
AP[®] German Language and Culture

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] GERMAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

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

Presentational Speaking: Cultural Comparison (Task 4)

Clarification Notes:

The term “community” can refer to something as large as a continent or as small as a family unit.

The phrase “target culture” can refer to any community, large or small, associated with the target language.

5: STRONG performance in Presentational Speaking

- Effective treatment of topic within the context of the task.
- Clearly compares the student’s own community with the target culture, including supporting details and relevant examples.
- Demonstrates understanding of the target culture, despite a few minor inaccuracies.
- Organized presentation; effective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices.
- 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 presentation.
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility.
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) improves comprehensibility.

4: GOOD performance in Presentational Speaking

- Generally effective treatment of topic within the context of the task.
- Compares the student’s own community with the target culture, including some supporting details and mostly relevant examples.
- Demonstrates some understanding of the target culture, despite minor inaccuracies.
- Organized presentation; some effective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices.
- 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 presentation, except for occasional shifts.
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response mostly comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility.
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually improves comprehensibility.

3: FAIR performance in Presentational Speaking

- Suitable treatment of topic within the context of the task.
- Compares the student’s own community with the target culture, including a few supporting details and examples.
- Demonstrates a basic understanding of the target culture, despite inaccuracies.
- Some organization; limited use of transitional elements or cohesive devices.
- 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 presentation with several shifts.
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response generally comprehensible; errors occasionally impede comprehensibility.
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) sometimes improves comprehensibility.

2: WEAK performance in Presentational Speaking

- Unsuitable treatment of topic within the context of the task.
- Presents information about the student’s own community and the target culture, but may not compare them; consists mostly of statements with no development.
- Demonstrates a limited understanding of the target culture; may include several inaccuracies.
- Limited organization; ineffective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices.
- Partially understandable, with errors that force interpretation and cause confusion for the listener.
- Limited vocabulary and idiomatic language.
- Limited control of grammar, syntax, and usage.
- Use of register is generally inappropriate for the presentation.
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend at times; errors impede comprehensibility.
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually does not improve comprehensibility.

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Presentational Speaking: Cultural Comparison (Task 4) (continued)

1: POOR performance in Presentational Speaking

- Almost no treatment of topic within the context of the task.
- Presents information only about the student's own community or only about the target culture, and may not include examples.
- Demonstrates minimal understanding of the target culture; generally inaccurate.
- Little or no organization; absence of transitional elements and cohesive devices.
- 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.
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend; errors impede comprehensibility.
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) does not improve comprehensibility.

0: UNACCEPTABLE performance in Presentational Speaking

- Mere restatement of language from the prompt
- Clearly does not respond to the prompt; completely irrelevant to the topic
- "I don't know," "I don't understand," or equivalent in English
- Clearly responds to the prompt in English

NR (No Response): BLANK (no response although recording equipment is functioning)

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2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

Task 4: Cultural Comparison

Note: Students' responses are quoted verbatim and may contain grammatical errors. In the transcripts of students' speech quoted in the commentaries, a three-dot ellipsis indicates that the sample has been excerpted. Two dots indicate that the student paused while speaking.

Overview

This task assessed speaking in the presentational communicative mode by having the student make a comparative oral presentation on a cultural topic. Students were allotted 4 minutes to read the topic and prepare the presentation and then 2 minutes to deliver the presentation. The response received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. The presentation had to compare the student's own community to an area of the German-speaking world, demonstrating understanding of cultural features of the German-speaking world. Furthermore the presentation had to be organized clearly.

In this exam, within the theme of Global Challenges (*Globalisierung*), students were asked about the role nature (e.g., landscape, fauna, forests, and green spaces) plays in the everyday life of people in their social environment. (*Welche Rolle spielt die Natur [z.B. Landschaft, Tierwelt, Wälder oder Grünflächen] im Alltagsleben der Menschen in Ihrem sozialen Umfeld?*) In their oral presentations, students compared perspectives on this question in their home communities with those in a German-speaking region and were also invited to describe their own observations, experiences, or what they had learned in school.

Sample: 4A

Score: 5

Transcript of Student Response

Sehr . . . Hallo, ich heiÙe [student name] und das Thema meines Vortrags lautet uh einen Vergleich zwischen die Rolle da . . . das Natur spielt in den USA gegen die Rolle, dass Natur spielt in Deutschland. Zuerst möchte ich über die Rolle von Natur in den USA sprechen, und dann komme ich zu Deutschland, und abschliesslich möchte ich über die Gemeinsamkeiten sprechen. In den USA werd die Natur weniger desku- diskutiert. Besonders betont werden muss, ist dass man hier in den USA mehr mit dem Auto fahren. Das bedeutet, dass wir mehr Luftverschmutzung hat haben, weil es so viel CO₂ in die Atmosphäre produziert. Im Gegensatz zu die Amerikaner uh . . . finden die Deutsche, dass die Natur eine große Auswirkung auf die Entscheidung haben soll, die wir die sie treffen. Zum Beispiel wenn man ein Parkplätz b- uh bauen will, uh dann muss man auch uh denk uh daran denken, dass es schlecht für die Umwelt ist. Aber es gibt viele Gemeinsamkeiten, zum Beispiel gibt es viele Organisat- Organisationen, zum Beispiel PETA, die für Tier die für Tiere kümmern will. Uh, als Fazit kann man festhalten, dass beide Ländern es sehr wichtig finden, dass wir um uns, um -s, dass wir uns um die Natur kümmern sollten, uh aber es ist eine, es bedeutet mehr in den in Deutschland, weil wir in den USA mehr V- Luftverschmutzung haben. Damit bin ich am Ende meines Vortrags und ich . . . ich danke Ihnen für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit. Auch möchte ich sch- sagen, dass es in den . . . i- dass wir in den USA mehr Autos fahren, weil es so viele uh . . . Leute, die Autos mit Freiheit uh denken.

Commentary

This response is a strong performance in Presentational Speaking. With respect to the task, the response makes a clear comparison of how nature influences people's decision-making in the U.S. and in Germany: "*Im Gegensatz zu die Amerikaner uh . . . finden die Deutsche, dass die Natur eine große Auswirkung auf die Entscheidung haben soll, die wir die sie treffen.*" As an example the student cites the fact that Americans often drive by car, while in Germany one would consider the negative effects building a parking lot would have on the environment, thus demonstrating understanding of the target culture. The student also discusses commonalities between the two communities such as PETA, an organization that protects animals in both countries under the same English acronym (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). The student then

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Task 4: Cultural Comparison (continued)

emphasizes that although both cultures think it is important to take care of nature, it means more in Germany because in America people continue to produce air pollution because they think of driving as a personal freedom.

The language of this response is strong. Although it is not necessary for students to provide an outline at the start nor come to a conclusion at the end of the presentation in order to receive a score of 5, the organization of this response does benefit from both. Transitional elements (“*besonders betont werden muss*”; “*es gibt viele Gemeinsamkeiten*”; “*zum Beispiel*”) are used effectively. Varied and appropriate vocabulary, as well as accuracy and a variety in grammar make this response fully understandable with ease and clarity of expression. Occasional flaws in organization (such as in the tacked-on final sentence), pronunciation, and grammar are present, but none of them impede comprehensibility. This response earned a score of 5.

Sample: 4B

Score: 3

Transcript of Student Response

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren, heute ich spreche uh . . heute spreche ich über Natur im . . Natur im altes Leben. . . Im im Amerika und Deutschland . . spielt . . uh no . . ah nein ah Na- Natur hat ein große Rolle in Deutschland. Die Deutsche leben frische Luft und sie benutzen weniger CO₂. Die Deutschen fahren mit die Bus mehr als Amerika. Die resiekilen viele Material. Die Deutsche resiekilen Glas, Papier und Plastik. Die Deutsche möchte die Umfeld präservieren. Die Deutschen fahren Autos weniger als Amerika. In amerikanische Leute nich- recylen nicht so viel Recycling. Wir wegen au- wir wegen auch viele Produkte. Wir . . Deutschland haben wir eine ökologische und eco-friendly Liebe . . und freundliche und eco-freundliche . . uh . . Ländern. Sie essen ökologische Essen uh . . das sie haben keine GMO. Die Deutsche möchte die Ozean und Ländern repräservieren. . . Uh . . in Deutschland Deutschland hat viele viele Gemüse und uhm Obst essen, aber . . in Amerika essen viele . . viele Fleisch. Das das ist uh nicht so gut for die Tierwelt und die Landschaft die Land dieser . . dieser Produkt diese Essen . . uhm . . macht viele CO₂ und uhm GMO in diese in diese Luft . . and uh . . die die Deutsche

Commentary

This response constitutes a fair performance in Presentational Speaking. The response compares the United States with Germany by listing differences between the communities (transportation, what people eat, protecting the environment, recycling). The student demonstrates a basic understanding of the target community (Germans want to protect the environment; they recycle more than Americans) with some inaccuracies (Germans eat more fruits and vegetables and that is better for animals and the landscape).

With respect to language, the response employs some organization, relying heavily on a limited number of transitions (“*in Amerika*”; “*in Deutschland*”; “*aber*”). The response is generally understandable, containing errors that impede comprehensibility (“*wir wegen auch viele Produkte*”; “*Deutschland hat viele viele Gemüse und uhm Obst essen*”; “*eco-friendly Liebe*”). Vocabulary overall is basic (“*Glas, Papier und Plastik*”) with occasional errors and neologisms (“*die Umfeld*”; “*repräservieren*”). Pronunciation in the response is generally understandable, although there is recourse to the English pronunciation of acronyms such as “*CO₂*” and “*GMO*.” Within the response there is some control of grammar and some successful self-correction (“*heute ich spreche uh . . heute spreche ich*”; “*eco-friendly . . eco-freundliche*”). This response accordingly earned a score of 3.

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Task 4: Cultural Comparison (continued)

Sample: 4C

Score: 2

Transcript of Student Response

Hallo, das Thema meines Vortrags heute lautet Natur im Alltagsleben im Deutschland und in Amerika. In beide Lander wir fahren Autos . . sehr viel. Das ist nicht gut für Nature, aber wir muss machen das. . . Beide Lander auch electricity benutzt. . . Im Deutschland und Amerika . . Natur ist sehr . . wichtig. . . In Deutschland sie recyceln . . gern. . . In beide Lander wir Tier tot machen, aber wir muss machen . . das für for Essen. . . Ich denke, dass Natur ist mehr wichtig in Deutschland, aber . . es ist wichtig in Amerika zu. . . In Deutschland und Amerika, wir sind . . okay mit Tierwelt, aber . .

Commentary

This response constitutes a weak performance in Presentational Speaking. The response presents information about two communities, which consists mostly of statements with no development. It demonstrates a limited understanding of the target culture (“*In Deutschland sie recyceln . . gern*”). Although this response begins with a topic sentence, the organization is otherwise limited, exhibiting both limited control of grammar (“*wir muss machen das*”) and limited vocabulary. This response received a score of 2.