Chief Reader Report on Student Responses:

2019 AP® German Language and Culture Free-Response Questions

- Number of Readers   52

Total Group
- Number of Students Scored   5,160
- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	1,082	21.0
4	1,247	24.2
3	1,403	27.2
2	1,007	19.5
1	421	8.2

- Global Mean   3.30

Standard Group*
- Number of Students Scored   3,488
- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	304	8.7
4	826	23.7
3	1,140	32.7
2	854	24.5
1	364	10.4

- Global Mean   2.96

The following comments on the 2019 free-response questions for AP® German Language and Culture were written by the Chief Reader, Harald Menz, Professor of World Languages and Cultures (German), Bethany College (WV). 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:** E-Mail Reply　　　**Topic:** Invitation to Participate in a
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Youth Parliament
　　　　　　　　　　Max. Points: 5　　　**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.38
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Standard Group Mean Score: 3.23

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

In this exam, within the theme of Contemporary Life (*Alltag*), students replied to an e-mail from Kirsten Niemann, program coordinator from the organization committee of "Youth Votes!" (*Die Jugend stimmt!*). In the opening of her message, Niemann says that the purpose of the international Youth Parliament is to discuss solutions to common problems and to bring these into the political arena. Niemann identifies the recipients of the e-mail as students who, through work for student clubs and associations, have gained leadership experience and are familiar with the interests and problems of their peers. She extends an invitation to these student leaders to represent the youth of their regions at the meeting in Berlin.

In order to structure the work of the youth parliament more clearly, she poses two questions to the recipients of the e-mail: 1) Could you please tell us something about your experience in school groups or other organizations? (*Könnten Sie uns bitte etwas über Ihre Erfahrungen in Schulgruppen oder anderen Organisationen erzählen?*) and 2) In your opinion, what is an important problem for young people that we should discuss in the youth parliament? (*Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach ein wichtiges Problem für Jugendliche in Ihrer Gegend, über das wir im Jugendparlament diskutieren sollten?*) Niemann closes the e-mail by thanking the student for the feedback and by offering assistance with any additional questions the e-mail recipient might have.

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. Both questions were quite open, allowing students to draw on some of the many topics AP German curricula typically incorporate (topics such as science and technology, environmentalism, and global challenges were regularly addressed). Strong responses incorporated varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions for describing leadership experiences and explaining which problems should be discussed. Strong responses also featured culturally appropriate writing conventions and register, varied and appropriate vocabulary, and a range of simple, compound, and complex sentences.

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

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	*Responses that Demonstrate Understanding*
• Some students did not fully comprehend the connection between leadership skills and the experiences mentioned in Question 1. This occasionally resulted in a mere listing of clubs in which the students were active, missing the chance for appropriate elaboration.	• In strong responses, students offered clearly appropriate evidence of leadership experiences in clubs and organizations.

• Some students had problems with the verb *erzählen* (to tell, narrate) in Question 1, confusing it with *zahlen* (to pay) and supplying inappropriate responses.	• Strong responses illustrated the students' leadership experiences.
• Although most students opened and closed their e-mail replies in an appropriately formal manner, some students struggled to maintain a formal register throughout the e-mail reply, addressing the recipient by her first name or shifting to informal pronouns in the body of the e-mail.	• In strong responses, students were able to maintain a formal register throughout their e-mail replies, not only by providing an appropriately formal greeting and closing, but also through consistent formal pronoun usage (*Sie/Ihr/Ihnen* vs. *du/dein/dir*) and word choice appropriate to the situation.
• Some students completed all task requirements by providing answers to questions and posing an additional question, but only in a minimal, unelaborated manner.	• Strong responses offered clearly appropriate responses with frequent elaboration, which demonstrated ease and clarity of expression in the writer's use of German.
• Although most students responded to the two questions posed in the e-mail, many neglected to ask for more details about something in the message, as specified in the task directions.	• 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 e-mail 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 e-mails 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 persuasive essay. Because students have only 15 minutes to read and respond to the e-mail on the exam, it is helpful for teachers to set time limits for students to write practice e-mails.
- Students should imagine that the e-mail 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 e-mail 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 e-mail 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, as it may hamper student production of meaningful content in their e-mail replies.

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

- The 2019–2020 Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the unit guides for building students' skills in writing successful e-mail replies. The e-mail 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

- Teachers can now access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers will be able to find and access e-mail replies from previous exams. Teachers can also access a new practice exam in the AP Question Bank, which provides practice in the e-mail reply and can be scored using the provided scoring guidelines.
- Teachers should view the AP World Language and Culture Online Modules 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 modules here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules
- 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 e-mail reply prompt from the posted free response questions (from 2012-2019) 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
- Teachers should assign E-mail Reply prompts from previous years 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.
- Meet with educators who teach French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common issues there are across languages and to share strategies that will improve student performance.

Question #2	**Task:** Persuasive Essay	**Topic:** The Pros and Cons of Online Shopping
	Max. Points: 5	**Total Group Mean Score:** 3.68
		Standard Group Mean Score: 3.54

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

This task assessed writing in the presentational communicative mode by having the student write a persuasive 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 one audio source. Afterward they had 40 minutes to write the essay. The response received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. Students needed to be able first to comprehend the three sources and then to present their different viewpoints. They also had to present their own viewpoint and defend it thoroughly, using information from all of the sources to support the essay. As they referred to the sources, they had to identify them appropriately. Furthermore the essay had to be organized into clear paragraphs.

In this exam, within the theme of Global Challenges (*Globalisierung*), students wrote essays in response to the question of whether one should do less online shopping. (*Sollte man weniger online einkaufen?*) The first print source (*Quellenmaterial 1*) offers a variety of reasons that speak against the online shopping boom: They range from the substandard working conditions in the industry to negative consequences for small businesses and shopping centers to the detrimental environmental impact of delivery, return, and packaging of the products. The second print source (*Quellenmaterial 2)*, a table titled "Why do you sometimes prefer to shop on the Internet rather than in the store?" (*Warum kaufen Sie manchmal lieber im Internet als im Geschäft ein?*), offers nine different reasons *for* online shopping and also lists the small percentage of people who prefer to shop at a store. *Quellenmaterial 3*, an audio source, features an interview with Amelie Richter, a student who is an avid online shopper, and with the clothing designer Carl Tillessen, who describes the advantages of e-commerce for his small business, which is trying to strike a balance between physical retailing and internet sales.

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 one should do less online shopping. The question was very accessible and led to very few, if any, misunderstandings. Most responses indicated student familiarity with the topic and showed students were readily able to relate their own personal experiences and opinions related to online shopping. The three sources offered a rich array of perspectives and information on online shopping, and the strongest essays compared and contrasted information from the sources and used it to support student viewpoints. Strong essays were further marked by a clear organization that was facilitated by effective use of transitional words and cohesive devises, 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?

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	*Responses that Demonstrate Understanding*
• Students neglected to state their own viewpoint on the question (of whether one should do less online shopping) clearly from the outset of the essay, thus hampering their ability to build a persuasive argument.	• Strong essays opened with a clear statement on the question of whether one should do less online shopping. Some students were even able to construct more complicated (Yes, but ...) arguments successfully.

• Students summarized source material instead of integrating it into their own arguments.	• 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 the student's own point of view. In a strong essay, the student was frequently able to refute information from the sources by presenting a counter-argument, drawn either from the student's own experiences or from the source material.
• 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.	• 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 to 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.
- 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, as 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. Although it is helpful for students to learn phrases typically found in academic essays (such as *laut des Textes* or *meiner Meinung nach*), such phrases 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 under 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 2019–2020 Course and Exam Description (CED) contains suggestions in the unit guides for building students' skills in writing successful essays. The task's name is changing in the 2019–2020 year to "argumentative essay," and 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, 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

- Teachers can now access the AP Question Bank through AP Classroom. This is a searchable collection of past AP Exam questions where teachers will be able to find and access persuasive essay tasks from previous exams.
- Teachers can access a new Practice Exam in the AP Question Bank, which will 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, and the second: *Building Students' Skills in Developing Effective Arguments,* by Ann Mar to learn some strategies that focus on developing students' presentational writing skills. Teachers can access these two online modules here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules
- 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 Persuasive Essay prompt and its sources from the posted free response questions 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 inform them further of expectations for performance on this task.
- Meet with educators who teach French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common issues there are across languages and to share strategies across languages that will assist student performance.
- Teachers should assign other persuasive (argumentative) essay prompts from 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:** Planning a Trip to Berlin
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Total Group Mean Score: 3.61
　　　　　　　　　　　　Max. Points: 5　　　　　**Standard Group Mean Score:** 3.32

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

This task assessed speaking in the interpersonal communicative mode by having the student respond as part of a simulated oral 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 five turns in the conversation. The series of five responses received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. The responses had to appropriately address each turn in the conversation according to the outline, as well as the simulated interlocutor's utterance.

In this exam, within the theme of Contemporary Life (*Alltag*), the interlocutor (Peter) opens the conversation by complaining that the student has not answered his text message, and then asks what the student is doing right now. (*Hallo*, *du hast nicht auf meine SMS geantwortet, was machst du gerade?*) The directions contained in the outline of the conversation tell the student to respond to the question. In the second turn, Peter reminds the student about a meeting of a group of students to plan a trip to Berlin, in which both plan to take part. Peter asks how the student managed to come up with the money for the trip. The student is directed to respond. In the third turn, Peter provides additional details and asks for an opinion: He reports that he already has all the money for the trip, but his parents don't want to let him go without adult supervision. He tells the student that he finds his parents' position ridiculous and asks for the student's opinion about that. The student is directed to state an opinion and give reasons. In the fourth turn, Peter stresses that he will definitely have to convince his parents to let him go on the trip. Then he asks for advice and ideas about what they could do in Berlin. (*Hast du eine Idee, was wir dort machen könnten?*) The student is instructed to make a suggestion. In the final turn, Peter asks if the student is going to be able to join the group for the meeting at Lisa's in the evening. (*Kommst du auch? Hast du Zeit?*) The directions tell the student to answer.

How well did the response 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 planning of the Berlin trip and Peter's parental problems. Strong responses were able to maintain 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?

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	*Responses that Demonstrate Understanding*
• Students did not adhere to the conversation overview and responded inappropriately or only partially to the interlocutor's statements and questions.	• Strong responses followed the conversation overview and demonstrated knowledge of idiomatic language for various kinds of speech acts (stating opinions, giving advice, etc.).
• Students did not understand some of the words and phrases (e.g., *SMS* in turn 1) used by the interlocutor and gave inappropriate responses as a result. Similarly, in turn 4, some students were not able to	• Strong responses were characterized by clearly appropriate statements in every turn of the conversation.

understand that the word *dort* referred to Berlin, thus again providing inappropriate answers.	
• Students offered only very general, if still fully appropriate responses to the interlocutor's question regarding things to do in Berlin (*Eis essen gehen; ins Kino gehen*). Occasionally, students confused sights in other German cities with sights in Berlin (*ins Hofbräuhaus gehen; in den Englischen Garten gehen*).	• Strong responses featured frequent elaboration, allowing the student to demonstrate their knowledge of Berlin, or their knowledge of typical activities tourists do in a big city (*ins Museum/Theater gehen; eine Stadtrundfahrt machen*).
• In turn 4, some students continued to respond to the question from turn 3 regarding the parents' reaction to the travel plans. Often that led to inappropriate responses or a failure to respond to the question regarding things to do in Berlin.	• Strong responses focused on the question at hand.

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, as 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 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 complications.
- Although 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.

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

- The 2019–2020 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
- Teachers can now 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 will also be able to access a new practice exam in the AP Question Bank, which will provide practice with the conversation task and can be scored using the scoring guidelines provided.
- Teachers should become familiar with the range of online tools available to help students develop and track their skills that are described here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/news-changes/ap-2019/support-students-new-online-tools
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Modules to find strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing interpersonal speaking skills. Teachers can access these online modules here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules
- Meet with educators who teach French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common issues there are across languages and to share strategies across languages that will assist student performance.
- Teachers should work with students so they become familiar with how long 20 seconds lasts so they can become more comfortable with how long their responses can be.
- Teachers should help students learn how to use the conversation outline to their advantage. Look at commonalities from year to year so that 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   **Topic:** The Role of Nature
                                Comparison
                         Max. Points: 5   **Total Group Mean Score:** 3.69
                                                     Standard Group Mean Score: 3.51

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

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

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

In general, students were readily able to make a presentation about the role of nature in their own communities and in the German-speaking world. The accessibility of the topic and its importance in the AP curriculum was demonstrated by the many and varied aspects of nature and the environment in their presentations, including how many people in German-speaking countries love outdoor activities (e.g., *wandern, klettern, spazieren gehen*) and therefore take better care of the environment than their American counterparts, or why recycling is much more important in a smaller country than in the U.S. Although most responses readily described differences and similarities between natural features in the two cultures, some didn't effectively address the question of the role nature plays in the students' own communities and German-speaking culture.

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

Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps	*Responses that Demonstrate Understanding*
• Students neglected to address the role of nature in their own communities and German-speaking communities, offering instead only facts about natural features, often in the form of lists and divorced of context.	• Strong responses provided not only information about natural features but also explained the role nature plays in their home communities and in German-speaking cultures.
• Students offered a list of similiarities and differences related to nature but did not offer further explanation or detail.	• 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.

• Students ran out of time before they were able to demonstrate an understanding of the target culture.	• 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 but were organized well enough to include a discussion of both cultures.

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to 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 American 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 that they may focus on a single cultural phenomenon in their presentations, as long as they address both cultures and answer the question with depth and detail.
- Students may want to consider beginning their presentations by addressing the German-speaking culture so that they 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. Or 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 (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" can lead to overly broad generalizations, and teachers should encourage students to use qualifiers such as "some Germans" or "many Germans" instead. Practice expressing nuanced cultural differences (*es kommt darauf an*, *manchmal*, etc.) instead of creating stereotypes (e.g., *Deutsche lieben Natur mehr als Amerikaner*).
- 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 in order to maximize the amount of time they have to communicate information.

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

- The 2019–2020 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 one-minute cultural presentation about an aspect of culture learned in that unit; in Unit 2, they do a one-minute cultural comparison; in Unit 3, a full two-minute cultural comparison; and in Units 4, 5, and 6, subsequent full comparisons on topics of increasing difficulty. The CED can be accessed here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-german-language-and-culture-course-and-exam-description.pdf
- Teachers can now 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 will also be able to access a new Practice Exam in the AP Question Bank, which will provide practice with the cultural comparison task and can be scored using the scoring guidelines provided.

- Teachers should become familiar with the range of online tools available to help students develop and track their skills that are described here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/about-ap/news-changes/ap-2019/support-students-new-online-tools
- Teachers should go to AP Central and view the AP World Language and Culture Online Module on presentational speaking by Angelika Becker to learn strategies, resources, and activities that focus on developing presentational speaking skills. Teachers can access this online module here: https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/resources/ap-world-language-culture-interactive-online-modules
- Meet with educators who teach French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture to determine what common issues there are across languages and to share strategies across languages that will assist 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. They should have students apply the scoring guidelines to student samples of cultural comparisons posted on AP Central to help students understand how the scoring guidelines are applied to student work.