



## Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2025 AP<sup>®</sup> German Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

- Number of Readers 37

### Total Group

- Number of Students Scored 4,213
- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	899	21.3
4	1,032	24.5
3	1,083	25.7
2	742	17.6
1	457	10.8
- Global Mean 3.28

### Standard Group

- Number of Students Scored 2,753
- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	242	8.8
4	627	22.8
3	850	30.9
2	651	23.6
1	383	13.9
- Global Mean 2.89

The following comments on the 2025 free-response questions for AP<sup>®</sup> German Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Burkhard Henke, Professor of German at Davidson 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:** Participating in a social media contest

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.84

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.69

### ***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This part of the exam evaluated students' interpersonal writing skills through an email response task. Students had 15 minutes to read an incoming email message and compose a reply. Their responses were scored holistically based on how effectively students fulfilled the task requirements. To succeed, students needed to demonstrate reading comprehension of the original email, then craft a formal response that addressed every question and request from the sender while also asking follow-up questions about details mentioned in the original message.

The Email Reply focused on the theme of Contemporary Life (*Alltag*). Students were tasked with responding to a message from Emilia Fleischmann, who serves as the social media director for “*Bessere Schulen, bessere Schüler\*innen*” (Better Schools, Better Students). Students received this email after showing previous interest in the organization's social media contest called “*Zeig uns deine Schule*” (Show Us Your School).

In her message, Frau Fleischmann describes a competition where participants will use social media platforms to showcase a positive feature of their school. However, before entering the contest, interested students must answer two preliminary questions: they need to describe how social media functions in their everyday life, and they must identify which positive school characteristic they want to feature in their entry while explaining their choice. Frau Fleischmann concludes by inviting students to ask any questions they may have and expressing gratitude for their involvement.

Like all email assignments, this task required students to demonstrate comprehension of the message content, draw connections to cultural contexts and other subject areas, and interpret vocabulary and phrases effectively. Student responses were evaluated based on their interpersonal writing abilities, particularly how well they employed suitable communication techniques and diverse sentence structures.

### ***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?***

Most students found the social media email topic in the Contemporary Life theme accessible, but many struggled with the second question, which required them to highlight a positive aspect of their school and to explain more about it. This part of the exam consistently challenges students to interpret both familiar and unknown vocabulary. Although the prompt provided some contextual hints, students most frequently had trouble understanding “*Wettbewerb*” (competition) and “*zeigen*” (to show). Successful responses also demand the use of effective communication strategies in interpersonal writing. Weaker responses depended too much on memorized expressions, while stronger responses included sufficient detail to showcase a range of simple, compound, and some complex sentence structures.

**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>
As in previous years, certain students fulfilled only the basic task requirements, giving brief answers to the two questions that lacked depth and elaboration.	Excellent responses addressed both of Frau Fleischman's questions in clearly relevant ways and expanded their answers with explanations and additional details, showing the student's fluent and clear expression in German.
While most students appropriately used formal language when opening and closing their email responses, others had difficulty maintaining this formal tone consistently. These students would inappropriately address Frau Fleischmann by her first name or switch to informal pronouns within the body of the email.	In excellent responses, students maintained formal register throughout their email responses by using appropriate formal greetings and closings, consistent formal pronouns ( <i>Sie/Ihr/Ihnen</i> rather than <i>du/dein/dir</i> ), and vocabulary suited to the genre and context.
Several students failed to comprehend the word " <i>Wettbewerb</i> " (competition) at the beginning of the email, which subsequently caused them to overlook the key term " <i>zeigen</i> " (to show) in the second bulleted question. This misunderstanding occurred despite clear contextual information explaining that students needed to emphasize a positive school attribute in their post: " <i>Teilnehmer*innen müssen ein Posting für Social-Media kreieren, das einen positiven Aspekt Ihrer Schule betont.</i> " (Participants must create a post for social media that stresses a positive aspect of their school.).	In excellent responses, students addressed the second bulleted question by identifying a specific positive aspect of their school they intended to feature. They then provided details that helped illustrate why that part of their school was special or worthy of attention.
Many students misinterpreted the question " <i>Welchen positiven Aspekt Ihrer Schule . . .</i> " by discussing how schools generally use social media positively or exploring broad benefits of social media usage, rather than identifying a specific positive feature of their own school for the competition. Weaker responses sometimes failed to address this question entirely.	As mentioned previously, an excellent response provided detailed explanation and elaboration of a specific school feature to emphasize, along with justification for that choice. Proficient responses typically elaborated less, either on their school's social media usage or the benefits of social media use in general.

**Based on your experience at the AP<sup>®</sup> Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve student performance on the exam?**

- **Interpersonal writing tasks are well-suited for beginning German students.** Advanced students should focus on developing more sophisticated responses by elaborating on their answers to email questions. Rather than emphasizing length, instructors should prioritize helping students develop complex sentence structures.
- **All students, regardless of skill level, should ensure they thoroughly understand task requirements.** This is particularly important for native speakers, heritage learners, and other advanced students, as failing to include required questions was a common error this year among students with stronger language backgrounds.
- **Legible handwriting is essential for scoring.** Students must practice writing responses by hand in a clear, readable manner, and teachers should provide specific feedback on handwriting legibility since illegible responses cannot be scored.
- **Email responses must consistently use formal register throughout.** While most students can correctly format formal greetings and closings (accounting for gender and number of recipients), many struggle to maintain formal pronouns and possessive adjectives in the email body. Regular communicative practice will help students master appropriate register while effectively conveying their message.
- **Students need practice with elaboration techniques,** particularly constructing proper *weil-* and *denn-* clauses to provide reasons and explanations for their responses.
- **Additional contextually relevant questions should be incorporated into practice.** Students should learn to ask follow-up questions that naturally relate to the email's content and situation.
- **Timed practice is crucial** since students must complete responses within the exam timeframe. Even though AP Classroom practice sessions don't impose time limits automatically, you can assign a timer in the assignment settings.
- **Multiple practice resources are available,** including email prompts in the AP Classroom library and free response questions from previous AP German exams on AP Central.

**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/media/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- 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 task requirements 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 practice emails.
- Teachers can also access 3 Practice Exams in the AP Question Bank or through the Course Guide, 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/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/developing-interpersonal-writing-abilities/story_html5.html).
- 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.
- Teachers should choose a sample Email Reply prompt from past free-response questions including 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## Question 2

**Task:** Argumentative Essay

**Topic:** Should 16-year-olds be allowed to vote?

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.59

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.40

***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This task assessed writing in the presentational communicative mode by requiring students to compose an argumentative essay on a given topic while incorporating information from three distinct sources. Students received 6 minutes to read the essay topic and examine two printed sources, followed by an audio source presentation. They then had 40 minutes to write their essay. Responses were evaluated using a single holistic score based on how effectively students fulfilled the task requirements. Students needed to demonstrate comprehension of all three sources and articulate the different viewpoints presented. They were also required to establish and defend their own position using supporting information from all sources. Clear and appropriate source identification was expected, and essays needed to be structured in well-defined paragraphs.

The argumentative essay task centered on the theme of Globalization (*Globalisierung*), specifically addressing whether 16-year-olds should be granted voting rights. The first source, an article titled “Example Austria—Why Adolescents Should Be Allowed to Vote,” featured an interview with an expert who advocates for youth voting rights. Bernhard Heinzlmaier argues that today’s young people demonstrate greater maturity than previous generations and possess decision-making capabilities equivalent to those of 25-year-olds.

The second source presented data through charts displaying poll results about political engagement among adolescents. For 17-year-olds in Switzerland, the most popular political activities included discussions with friends, participation in cantonal elections, and boycotts. Among European adolescents aged 15-19, the most compelling political issues were human rights, educational access, and environmental concerns including climate change. This source also included a map of Germany indicating regions where 16-year-olds can participate in local and regional elections.

The audio source provided counterarguments against lowering the voting age. Featured in a *Stuggi-TV* YouTube broadcast titled “Voting at 16 Years of Age?,” the segment questioned whether 16-year-olds possess sufficient maturity for voting responsibilities. The moderator interviewed a politician of the conservative Christian Democratic Union, who explained that society gradually assigns responsibility to adolescents leading up to age 18, emphasizing that they need to learn and develop before acquiring the right to vote. The representative argued that responsibility develops through a process during which young people continue forming their identities and learning from mistakes. He suggested that even 18 might be premature for voting rights, noting that lawmakers still protect 18-year-olds from certain criminal liabilities.

Consistent with all argumentative essay tasks, students were expected to demonstrate comprehension across multiple text types (written, visual, and audio), establish cultural connections and interdisciplinary links, and derive meaning from vocabulary and expressions. Responses were evaluated on presentational writing strength, particularly students’ ability to employ effective writing strategies and articulate perspectives supported by detailed examples and evidence.

**How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?**

Most responses provided suitable and effective treatment of the topic. The subject matter proved accessible to students, demonstrating that coursework in the AP German classroom had prepared them well for this question. Students naturally connected with the topic given their age and personal interests in voting and political engagement.

Most responses showed at least moderate comprehension of the sources. All three sources provided abundant material that students could use to support their arguments. Consequently, strong responses successfully incorporated all three sources without simply dismissing opposing viewpoints as “incorrect.” However, students found it challenging to integrate source content seamlessly throughout their essays. Even strong responses often followed a pattern where each source received treatment in separate paragraphs. Essays that used the writer’s perspective on the topic as an organizational framework achieved better source integration throughout the response. Clear organization was enhanced by effective transitional words and cohesive devices, varied and appropriate vocabulary, and diverse sentence structures incorporating simple, compound, and complex constructions.

**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>
Often misinterpreted the topic as focusing on political activism or general political interest rather than voting eligibility	Clearly addressed the prompt with a definitive stance on whether 16-year-olds should have voting rights
Relied heavily on listing activities and percentages from Source 2’s bar graphs without deeper analysis	Effectively paraphrased Source 2’s content rather than simply listing data points
Frequently misunderstood the interviewee’s bicycle analogy in Source 3, incorrectly concluding that since adolescents can buy bikes, they possess the maturity to vote—the opposite of the interviewee’s intended meaning	Correctly interpreted the interviewee’s perspective that adolescents require time to develop their worldviews through an ongoing maturation process
Summarized source material rather than incorporating it meaningfully into their arguments	Skillfully integrated source material into their arguments, selecting information that best supported their positions rather than merely summarizing content

The key distinction was that stronger essays demonstrated analytical thinking by weaving evidence into coherent arguments, while weaker responses remained at the surface level of information reporting.

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

- **Instruct students to craft a clear thesis statement in the opening paragraph that directly addresses the prompt.** This thesis should serve as the essay's foundation and be thoughtfully revisited in the conclusion to create a cohesive argument.
- **Students at all proficiency levels, including native, heritage, and otherwise advantaged speakers, should ensure they are thoroughly familiar with task directions and requirements.** Emphasize the importance of reading the summary (*Übersicht*) for each source, as it frequently contains valuable information and explanations of key terminology that will enhance their understanding and lead to a stronger response.
- **Provide extensive practice with reading and listening to authentic sources while developing skills in interpreting data and graphs.** This exposure builds the critical thinking skills necessary for sophisticated analysis and integration of materials.
- **Teach students effective essay organization through strategic paragraph structure and clear source attribution using proper references (Q1, Q2, Q3, or equivalent designations).** Students should understand how to weave sources seamlessly into their arguments rather than simply summarizing them.
- **Introduce students to essential transition words and cohesive devices that will strengthen their organizational clarity.** Key German transitions include: *zum Beispiel* (for example), *darüber hinaus* (furthermore), *auf der anderen Seite* (on the other hand), and *zusammenfassend* (in summary).
- **Distinguish between source integration and mere summarization, emphasizing paraphrasing skills over direct quotation.** Teach students to use phrases like *das bedeutet*, *dass* (that means) to demonstrate understanding and facilitate smooth integration of source material into their own analysis.
- **Legible handwriting is essential for scoring and should be a regular focus of feedback.** Readers cannot evaluate responses that are impossible to decipher. Students must practice writing their responses by hand in a clear, readable manner and should receive regular teacher feedback on legibility to ensure their ideas can be properly assessed.
- **Focus on frequently used vocabulary that students often misapply.** For voting-related topics, ensure students master key words such as *wählen* (to vote), *Eltern* (parents), *Erwachsene* (adults), *Menschen* (people), *Rechte* (rights), *Menschenrechte* (human rights), *Politik* (politics), *protestieren* (to protest), and *politisch* (political).

**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/media/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- 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 tasks requirements thoroughly.

- Teachers can access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of practice sets and 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/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-writing/story_html5.html).
- 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.
- Teachers should choose a sample Essay Reply prompt from past free-response questions including 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.
- Teachers can access several instructional guidelines and examples for the essay task on the AP German Community page: <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/professional-learning/ap-community>.
- 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.

### Question 3

**Task:** Conversation

**Topic:** Celebrating father's birthday with a family reunion in the mountains

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.88

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.64

***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This task evaluated students' speaking abilities in the interpersonal communicative mode through a simulated oral conversation format. Students received one minute to preview the conversation structure, including an outline of each conversational turn. During the actual conversation, students had 20 seconds to respond at each of five designated turns. All five responses were evaluated using a single holistic score based on how effectively the student accomplished the assigned communicative task. Responses needed to address each conversational turn appropriately, following both the provided outline and responding meaningfully to the simulated interlocutor's statements.

The conversation centered on the course theme of Families and Communities (*Familie und Gemeinschaft*). In this scenario, students engaged in a simulated dialogue with their friend Tobias, who discussed an upcoming family reunion and his father's birthday. Students were required to respond to five audio prompts throughout the conversation.

*Tobias greets you and asks a question.*

Hi! Finally done with school! Time to relax! What are your plans for summer vacation?

*You answer the question.*

*Tobias asks for your opinion.*

Hmmm, we are having a big family reunion that everyone is coming to. My father is celebrating his 50th birthday, and my grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and so on are coming. Oh well. What do you think of family reunions?

*You give your opinion and justify it.*

*Tobias asks for advice.*

Ah, interesting. You know, the reunion is out in the middle of nowhere, in a small village in the mountains. There is not a lot to do there. What could I do so I don't get bored?

*You give advice and provide details.*

*Tobias describes his situation and asks for advice.*

Hmmm, yeah, I'll think more about it. My other problem is that my best friends are going to France at the same time. They invited me, and I would like to go, but I can't miss Papa's birthday. What should I do?

*You give advice and provide details.*

*Tobias asks for a suggestion.*

Oh, thanks. That's a good idea. I still need a gift for Papa—and I don't have a lot of money. Do you have any ideas? What can I give him that doesn't cost a lot?

*You provide appropriate advice.*

As with all conversation tasks, students were expected to demonstrate comprehension of audio prompts, interpret familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary and expressions, and make cultural and interdisciplinary connections. Responses were evaluated based on students' interpersonal speaking skills, particularly their ability to understand and employ appropriate oral communication strategies while utilizing varied syntactic structures.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?***

Responses to the task demonstrated that most students understood the context and connected meaningfully with the topic of family reunions and birthday celebrations. While all components of the task were accessible to students across ability levels, performance varied notably in depth and specificity.

In the second turn, stronger students articulated the deeper significance of family gatherings, whereas weaker students often discussed family topics in a vague or general manner. When advising Tobias about reunion activities and gift selection, strong and proficient respondents provided detailed, contextually appropriate suggestions. Notably, stronger students recommended activities suited to the mountain village setting, while weaker students offered more generic ideas. This pattern extended to gift recommendations. Stronger students proposed thoughtful, budget-conscious options, while weaker students frequently suggested expensive alternatives without considering the practical constraints that Tobias mentioned.

The fourth turn revealed particularly stark differences in problem-solving abilities. Many strong and proficient respondents provided nuanced advice for navigating Tobias's conflict between the trip to France and his father's birthday celebration. They offered specific strategies for addressing the dilemma and clear reasoning for their recommendations. In contrast, weaker students could express a preference for one option, but often failed to provide actionable guidance or substantive justification for their choice.

The strongest performers maintained coherent, engaging conversations throughout all five turns, demonstrating contextually appropriate responses with comprehensive understanding. Their contributions featured diverse vocabulary usage and consistent accuracy in grammar, syntax, and linguistic conventions.

**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>
Although the question in the first turn is comprehensible for novice learners, many students focused on what they are doing presently or after the end of the school day and not during summer vacation. A wide variety of answers about activities were accepted during scoring.	Students demonstrated strength by elaborating with detail on their summer plans, including travel, work, and simply relaxing ( <i>ich will mich entspannen oder einfach relaxen</i> ). Many students concluded their response by asking Tobias about his plans.
Weaker students understood the concept of family in turn two, but they either did not understand or did not know how to talk about the idea of a family reunion. All students seemed to understand “ <i>Familie</i> ” even if they did not understand “ <i>Treffen</i> .” Many interpreted “ <i>treffen</i> ” simply in terms of spending time with family, be it immediate family members or relatives. Weak and poor respondents tended to just list family members.	Respondents who achieved a score of Strong or Good could talk about family gatherings and what they do during them; they were also able to provide clear reasons for their opinions. Respondents with a Fair rating typically talked about their feelings and opinions regarding family generally.
In turn four, most students seemed to understand the conflict between the travel to France and the birthday celebration, but weaker students could not provide advice.	Strong responses included advice about one activity or the other, or sometimes both. They included reasons for their recommendation and used appropriate language for making a polite suggestion. Good responses frequently provided a recommendation with less detailed reasoning for why. Fair responses often included advice, but without a detailed reason for an action, or any reasoning at all.
Turn five was a successful response for most students.	Strong and Good responses included gift ideas that were low-cost and why they would be meaningful. Students often described what they give as gifts to their parents. Fair responses included a gift idea that was usually (but not always) low-cost.

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

- **Proctoring and Technical Considerations.** Students must maintain continuous recording throughout the entire conversation. Starting and stopping recordings between turns disrupts the flow and creates technical complications that should be avoided.
- **Strategic Use of Starter Phrases.** While starter phrases such as “*Lass mich mal denken . . .*” or “*Das ist eine gute Frage . . .*” can provide valuable thinking time, students should use them judiciously. Overuse of these introductions can consume precious response time, preventing students from delivering complete and substantive answers.
- **Holistic Scoring and Recovery Strategies.** Students should understand that scoring follows a holistic approach. When a turn is missed or incomplete, the best strategy is to move forward rather than attempting to revisit previous responses. Students should focus their energy on providing the most comprehensive possible answer to the current question.
- **Active Listening and Authentic Response.** Students should prioritize genuine listening over delivering rehearsed responses. This skill has become particularly crucial given that the first and final turns now feature more varied and challenging content that requires authentic engagement with what the interlocutor actually says.
- **Grammar Focus Areas.** Two specific areas require attention: the distinction between “*sehr*” and “*viel*” (correcting errors like “*sehr Spaß*” and “*sehr besser*”), and proper usage of enjoyment expressions. Students should master “*Das macht Spaß*” as the standard phrase rather than the incorrect “*Das ist Spaß*.”
- **Demonstrating Conversational Competence.** Students show advanced understanding when they address the interlocutor by name (Tobias) and provide appropriate affective responses to situational cues. For example, responding with “*Ach, schade!*” to disappointing news in turn four demonstrates both comprehension and appropriate social-emotional engagement within the conversational context.

**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/media/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.
- 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 tasks requirements 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 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](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/interpersonal-communications/story_html5.html).
- 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 that students can anticipate vocabulary and 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.
- Teachers should choose a sample Conversation from past free-response questions including 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 and how the performance is assessed on the exam.
- 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.

## Question 4

**Task:** Cultural Comparison

**Topic:** The Role of Health

**Max Score:** 5

**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.77

**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.58

***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

This task assessed students' oral presentation skills in the communicative mode through a comparative cultural analysis. Students received one minute to review the assignment parameters, four minutes to examine the topic and prepare their presentation, and two minutes to deliver their oral response. Each presentation received a single holistic score evaluating how effectively it fulfilled the task requirements. Students were required to compare an aspect of the German-speaking world with their own community or another community of their choice, while demonstrating clear understanding of German-speaking cultural features and maintaining logical organization throughout their presentation.

The cultural comparison task centered on the theme of Personal and Public Identities (*Persönliche und Öffentliche Identität*). Students explored the role of health—encompassing food, fitness, and nutrition—within a German-speaking community familiar to them. Their presentations needed to contrast perspectives on health's role between a German-speaking community and their home community or another community they selected. Students could draw upon personal observations and experiences, classroom learning, and external knowledge to substantiate their arguments.

Beyond making meaningful cultural and interdisciplinary connections, students were expected to construct coherent sentences using vocabulary and expressions appropriate to the academic context. Assessment also evaluated the quality of students' presentational speaking abilities, including delivery, clarity, and overall communication effectiveness.

***How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?***

Students found the health topic highly accessible due to its broad thematic scope, which encompassed food, fitness, and wellness. Most students gravitated toward nutrition-related discussions, exploring food types and diversity, meal timing, and dietary practices. Athletic activities and their health impacts also proved popular, as did transportation and movement patterns. A smaller number of students successfully addressed clinical aspects of health, including illness, healthcare costs, and medical scheduling.

Effective responses typically included explicit references to health's role in daily life. Simple descriptors such as *wichtig*, *klein*, or *groß* were deemed sufficient to establish this connection. However, strong responses went beyond mere identification to provide substantive reasoning that contextualized or justified the specific role they identified. While explicit treatment of health's role was preferred, implicit references—such as discussing the benefits or drawbacks of particular diets or exercise routines—were also accepted as valid approaches.

The most frequent shortcoming in weaker responses was the failure to draw meaningful comparisons between German-speaking communities and students' own communities, which was a key requirement of the task.

**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>
Students failed to examine the role of mental and physical health within German-speaking communities or draw meaningful connections to their own cultural contexts. Rather than exploring the specific significance of health-related practices, they provided superficial lists of individual health components without deeper analysis.	Effective presentations concentrated on specific German-speaking communities, thoroughly examining and contextualizing health's role within these societies while maintaining clear, insightful comparisons to the student's home community.
Students enumerated food items, sports, or transportation methods found in German-speaking communities without providing essential context or explaining their relevance to health and wellness practices.	Strong responses skillfully integrated specific national or regional examples—such as traditional foods, athletic practices, or transportation systems—to illustrate how health functions within German-speaking communities.
Students allocated excessive time to discussing their own cultural background, leaving insufficient time to demonstrate substantive understanding of the target culture before their presentations concluded.	Successful presentations addressed the central topic immediately in their opening statements, then devoted the majority of their time to exploring the target culture in depth.
Students made broad generalizations about health practices across different countries or regions without developing comparative analysis or supporting their observations with concrete examples.	The most effective responses provided comprehensive analysis of the role of health across two countries or regions, completing the assignment with clarity, organization, and articulate delivery.



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

- **Core Requirement.** When preparing students for cultural comparisons, emphasize the importance of addressing both the specific topic and the comparison between the two cultures. The cultural comparison prompt always presents a question that students must answer in their presentations. This question may ask students to examine the meaning of a particular cultural phenomenon, analyze its role in both a German-speaking community and their own community, or evaluate its influence on these communities.
- **Significance, Impact, or Role.** Students should move beyond mere description to explain the significance, impact, or role of cultural phenomena. Encourage them to use explanatory clauses beginning with *weil* to articulate these deeper connections. Frame these explanations within the context of everyday life to make them more meaningful and relatable. Students may focus on a single cultural phenomenon throughout their presentation, provided they address both cultures and answer the guiding question with relevant, supporting details.
- **Strategic Sequencing.** Students should consider beginning with the German-speaking culture to maximize opportunities for demonstrating target culture knowledge. Since students naturally have more to say about their own communities, discussing their own culture later may help them avoid time constraints that prevent effective comparison. Alternatively, students can alternate between cultures when making points related to the presentation topic.
- **Organizational Efficiency.** While opening statements are appropriate, keep organizational overviews brief or eliminate them entirely. This maximizes time for presenting substantive information and elaboration.
- **Specificity Over Generalization.** Students should avoid vague generalities in favor of concrete examples, details, and elaborations from specific regions or cities in the German-speaking world with which they are familiar. Citing information sources—whether literary texts, news articles, exchange students, or teachers—strengthens credibility and enhances a presentation’s effectiveness.
- **Nuanced Language.** Discourage broad generalizations introduced by phrases like “the Germans” or “in Switzerland.” Instead, encourage qualifiers such as “some Germans,” “many Germans,” or focus on specific regions. Provide ample practice with expressing cultural differences through nuanced language (*es kommt darauf an*, *manchmal*, etc.) rather than relying on stereotypes. Ensure students can properly use demonyms such as *Deutsche*, *Schweizer\*innen*, *US-Amerikaner\*innen*.
- **Teaching Approach.** Teachers should model discussing the role, meaning, and influence of cultural phenomena rather than simply presenting them. Ensure students understand they must make genuine comparisons between two communities rather than presenting only one culture in isolation.

**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/media/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf>.

- 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 tasks requirements thoroughly.
- Teachers can access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of practice sets and 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/story\\_html5.html](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/modules/world-languages-cultures/presentational-communications-speaking/story_html5.html).
- 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.
- Teachers should have students apply the scoring guidelines to student samples of cultural comparisons from past free-response questions to help them understand how the scoring guidelines are applied to student work.
- 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.