

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2022 AP[®] German Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

• Number of Readers	33			
Total Group				
• Number of Students Scored	4,450			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	889	20.0	
	4	849	19.1	
	3	1,178	26.5	
	2	1,018	22.9	
	1	516	11.6	
• Global Mean	3.13			
Standard Group*				
• Number of Students Scored	3,164			
• Score Distribution	Exam Score	N	%At	
	5	254	8.0	
	4	553	17.5	
	3	1,012	32.0	
	2	906	28.6	
	1	439	13.9	
• Global Mean	2.77			

The following comments on the 2022 free-response questions for AP[®] German Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Dr. Harald Menz, Bethany College. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Question 1

Task: Email Reply

Topic: Film about Your Hometown

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 3.47

Standard Group Mean Score: 3.35

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

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

The course theme for the email reply was Families and Communities. The task required the student to reply to an email from Leon Traxler, a project leader of the tourism department at unserestadt@tourism.com. Mr. Traxler is himself writing in response to an email from the student expressing interest in working on a new film titled “Come visit us!” (“*Kommt uns besuchen!*”). The stated purpose of the film is to attract more young people to visit the region. Young talents are invited to participate in all aspects of the making of the film: acting, camera work, costuming, make-up, visual effects, etc. Mr. Traxler poses two questions to the interlocutor: 1) Which interests or experiences do you have that could be useful for your work on the film?; and 2) Which regional sights, cultural attractions, or ways to spend your free time should the film include and why? In closing, Mr. Traxler offers to answer any questions the student might have and looks forward to meeting the student personally in the near future.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In their responses, most students were able to maintain the interpersonal exchange in an appropriate manner by answering the two questions with some degree of elaboration and posing an additional question. Some students struggled with the second question, misinterpreting the request for naming *regional* sights and attractions to include international attractions ranging from the Eiffel Tower to the ever-present Oktoberfest. While both questions were relatively specific, the first question allowed students to elaborate on the reason for their preference, and successful answers to the second question included elaborate discussions of regional attractions. This allowed students to draw on some of the many “Family and Community” topics of the AP German curriculum. Unsurprisingly, then, many students chose to describe their hometown. Strong responses incorporated varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions in order to describe preferences and availability. Strong responses also featured culturally appropriate writing conventions and register, as well as a range of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students did not fully comprehend the request for regional sights and attractions. This occasionally resulted in inappropriate responses that were not logical within the context of the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses identified the regions they had selected to answer the question and restricted their answers to regional attractions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although most students opened and closed their email replies in an appropriately formal manner, some students struggled to maintain a formal register throughout the email reply, addressing the recipient by his first name or shifting to informal pronouns in the body of the email. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In strong responses, students were able to maintain a formal register throughout their email replies, not only by providing an appropriately formal greeting and closing but also through consistent formal pronoun usage (<i>Sie/Ihr/Innen</i> vs. <i>du/dein/dir</i>) and word choice appropriate to the situation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students completed all task requirements by providing answers to questions and posing an additional question, but only in a minimal, unelaborated manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses offered clearly appropriate responses with frequent elaboration, which demonstrated ease and clarity of expression in the writer’s use of German.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although most students responded to the two questions posed in the email, many neglected to ask for more details about something in the message, as specified in the task directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses addressed all task requirements, including asking for more details about something in the message.

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- The email reply is primarily an interpersonal writing task, but it also requires skill in interpretive reading. Teachers should provide students with frequent opportunities to read and analyze emails before writing replies, drawing students’ attention in particular to the functions and referents of personal pronouns.
- Teachers and students should not underestimate the complexity of this task because the time spent on it is relatively brief, especially in comparison with the much longer argumentative essay. Because students have only 15 minutes to read and respond to the email on the exam, it is helpful for teachers to set time limits for students to write practice emails and other interpersonal communication texts.
- Students should imagine that the email is addressed to them personally and not be confused by impersonal salutations like “Dear Student.” Students should keep in mind that they, as writers, will always use “*ich*” and will always be addressed as “*Sie*.”
- It is imperative that students adhere to the task directions, answering all the questions posed in the email *and* asking for more details. Teachers could suggest that students make a list of the task requirements and check them off as they complete them.

- Students should work on maintaining a formal register throughout their email replies and pay close attention to how register is reflected in pronouns and word choice, as well as in salutations and closings.
- Overuse of memorized phrases should be avoided because it may hamper student production of meaningful content in their email replies. Memorizing and practicing correct forms of address for the opening of formal emails (*Sehr geehrter Herr*, *Sehr geehrte Frau*), however, can help get students off to a good start.
- Teachers should remind students that legible handwriting and correct punctuation, especially commas, contribute enormously to the readability of their writing. Students should practice producing legible handwritten emails in pen and within a time limit.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The AP German Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students' skills in writing successful email replies. The email reply task model is presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf?course=ap-german-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP German Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://myap.collegeboard.org/login> Units 1, 3, and 5 provide teachers and students with a series of videos that explain the task model Email Reply in detail and explain the requirements of the task thoroughly.
- Through AP Classroom, teachers can access the AP Question Bank. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access email replies from previous exams.
- Teachers can also access 3 Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank, which provide practice in the email reply and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on interpersonal writing, Interpersonal Communication: Developing Writing Abilities by Nyan-Ping Bi, to learn some strategies that focus on developing students' interpersonal writing skills. Teachers can access this online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/developing-interpersonal-writing-abilities/index.html>
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach AP French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common shared issues there are across languages for this task and to share strategies that will improve student performance.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP German Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-german-language-and-culture/exam>
- Teachers should choose a sample Email Reply prompt from the posted free-response questions (from 2012–2022) and access the corresponding student sample responses of high, mid, and low performances to share with students so they can examine student work vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. This will inform them further of expectations for performance on this task, as well as the evaluative criteria for each score point: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-german-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-german-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should assign Email Reply prompts for students to complete under the same conditions and time constraints as on the exam and then score them using the scoring guidelines. Feedback to students should focus on what students should do to move their performance to the next higher level.

Question 2

Task: Argumentative Essay

Topic: Skipping School for a Climate Demonstration

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 3.47

Standard Group Mean Score: 3.32

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

This task assessed writing in the presentational communicative mode by having the student write an argumentative essay on a given topic while referencing three sources of information about the topic. Students were first allotted 6 minutes to read the essay topic and the two printed sources. Then they listened to the audio source twice. Afterward, they had 40 minutes to write the essay. Students were asked to clearly present and thoroughly defend their own position on the topic. They were instructed to integrate viewpoints and information they found in all three sources to support their argument. As students referred to the sources, they were supposed to identify them appropriately and organize their essay into clear paragraphs. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the argumentative essay task was Global Challenges. Students had to write an argumentative essay on whether young people should be allowed to miss school in order to protest for climate protection. The article “Someone Just Has to Do It. Young People Protest for Climate Protection” begins with a quote from 11-year-old Elise’s sign: “Why go to school today, if I have no world left tomorrow?” and continues with an indictment of adults for their inaction to prevent climate change. Elise is identified as one of tens of thousands of students worldwide that follow Greta Thunberg’s “Fridays for Future” movement. The article points out some opposition to the students’ activism but emphasizes the broad support for their actions. The second print source, a chart entitled “School Strike for Climate Protection,” presents the results of a survey asking the question, “Do parents think it is okay to miss school for climate protection?” The answer is that 50 percent do and 31 percent don’t, with the rest remaining undecided. The audio source “Skipping School for Climate Protection” presents an interview with a politician and a youth researcher. It questions whether the school strikes are defensible and whether students really understand what their protest is about.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In their responses students were, for the most part, able to offer an effective or suitable treatment of the topic of whether students should be allowed to demonstrate for climate protection during the school day. The layering of the question—to discuss climate change protests and whether or not skipping school is acceptable—presented challenges for some students. However, most students were familiar with the topic and were readily able to relate their own personal experiences and opinions about protests by young people for climate protection. While the three sources offered more arguments for allowing students to protest, there was an array of perspectives and information that included more critical perspectives on skipping school. In the strongest essays, students were able to compare and contrast information from the sources and use it to support their own viewpoints. Strong essays were further marked by a clear organization that was facilitated by effective use of transitional words and cohesive devices, as well as varied and appropriate vocabulary, and a variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students neglected to state their own viewpoint on the question (of whether one should be allowed to miss school to demonstrate for climate protection) clearly from the outset of the essay, thus hampering their ability to build an effective argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong essays opened with a clear statement of opinion on the question of whether one should be allowed to miss school to demonstrate for climate protection. Some students were even able to construct more complicated (Yes, but...) arguments successfully.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students summarized source material instead of integrating it into their own arguments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong essays were characterized by an integration of source material into the student's argument; in doing so, students tend to draw on information from the sources that is most relevant to their own point of view. In some strong essays, students were frequently able to refute information from the sources by presenting a counterargument, drawn either from their own experiences or from the source material.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students oversimplified the nature of the argument they were supposed to construct and concentrated on differing opinions on climate change and not on whether students should be allowed to miss school to participate in climate protests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong essays made the connection between stances on climate change and whether to grant permission to miss school for the purpose of protests.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some students misunderstood the source material, as shown by inaccurate paraphrases or by a failure to address one or more of the sources in their essays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong essays integrated key information and relevant details from the source material, thereby demonstrating a high degree of comprehension of the sources.

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should continue to encourage students to read the overview of each of the three sources (*Übersicht*) carefully before diving into the source itself because the overview will often preview key terms and points of view found in the source. Many students used this strategy successfully.
- Teachers should explain to their students that parenthetical information provided in the essay topic is meant to provide examples or clarification of terms used. It is not meant to be a prescriptive limitation or an invitation to compare or contrast the items listed in parentheses.
- Students should learn to develop a clear outline for their essays before they begin writing. Although working on an outline during the exam may take time away from writing, a relatively short essay that

is well organized and concisely argued will receive a higher score than a longer essay that is repetitive or rambling.

- Students should be encouraged to state their thesis (i.e., their answer to the question) early and draw on the source material to support that thesis rather than begin with a summary of the sources.
- Students can and should take advantage of words and phrases from the source material in building their arguments, but they should be reminded to use quotation marks if they are citing the sources verbatim. In general, students should use direct quotes sparingly because paraphrasing source material is a better way to demonstrate their comprehension of the material than direct citations. It is critical that students cite the sources as they draw on them, and students should feel free to use a short parenthetical citation form (e.g., Q1 for *Quellenmaterial 1*) to save time.
- If students do not know the German translation for a particular English word, they should do their best to circumlocute rather than simply insert an English word.
- While it is helpful for students to learn phrases typically found in academic essays (such as *laut des Textes* or *meiner Meinung nach*), they can detract from the persuasiveness of the student's argument when used too frequently or inappropriately.
- Teachers should remind students that legible handwriting and correct punctuation, especially commas, contribute enormously to the readability of their essays. Students should practice producing legible handwritten essays in pen and within a time limit.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The AP German Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students' skills in writing successful argumentative essays. The argumentative essay task model is presented and practiced in Units 2, 4, and 6. This task is scaffolded to build students' skills and confidence. The first time it appears in Unit 2, students write an argumentative essay responding to a prompt using only two sources, and subsequently, in Units 4 and 6, they write essays using three sources. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf?course=ap-german-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP German Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://myap.collegeboard.org/login> Units 2, 4, and 6 provide teachers and students with a series of videos that explain the task model Argumentative Essay in detail and explain the requirements of the task thoroughly.
- Teachers can access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can access argumentative essay tasks from previous exams.
- Teachers can access three Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank, which provide practice with the essay task and can be scored using the scoring guidelines provided.
- Teachers should view the two AP World Language and Culture Online Module on Presentational Writing; the first: Presentational Communication, A Focus on Writing, by Federica Santini. Teachers can access the online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-writing/index.html>
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach AP French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common shared issues there are across languages for this task and to share strategies that will improve student performance.
- Teachers should download the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP German Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance, as

well as the evaluative criteria for each score point: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-german-language-and-culture/exam>

- Teachers should choose a sample essay prompt and its sources from the posted free-response questions from 2012–2022 from AP Central: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-german-language-and-culture/exam> and access the corresponding student sample responses of high, mid, and low performances to share with students, so that they can examine student work vis-à-vis the scoring guidelines. This will further inform them of expectations for performance on this task.
- Teachers should assign other argumentative essay prompts for students to complete under the same conditions and time constraints as on the exam and then score them using the scoring guidelines. Feedback to students should focus on what students should do to move their performance to the next higher level.

Question 3

Task: Conversation

Topic: Getting a Tattoo

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 3.54

Standard Group Mean Score: 3.29

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

This task assessed speaking in the interpersonal communicative mode by having students engage in a simulated conversation. Students were first allotted 1 minute to read a preview of the conversation, including an outline of each turn in the conversation. Then the conversation proceeded, including 20 seconds for students to speak at each of the 5 turns. The responses had to appropriately address each turn in the conversation according to the outline as well as the simulated interlocutor's utterances. The series of 5 responses received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the conversation task was Personal and Public Identities. In the task, the student had a simulated conversation with Christina, another student.

The student needed to respond to the following five audio prompts:

1. Christina comments on how busy people are and asks what the student still has to get done today.
2. Christina mentions that she wants to get a tattoo, saying she thinks a tattoo could be great. She then asks the student their opinion of tattoos.
3. Christina says that she hates it when everyone looks the same and proclaims that she wants to be different. She then asks the student if they place importance on having their own personal style.
4. Christina says that her parents are against tattoos and goes on to say that she is 18 and does not need her parents' permission. She could have it done and only tell her parents about it later. She asks the student what the student would do in her position.
5. Christina comments that she will maybe go to the tattoo studio on Friday and asks the student if they would like to come along or if they already have plans.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In general, responses to the task showed that students understood the situation and related to the topic of tattoos. The third turn of the conversation, which asks about the importance of having a personal style, presented the greatest difficulty for some students. Responses to that question tended to be vague, owing perhaps to listening comprehension issues (*"Ich will irgendwie anders sein"*/"I want to be different in some way"). In strong and good responses, students were able to clearly state their ideas about the importance of personal style and successfully maintained the conversation across all five turns in a clearly appropriate and fully comprehensible manner, drawing on varied vocabulary and demonstrating accuracy in grammar, syntax, and usage.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students did not adhere to the conversation overview and responded inappropriately or only partially to the interlocutor’s statements and questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses followed the conversation overview and demonstrated knowledge of idiomatic language for various kinds of speech acts (stating opinions and reasons, giving advice, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students did not respond idiomatically or fully to the question in turn 3, answering very simply in the affirmative or in the negative, thus missing a chance to elaborate with examples on how they express their personal style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses were characterized by clearly appropriate, idiomatically correct responses in the third turn of the conversation and featured elaboration through pertinent examples of personal style.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students made assumptions from previously practiced conversations, e.g., they assumed that the interlocutor would always have a problem in the first turn of the conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students responded precisely and with elaboration to the particular prompt presented to them.

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Students should be reminded to read the task overview because it may contain words and phrases that are relevant to the task itself. They should listen carefully and follow the lead of the interlocutor. “Playing along” with a conversation, even if it may not always seem completely logical, is a better strategy than refuting the interlocutor’s reasoning.
- Students should practice responding correctly and idiomatically to common conversation openers, such as *Wie geht’s?* or *Was gibt’s Neues?*, and to use turn 1 as an opportunity for some simple elaboration.
- Students should actively learn the vocabulary items typically used in the conversation overview—both the meanings of the words (such as *begründen* or *Meinung geben*) and the phrases that one would use to support an opinion, offer advice, and so on.
- In practicing the conversation, teachers should remind students to adhere to the overview and to avoid taking the conversation in a different direction because that would undercut their ability to maintain the exchange with appropriate responses.
- Although students are not required to fill the 20 seconds in which they respond to each turn, they should be encouraged to elaborate within their responses and say as much as they can (while still maintaining the appropriateness of their responses). Unelaborated responses offer only limited information about students’ vocabulary usage, grammatical accuracy, and ease and clarity of expression.
- The improvisational nature of the conversation lends itself to all kinds of role-playing in the classroom. From the earliest stages of the curriculum, teachers should provide students with opportunities to take on a role and practice responding appropriately in an unfamiliar situation.

Within this context, students should learn words and phrases for opening and closing conversations, responding to questions, giving opinions, and dealing with challenges.

- While cultural accuracy is not part of the scoring guidelines for this task, responding appropriately to the context in which the conversation takes place adds to the positive feel of a strong, fully appropriate response.
- Teachers should instruct students in the use of the recording device, especially volume control, and to cancel out background noise as much as possible.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The AP German Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students' skills for engaging in the conversation task model. This task model is specifically presented and practiced in Units 1, 3, and 5. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf?course=ap-german-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP German Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://myap.collegeboard.org/login>. Units 1, 3, and 5 provide teachers and students with a series of videos that explain the task model Conversation in detail and explain the requirements of the task thoroughly.
- Teachers can access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access conversation tasks from previous exams.
- Teachers can also access three Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank, which provide practice with the conversation task and can be scored using the scoring guidelines provided.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module by Clarissa Adams-Fletcher in order to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing interpersonal speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here: https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/interpersonal-communications/story_html5.html
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach AP French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common shared issues there are across languages for this task and to share strategies that will improve student performance.
- Work with students so they can learn to respond with elaboration and detail in the 20 seconds they have for each of their five responses in this task.
- Teach students how to use the conversation outline to their advantage. Look at commonalities from year to year so students can anticipate possible types of responses.
- Teachers should download a copy of the scoring guidelines for the conversation task available on the AP German Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance. They should have students listen to the sample student responses and use the scoring guidelines to understand how performance is assessed on the exam: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-german-language-and-culture/exam>

Question 4

Task: Cultural Comparison

Topic: Vacation trips

Max Score: 5

Total Group Mean Score: 3.12

Standard Group Mean Score: 2.96

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

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 presentation had to compare an area of the German-speaking world to the students' own or another community of their choice, demonstrating understanding of cultural features of the German-speaking world. Furthermore, the presentation had to be organized clearly. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task was Contemporary Life. Students were asked about the role vacation trips (e.g., to other countries, to the beach, to a campground, etc.) play in the everyday life of a community. In their oral presentations students had to compare perspectives on this question in a German-speaking community with those in their home community or another community. Students could reference their own observations, experiences, or what they had learned in school as support for their claims.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In general, students were hard-pressed to elaborate on details of the role vacation trips play in a German-speaking community. Some students had difficulty distinguishing between holidays, when people typically get a day off, and longer vacations involving travel. Even good answers tended to be fairly general in nature, rarely getting into a detailed comparison of the role such trips play in the two communities. Overall, the topic seemed to be less accessible to students, leading some to delve into general comparisons of cultures rather than focusing on the topic at hand.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

<i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i>	<i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students neglected to address the role of vacation trips in German-speaking communities and their own community, offering instead only facts about these occasions, often in the form of lists, or point-by-point comparisons, and divorced of context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strong responses provided not only information about destinations and occasions for vacation trips but also explained the role these occasions play in their home communities and in German-speaking cultures.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students offered a list of similar and different travel destinations, means of transportation, and occasions, but did not offer further explanation or detail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses frequently focused on a limited number of similarities and differences, which allowed students to develop their examples with depth and detail within the two-minute time frame.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students ran out of time before they were able to demonstrate an understanding of the target culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses typically began with a thesis statement or controlling idea that included both cultures and then proceeded with a discussion of the target culture. They were organized and paced well enough to include a discussion of both cultures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students lacked an understanding of the role of vacation travel in either or both communities they attempted to compare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong responses were able to focus on at least one aspect of the role of vacation travel (e.g., relaxation, attendance at events, educational purposes, etc.) to compare in some depth in both cultures. These responses also showed facility in comparing their roles.

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- When preparing for the cultural comparison, teachers should remind students that they must both address the topic and compare the two cultures. The prompt for the cultural comparison always takes the form of a question, and students must make an effort to answer that question in their presentations. The question may require students to address the meaning of a particular cultural phenomenon, the role that it plays in German-speaking and the student’s own societies, or its influence on those societies. It is, therefore, important that students not only describe cultural phenomena, but also explain their importance or impact. Students should be aware of the fact that they may focus on a single cultural phenomenon in their presentations, as long as they address both cultures and answer the question in depth and with detail. Teachers should take care to discuss the role, meaning, and influence of cultural phenomena, rather than simply presenting them. Teach phrases that allow students to address the cultural perspectives underlying the cultural practice or product in question, e.g., “*Dies zeigt, dass*” or “*Wert legen auf*.”
- Students should remember that task 4 never asks for a general comparison between cultures. It always focuses on a specific aspect of culture.
- Students may want to consider beginning their presentations by addressing the German-speaking culture in order to maximize their opportunities to demonstrate knowledge of the target culture. Because they will naturally have more to say about their own communities, discussing their own culture later in the presentation may help them avoid running out of time before they are able to make an effective comparison. Alternatively, students may want to alternate between the two cultures in making points related to the topic of the presentation.
- In their presentations, students should avoid vague generalities by giving concrete examples from a specific region or city in the German-speaking world with which they are familiar. Mentioning the source of their information (e.g., a literary text or news article, an exchange student, or their teacher) makes their statements more convincing and adds to the overall effectiveness of the presentation.

- Use of phrases, such as “the Germans” or “in Switzerland,” can lead to overly broad generalizations, and teachers should encourage students to use qualifiers, such as “*some* Germans” or “*many* Germans,” instead or focus on specific regions within the countries they discuss. Practice expressing nuanced cultural differences (*es kommt darauf an, manchmal*, etc.) instead of creating stereotypes (e.g., *die Deutschen*).
- Students can develop strategies for organizing their presentations by learning appropriate phrases for opening and closing the presentation and for transitioning between topics. At the same time, it is important that students keep their organizational statements brief, better yet, avoid them completely, in order to maximize the amount of time they have to communicate information and to elaborate.
- Teachers should instruct students in the use of the recording device, especially volume control, and to cancel out background noise as much as possible.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- The AP German Language and Culture Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the Unit Guides for building students’ skills in the cultural comparison task model. This task model is specifically presented and practiced in all six units and is scaffolded to build students’ skills and confidence over time. For example, in Unit 1, students give a 1-minute cultural presentation about an aspect of culture learned in that unit; in Unit 2, they do a 1-minute cultural comparison; in Unit 3, a full 2-minute cultural comparison, and subsequent full comparisons on topics of increasing difficulty in Units 4, 5, and 6. The CED can be accessed here: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf?course=ap-german-language-and-culture>
- Teachers should become familiar with all the online resources available to support instruction and assessment for AP German Language and Culture within AP Classroom: <https://myap.collegeboard.org/login>. All Units provide teachers and students with a series of videos that explain the task model Cultural Comparison in detail and explain the requirements of the task thoroughly.
- Teachers can access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers can find and access cultural comparison tasks from previous exams.
- Teachers can access three Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank, which provide practice with the cultural comparison task and can be scored using the scoring guidelines provided.
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on presentational speaking by Angelika Becker to learn about strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing presentational speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-speaking/index.html>
- Teachers should meet with colleagues who teach AP French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common shared issues there are across languages for this task and to share strategies that will improve student performance.
- Teachers should download a copy of the scoring guidelines for this task available on the AP German Language and Culture Exam page and use them to review expectations for student performance: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-german-language-and-culture/exam>
- Teachers should have students apply the scoring guidelines to student samples of cultural comparisons posted on AP Central on the exam page to help them understand how the scoring guidelines are applied to student work.