

# GCSE German

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**Effective exam preparation**

Booklet 4: strategies for skills development

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# Notes and guidance

## Active and passive vocabulary

These worksheets are designed to help you think about some exam texts from the point of view of 'active' and 'passive' vocabulary. They are not about 'comprehension' of the text, they're about 'recognising' types of word and helping you find ways of working out meaning. The activities might show you which 'types' of word you need to focus your vocabulary revision.

## Types of questions for the General Conversation

You are likely to be asked a variety of different types of question. They will all be designed to encourage you to respond as openly and freely as possible. Knowing what the best kind of answer to give means knowing what type of question it is. Use this sheet to plan your strategies for answering questions.

## Structures make sentences more complex

Using a variety of structures in your Speaking and Writing will help you get marks for the quality of your language. Complex sentences are simple sentences joined together. Try to keep your ideas fairly straightforward but use as many different structures as you can to make your sentences longer and more complex.

## Expressing, justifying and asking opinions

These are an important part of your German exam. Use these sheets as reference and revision sheets and practice using them as much as you can.

## Decoding bullet points

This will help you understand how to answer the task fully.

## Developing your ideas

There are many ways of developing your ideas. Use clauses, connectives and conjunctions to add detail to what you say or write. Or simply add more sentences. The basic rule of thumb is to 'keep your ideas fairly straightforward, but make the language you use as complex as you can'. Have a good balance between '**quantity**' and '**quality**'.

## Revision check-lists

Use these to help you prepare for the exam.

## Revising vocabulary

There are many ways to revise vocabulary. These activities might help.

## The golden rules for Listening and Reading

Things to remember both *before* and *while* doing the exams.

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# Active and passive vocabulary

## Active vocabulary:

- is a core of words you use often
- is usually very familiar and easy to remember
- includes words you use almost without thinking
- is likely to be used in Speaking and Writing (productively).

## Passive vocabulary:

- is like a database or a library you use less often
- is probably vaguely familiar but harder to remember
- includes words you recognise and have seen before
- is likely to be used in Listening and Reading (receptively).

To improve your Speaking and Writing try to expand your active vocabulary, and to improve your Listening and Reading try to develop your passive vocabulary.

For example, tick these boxes and see where these words belong! All the words are listed under 'Home, town, neighbourhood and region' in the specification.

Word	Active vocab	Not sure?	Passive vocab	Unknown
ausgeben				
baden				
Doppelhaus, das				
einkaufen				
Fluss, der				
günstig				
Kasse, die				
kostenlos				
Kühlschrank, der				
leeren				
mieten				
Nachteil, der				
Quittung, die				
Rasen, der				
Rolltreppe, die				
Schlange stehen				
tanken				
Umgebung, die				
Vorteil, der				
Wohnblock, der				

What did you discover? How long did you think about them? Add their meanings in English and check their meanings if you need to.

Remember that everyone has active and passive vocabulary – that's normal.

Our active and passive vocabulary may be different for different subjects.

All the words are listed under 'Me, my family and friends' in the specification. Now try these...

Word	Active vocab	Not sure?	Passive vocab	Unknown
Alter, das				
auf die Nerven gehen				
besuchen				
Einzelkind, das				
fühlen (sich)				
Geburtsort, der				
geduldig				
gemein				
gut/schlecht gelaunt				
Hochzeit, die				
kennen				
kümmern (sich um)				
ledig				
Persönlichkeit, die				
schüchtern				
Spitzname, der				
Streit, der				
unternehmungslustig				
verstehen (sich mit)				
Zwillinge (pl)				

What did you discover this time? Check the meanings if you need to.

What kinds of words did you remember easily (eg nouns, verbs, adjectives)?

**Easy** types of word to remember are: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Hard** types of word to remember are: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

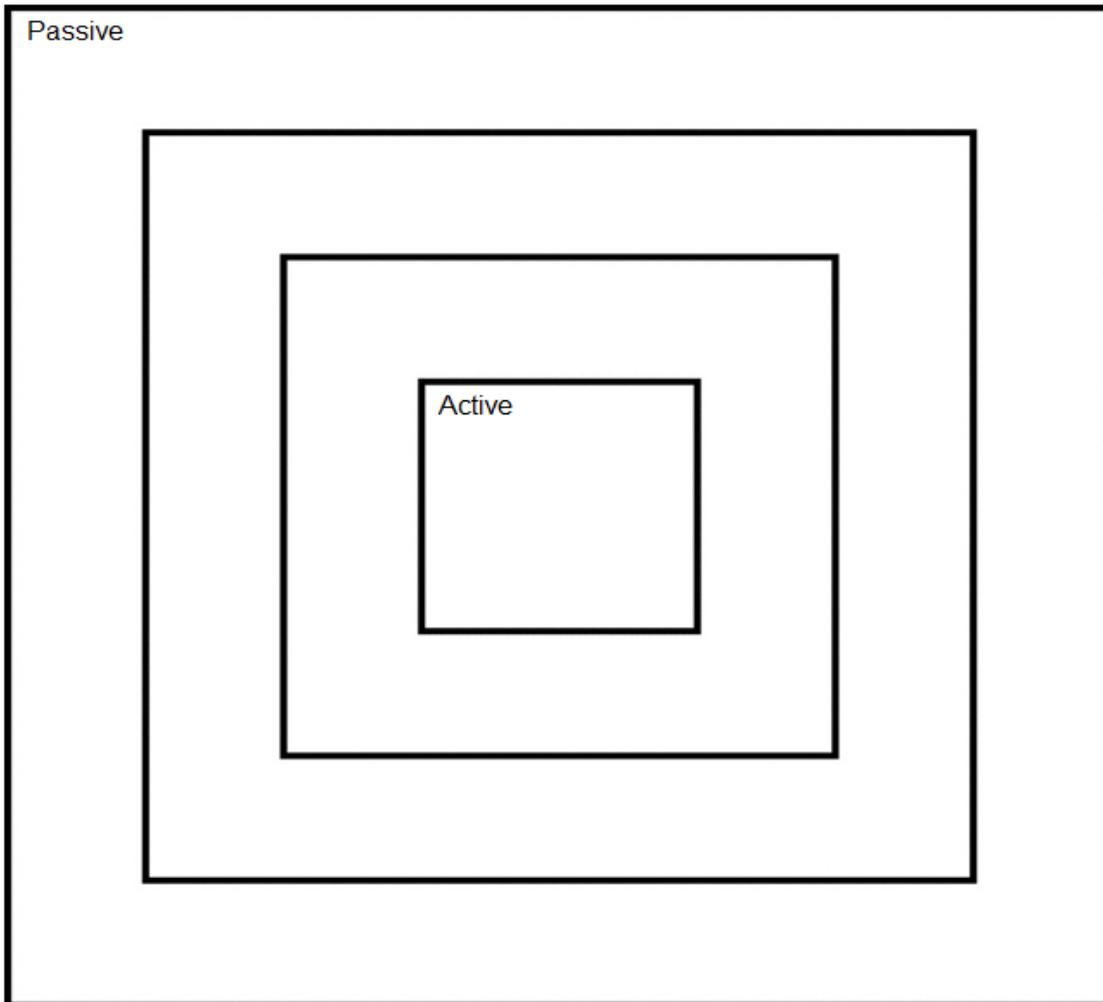


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Use this grid to sort your vocabulary and phrases into categories before you start to revise them. Try to move some of them gradually towards the centre. Write them in German if you know them (**actively**); write them in German and English if you should or might know them (**passively**).

Theme:

Topic:

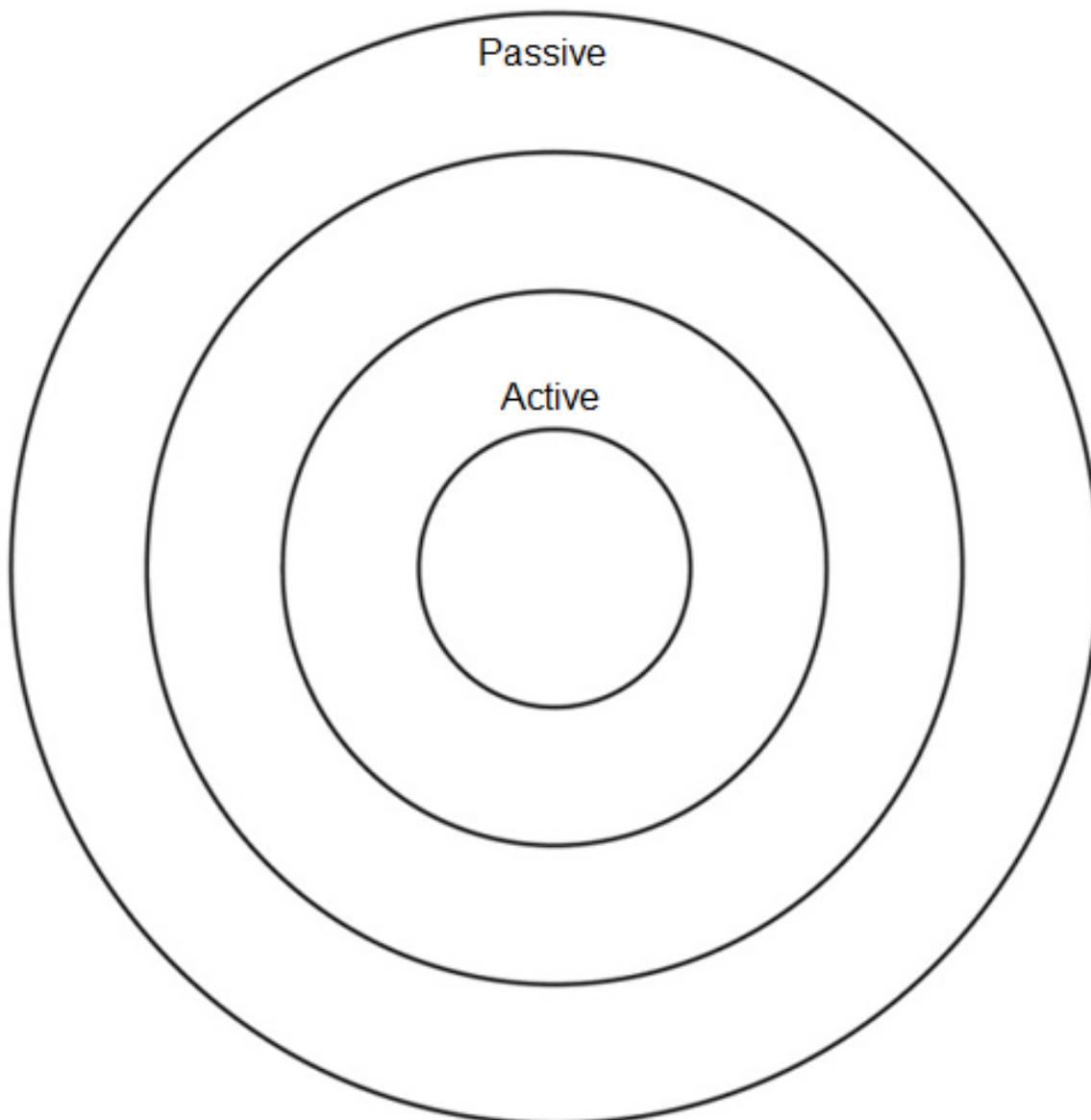


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Use this grid to sort your vocabulary and phrases into categories before you start to revise them. Try to move some of them gradually towards the centre. Write them in German if you know them (actively); write them in German and English if you should or might know them (passively).

Theme:

Topic:



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# Different types of question for the General Conversation

Knowing something about the type of question you are asked will help you answer it in the best possible way. Recognising the type of question will support focused revision and preparation of appropriate types of answer. (NB some types of question overlap!)

Theme:

Topic:

Type of question	Examples	Good way(s) to answer
Open-ended		
Closed		
Either...or...		
Evaluate		
Explanatory		
Time frame		
Leading		
Hypothetical		

# Different types of question (completed example)

Theme: 2

Topic: Holidays

Type of question	Examples	Good way(s) to answer
Open-ended	Sag mir etwas über deinen Urlaub.	
Closed	Hast du je einen Vergnügungspark besucht?	
Either...or...	Machst du lieber Urlaub an der Küste oder in den Bergen	
Evaluate	Was denkst du über das Zelten?	
Explanatory	Deiner Meinung nach warum ist es wichtig, auf Urlaub zu fahren,?	
Time frame	Was wirst du diesen Sommer in den Ferien machen?	
Leading	Hast du einen wunderbaren Urlaub irgendwo im Ausland gehabt?	
Hypothetical	Was machst du, wenn es in den Ferien regnet?	

# Structures makes sentences more complex

und	deswegen/deshalb	als	wo
da	entweder ... oder ...	nachdem	wenn
obwohl	damit	weil/denn	bevor
um ... zu	statt ... zu	während	dass
ohne ... zu	ob	oder	aber

Rearrange the above structures on the shelves of this resource 'cupboard'!

## Shelves in the cupboard

### Top shelf (Higher):

nachdem, statt ... zu, während, bevor, damit, ob, als, ohne...zu

### Middle shelf (Intermediate):

wenn, wo, da, obwohl, weil, dass, deshalb/deshwegen, um ..... zu, entweder..... oder

### Bottom shelf (Basic):

und, oder, aber, denn

## Strategy 1

### Example Topic: Free Time ('Freizeit')

ich treibe Sport	ich sehe fern	ich gehe ins Kino
ich mag Schokolade	ich bin gut in Form	ich habe nicht viel Zeit
es regnet viel	ich bin ein aktiver Mensch	ich mache meine Hausaufgaben
ich höre Musik	ich besuche meinen Freund	es ist schön

## Strategy 2

Make coloured-coded cards of the structures and use them in pair work.

# Opinion activity

Was meinst du? Bist du damit einverstanden?

Expressing opinions and justifying or explaining them.

Deutsch	Englisch	Deutsch	Englisch	Deutsch	Englisch
altmodisch	old-fashioned	freundlich	friendly	nützlich	useful
amüsant	amusing	gefährlich	dangerous	nutzlos	useless
anders	other	gesprächig	talkative	optimistisch	optimistic
angenehm	pleasant	gewöhnlich	ordinary	peinlich	embarrassing
ärgerlich	annoying	glücklich	happy	pessimistisch	pessimistic
atemberaubend	breath-taking	gut	good	positiv	positive
belebt	busy	hässlich	ugly	praktisch	practical
beliebt	popular	herrlich	splendid	ruhig	quiet
bequem	comfortable	höflich	polite	schlecht	bad
berühmt	famous	hübsch	pretty	schön	beautiful
besorgt	concerned	ideal	ideal	schrecklich	terrible
billig	cheap	interessant	interesting	schüchtern	shy
böse	angry	klug	clever	schwach	weak
doof	stupid	komisch	funny	schwierig	difficult
dumm	stupid	kompliziert	complicated	sensationell	sensational
egoistisch	selfish	lächerlich	ridiculous	spannend	exciting
einfach	easy	langweilig	boring	stark	strong
entspannend	relaxing	lecker	delicious	sympathisch	sympathetic
ermüdend	tiring	Lieblings-	favourite	teuer	expensive
ernst	serious	liebenswert	amiable	traurig	sad

erstaunlich	astonishing	lustig	funny, cheerful	unfreundlich	unfriendly
fair	fair	nervig	irritating	weise	wise
fantastisch	fantastic	niedlich	cute	wunderbar	wonderful
faul	lazy	niedrig	humble	zauberhaft	magical

Some other important ways of expressing your opinion:

Giving an opinion ...	(with a verb)	Explaining ...	(with a verb)
Ich denke, dass	I think that	weil ...	because
Ich glaube, dass	I believe that	da ...	since, because
Ich finde, dass	I find that	denn...	for
Ich bin sicher, dass	I am sure that	also	so, therefore
Meiner Meinung nach ...	In my opinion	deshalb...	therefore
Es scheint mir, dass/als ob...	It seems to me that/ as though	Das ist zu sagen ...	That is to say
Man sollte ...	One should	wegen (+ <i>noun</i> - <i>genitive</i> )	because of

Asking for an opinion		Asking for an opinion	
Hast du ...gern?*	Do you like...?	Das ist ..., nicht wahr?	That is..isn't it?
Hast du lieber...oder...?*	Do you prefer...?	Deiner Meinung nach, ... ?	In your opinion..?
Was denkst du über ... ?	What do you think about...?	Wie ist das?	What is that like?
Denkst du, dass ... ?	Do you think that..?	Wie findest du ... ?	How do you find..?
Glaubst du, dass... ?	Do you believe that.....?	Ich glaube, dass...und du ?	I believe that...and you?

A different verb can be used eg gehst du gern ins Kino? Spielst du lieber Fußball oder Rugby?

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## Activity:

**Level 1** (cards with pictures, ie no printed language).

In pairs or small groups, one student picks up a card and asks the next student his or her opinion about it. That person answers using two words or more (to avoid yes/no answers). He/she then turns to the next person and repeats the process. To increase the level of difficulty a bit you could ask them not to repeat any opinion phrases already used in the round.

**Level 2** (cards with words printed on them in English)

Same as above but incorporates a small amount of simple vocabulary recall or translation.

**Level 3** (cards with phrases printed on them in English)

Same as above but works with more complex language and also practises the art of translation. This could be linked to a particular structure that's being studied.

**Level 4** (any sort of card)

One student gives an opinion about the word/phrase/picture on the card and then asks the next student if he/she agrees. He/she now needs to supply a reason, whether he/she agrees or not. Students alternate or else the activity continues round the circle.

### Example cards:

- 1) singular nouns (images, different genders)
- 2) plural nouns (words, some with adjectives)
- 3) structures (gerund in English, infinitive in German)
- 4) structures (gerund/infinitive and connective)



iStock/mochipet



iStock/bubble86



iStock/tumoxasan



iStock/vectorplush

<b>strawberries</b>	<b>cats</b>	<b>romantic films</b>	<b>fast cars</b>
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<b>doing homework</b>	<b>going to the bowling alley</b>	<b>eating in the canteen</b>	<b>reading newspapers</b>
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<b>swimming when the water is cold</b>	<b>playing football if it's raining</b>	<b>listening to music while you study</b>	<b>cycling in order to keep fit</b>
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# Working with opinions

- 1) Choose a topic.
- 2) Work with a partner.
- 3) Give your opinion (and a reason).
- 4) Ask if your partner agrees.
- 5) Listen to your partner's opinion (and reason).
- 6) Swap roles.
- 7) Vary your questions and opinions as much as you can.
- 8) Try to reduce your thinking time as you build up your confidence and skill.

Some suggestions to start you off:

Topic: school subjects	Topic: free time activities
Deutsch	Tennis spielen
Erdkunde	ins Kino gehen

Topic: food and drink	Topic: holiday activities
Schokolade	Museen besuchen
Eis	Andenken kaufen

# Decoding bullet points in the Writing test

Bullet points are usually compulsory so remember to refer to all of them.

<b>Bullet points are:</b>	keys to the task content to include prompts to respond to points to refer to headings to plan with	- deine Lieblingshobbys - die Wichtigkeit eines/einer... - die Filme, die du gern siehst - die Fächer, die du lernst
<b>Usually they are:</b>	fairly open-ended possible to interpret freely boundaried, content-limited	- das Wetter - deine (Ferien)aktivitäten - wo du bist
<b>They can contain:</b>	a single key word more than one key word two elements	- das Hotel - deine Gesundheit und Diät - was du in der letzten Zeit mit deiner Familie gemacht hast

Look out for	Example	Meaning	Evidence
<b>Connectives:</b>	und	two parts to the bullet point	- deine Stadt und ihre Sehenswürdigkeiten. Das Positive und das Negative
<b>Question words :</b>	wo warum	'where' 'why'	- wo du bist - warum deine Schule eine gute Schule ist
<b>Time frame indicators :</b>	vor kurzem unvergesslich in der Zukunft nächste(s) typisch besondere(r/s)	'recent' - in the past memorable, unforgettable in the future next (eg week/year) typical (ie present tense) special (probably in the past)	- was du vor kurzem in der Stadt gemacht hast - ein unvergesslicher Urlaub - wo du in der Zukunft wohnen möchtest - deine Pläne für nächste Woche - ein typischer Schultag - ein besonderer Geburtstag - ein besonderes Wochenende

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# Develop your ideas

## Isst du gern Eis?

Here are a number of possible answers to this question – notice the difference between them. Highlight some of the ‘best bits’ of these answers. You’ll see increasingly good content and language the higher you go.

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### Higher

Leider ja! Als ich jünger war, habe ich sehr gern Eis gegessen, aber jetzt esse ich es gar nicht so oft, denn man hat mir gesagt, dass es viel besser ist, sich gesünder zu ernähren, um die Fettleibigkeit zu vermeiden.. Aber ich weiß doch, dass ich es gelegentlich in der Zukunft essen werde.

Das hängt davon ab. Wenn es heiß ist und wenn ich nicht viel Geld habe, kaufe ich lieber Mineralwasser, aber um meinen Geburtstag zu feiern, werde ich bestimmt viel Eis essen.

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### Intermediate

Nein, nicht so viel, da ich glaube, dass Eis viel Fett und viel zu viel Zucker enthält und das ist nicht gut für die Gesundheit..

Ich esse sehr gern Eis, besonders Erdbeereis, weil das mir am besten schmeckt.

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### Basic

Ja, weil es lecker ist, wenn es heiß ist.

Ja, es schmeckt mir gut.

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### Minimal

Ja.

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# Revision check-lists

By theme, skill

Theme 1		Identity and culture			
Topic	Sub-topic	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Me, my family and friends	Relationships – family & friends				
	Marriage/ partnership				
Technology in everyday life	Mobile technology				
	Social media				
Free-time activities	Music				
	Cinema and TV				
	Food & eating out				
	Sport				
Customs, festivals					

Theme 2		Local, national, international and global areas of interest			
Topic	Sub-topic	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Home, town, neighbourhood and region					
Social issues	Charity/voluntary work				
	Healthy/ unhealthy living				
Global issues	Environment				
	Poverty/ homelessness				
Travel & tourism					

Theme 3		Current and future study and employment			
Topic	Sub-topic	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
My studies					
Life at school					
Education post-16					
Jobs, career choices and ambitions					

## Speaking

Speaking: Role-play – skills and things to check				
Task/Skill	Understood	Practised	Revised	Checked
use a conjugated verb in your answer				
know the meaning of the word 'detail'				
know the meaning of the word 'aktiviät'				
possessive adjectives (eg dein/mein)				
more than one time frame (Higher)				
the unpredictable question – (!)				
the student asks a question – (?)				
always speak clearly and not too fast				
clear pronunciation				

Speaking: Photo card – skills and things to check				
Task/Skill	Understood	Practised	Revised	Checked
describe what's in the photo				
identify people in the photo correctly				
no need for complex language/structures				
actions in the photo – beware: grammar				
develop at least 3 answers				
use time frames: 2 (F tier) or 3 (H tier)				
one opinion and one justification				
NB – time limit: 2m (F tier), 3m (H tier)				
clear pronunciation				

<b>Speaking: General Conversation – skills and things to check</b>				
<b>Task/Skill</b>	<b>Understood</b>	<b>Practised</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Checked</b>
nominate the first theme to discuss...				
be prepared to talk about another theme				
time allowed: 3–5m (F tier), 5–7m (H tier)				
different types of question				
develop answers to most questions				
ensure all ideas are expressed clearly				
use a wide variety of vocabulary				
include some longer sentences				
include some complex structures				
include opinions and justifications				
remember to ask a question				
use up to three time frames				
avoid too much 'pre-learnt' material				
clear pronunciation				
10 marks – awarded for communication				
10 marks – awarded for quality of language				
5 marks – awarded for pronunciation				
5 marks – awarded for spontaneity and fluency				

## Writing

Writing: Foundation Question 1 – skills and things to check				
Task/Skill	Understood	Practised	Revised	Checked
make sure what you write is very clear				
okay to use the same verb /structure				
try to be as accurate as you can				
no marks for quality of language				
Leave time to check your work at the end!				

Writing: Foundation Question 2 – skills and things to check				
Task/Skill	Understood	Practised	Revised	Checked
make sure what you write is very clear				
cover/refer to all four bullet points				
recommended word length is 40 words				
use conjugated verbs rather than infinitives				
write in the present tense only				
opinions – optional, only of you want to				
justification of opinion not necessary				
vary the vocabulary and structures you use				
write as neatly and clearly as you can				
try to be as accurate as possible				
Leave time to check your work at the end!				

Writing: Foundation Question 4/Higher Question 1 - skills and things to check				
Task/Skill	Understood	Practised	Revised	Checked
answer only <b>one</b> of the two questions				
make sure what you write is very clear				
cover/refer to all <b>four</b> bullet points				
one bullet point will refer to the past				
one bullet point will refer to the future				
recommended word length is <b>90</b> words				
remember to include <b>two</b> opinions				
including justifications is optional				
vary the vocabulary and structures you use				
try to include some complex sentences				
10 marks are awarded for content				
6 marks are awarded for quality of language				
write as neatly and clearly as you can				
try to be as accurate as possible				
Leave time to check your work at the end!				

<b>Writing: Higher Question 2 - skills and things to check</b>				
<b>Task/Skill</b>	<b>Understood</b>	<b>Practised</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Checked</b>
answer only one of the two questions				
cover/refer to both bullet points				
one bullet point is in the present tense				
one bullet point is in another tense				
recommended word length is 150 words				
remember to include two opinions				
remember to include two justifications				
vary the vocabulary and structures you use				
try to include some complex sentences				
15 marks are awarded for content				
12 marks are awarded for quality of language				
5 marks are awarded for accuracy				
Leave time to check your work at the end!				

# Revising vocabulary

Sample taken from – Theme 2, topic: social issues, sub-topic: healthy living

**1)** Choose the words you want to revise and put them in column 3. It can be helpful to arrange them in groups to help you remember them better. (In the example below, 1–5 are or contain verbs, 6–11 are nouns, 12–16 are adjectives or descriptive expressions.)

**2)** When you think you know them, hide the English meanings from view by deleting them digitally or by folding them back under your printed page.

**3)** When you're ready, put the meanings in column 2 – all those you complete correctly can now be said to be part of your learnt/known/active vocabulary. The others are probably still part of your passive vocabulary.

**4)** Have another go at revising the list of words a bit later, focusing on the ones you didn't remember, then hide the contents of columns 1 and 2 before completing column 4.

	English meaning	Attempt 1	What to learn	Attempt 2
1	to sleep		schlafen	
2	to be better		mir geht es besser	
3	to relax		sich entspannen	
4	to avoid		vermeiden	
5	to be on a diet		Diät machen	
6	health		Gesundheit, die	
7	sleep		Schlaf, der	
8	medicine		Medizin, die	
9	habit		Angewohnheit, die	
10	meal		Mahlzeit, die	
11	drinking water		Trinkwasser, das	
12	balanced		ausgewogen	
13	tired		müde	
14	sugary		süß	
15	strong		stark	
16	fit		fit	

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# Revising vocabulary (template)

Topic:

	English meaning	Attempt 1	What to learn	Attempt 2
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
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# Notes

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## Notes

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## Notes



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## Contact us

**T:** 0161 696 5994

**E:** [events@aqa.org.uk](mailto:events@aqa.org.uk)

[aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)