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AP<sup>®</sup>



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# AP<sup>®</sup> German Language and Culture

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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#### **Task 4—Cultural Comparison**

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**Question 4: Cultural Comparison**

**5 points**

**General Scoring Note**

When applying the scoring guidelines, the response does not need to meet every single criterion in a column. You should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence.

AP® German Language and Culture 2023 Scoring Guidelines

1 Poor	2 Weak	3 Fair	4 Good	5 Strong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almost no treatment of topic within the context of the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuitable treatment of topic within the context of the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable treatment of topic within the context of the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally effective treatment of topic within the context of the task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective treatment of topic within the context of the task</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information only about the target culture or only about the student’s own or another community, and may not include examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information about the target culture and the student’s own or another community, but may not compare them; consists mostly of statements with no development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compares the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including a few supporting details and examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compares the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including some supporting details and mostly relevant examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly compares the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including supporting details and relevant examples</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates minimal understanding of the target culture; generally inaccurate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a limited understanding of the target culture; may include several inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a basic understanding of the target culture, despite inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates some understanding of the target culture, despite minor inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates understanding of the target culture, despite a few minor inaccuracies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no organization; absence of transitional elements and cohesive devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited organization; ineffective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some organization; limited use of transitional elements or cohesive devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized presentation; some effective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized presentation; effective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barely understandable, with frequent or significant errors that impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partially understandable, with errors that force interpretation and cause confusion for the listener</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally understandable, with errors that may impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully understandable, with some errors that do not impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully understandable, with ease and clarity of expression; occasional errors do not impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very few vocabulary resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited vocabulary and idiomatic language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate but basic vocabulary and idiomatic language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied and generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no control of grammar, syntax, and usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited control of grammar, syntax, and usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some control of grammar, syntax, and usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General control of grammar, syntax, and usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and usage, with few errors</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal or no attention to register</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of register is generally inappropriate for the presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of register may be inappropriate for the presentation with several shifts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally consistent use of register appropriate for the presentation, except for occasional shifts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly consistent use of register appropriate for the presentation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend; errors impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend at times; errors impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response generally comprehensible; errors occasionally impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response mostly comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification or self-correction (if present) does not improve comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually does not improve comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification or self-correction (if present) sometimes improves comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually improves comprehensibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification or self-correction (if present) improves comprehensibility</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Scoring note:</b> A response that does not explicitly compare may earn a score of 3 if it provides a suitable treatment of the topic, including a basic understanding of the target culture and the student’s own or another community.</p>	<p><b>Scoring note:</b> A response that does not explicitly compare may earn a score of 4 if it provides a generally effective treatment of the topic, including some understanding of the target culture and the student’s own or another community.</p>	<p><b>Scoring note:</b> A response that does not explicitly compare cannot earn a score of 5.</p>

**Score of 0: UNACCEPTABLE**

- 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 any language
- Clearly responds to the prompt in English

**NR: no response although recording equipment is functioning**

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**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.
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## Question 4

**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 an area of the German-speaking world to the student's own or another community, demonstrating understanding of cultural features of the German-speaking world. Furthermore, the presentation had to be organized clearly.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task was Families and Communities (*Familie und Gemeinschaft*). Students were asked about the role sports activities (e.g., physical activity in sports clubs, everyday fitness routines, hiking and biking in the outdoors, etc.) play in a German-speaking community with which they are familiar. In their oral presentations, students had to compare perspectives on this topic 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.

### Sample: 4A

**Score: 5**

### Transcript of Student's Response(s)

*Hallo. Heute spreche ich über die Rolle, uhh das sportliche Aktivitäten spielen in Deutschland und in den USA. In Deutschland sportliche Aktivitäten – besonders wandern gehen – sind sehr wichtig. uhh Die Deutsche wandern sehr gern, weil Natur und die Umwelt wichtig sind. Aber Freizeit in Deutschland ist auch wichtig. Daswegens haben die Deutschen mehr Zeit zu uhh sportliche Aktivität zu zu active sein. Sie kann uhh Fahrrad fahren, sie hat Zeit in den Wald gehen. Es gibt mehr Zeit für die sportliche Aktivitäten. In den USA das ist nicht uhh immer den Fall. Es ist auch wichtig, aber in den USA wir haben nicht zu viel Zeit, uhh um sportliche Aktivitäten uhh zu machen. Viele Leute wollen sportliche Aktivitäten – uhh wie in einen Fitnessstudio gehen oder wandern gehen –, aber uhh sie haben keine Zeit. uhh Es ist auch uhm es ist auch oft teuer er in den USA uhh sportliche Aktivitäten machen. Es gibt nicht so viel Parks in der Nähe und man must uhh weiter fahren, um wandern gehen, und uhh es ist nicht billig, um ein Fitnessstudio zu gehen. Uhh uhh deswegen uhh Leute in den USA uhh machen nicht so viel sportliche Aktivitäten als in Deutschland uhh, weil sie haben keine Zeit – weil sie keine Zeit haben – und weil es teuer ist. Und*

## Question 4 (continued)

### Commentary

This response is a strong performance in Presentational Speaking. It constitutes an effective treatment of the topic within the context of the task because it carries out the assigned comparison in a clear and detailed manner. The response demonstrates insight into the target culture and an understanding of the role athletic activities play by explaining that many of the most popular activities reinforce the high value that Germans place on nature and the environment (“*Natur und die Umwelt*”). The response goes on to say that German citizens can be more active than Americans in general because they have more time (“*haben die Deutschen mehr Zeit zu uhh sportliche Aktivität zu zu active sein*”). By contrast, the response explains, Americans have less time available and that the opportunities to exercise are more expensive. Relevant examples are provided to back up these observations (“*Viele Leute wollen sportliche Aktivitäten – uhh wie in einen Fitnessstudio gehen oder wandern gehen –, aber uhh sie haben keine Zeit.*”; “*es ist auch oft teuer er in den USA uhh sportliche Aktivitäten machen.*”). The response concludes with an effective comparison statement: (“*deswegens uhh Leute in den USA uhh machen nicht so viel sportliche Aktivitäten als in Deutschland uhh, weil sie haben keine Zeit – weil sie keine Zeit haben – und weil es teuer ist.*”) In the area of language skills, the response is organized well, in that it begins with an analysis of German athletic activities with supporting details and relevant examples and then uses this to show how American athletic activities contrast. The response demonstrates some effective use of transitional elements and cohesive devices (*deswegen, weil, aber*). The presentation is fully understandable with ease and clarity of expression. There are occasional errors in vocabulary and usage (“*Daswegens*”; “*active sein*”), as well as in grammar and syntax (“*sie kann*” with reference to “*die Deutschen*”; “*in den USA wir haben*”; “*das ist nicht uhh immer den Fall*”; “*man must*”), but these errors do not impede comprehensibility. Pronunciation in the response is quite good, and it also appropriately uses complex sentences. Self-correction improves grammatical accuracy (“*weil sie keine Zeit haben*”). Overall, this was a strong response, and it received a score of 5.

### Sample: 4B

#### Score: 3

### Transcript of Student’s Response(s)

*Hallo. Uhh so ich habe Freundin uhh Austauschstudentin ich denke. Uhh wer kommen aus Deutschland. und sie Name ist Leoni und Charlotte. Und Leoni und Charlotte uhh sagten dass uhh dass vielen Sport- uhh liche Aktivitäten uhh ist in Deutschland und dass die sportlichen Aktivitäten ist sehr sehr wichtig. Sehr wichtig. Uhh Leoni uhh Leoni in Deutschland rennen und uhh sie sie sagten, dass es ist gut für die Kinder, für die Sprechen uhh mit oder Kinder und es ist gut für machen Freundin und es ist gut für die Kopf uhh und die die uhh – Ja es ist es ist sehr gut und du kannst or sie kannst uhh vielen oder Aktivitäten mit die sportliche Aktivitäten uhh zum Beispiel Musik hören. Du kannst uhh Musik hölen hören und rennen uhh in die in die Hour – in die Uhr. uhh In die USA uhh spielen sportlich Aktivitäten ist sehr wichtig zu. Ich ich habe viele Freunden in meine meine Sportliche und das Sportliche ist Rennen. uhh und Leoni und Charlotte rennen.*

**Question 4 (continued)****Commentary**

This fair performance in Presentational Speaking constitutes a suitable treatment of the topic within the context of the task because it succeeds in drawing a basic comparison between two cultures. Information about the target culture is based at least in part on the speaker’s friends, who are introduced as German exchange students. The student states that athletic activity is important in the target culture, and examples of how Germans see some specific aspects of this importance are drawn from the sport of running (“*es ist gut für die Kinder*”; “*gut für machen Freundin*”; “*gut für die Kopf*”—not to mention “*du kannst uhh Musik . . . hören*”). The student also attempts to directly compare cultures by stating that sports are important in the United States, too (“*In die USA uhh spielen sportlich Aktivitäten ist sehr wichtig zu*”). Although this formulation requires significant interpretation, the comparison confirms that the response is addressing the task; together with the details that are provided about people’s motivations and habits with regard to athletic activity, we can therefore say that there is suitable task completion.

The student’s language skills make the response mostly (in the language of the scoring guidelines, “generally”) understandable, a level at which some errors may impede comprehensibility. The vocabulary deployed here is appropriate but basic (“*rennen*” instead of the more idiomatic “*laufen*”; “*wichtig*” and repeated use of “*gut*”). There is some control of grammar, syntax, and usage as evidenced in successful use of modal verb structures (“*du kannst uhh Musik . . . hören*”), but other sentences reveal errors in subject-verb agreement, word order, and in verb structures that seem to be missing key elements altogether (“*Leoni in Deutschland rennen*”). Several phrases demand interpretation on the part of the listener (“*sie Name ist*”; “*gut . . . für die Sprechen uhh mit oder Kinder*”; “*rennen uhh in die in die Hour – in die Uhr*”).

Given that this response delivered a basic comparison of the two cultures in language that managed to complete the task with a number of noticeable difficulties, it received a score of 3.

**Sample: 4C****Score: 2****Transcript of Student’s Response(s)**

*Hallo. Guten Guten Tag. Meine Vortag ist Family mit meine American Family und meine German Family. American Family ist sehr rougher. Uhh America Family America hat America America mag magst Sport sehr mehr verglichen German Family. In America American Fußball American Fußball ist sehr populärt und Personen kann hat Geld from der Guverment für . . für . . gut Sports (laughter) verglichen Germany ist sehr flexible und sie hat*

**Question 4 (continued)****Commentary**

This response is a weak performance in Presentational Speaking and is an unsuitable treatment of the topic within the context of the task. The response presents only very limited information about the target culture (“*Germany ist sehr flexible*”). There is a brief attempt at a comparison by saying that American families like sport more than German families (“*America mag magst Sport sehr mehr verglichen German Family*”). The student also mentions that American football is very popular (“*American Fußball ist sehr populär*”) and seems to say that successful sportspeople can receive money from the state. This statement (“*Personen kann hat Geld from der Guverment für . . für . . gut Sports*”) is indicative of the response as a whole in many respects. In terms of content, it refers one-sidedly to American sports and is an undeveloped assertion whose accuracy is difficult to assess. Weak linguistic skills contribute to making the statement only partially understandable. The halting pace and repetitions frequently leave listeners hanging, unclear as to the path that the given sentence is trying to take. A limited vocabulary forces reliance on high-frequency verbs (“*hat*”) and words drawn from English (“*Personen*” instead of “*man*”; “*Guverment*”; “*Sports*”). Limited control of sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, and verb placement muddy the waters further. With the two words “*kann hat*,” did the student intend to deploy a modal verb to say something like “*Personen können /man kann . . . Geld bekommen*”? Or did they change their mind midstream and want to make a statement of fact (“*Man hat/Man bekommt Geld*”? It is hard to know what was intended because these errors force interpretation and cause confusion. Overall, this was a weak response and received a score of 2.