

GERMAN

Paper 3025/01 Translation and Composition
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Writing

There was a wide range of candidates for this examination, including native or near native speakers of German. The majority of candidates had been very well prepared and were familiar with the rubrics to the questions and with what to expect. Fewer candidates than in previous years wrote lengthy pre learnt preambles which are allowed limited reward by the mark scheme. In addition, a few candidates used the present tense to narrate events in the past, which at times prevented candidates from communicating clearly and gaining full marks for communication.

Question 1 Picture Story

The convention of this type of question is to relate the events depicted using the past tense: the perfect tense, imperfect tense or a mixture of both are acceptable. As in previous years some candidates answered in the present tense. Whilst some credit could be given to those candidates, they nonetheless failed to achieve their full potential. Most candidates were able to cope with the vocabulary necessary to tell the main elements of the story. In particular there were good examples of candidates using a variety of verbs to express the various comings and goings in the story. However, certain key vocabulary items were not always known and some candidates had difficulty with *ice-cream*, *cashier*, *wallet* and *shopkeeper* and also confused *gelb* and *Geld*. There were also several instances of the misuse of *möchte* or *mochte* where *wollte* would have been the appropriate word. Nevertheless there were many good examples of the use of idiomatic German and a wide variety of vocabulary such as *stöhnen*, *erschüttert*, *die Stirn runzeln*, *im Handumdrehen*, *unaufhörlich* and *versehentlich*.

Question 2 Essays

Candidates must read the rubric carefully and should be aware that credit is not given for simply copying phrases from the question. **Question (a)** was by far the most popular option with **Question (c)** being answered by the fewest candidates.

- (a) Candidates were quite successful in describing the reactions of the family to the stolen car and generally covered all five of the bullet points. There was at least one instance of a candidate misunderstanding the word *gestohlen* in the question and this led to an answer which did not tell the correct story. Candidates should certainly be advised only to answer a question where they know they understand fully the main elements they are required to write about.
- (b) The “conversation” question was answered more successfully than in previous years. The subject matter was familiar to candidates who came up with a variety of arguments for and against an exchange. The main difficulty candidates had was in correctly using verbs such as *lernen*, *wissen*, *kennen* and *kennenlernen*. Many chose the wrong one in the context.
- (c) This was the least popular of the essay questions. Those candidates who did choose this option often struggled to express the ideas needed and, as a result, were less successful than candidates who had chosen (a) or (b).

Question 3 Translation

Many weaker candidates still struggle to do well on the translation question if they opt for it and score considerably fewer marks than on the other questions. This year, however the difference was less marked and candidates were more successful than in previous years. Most of the vocabulary required was known by the majority of candidates but marks were often lost through minor grammatical errors which would not affect communication but which need to be correct in a translation. These included mistakes with word order, verb endings, articles and case endings, as well as unknown vocabulary. Common errors included the use of

denn instead of *dann*, *mit* instead of *bei*, *hast zu* instead of *müssen* and the anglicised *auf dem Zug*. As many candidates did not know *Fahrkarte*, this made their choice of pronoun to refer to the lost ticket quite difficult. The final paragraph proved to be as straightforward as any and some candidates who had struggled with the middle sections were, at least, able to finish on a high.

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Paper 3025/02 Reading Comprehension
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General comments

Candidates' performance on this paper was in line with that in previous years. There was a full spread of marks, with a number of candidates achieving full or nearly full marks, in **Section 1** in particular. **Section 2** proved to be more challenging, though all candidates appeared to be familiar with the rubrics and the question types. **Section 3** as usual posed the biggest challenge for all candidates, but even here candidates appeared well prepared for the layout of the exercise.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Questions 1 – 5

This initial exercise tests comprehension of short reading extracts by way of multiple choice questions. As usual the correct answers had to be selected from four visual stimuli. This exercise posed very few problems and the majority of candidates were able, as expected, to get off to a confident start.

Questions 6 – 10

Most candidates also scored full marks on this exercise, where candidates needed to identify which of a series of short statements about holidays matched the question.

Questions 11 – 15

Again, this exercise was well answered by most candidates. They were required to read a short letter and decide whether statements on it were true or false. Most candidates scored full marks here.

Section 2

Questions 16 – 23

In this exercise, longer answers had to be produced in the target language in response to questions on a text about the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. Most candidates were able to score well here and many gained full marks. **Question 18** occasionally caused problems when candidates missed *nach ihrer Ankunft* in the question and wrote about the journey to the hotel. Careful reading of the question is always advisable especially if there is time to check answers towards the end of the examination.

Questions 24 – 31

In this exercise candidates are expected to be more grammatically correct in their answers to demonstrate true comprehension. Consequently candidates who wrote *deine Kunden* in **Question 32** or indeed simply wrote *sie sind enttäuscht* without reference to who *sie* might be were not rewarded by the mark scheme. Although a variety of answers were allowed, some candidates were not precise enough when answering **Question 26** and needed to say more than just that there were *Verkehrsprobleme* to show true understanding of the text. Similarly in **Question 28** both elements of the idea of having an accident whilst not using winter tyres were needed to score the mark for that question.

Section 3

Questions 32 – 51

Although many candidates continue to find this cloze test, the last exercise on the paper, particularly challenging, there is evidence that performances are improving. There were only a handful of gaps left unfilled and a majority of candidates were able to cope well with many elements of the passage. The main problems appeared to be similar to previous years: subordinating and coordinating conjunctions (**Question 36**, *obwohl*, **Question 53** *damit*), choice of correct infinitives (**Question 51** *besuchen*, *finden*, **Question 47** *machen*, **Question 50** *können*, **Question 48** *sein*, *aussehen*). Quite a few candidates also confused *als* and *dann* in **Question 44** and many were unaware that *Straßenbahn* in **Question 39** was feminine and put *dem* instead of *der*. On the whole, however, candidates scored creditably here and many were able to fill in most gaps correctly.