

## German A

### Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0 – 7	8 – 15	16 – 22	23 – 28	29 - 36

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

It seems that the range of work submitted this year was more varied. There were fewer EEs on Schlink’s “Der Vorleser” and Suskind’s “Das Parfum”. However, Fontane’s “Effi Briest”, Goebbel’s speech(es) and Herrndorf’s “Tschick” are still very popular.

Even though the above mentioned texts are suitable in general, Brüder Grimm’s Märchen are often not. There is hardly ever an analysis of the literary text, most EEs drift away to a more moral, psychological or sociological investigation.

Equally unsuitable is the general approach to Kehlmann’s “Die Vermessung der Welt” as one example of historical novels. Candidates do not investigate the literary merit but rather, they compare the protagonists with their historical counterpart. This does not lead to an analysis of the text as literature. Likewise, an investigation of “Anne Frank’s Tagebuch” does not concentrate on the literary analysis of the text, but instead of Anne as an example of a Holocaust victim. This kind of literature should be avoided if the candidate’s intended focus veers away from the literary or linguistic.

There were some Category 3 essays with interesting topics; however, they were sometimes treated with scant academic thoroughness.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A: research question

A narrow research question which is focused on the analysis of the text, is still rare. Some research questions are too broad, e.g. “Change in teenage language”, others do not focus on the literary text, e.g. “The influence of the Nachkriegszeit on the authors”. The research question should aim to analyse the text in order to interpret it. Therefore, questions which aim

to investigate a psychological, autobiographical or an historical aspect tend to veer away from the subject.

### Criterion B: introduction

The introduction should state clearly the research question and explain why the investigation is of interest.

Long, historical or autobiographical context should be avoided in the introduction. If the context is explained, it needs to be referenced.

### Criterion C: investigation

Some internet sources are not appropriate for a academic research, e.g. Wikipedia, "hausaufgaben.de", "referate.de" or similar websites. They should not be the main source of information. All material listed in the bibliography must be used in order to justify their entry. There are some EEs which do not have any quotations or reference to sources.

### Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

The majority of candidates demonstrate an adequate knowledge and some understanding of the topic studied. But still, candidates summarise the text throughout their essay so that a deeper "understanding" often cannot be detected.

### Criterion E: reasoned argument

Most essays do not show a reasoned argument. They just state an opinion which is not supported by the text. Throughout the EE, candidates stay descriptive and narrative rather than argumentative. This is due to neglect of the research question and therefore, resulting in a lack of argument.

Some EEs list their arguments without any connection between them. This can hardly be regarded as "a logical and coherent manner", let alone that there is a "development" in the reasoned argument.

### Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills

Only in very few EEs can analysis be found. Very often, candidates write their entire EE without any use of literary terms. Why the author wrote his piece in a given way, is totally ignored. Equally, the analysis needs to be supported by the text. Just stating that there is a use of metaphors or that the author takes the view of the protagonist, is not sufficient.

### Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject

More and more colloquial phrases find their way into this formal essay, which is unacceptable. There is hardly any "subject language" in the essay. Literary terminology is often neglected.

### Criterion H: conclusion

The conclusion should answer the research question, not just summarise what has already been said in the main body. An excellent conclusion sets out the answer to the research question in a wider context, to show a “personal response”.

The conclusion should not state any new argumentation.

### Criterion I: formal presentation

Most mistakes are in the bibliography and with consistency with regards to the referencing method.

### Criterion J: abstract

The abstract has to state the research question, explain how the investigation was undertaken and what the result of the EE is. The word count has to be under the abstract (not exceeding 300 words). The most difficult part remains to explain, why the candidate has chosen to answer the research question in what way. Conclusions are often too broad, for example: “There are similarities and differences between the two works.”

### Criterion K: holistic judgement

Supervisors should always give an insight into the work of the candidate, particularly referencing assessment appropriate elements that the examiner may not be able to see first-hand in the body of the EE (for example, interesting approaches to research).

## Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Read the final draft which is actually handed in to the IB. Please check that there are no parts missing.

Discuss the EE criteria in depth with the candidate. The criteria should be shared with all candidates.

Highlight the importance of formality in writing and register.

Category 3 EEs should have a text as the focus, which allows an investigation of an academic nature. For example, rap texts are fine provided they are investigated in a literary and linguistic manner.

Ensure candidates are given guidance on proper referencing and general academic honesty skills.