfe* referred to. Instead of translating it as 'benefits' the assumption often seemed to be that it meant that a social worker would come to help the family at home. This led to some incorrect answers.

Question 12

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 13

A lack of precision in answering this question often led to invalid answers which had little to do with the targeted information of financial responsibility and autonomy.

Question 14

This was generally answered correctly.

Part 1 - Lesetext 3

This exercise requires a good range of vocabulary as well as sound grammar. In spite of the challenges, many candidates completed the task successfully.

Question 15

With the exception of the direct speech and the short final clause the passage required either the simple past or the perfect tense, with one verb form requiring the subjunctive mood (*Konjunktiv II*). The most common grammatical difficulties encountered were with verb-subject agreement, adjectival endings and word order. Other grammatical challenges included the use of the infinitive, the subjunctive mood and irregular comparisons of adjectives. Vocabulary and idiom which caused particular problems included: *in den 50er*

Jahren; mit wenig Geld auskommen; mit einer Situation umgehen; Schulden machen; and ziemlich. A number of candidates used the wrong preposition in certain idioms, e.g. *von* instead of *auf* for 'to be proud of'.

Part II - Hörtext 1

As with the first two reading exercises, full sentences are usually not required for a correct response. Most candidates did well in this exercise, though some found **Question 17** challenging.

Question 16

- (a) There were no particular difficulties with this question.
- (b) Most candidates were able to answer this question correctly.

Question 17

Two marks were allocated to this question. Most candidates managed to answer correctly on the way things are at present, but many had difficulties conveying the development of this behaviour over time which was required to obtain the second of the two marks on offer.

Question 18

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 19

A number of candidates were unable to communicate the subjective nature of the feeling of safety afforded by *Vorinformation*.

Question 20

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 21

Some candidates attributed a causal link between the internet and marrying late, whereas the text makes no such connection.

Part II - Hörtext 2

Overall, candidates did well in this exercise. However, as usual, it was attention to detail which determined a good outcome. **Questions 23** and **25** are a good case in point. In the last paragraph certain words proved challenging for some candidates, such as *angeworben*, *angestellt*, and *schaffen*, leading to some wrong answers to **Question 28**.

Question 22

This was generally answered correctly.

Question 23

A number of candidates did not differentiate between the national average of male teachers and the percentage of male teachers in primary education, leading to some wrong answers.

Question 24

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 25

Most candidates correctly identified the debate in question, namely whether co-education is a good or a bad thing. However, several candidates omitted to say that this debate concerned science subjects only, leading to a loss of marks.

Question 26

Some candidates mistook *leichter* as being used in its adjectival form, leading to the wrong answer 'It is easier for women', whereas *leichter* was in fact used adverbially in conjunction with the verb construction *sich vereinbaren lassen*. This led to a number of wrong answers.

Question 27

There were no particular problems with this question

Question 28

Misunderstanding *angeworben*, *angestellt*, and in particular *schaffen*, led to some incorrect answers to this question. Several candidates appeared to understand *schaffen* in the sense of 'to create', whereas its meaning in this context is 'to get there' or 'to manage'.

Part II - Hörtext 3

As in previous years, the summary proved to be a particularly challenging exercise for some candidates. Candidates had to be disciplined in order to be able to cover all four bullet points within the word limit. Several candidates lost valuable marks by writing too many words or through lack of precision. Most candidates, nevertheless, did quite well.

Question 29

- *Attitude to nuclear energy of German governments past and present.*
The word *Atomausstieg* proved to be a challenge for a number of candidates. Some took it to mean merely a reduction in nuclear consumption rather than a moratorium; others translated it as 'increase'. Several candidates lost valuable points for not conveying the historical reasons for holding on to nuclear power today.
- *The consumption of renewable energy.*
This was generally answered correctly. In order to be awarded full marks, however, it was necessary to include both the development of energy consumption over the past 20 years and the two alternative projections for the future.
- *The financial costs of nuclear versus renewable energy.*
Most candidates received one mark for including the issue of underinvestment in wind and tidal power and its effect on the cost of renewable energy. The word *ersetzt* caused problems for a number of candidates, leading to some incorrect answers.
- *Bosshardt's concerns about nuclear safety and waste.*
There were no particular problems with the summary of the last bullet point.

GERMAN

Paper 9780/03
Writing and Usage

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, choose a title on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and lexis
- in Part I, plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments
- in Part I, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in Part II, read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in Parts I and II, carefully proofread their responses.

General comments

The challenge in the first part of the paper is for candidates to express their knowledge of their chosen topic in idiomatic and accurate German. Many candidates who did well structured their essays appropriately and marshalled their thoughts coherently. Most candidates were able to produce written work with an appropriate mix of description, analysis, illustration and evaluation. In the second part of the examination, candidates had to conjugate verbs, manipulate sentences and complete a cloze test. Both parts demanded detailed knowledge of German grammar and versatility in its application.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1: Discursive Essay (40 marks)

Successful candidates planned their essays by structuring their thoughts into a coherent and relevant response. Very few essays were too short but candidates who wrote more than the advised 350–450 words tended to repeat certain parts of their argument.

The topics are carefully worded and the candidates' first task must be to decide what is expected of them. It may be useful in this respect to copy the chosen task at the top of one's essay, as was indeed done by the vast majority of this year's candidates. Most candidates went on to show that they had understood the question well, and developed their ideas into coherent arguments. The best candidates wrote compositions which were wholly convincing. In a small number of cases the understanding of the question was limited and only a small number of relevant points were made.

A well-constructed argument will often make a significant contribution to the validity and persuasiveness of the views put forward. A good essay will usually indicate the issue for discussion in an appropriately brief introduction and present a balanced evaluation of the available evidence in the main part of the response, leading to a logical and considered conclusion. It was good to see that very few candidates launched straight into their argument without introducing their essay first. All candidates wrote a concluding paragraph, although in some cases important synoptic points which might have lent further weight to the argument were left out, and in a small number of cases the conclusions had very little connection with the discussions that had preceded them. Some candidates wrote introductions which were too long and which contained many points which could have been more effectively deployed in the discussion part of their essays. Unfortunately, some candidates struggled to use paragraphs effectively, and a small number of essays didn't contain any at all. Candidates should therefore be reminded that paragraphing is a crucial device for structuring a coherent argument. Ideally, candidates should devote one paragraph to each main point they wish to make.

In terms of language and usage, most essays were easy to follow and almost all candidates showed they were able to apply German word order rules correctly. A small number of candidates lost themselves in very

complex sentence patterns. The best candidates showed flair and style, however, and many were able to use idiomatic language to good effect. In some instances candidates relied on a list of set phrases, which, although often linguistically correct, did not always fit the argument they were trying to make. For some reason, capitalisation of nouns proved particularly problematic this year. In some essays capitalisation was rather randomly implemented in that some verbs or adjectives were spelt with a capital while many nouns were not. Nevertheless, it was pleasing to note the following strengths this year:

- the argumentation in several essays was wholly convincing and much of the work was enjoyable to read
- candidates are becoming increasingly adept at using subjunctive, conditional and passive structures
- the majority of the work was more balanced, considered and persuasive than in previous years.

Question 1

- (a) This was second-most popular topic and most of the essays were sufficiently relevant and focused. Many candidates showed very good insight into the various problems which make it a difficult task to eradicate hunger in Africa. Few essays relied on generalisations or wandered off the point. Some candidates felt strongly about the issue and offered good reasons for why they agreed with the statement made in the topic. Whilst most candidates were of the opinion that more needs to be done to fight starvation in Africa, they did not rely on a one-sided argument but also provided insight into why some countries may currently not be in a good enough economical position to provide more help. They also highlighted and discussed many of the difficulties associated with the provision of aid, including corruption and logistical problems with the fair and effective distribution of food and money.
- (b) This was the most popular question. Most answers were well written, with relevant examples of what might count the educational benefits of travel, e.g. using other languages, the experience of mastering challenging situations in a foreign culture, meeting new people, and also examples of what kind of holidays would not be conducive to learning about other cultures and peoples, e.g. beach holidays. Several candidates made the effective distinction between *Reisen* and *Urlaub*, arguing that the former did indeed provide much in the way of educational value, whereas the latter would often not. Some candidates also included *Geschäftsreisen* in their discussion and argued that these might be particularly educational. They and others also pointed to the important knowledge, experience and skills that could be gained during a gap year, e.g. increased confidence, tolerance of other ways of life and openness and receptiveness to new ideas. Other candidates made the subtle point that tourism could reinforce an entrenched belief in the superior values of one's own culture and even lead to racism. Perhaps unfortunately, many candidates passed up on the opportunity to refer to their own travel and/or holiday experiences abroad, which might have added more colour to their solidly argued essays.
- (c) Only a small number of candidates chose this topic but they invariably wrote convincing and well-balanced essays. The arguments presented were based on impressive scientific insights and elucidations. Candidates explained why inoculations were important but also explored the reasons why some parents may decide not to have their children inoculated.
- (d) Many coherent arguments were presented in response to this topic but some misunderstanding was also evident. Most candidates chose to focus their response on the advantages and disadvantages of a 'Big Brother society', and only a very few candidates misunderstood the phrase "*im öffentlichen Licht stehen*".
- (e) A number of candidates offered statistical evidence to bolster their argument. Unfortunately, these statistics did not always ring true and. Candidates may need to be reminded that statistical data should only be included if it is relevant and correct and that such information is by no means essential for a convincing essay. Most arguments presented were clear and valid, however, and many candidates effectively described and evaluated the reasons why young people may choose to take part in demonstrations and many cited pertinent examples to underline why protest was often justified.

Part 2

Many candidates were well prepared for this part of the paper and achieved high scores. However, it appeared that this year's candidates were perhaps not quite as strong in the area of linguistic accuracy than candidates in previous years. In addition, more candidates ignored the instructions in *Übung 2* to start the

new sentence with the words in brackets than in the past. No marks could be awarded for answers which were in breach of this requirement.

Übung 1

Overall candidates did quite well in this exercise. A few candidates were unable to conjugate *wollen* correctly in **Question 2**. Some candidates struggled to put *anmachen* in the past tense or did not realise that a past tense was required in the next question. In **Question 4** a small number of candidates encountered difficulties with using the reflexive, and in **Question 5** some used the pluperfect, while others did not know the past tense (imperfect or perfect) for the verb in brackets. A small number mixed up *wurde* and *würde* in response to **Question 6**.

Übung 2

Correct word order is particularly important in this exercise. Candidates who did not start their sentence with the word(s) in brackets could not be given a mark. Only a small number of strong candidates realised that a noun was needed in **Question 9**. **Question 10** also presented problems for some candidates, especially when the instruction to start the sentence with *Damit* was not heeded. **Question 11** also proved quite challenging for some candidates who struggled with the tense and/or with the word order.

Übung 3

As was the case with the other two grammar exercises, candidates struggled with this third exercise more than they had in previous years. Many candidates chose *auf* instead of the correct *über* in **Question 12**. Several candidates struggled with the plural ending in **Question 13**, while some did not recognise that **Question 14** required the genitive. Some candidates did not appear to be familiar with the phrase “*es handelt sich um*” in **Question 15**. The vast majority of candidates had no problems with **Question 16**, however, but a small number chose *das*. **Question 17** posed very few problems but the difference between the comparative and the superlative in **Question 18** proved to be more challenging for some candidates, as did **Question 19**. Only a very small number of candidates answered **Questions 20** and **21** incorrectly, but several made mistakes in **Question 22**. A small majority of the candidates did not recognise that for **Question 23** the correct answer was *fehlt*, and chose *fehlen* instead. **Question 24** showed up some weaknesses in dealing with the comparative and the superlative but only a few candidates answered **Questions 25, 28, 30** and **31** incorrectly. Of the remaining tasks, **Question 27** was tackled comparatively poorly, however.

GERMAN

Paper 9780/04
Topics and Texts

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the question with care and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close attention to the question
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid simply retelling the story.

General comments

Examiners were impressed with the general standard of scripts presented this year. The requirements of the examination seem to be well understood by teachers and candidates alike and it was good to see the high level of achievement which candidates had reached at the end of their two-year course. This year, candidates were particularly impressive in their Topics responses, with good handling of the comparative nature of the tasks shown by the vast majority. The answers in the Texts section were a little more uneven than last year, with weaker scripts tending towards a retelling of the narrative. Nevertheless, there were a good number of very impressive answers in which effective critical engagement with the precise terms of the question was plain to see. Once again, the skills gained by the candidates from their engagement with this part of the syllabus were very much in evidence and it was pleasing to see the academic freedom Pre-U offers being put to good use.

For sake of clarity candidates should be advised to indicate the numbers of the questions they've chosen and also to note the question numbers on the front cover of their answer booklet, as very few candidates did so this year. It would help if candidates would start a new side in their answer booklet for their second essay. Candidates should be encouraged to write their plans in the answer booklets and to write out the title of the essay to help them adhere to the requirements of the question throughout their answers.

The aim of the Topics Section is that of encouraging the acquisition of a broader cultural knowledge of the topic studied through the texts/films chosen. It was clear to see that this aim had been achieved in the vast majority of answers, with some candidates producing essays of a very high standard indeed, showing the ability to produce very comprehensive answers with excellent understanding of the underlying themes of the Topic in question. Whilst the focus of the answers should be the texts/films studied, the function of these works is primarily to reflect the concrete historical circumstances pertinent to the topic. Purposefully casting responses in terms of the broader topic will often help candidates to gain access to the top mark boxes, as was indeed the case with a number of scripts did this year.

The level of language showed improvement when compared with previous years, with far fewer linguistically weak answers in evidence. However, as in previous sessions, *Stadt* and *statt* were confused with *Staat*. The genders of *Film* and *Stasi* were also frequently given incorrectly, as was the plural of *Film*. The spelling of *Stasi* also appeared to be difficult for some candidates and the spelling of characters' names proved to be problematic (e.g. 'Seeland' instead of Sieland; 'Dreymann' or 'Dreiman' instead of Dreyman). The acquisition of a secure Topic-specific vocabulary should therefore be placed higher on the priority list for candidates in their revision for this paper.

There was good targeting of the precise terms of the questions and certainly far fewer instances of padding or narrative compared to previous sessions, and it would appear that good answering technique is becoming increasingly well-established. In almost all of the answers a good balance was struck between the two works chosen. Weaker candidates often had problems progressing beyond a basic response to the question and tended to be narrow in their interpretation of the question.

Close reference, through effective allusion and/or quotation combined with incisive analysis, was very much in evidence in the best responses. It was also good to see that the recommendation that candidates refer only or mainly to two works – with any other work mentioned only in passing, if at all – has been taken on board by all Centres.

The aim of the Texts Section is to encourage literary appreciation through detailed textual analysis. It was obvious that candidates are becoming increasingly adept at producing a well-structured answer in English. In contrast to last year, however, the Texts answers scored slightly lower marks this year than the responses in the Topics part of the paper.

Planning still is rather inconsistently applied and candidates would be well-advised to use part of their time to think through the implications of the questions and construct a clear line of argument before putting pen to paper. The best answers provided sustained analysis with a suitably broad take on the question. Quotations were often used well as were direct references to the text. Weaker candidates tended not to plan their answers effectively and often took too much time to engage with the focus of the question, relying on padding or on lines of argument which were not particularly relevant or appropriate. In particular, introductions should be used to engage with the precise terms of the question rather than give a potted summary of the work or author under discussion.

This year there were more candidates who attempted commentary questions compared to previous years. Results were rather mixed. In some scripts, critical commentary gave way to retelling the story. It should therefore be stressed that the extract given must be analysed according to the parameters specified in the question. That said, some of the best answers showed sustained analysis of the particular extract. In delivering the syllabus, practising commentary is a very fruitful way of engaging with the texts. When referring to the extract candidates should be encouraged to refer to the line numbers given in the question paper rather than re-quote large chunks from the text, as this will save precious time and space to focus on the task in hand.

Comments on individual questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

Ideologie, Die Nachkriegszeit, Das Leben in der DDR and *Die Wende* all attracted responses this year. This report will only focus on those questions which were attempted by more than a very small number of candidates.

As mentioned before, Examiners were impressed with the standard of written German this year. It was clear that candidates had learnt to structure and express their thoughts in German well over two years, and with more style and *Sprachgefühl* than in previous years. Candidates also employed a broader range of vocabulary this year. At the top end candidates were very fluent and displayed an impressive command of the language with a considerable degree of idiom. There were occasional weaknesses in the handling of cases and the comparative form of adjectives. The gender of a few nouns was not always known (e.g. *Roman, Ehemann, Film*), and there were some problems with weak masculine nouns (e.g. *Staat, Mensch; Mann*), oblique cases and some common conjunctions (*als* or *wenn?*). Candidates should be reminded that it is customary to use the present tense when discussing the action of a text or film. The shortening of characters names (for example 'CMS' for Christa-Maria Sieland) is not appropriate. Nevertheless, it was good to see that Centres have very much contributed to the expansion of the range of candidates' critical vocabulary and they are indeed encouraged to maintain their efforts in this area. There were also fewer problems with forming comparative adjectives this year, which was a welcome improvement given that candidates are asked to make detailed comparisons between different works.

Question 1A

This question produced a good range of answers. The best answers showed a detailed understanding of the ideologies studied, with many drawing interesting parallels and making crucial distinctions between the idealism in *Die Fetten Jahre sind vorbei* and the fascism in *Die Welle*. Some candidates seemed more at home with *Die Welle*, but even with this film important details were sometimes misremembered or conspicuous by their absence. In particular the film's denouement (including Tim's suicide; the shooting of Bomber and the arrest of Rainer) was not always analysed in enough detail. There was a tendency to retell the story in some weaker scripts. Candidates are therefore advised to keep the terms of the question in mind at all times.

Question 2A

This proved a popular topic once again and the standard of the work was generally high. The best answers showed excellent insight into the underlying themes and the historical setting. Knowledge and interpretation of the film were especially good, as were responses which discussed *Draußen vor der Tür*. However, treatment of *Das Brot der frühen Jahre* was a little more uneven, with weaker candidates not always managing to analyse the portrayals of the dysfunctional families very convincingly. The replacement of the family by the machine of capitalism was also not widely discussed as there was a tendency to home in on the notion of *Brot* in a way that was not particularly relevant to the question. There were some very strong answers indeed to this question, however.

Question 2B

This was the most popular question on the paper and attracted a wide range of answers. Most candidates approached the question well, although some limited their responses to just one character. This was particularly the case with *Das Wunder von Bern*. There was more scope in this film to see the conflicts from a broader range of perspectives than just that of Richard, especially as the film follows Matthias closely. Good comparisons were made about the types of conflict in each work, with many candidates making good comparisons between texts; contrasting the endings proved a particularly fruitful line of enquiry in this respect. The broad scope of the question led to some excellent answers and the high level achieved was very pleasing to observe indeed.

Question 4A

This topic proved popular once again, with answers given on *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* and *Das Leben der Anderen*. All candidates displayed good knowledge of the source material and were able to discuss the representations of communism well. There were many good observations on the film in particular, analyzing the differences between the theory and practice of the Party, specifically with reference to the character of Minister Hempf. The all-pervasive nature of communism and its inherent suspicion of others was well illustrated. Others looked at the loss of faith in communism, through both Wieseler and Dreymann. Responses to the novel were less even, and although there is a light-heartedness about the text there were more serious aspects which were somewhat downplayed in some answers, in particular with regards to Wuschel and Micha's brother Bernd.

Question 4B

Candidates responded well to this question, especially in relation to *Das Leben der Anderen*. Some candidates were a little limited in their approach, focusing on Wiesler to the exclusion of other characters, but most answers included a good range of careers depicted in the film, with Hempf at the centre deciding the fate of many individuals (e.g. Wiesler, Dreyman, and above all Christa-Maria Sieland). Some also looked at the career aspirations of Grubitz and the *Berufsverbot* placed on Jerska. The responses to *Am kürzerem Ende der Sonnenallee* were sometimes limited to discussions of Micha, without consideration of the wider group of characters. The aim of finding a job which was apolitical did not feature as often as it might and the power of the State was not always commented on enough. It should be mentioned, however, that there were some fruitful discussions on the role of the Party in the work of the strongest candidates which displayed a good understanding of the Party's impact on the careers of various characters.

Part II: Literary Texts

As last year, the four texts which attracted responses were *Tonio Kröger*, *Die Verwandlung*, *Leben des Galilei*, and *Der Vorleser*. Reports will only be given on those questions attempted by more than one candidate.

Question 9A

The best answers were of very high quality indeed, exhibiting great sensitivity to the nuance of the text and the evolving *Leitmotive*, and revealing the shifting mood within the passage. Weaker candidates tended to paraphrase the text rather than analyse it. All candidates successfully located the passage in its context in Chapter III and some related it well to Tonio's later development, abandoning the position he reaches as an artist in this particular passage. In referring to different parts of the passage it would be advisable for candidates to do so with reference to the line numbers given in the paper rather than quote long sections from the passage. The quotation of single words or short phrases is of course to be encouraged when

combined with critical analysis. It should also be noted for the benefit of future candidates that the text is more properly referred to as a *Novelle* than a novel.

Question 9B

This was the most popular question on *Tonio Kröger* and attracted a range of responses. Weaker candidates tended to retell events, describing the roles played by women in the story rather than seeing them as vital influences on Tonio's development as an artist. The best answers looked at the roles played by Tonio's mother, who defines his otherness as a child; by Inge and her role as an unattainable but essential muse; and finally by Lisaweta Iwanowna. With regards to the latter, the significance of the letter to her at the end of the *Novelle* was often underplayed or left untouched.

Question 10C

This proved the most popular question on Kafka by some margin. The best answers engaged wholeheartedly with the topic and established a clear line of argument in a succinct introduction. Once candidates had managed to define what 'freedom' might stand for in relation to the story, their essays gained more structure. Weaker candidates struggled to do so and tended to resort to narrative. More sensitivity to the nuance of Kafka's language, for example in the description of Gregor's death, would have helped candidates to put their points across more convincingly. The lack of close reference to the text weakened the arguments put forward in some essays. As last year, some answers were marred by overly biographical readings which are hard to justify in a short essay, or the views of particular critics, which, whilst often interesting in themselves, were not always particularly relevant to the question. The notion of the reader being set free at the end of the story in one or two answers provided an interesting and unexpected take on the question. Structurally most essays were sound.

Question 11A

Unfortunately, some responses tended to recap the story of the passage instead of taking a critical stance towards it. The comments made on **Question 9A** also hold here in this regard. Candidates often gave a very general overview of Brecht and the play instead of looking at the passage in detail. Little time was given to the dramatic impact of the scene, with the robing of Barberini mirroring his assumption of authority. The way in which the contradictions of the Church are revealed in the passage were often underplayed and in many cases omitted entirely. Appreciation of the role played by history and the distancing effect of the play's setting on a modern audience were also less than assured. On the whole, critical ability was less evident in response to this question than in other commentaries.

Question 12B

A number of candidates attempted this question, with varying success. Many identified the key female figures in the novel, yet there were some answers which omitted the Jewish woman Michael meets in New York, who is key in a successful interpretation of the novel, as she is able to help Michael realise that the source of his shame lies in his relationship with Hanna (*'Was ist diese Frau brutal gewesen.'*). As a result, there were some limitations of insight but a number of other candidates produced impressive essays.

Question 12C

This was a popular question which elicited some excellent answers. Weaker answers showed an uncertain grasp of the notion of 'shame' as distinct from 'guilt'. The concept of shame was also often approached with regards to Hanna only, with little acknowledgement of Michael's parallel sense of shame or of the wider notion of German shame in the post-war era. Better answers expanded well on the parameters of the question and focused with particular success on Hanna's ultimate sense of shame (or lack thereof) in relation to her suicide. Some focused rather too much on **Part I** of the novel and did not discuss the dynamic nature of shame and its development throughout the novel. Textual knowledge was not as assured as it should be in weaker scripts, and candidates are reminded that any assertions should be analysed and illustrated with close reference to relevant parts of the text.