ENGLISHONLINE.TRAINING · STUDY HANDOUT

AFB Explained

The three levels of demand — and what each one asks you to do. Keep this page next to your past paper.

	AFB 1 · Reproduction	AFB 2 · Transfer	AFB 3 · Reflection & Evaluation
What it asks	Show you know the text or topic.	Use what you know in a new arrangement.	Take a position and defend it.
Typical verbs	name · describe · list · summarise · retell · outline	analyse · compare · contrast · apply · explain · examine	evaluate · discuss · assess · justify · comment on
Where the points are	Accuracy and completeness.	A clear point, built from selected evidence.	Judgement + evidence + weighing both sides.
Your opinion	Not asked for.	A tool, not the goal.	The goal — but it must be proven.
Answer shape	Short, exact, fully about the text.	Structured paragraphs: claim, then quotes.	Thesis → evidence → counter-argument → verdict.

Decode any task in three questions

1. What does the text say? (AFB 1)
2. How does it say it, and what does that do? (AFB 2)
3. What do I think — and can I prove it? (AFB 3)
The operative verb tells you which question is being asked. *Describe* stays with question one. *Analyse* answers question two. *Discuss* means both sides, then your position.

The most common mistake at each level

AFB 1 — Opinions instead of content. Find the answer in the text and state it. Commentary earns nothing.
AFB 2 — A bigger description. An analysis has one point; every quote works for it. A list of everything you know is a warehouse.
AFB 3 — Opinion without evidence, or evidence without a position. Commit, prove, admit the other side.

Five-minute task

Take one past paper. Underline the operative verb in three tasks and label each one. Then write only the first two sentences of the AFB 3 answer, starting with *"While …, …"*.

Two openers that signal AFB 3 thinking

"While the speech succeeds at …, it struggles with …"
"X is convincing to the extent that …; however, …"
If your first sentence already contains both sides, you are writing at the right level.

Match effort to the level

The level tells you the shape of the answer before you write. Ten lines is generous for AFB 1 and thin for AFB 3. Match effort to the level, not to how much you know.

Language notes for German speakers

Discuss in an English exam ≠ everyday German *diskutieren*. It means weigh both sides, then reach a position. One-sided answers lose marks.
Analyse ≠ *describe*. To analyse is to break something open and show how its parts create the effect.
But joins two ideas in one sentence; **however** starts a new one. Never both together.

The levels come from the official German education standards (KMK Bildungsstandards) and shape every Abitur and MSA task.