
AP German Language and Culture

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] GERMAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE 2018 SCORING GUIDELINES

Identical to Scoring Guidelines used for French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture Exams

Interpersonal Writing: E-mail Reply (Task 1)

5: STRONG performance in Interpersonal Writing

- Maintains the exchange with a response that is clearly appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides required information (responses to questions, request for details) with frequent elaboration
- Fully understandable, with ease and clarity of expression; occasional errors do not impede comprehensibility
- Varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language
- Accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and usage, with few errors
- Mostly consistent use of register appropriate for the situation; control of cultural conventions appropriate for formal correspondence (e.g., greeting, closing), despite occasional errors
- Variety of simple and compound sentences, and some complex sentences

4: GOOD performance in Interpersonal Writing

- Maintains the exchange with a response that is generally appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides most required information (responses to questions, request for details) with some elaboration
- Fully understandable, with some errors that do not impede comprehensibility
- Varied and generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language
- General control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Generally consistent use of register appropriate for the situation, except for occasional shifts; basic control of cultural conventions appropriate for formal correspondence (e.g., greeting, closing)
- Simple, compound, and a few complex sentences

3: FAIR performance in Interpersonal Writing

- Maintains the exchange with a response that is somewhat appropriate but basic within the context of the task
- Provides most required information (responses to questions, request for details)
- Generally understandable, with errors that may impede comprehensibility
- Appropriate but basic vocabulary and idiomatic language
- Some control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Use of register may be inappropriate for the situation with several shifts; partial control of conventions for formal correspondence (e.g., greeting, closing), although these may lack cultural appropriateness
- Simple and a few compound sentences

2: WEAK performance in Interpersonal Writing

- Partially maintains the exchange with a response that is minimally appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides some required information (responses to questions, request for details)
- Partially understandable with errors that force interpretation and cause confusion for the reader
- Limited vocabulary and idiomatic language
- Limited control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Use of register is generally inappropriate for the situation; includes some conventions for formal correspondence (e.g., greeting, closing) with inaccuracies
- Simple sentences and phrases

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Interpersonal Writing: E-mail Reply (Task 1) (continued)

1: POOR performance in Interpersonal Writing

- Unsuccessfully attempts to maintain the exchange by providing a response that is inappropriate within the context of the task
- Provides little required information (responses to questions, request for details)
- Barely understandable, with frequent or significant errors that impede comprehensibility
- Very few vocabulary resources
- Little or no control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Minimal or no attention to register; includes significantly inaccurate or no conventions for formal correspondence (e.g., greeting, closing)
- Very simple sentences or fragments

0: UNACCEPTABLE performance in Interpersonal Writing

- Mere restatement of language from the stimulus
- Completely irrelevant to the stimulus
- “I don’t know,” “I don’t understand,” or equivalent in any language
- Not in the language of the exam

- (hyphen): BLANK (no response)

Sehr geehrte Frau Ballwein,

Vielen Dank für Ihre E-Mail. Ich will Ihnen bestimmt helfen. Ich habe nicht viel Talent zum Malen, aber ich arbeite gerne im Garten. Zu Hause habe ich einen kleinen Garten, in dem ich Blumen und Gemüse haben. Vielleicht kann ich Ihnen helfen, einen kleinen Garten zu bauen. Leider kann ich Ihnen nur am Wochenende helfen, weil ich so viele Hausaufgaben habe. Ein Blumen und Gemüse Garten würden bestimmt unsere Stadt verschönern. Ich kann am Samstag beginnen. Wo soll ich Ihnen treffen? Und wann? Auch, soll ich Blumen und Gemüse aus meinem Garten mitbringen?

Hochachtungsvoll,
~~_____~~ Eine Schülerin

Do Not Write Beyond This Border

Do Not Write Beyond This Border

Sehr geehrte Frau Ballwein,
 Vielen dank für Ihre Email. Ein
 Idee habe ich ist für mehr Pflanzen
 in der Stadt, Pflanzen sind attraktiv
 und gut für die Umwelt, Ich konnte
~~nicht~~ and die Wochenende treffen aber
 nicht in der Woche, weil ich schule
 habe. Haben Sie viele menschen in
 die Blumen Gruppe? Wie vielen stadtten
 machen die Projekt? Ich erwarte
 Ihre Antwort.

Mit Freundlichen Grüßen

[student name]

Schüler

Do Not Write Beyond This Border

Do Not Write Beyond This Border

Sehr geehrte Frau Bellwein,
Ich glaube, der schöner Stadt sind ein gute
Idee. Es ist natürlich schön. Der Stadt kann viel
Parken haben. An Wochenenden ist ein gut zeit für
mich. Sie sind ein toll mensch und sehr intelligent
für dieser Projekte. Will es große ist? Lange?
Danke für weitere Details
E. ndlichen G uß ~
[student name]

Do Not Write Beyond This Border

Do Not Write Beyond This Border

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2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Task 1: E-mail Reply

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain grammatical errors.

Overview

This task assessed writing in the interpersonal communicative mode by having students write a reply to an e-mail message. Students were allotted 15 minutes to read the message and write their reply. The response received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. Students needed to be able, first, to comprehend the e-mail, and then to write a reply using a formal form of address. The reply had to address all the questions and requests raised in the message, as well as ask for more details about something mentioned in the message.

In this exam, within the theme of Beauty and Aesthetics (*Schönheit und Ästhetik*), students replied to an e-mail from Marissa Ballwein, director of the initiative "Young People Beautify Spaces" (*Jugend verschönert Flächen*). In the opening of her message, Ms. Ballwein thanks the recipient for showing interest in the organization and explains that it has been working since 2009 to give creative young people the opportunity to use their talents to beautify public spaces. She goes on to give examples of possible projects, ranging from planting flowers to painting gray concrete walls, but she also invites the students to submit their own ideas.

In order to gain a better idea of each student's potential participation in the initiative, she poses two questions in the e-mail: 1) What kind of ideas do you have for projects that would make our town more beautiful and more attractive? (*Was für Ideen haben Sie für Projekte, die unsere Stadt schöner oder attraktiver machen würden?*) and 2) As we have several different groups that meet either during the week or on weekends, we would like to know when you are able to participate (*Da wir verschiedene Gruppen haben, die sich entweder unter der Woche oder an Wochenenden treffen, würden wir gern wissen, wann Sie mitmachen können.*) Marissa Ballwein closes the e-mail by expressing her hope that the e-mail was helpful and by offering her assistance with any additional questions the e-mail recipient might have.

Sample: 1A

Score: 5

This response is an example of a strong performance in Interpersonal Writing. It maintains the exchange in a way that is clearly appropriate within the context of the task. All required information is addressed, and the response demonstrates a clear understanding of the stimulus with the mention of painting and the suggestion of a gardening project to make the city more attractive, leading to a clearly appropriate reply within the context of the task. All questions from the e-mail are answered, and the ones posed are meaningful within the context of the message (e.g., "*Wo soll ich Ihnen treffen? Und wann?*"). While the response is succinct, there is frequent elaboration: There are four sentences addressing the first question posed in the e-mail, two for the second, and three questions posed by the student. Transitions between thoughts and sentences are smooth and clear (e.g., "*Ich habe nicht viel Talent zum Malen, aber ich arbeite gerne im Garten*"), and a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences give this response the ease and clarity that are a hallmark of a strong performance in Interpersonal Writing (e.g., "*Leider kann ich Ihnen nur am Wochenende helfen, weil ich so viele Hausaufgaben habe.*"). The response also displays a variety of grammatical forms and syntax, such as the use of subordinate clauses, a relative clause, and inverted word order (e.g., "*weil*"; "*Garten, in dem*"; "*Zu Hause habe ich*"; "*Ihnen helfen*") used with control and accuracy, with only a few minor errors (e.g., "*kleinen Garten, in dem ich Blumen und Gemüse haben*"; "*zu bauern*"). Additionally, the response demonstrates control of cultural conventions appropriate for formal correspondence ("*Sehr geehrte*"; "*Ihre Email*"; "*Ihnen*"; "*Hochachtungsvoll*"). This response accordingly received a score of 5.

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2018 SCORING COMMENTARY

Task 1: E-mail Reply (continued)

Sample: 1B

Score: 3

This response is an example of a fair performance in Interpersonal Writing. While the response addresses all the required information, it maintains the exchange on a level that is only somewhat appropriate with a series of poorly-transitioned sentences that each time leave the reader wondering if the writer is responding to the original e-mail. For example the student asks, “*Haben Sie viele menschen in die Blumen Gruppe?*”, which demonstrates some misunderstanding of the original e-mail, as planting flowers is only provided as an example of a possible city beautification idea and not as an example of an already existing group. The student responds to each of the questions posed in the e-mail but in an abrupt fashion with little transition and lack of elaboration. The relatively brief response contains appropriate but basic vocabulary (e.g., “*Idee*”; “*Pflanzen*”; “*in der Stadt*”; “*Wochenende*”; “*treffen*”), which is partially drawn from the stimulus. Nevertheless it illustrates some control of grammar and syntax in the simple and compound sentences typically found at this level (e.g., “*Ein Idee habe ich ist für mehr Pflanzen in der Stadt.*”). The response displays correct word order in one compound and complex sentence: “*Ich konnte an die Wochenende treffen aber nicht in der Woche, weil ich schule habe.*” Some more complex vocabulary such as “*Umwelt*” and “*erwarte*” is included; however, the sample never rises to the level of a good performance because it lacks the elaboration and complexity typically seen in a 4. The response displays generally appropriate use of register, including formal greeting and closing (“*Sehr geehrte*”; “*Ihre*”; “*Sie*”; “*Mit Freundlichen Grüßen*”). This response, therefore, received a score of 3.

Sample: 1C

Score: 2

This response is an example of a weak performance in Interpersonal Writing. It only partially succeeds in maintaining the exchange with a response that is minimally appropriate as a reply to the specific questions and concerns laid out in the sender’s original e-mail. For example, while the response attempts to address the question about a project idea (“*Der Stadt kann viel farben haben*”), it never explains what is meant by “having colors.” The response provides some of the required information by including a vague project idea, an answer to the question of availability, and an attempt to form a question. However, the limited control of grammar and vocabulary (e.g., “*der schöner Stadt sind*”; “*Will es große ist? Lange?*”) creates errors that force interpretation and cause confusion for the reader. While the response follows conventions of formal correspondence by including an appropriate greeting and closing (“*Sehr geehrte*”; “*Mit freundlichen Grüßen*”), it also includes language that is inappropriate for the situation (“*Sie sind ein toll mensch und sehr intelligent für dieser Projekte*”). The response consists of simple sentences and is quite brief. Despite this the reader is left wondering throughout if the original e-mail was understood and whether the student’s statements constitute a meaningful reply to its individual parts; thus, the response never rises above a minimally appropriate level. This response accordingly received a score of 2.