A Day in the Life of ...

Olga Šatravina-Cap

Participating Students
Sanna Bibow
Arian Blatt
Julius Erdmann
Johann Philipp Kändler
Vivian Pauline Köpcke
Dennis Kühner
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weitere Mitwirkende: Sanna Bibow, Arian Blatt, Julius Erdmann, Johann Philipp Kändler, Vivian Pauline Köpcke, Dennis Kühner, Alma Romanus, Leonie Schütt, Hannah Tetzlaff, Carlina Thormann, Bjarne Wiesenberg, Waya Janik Zeise, Jaqueline Geier

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1 Introduction

The current book is the final product of a cooperation between two schools – the Free School of Güstrow in Germany (FSG) and Jelgava Secondary School #5 in Latvia – within an Erasmus+ programme. The cooperation was aimed at discussing and describing the values of young people in Germany and Latvia, based on historical, political, and cultural background. During the project the students researched, analysed and interpreted certain historical, cultural, and social concepts of their own country as well as those ones of their peers' country, which also helped them to develop their intercultural competence. Thus, the current book represents twelve texts written by the students of FSG under the supervision of their teacher. The texts are followed by various tasks of different types intended for learning or revising the knowledge of the English language as well as general knowledge about Germany, including such aspects as politics, economy, free time and others. The book can be used as a textbook for school students, aged 15–17, learning English as a foreign language.

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2 Geography and Sights

Major Facts

Germany is the 4^{th} largest country in Europe, located in Central and Western Europe. It borders with France, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Germany also shares maritime borders with Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The maritime border between Germany and the UK lies in the North Sea, while the Swedish-German maritime border is in the Baltic Sea. Germany has a population of 82.79 million people and is 357,578 km^2. The capital, which is a city and a federal state at the same time, is Berlin. Since 1990, the whole country has been split into 16 federal states.



Figure 2.1: Map of the Bundesländer.

Superlatives

The highest geographical point in Germany is the mountain Zugspitze. It is 2,962 m high and is located in the south of Bavaria. The Austria-Germany border runs over the summit in the west. The longest river in Germany is the Rhine with a length of 1,230 km. It is also one of the major rivers in Europe. The river has its sources in Switzerland, flows through Germany and the Netherlands and empties into the North Sea. Lake Constance is the largest lake in Germany. It has an area of 536 km^2 and it is located at the point where Germany, Switzerland and Austria meet.

Weather and climate

The climate in Germany is mostly affected by Germany's location on the west side of the continent in the area of the west wind zone. Winds come in from the Atlantic and bring with them moist and, due to the warm Gulf Stream, mild sea air. As a result, the temperatures in Germany, especially in winter, are higher than you would think because of the northern location. There is only a slight temperature difference between summer and winter in northwestern Germany. In the southeast, on the other hand, there is a clearer continental influence, with warmer summers and colder winters.

Most Famous Sights

Plenary Area Reichstag Building, Berlin The historic Reichstag building with its retrofitted dome is the most popular attraction not only in Berlin, but throughout Germany. The Reichstag building on the Platz der Republik in Berlin has been the seat of the German Bundestag since 1999. Visitors recommend taking a guided tour of the building because they learn many interesting things about the history. With over three million visitors each year, it is the most visited parliament building in the world.

Brandenburg Gate, Berlin The Brandenburg Gate on the Pariser Platz is the most important landmark in Germany and is a national symbol with which many important historical events of the 19^{th} and 20^{th} centuries are connected. For example, it was the gateway between West and East Berlin from 1961 to 1989.

Holocaust Memorial, Berlin The memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe is the Holocaust Memorial, which is located very close

to the Brandenburg Gate. It consists of 2,711 rectangular concrete steles that are reminiscent of tombstones. Below these steles there is a museum.

Berlin Wall Memorial The Berlin Wall Memorial on Bernauer Strasse commemorates the division of Berlin by the Wall and the people who died there. The accompanying exhibition offers a lot of information and photos from the time when the wall was standing. In particular, the stories of individual people allow visitors to experience firsthand how the wall was perceived.

Cologne Cathedral The Cologne Cathedral is officially called Sankt Petrus. The cathedral is 157.38 m high and it is one of the most popular and most visited sights in Germany. It is also one of the largest Gothic style cathedrals. Construction started in 1248 and was not completed until 1880.

Neuschwanstein Castle, Hohenschwangau For many people, Neuschwanstein Castle in Bavaria is the most beautiful attraction in Germany. It was built in the 19^{th} century for the Bavarian King Ludwig II. Even though many people complain about the crowds of visitors, in the end, the enthusiasm at the sight of the fairy tale castle is always bigger.

Schwerin Castle One of the most famous castles in Germany is in Schwerin. It is located on an island in the city center and today it is the seat of the state parliament of Mecklenburg. For many centuries, it was the residence of the Mecklenburg dukes and grand dukes.

Güstrow Cathedral The cathedral was built in the 12^{th} and 13^{th} centuries and it is the symbol of Güstrow. The interior of the cathedral is significant. Works of art from the 15^{th} and 16^{th} centuries as well as a sculpture called "Der Schwebende" by Ernst Barlach are available here.

Tasks

Task 1: Matching

Match the pictures and the names of the sights. Write the numbers of the names next to the correct picture.

1. Schwerin Castle
2. Holocaust Memorial
3. Güstrow Cathedral
4. Reichstag Building
5. Berlin Wall Memorial
6. Brandenburg Gate
7. Cologne Cathedral
8. Neuschwanstein Castle



Figure 2.2: _____



Figure 2.3: _____



Figure 2.4: _____



Figure 2.5: _____



Figure 2.6: _____



Figure 2.7: _____



Figure 2.8: _____



Figure 2.9: _____

Task 2: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. The capital of Germany is a city and a federal state.
2. Germany has three maritime borders.
3. Lake Constance has borders in Germany, Austria and Poland.
4. In the south east, the temperature difference between summer and winter is high.
5. Paris is bigger than Berlin.
6. The Brandenburg gate is located in Brandenburg.

Task 3: Argumentative Writing

Would you like to live in Germany?

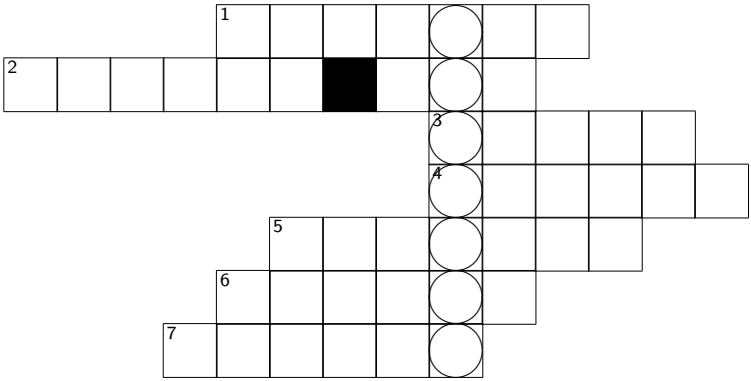
Discuss the question in a written text of at least 200 words. Consider the following points: pros and cons regarding living in Germany; where you would like to live and why.

Task 4: Mind Map

Work in groups. Create a mind map about the three cities and federal states of Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg.

Task 5: Crossword

Read the questions below and write the right answers in the crossword puzzle. The word we are looking for will then be found in the ovals.



Across 1 City of a popular cathedral in the Gothic style. 2 Swedish-German maritime border. 3 One of the major rivers in Europe. 4 What is under the Holocaust memorial? 5 Federal state where the Zugspitze is located. 6 One of the countries Germany borders with. 7 Federal state in Eastern Germany.

3 History

The first consolidation of the German countries was called the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which existed until 1815. The largest territory of the Empire after 962 was called the Kingdom of Germany, which also included the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Kingdom of Italy and the Kingdom of Burgundy. After the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation was officially dissolved in 1806.

In 1870, after the Franco-Prussian War, the North-German confederation became the German Empire, sometimes also referred to as Imperial Germany, and the Treaty of Frankfurt was signed in 1871. In this treaty the new frontiers between the French Third Republic and the German Empire were defined and the Alsace-Lorraine region became part of the Empire. Germany then became a constitutional monarchy. The first monarch was Wilhelm I of Prussia, who was recognised and accepted in the treaty.

In 1914, the First World War started because of numerous political, territorial and economic conflicts between Germany and Austria-Hungary on the one hand, and Russia, France, Great Britain and the USA on the other. The coalition, called the Triple Entente and consisting of Britain, France and Russia, fought against the Triple Alliance, consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. After the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne, Franz Ferdinand, on June 28th, 1914, Austria and Russia mobilized their armies. On August 1st, Germany declared war on Russia and a few days later – on France. In the years that followed a 700 km trench warfare, extending from the Belgian coast to the borders of Switzerland, weakened all the war participants. The USA initially remained neutral, but nevertheless it supplied war material to the Allies, but then entered the war in April, 1917, and riots in the German army took place.

The war ended with an armistice on November 11th, 1918. Then a number of treaties followed, the most well-known of which was the German peace treaty, the so-called Treaty of Versailles, signed on June 28th, 1919. According to this Treaty, Germany was obliged to make high reparations to the Allied powers, because it was pronounced responsible for the losses and damages caused by the war. Also, Germany lost its colonies, a lot of coal mining areas and many people who could have helped build up the destroyed Germany, all together comprising 65,000 km and 7 million people. As a result of the war, the Austro-Hungarian, German, Ottoman, and Russian Empires ceased to exist.

After the war, many Germans felt this was unfair, and these feelings led to the German Revolution – a civil conflict, having led to the replacement of the German federal constitutional monarchy with a democratic parliamentary republic, known as the Weimar Republic. From 1918, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) played a significant role in the political system of Weimar Republic.

In 1939, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party took over the German government. The people of Germany of that time were still hurt by the defeat in the First World War. The Second World War started as a result of the German Republic's attack on Poland.

Germany, Italy and Japan led Wars of Conquest against their neighboring countries. Their enemies were France, Great Britain and the Republic of China. The USA entered the war at the end of 1941 after an air attack on Pearl Harbour by the Japanese. After the Allied forces landed in Normandy and Sicily, Germans had to fight on 3 fronts at the same time. On May 9^{th}, 1945, Grand Admiral Dönitz signed the German Instrument of Surrender after Hitler's suicide. After the document was signed, Nazi Germany ceased to exist and the Second World War ended. In total, about 60 million deaths were recorded in the Second World War.

After the end of World War II, Germany was split into two blocs, one in the west and one in the east, namely, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). France, Great Britain and the USA formed the western zone, which was a parliamentary democracy with a capitalist economic system. The USSR had the eastern occupation zone, which was a Marxist-Leninist social republic. After some time it turned out that the western forces – France, Great Britain and the USA, had completely different ideas regarding the economy. Berlin, as the capital of Germany, was also split in four parts, even though it was actually located in the occupation zone of the USSR. In 1989, the wall that split Germany in two parts was suddenly opened. This happened by accident, after the German government in the east published an announcement that the border was then open. From that time on, Germany has been reunited.

Task 1: Timeline

Choose a time period of German history and create its timeline.

Task 2: Discussion

Discuss in pairs whether the splitting of Germany into several parts would, in your eyes, help leading a country and preventing it from falling back to past behaviors.

Task 3: Research

Write down one remarkable event in German history and inform your classmates about its background. You can choose from the text or from any other source of information:

1. The assassination of Franz Ferdinand leading to the First World War.
2. The peace treaty of Versailles signed on June 28^{th} that gave many restrictions to Germany, such as losing their colonies.
3. Adolf Hitler taking over the government in 1939, which, in further actions, led to the Second World War.
4. In 1989, the opening of the wall that used to split Germany, from where on Germany was reunited.

Task 4: Debate

Prepare a debate on the topic *Can world peace be achieved?* Form two groups – one collecting arguments for and the other against. Present your arguments in class.

4 Education

Education System

The education system in Germany has five levels. The first level starts with kindergarten, followed by the primary level (covering the first four years of school in elementary school (or already in special education school). In some states there is also a six-year elementary school or an orientation level which is independent of the type of school in the 5^{th} and 6^{th} grades and which is already at lower secondary level.

The so-called secondary level II, or lower secondary level, leads to the secondary school qualification or a transfer to the upper secondary school level. There is also a secondary level III, which starts after the lower secondary level as an upper secondary level at school or vocational school. The tertiary level starts after completing secondary education and can be acquired at universities, vocational academies, technical academies, or after corresponding vocational training and several years of professional experience at technical schools.

Schooling is compulsory in Germany, so every child must go to school for at least 9 years. Before a child begins school, they go to either state (free) or private (paid) kindergarten or day care. Most children are enrolled in their first school between the ages of 6-7. Depending on which school they are at, schoolchildren continue up to the 10^{th} grade. With the lower secondary school-leaving qualification you can start an apprenticeship or take a technical school-leaving certifi-

cate. However, there can be an additional way to do the Abitur – a qualification, necessary to start higher education.

There are the following types of secondary schools in Germany, namely, the Gymnasium (a secondary school for which you need a recommendation from the elementary school that leads to university entrance qualification), the Realschule (an educational offer leading to a vocational or university qualification), the Hauptschule (school providing basic general education leading to a vocational or university qualification, generally from grades 5 to 9, sometimes to grade 10), the Gesamtschule (school, combining Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium), private schools (fee-based schools, following alternative pedagogical concepts, for example Waldorf or Montessori schools as well as Protestant or Catholic schools), and support or special education schools (schools for children with special needs).

Various degrees can be acquired after finishing school, such as general education school leaving certificate after grade 9, general education school leaving certificate after grade 10, secondary school leaving certificate after 12 or 13 years of schooling and after passing the school-leaving exam. There is also a vocational qualification plan (divided into school lessons as well as practical training or internship) or university entrance qualifications (provides advanced general education as well as job-related knowledge, skills and abilities that meet the requirements for admission to a university of applied sciences). In addition to the technical colleges, there are also universities. Universities have the right to award doctorates, which serves to maintain and develop science through research, teaching, and studying. Universities are also intended to impart practical professional qualifications to their students.

School uniforms generally do not exist, except for the school regulations on how to dress, but these are different at every school. It can be interesting to know that there are no elite schools in Germany. In Germany schooling is compulsory, however home schooling

is prohibited.

The Güstrow Free School

The Güstrow Free School is an Integrated Comprehensive School. It is state recognized and it comprises primary to secondary school. The aim of our school is to respect and accompany children as independent personalities. It provides meaningful, real-life and lifelong learning with an orientation towards the pedagogy of Maria Montessori. The pedagogical approach has to provide different situations in which young people can learn without fear, make mistakes, or learn in a variety of ways. The school has the titles of "Environmental School" and "School without Racism School with Courage". The punk band Feine Sahne Fischfilet is now supporting our school so that the students and the teachers can continue working on democratic and anti-racist projects.

For the entire school there are regular school hours – lessons start at 8 a.m., but the end of lessons varies, from 12:45 p.m. for the primary school up to 5:15 p.m. for the upper secondary school. Our lessons are 90 minutes, with breaks in between. These breaks are very open, which means pupils could have something to eat from their lunchboxes, have some free time together, sit on the couch in the hall, or just talk to their friends. One important point is our lunchbox. Almost everyone at our school, no matter which class, has a lunchbox with them. The lunchbox is filled with food for the breaks.

The Güstrow Free School has many special features, one of which is having 13 years of schooling. This is similar to some other schools, but between years 10 and 11, we have a 10+ class. This class does not count towards the secondary school, but prepares us for 11^{th} class. The students of the Güstrow Free School start getting marks



Figure 4.1: The Güstrow Free School.

only from class 9. From class 10+ students get points, not marks. The system uses a scale of 0-15 points, according to which 15 points is the best mark, which also equals 1+. At school you can get lower secondary education as well as upper secondary education. If you want to finish upper secondary school, you have to take a school leaving exam after class 12. There are about 14 to 20 students in a class, so there is a balanced learning atmosphere. A great peculiarity is that we address our teachers by their first names, but we treat them like teachers.

Our lessons are very diverse. The concept is that students can learn, work and complete tasks very freely and independently. The school structure and requirements are well-adapted to the students and, if

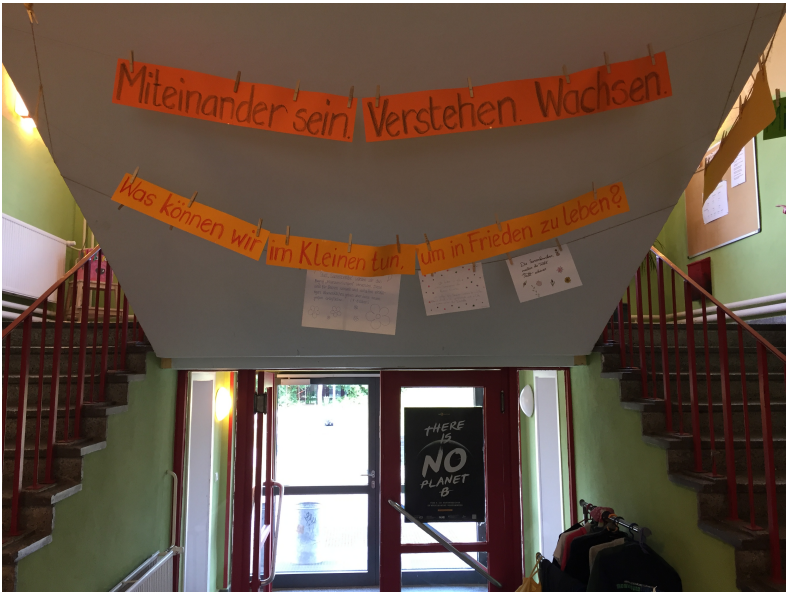


Figure 4.2: Entrance Hall of the Güstrow Free School.

questions arise, they can also ask the teachers. Our subjects change from primary to secondary levels. For example, we have the so-called World Knowledge in the 10^{th} class, which is divided into History and Social Studies in class 10+. It also happens in other subjects. The Güstrow Free School also insists on its compulsory leisure activities that run from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. For the students of classes 5 to 10 it is mandatory to attend one or two afternoon courses per week.

There are also many different projects at school, such as workshops and project weeks on interesting topics. For example, in one of the last big workshops we dealt intensively with the topic "Water". Each topic is integrated into the tasks and we receive a portfolio that we are supposed to complete within two weeks. In addition,

one of our projects is the so-called gold bucket toilet paper. Gold bucket toilet paper is the first social toilet paper in Germany. Every purchase supports the work and construction of toilets worldwide by the supporting organizations Viva con Agua and World Hunger Help. The toilet paper is made of 100% recycled paper.



Figure 4.3: Works of Art Made by Students of the Güstrow Free School.

It is also interesting to know that from year 7 we have two internships per school year, which each lasts one or two weeks. We can choose internship positions ourselves, be it at the vet's, hairdresser's, hotel, carpenter's, or somewhere else. We learn how to write a CV and a job application.

Tasks

Task 1: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. The school system in Germany has five levels.
2. The Güstrow Free School is financed by the band Feine Sahne Fischfilet because it is a "School with Courage School without Racism".
3. At Güstrow Free School classes start at 7 a.m. in the morning.
4. Every child in Germany must go to school for at least 9 years.
5. There are 10 types of schools in Germany.
6. At the Güstrow Free School students get grades from the eighth class.
7. The Güstrow Free School is a complete comprehensive school.
8. The Abitur includes not more than 12 years of school everywhere.
9. There is a difference between state and alternative schools.
10. Children always have to wear a school uniform in Germany.
11. The Güstrow Free School aims at treating its students as individuals with their own personality traits and respect those.
12. The Güstrow Free School is not an environmental school.
13. School attendance is compulsory in Germany.
14. Lessons at the Güstrow Free School last 90 minutes.
15. Children can be taught at home in Germany.

16. At the Güstrow Free School the teachers are addressed by their last names.
17. At the Güstrow Free School it is possible to do internship for future teachers.
18. The Güstrow Free School has no project weeks.

Task 2: Matching

Match the words and their definitions.

(1) Secondary school, education level II	(A) is a type of secondary school, after which students can attend a Gymnasium.
(2) Secondary school, education level III	(B) is a comprehensive school with no selection criteria, based on academic achievements.
(3) Gymnasium	(C) is lower secondary education which is the final phase of basic education.
(4) Gesamtschule	(D) is an official document allowing students to attend a university.
(5) Hauptschule	(E) is aimed at students with special needs.
(6) Realschule	(F) is upper secondary education, which is a necessary phase before tertiary education.
(7) Special education school	(G) is a type of secondary school with the emphasis on academic learning.
(8) A vocational qualification	(H) is an official document allowing people to work as a technician or in various jobs.
(9) A university entrance qualification	(I) is a type of secondary school, which offers secondary school education level II.

Task 3: Research

Compare the German and Latvian education systems. Find similarities and differences and organise them in a table.

Task 4: Discussion

Have a class discussion on the topic *E-learning: a substitute for classroom learning?*

5 Culture

German Language

According to Mark Twain, an American writer, humorist, and publisher, "There is no other language that is so sloppy and systemless and at the same time so slippery and difficult to grasp." ("The Awful German Language" by M. Twain). Is this opinion justified? What makes the German language so extraordinary then?

First of all, there are three grammatical gender forms, namely, masculine, feminine, and neutral. Every noun comes together with an article, corresponding to the gender, which also has to be learnt by heart. The problem is that words are not classified according to a single logical principle. For example, "das Mädchen", which in English means "girl", is of the neutral gender, although it should logically be feminine, should it not? At the same time "die Gabel" ("fork") is of the feminine gender, although it is actually an object, not a living being. Thus, while learning German nouns, one has to learn their gender as well.

The construction of sentences can also seem tricky when learning German, since we always push the second verb of a sentence to the end of it. For example, the sentence "If I've made a mistake, I'll not make it again" can be translated into German as "Wenn ich einen Fehler gemacht habe, werde ich ihn nicht nochmal machen", where the underlined word is "make" and it is the second verb.

On the other hand, the pronunciation of words is very simple, because you say exactly what you see written or printed – all the syllables are pronounced, thus, words do not change.

Dialects in Germany

In Germany there are 20 different dialects, distributed all over the sixteen federal states. From Alemannic, over Bavarian, up to Kölsch – every dialect is like a separate language, which has its own vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Moreover, when people move to a different place, they take their regional identity, including the language, with them, wherever they go. Bavarian and Saxon are only few examples of popular dialects in Germany; each is spoken by more than 10% of all Germans. There are three big language groups in Germany – Low German, Middle Low German and High German.

Low German (Plattdeutsch) evolved from Old Saxon (Old Low German) and nowadays it is spoken mainly in Northern Germany, including Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Altogether there are approximately 2-5 million speakers of Low German in Germany alone. Legally speaking, it is not even a dialect, but a regional language. In the past, the language area of Low German included Hanseatic cities. After the end of the Hanseatic League, Low German started its decline, turning into the language of the home and daily life. However, the Baltic Germans used to speak a distinct Low German dialect and thus, it influenced the vocabulary and phonetics of Estonian and Latvian.

Middle Low German also developed from Old Saxon in the Middle Ages and was considered a developmental stage of Low German. During the Hanseatic period (1300 – 1600) it was used as the leading written language in the north of Central Europe. It was the so-called

lingua franca – a bridge or trade language – of that area.

In addition, we also have the so-called "Hochdeutsch" (High German), which is the German accent-free language that is most commonly widespread and called this way because it is easy for every German to understand. You also learn exactly this version when learning the German language. High German, which is very widely spoken in central and southern Germany, developed from Old High German in 500 AD. With the end of the Hanseatic League, while Low German was the language of home, High German was used as the language of education.

Literature and Philosophy

Germany has been called the country of poets and thinkers (*Das Land der Dichter und Denker*). Scientists claim that German literature can be traced back to the Middle Ages. Walther von der Vogelweide, a lyrical poet, and Wolfram von Eschenbach, a poet and a composer, were among the most significant figures in the field in that time. The *Nibelungenlied* (the Song of the Nibelungs), an epic poem, is considered to be a very important literary work of that time as well. In the 19th century, Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm collected and published a number of fairy tales, which gained worldwide fame. Having translated the Bible in the 16^{th} century, the theologian Martin Luther set the basis for the modern High German language.

There are a number of German authors and philosophers who played an important role in shaping western philosophy, for example, Johann Wolfgang v. Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse and many others. Immanuel Kant is considered to be a notable figure in the history of philosophy. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels developed a communist theory.

Science

Germany is known to be the home of many inventors and engineers. For example, Johannes Gutenberg invented movable type printing in Europe, Hans Geiger was the creator of the Geiger counter and Konrad Zuse built the first computer. Such names as Ferdinand von Zeppelin, Gotlieb Daimler, Nicolaus Otto and Karl Benz are well known in the field of automotive and air transportation fields for their enormous input into technology development in the areas. Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen discovered X-rays. Albert Einstein and Max Planck were at the origins of modern physics.

Music

In the area of music, Germany claims some of the most significant classical composers of the world, including Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven. Also, many Lutheran chorals and hymns were developed in Germany. Other composers of the Austro-German tradition include Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Wilhelm Richard Wagner, Franz Joseph Haydn, Robert Schumann and Johann Strauss II.

Regarding modern music, Germany had an influence on the development of techno and rock music as well as it pioneered trance music. Such artists and music bands as Scorpions, Rammstein, Nena, Tokio Hotel, Modern Talking and Kraftwerk are known all over the world.

Religion

Freedom of expression in Germany also refers to a person's religion. Thus, it is absolutely legal to accept any existing religion if you want. However, Roman Catholic Christians (appr. 24 million members in Germany) and Evangelical Christians (appr. 21 million members) still remain the most widespread religions. These ones are followed by the world's third largest religious group, the Muslims (appr. 4 million members in Germany). Other religions are also represented, but only in very small numbers. But the largest percentage of Germans do not belong to any confession, and public schools are not allowed to hold religious instruction that could influence students in any way.

Tasks

Task 1: Presentation

Prepare a short presentation on one of the German dialects. Focus on its origin and historical development.

Task 2: Debate

Debate *Should religion as subject be taught at school?* Collect arguments for and against, prepare and organise a debate.

Task 3: Poster

Choose one important figure from the field of literature, philosophy or science and make a poster. Include the following points:

- his/her biography;
- his/her discoveries, inventions, literary works, etc. and their importance.

Task 4: Presentation

Prepare a short presentation on your favourite musician/musical band.

6 Festivals, Events and Celebrations

What does a typical German teenager do for fun nowadays? Digital internet platforms such as Instagram, YouTube or Twitter entertain a lot of young people today. However, there are also many other possibilities to be entertained. You can go to celebrations, special events, or festivals.

There are numerous popular events and celebrations in Germany, among which there are the Hanse Sail, the Gamescom, the Stampfestival, the Oktoberfest, and the Rock am Ring Festival. Would you like to know about them a bit more? Then continue reading!

The Hanse Sail The Hanse Sail is one of the biggest gatherings for sailors in the world. About one million people visit the event every year. Up to 200,000 boats take part in it. If you want, you can sail with a crew on one of their boats. On land, you can buy many different things which have something to do with sailing, be it a souvenir, a post card, or a piece of clothing.

The Gamescom Many young people in Germany are busy with electrical appliances, especially computers, mobile phones, or consoles. Thus, many people are entertained with playing games on different devices, therefore Germany hosts one of the biggest computer and video-games fairs in the world. Gamescom is the world's



Figure 6.1: Hanse Sail 2010, Rostock Harbour.

largest trade fair. It takes place annually at the Cologne Trade Fair Centre. Many big companies like NVidia, Nintendo, Xbox, Intel, Electronic Arts, UBISOFT, Microsoft, and Sony present their new games, software, and hardware. In 2017, the fair was opened for the first time by the Federal Chancellor. Around 373,000 visitors attended it in 2019. Of those, 31,300 were trade visitors and a further 5,132 were journalists.

Music, Art and Culture If you like music, you can go to a music festival. There are many really big festivals for various musical genres. For example, if you like rock music, you can go to the Rock am Ring Festival. There you can listen to music by such artists as the punk band Feine Sahne Fischfilet from Mecklenburg Western-Pomerania, for example. For those who are not interested in rock or pop music there are also a lot of other events, suitable for their interests and hobbies. For example, if you like art and you are interested in culture, you can visit the STAMP – Street Arts Melting

Pot – Festival. It is an international festival of culture and art. You can enjoy hiphop, street theatre and urban art there.

Oktoberfest Probably the biggest and most famous folk festival in the world is the Oktoberfest. Practically everyone in Germany, and even around the world, has heard the name before. It is held annually in Munich, the capital of the Bavarian federal state. The origin of the festival can be traced back to the horse racing events in Munich around 1810. The horse racing was organised to celebrate the wedding of Crown Prince Ludwig and Princess Therese of Bavaria. Since that year, the festival has been growing from year to year. Nowadays it attracts several million visitors from all over the world. In addition to the horse race, many new attractions have been added to the festival, such as bowling alleys, swings and climbing trees. Also the consumption of alcohol at the festival has increased. Leather trousers or dirndl dresses (a special folk costume) are often worn at this festival. Today, however, the folk festival is described by many as an annoying mass drunkenness. The festival is critised for no longer having much to do with the original idea and thus, it can no longer be described as a folk festival.

Güstrow Our school, the Free School of Güstrow, is located in Güstrow, so naturally many students live nearby. Therefore, I would like to give a few examples of entertainment possibilities in this area. Like in many other federal states, in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania you can visit fun-fairs, Christmas markets or other small fairs. Several times a year Güstrow organises the so-called shopping days. On these days you can buy various goods at reduced prices in numerous stores. Throughout the year, there are a lot more festivals, for instance, Culture Day, some exhibitions or concerts.



Figure 6.2: Oktoberfest 2012, Munich, Löwenbräu-Festhalle.

Tasks

Task 1: Questions

Answer the following comprehension questions:

1. How many boats take part in the Hanse Sail?
2. How many visitors attended the Gamescom in 2019?
3. What can you do during the Oktoberfest?
4. Why is the Oktoberfest critised currently?

Task 2: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. The Gamescom is the second largest trade fair in the world.
2. The origin of the Oktoberfest is connected with a horse race in Munich.

3. In Germany there is no big selection of free time activities, so a lot of teenagers just stay at home, entertaining themselves with the help of electronic devices.
4. The Hanse Sail is a sailing fair.
5. On the Rock am Ring you can listen to various kinds of classical multicultural music.

Task 3: Discussion

Due to the Corona pandemic, many fairs were cancelled, therefore there was the necessity of the consideration to organise digital fairs. Think about pros and cons of a digital fair and write them down in key points. Discuss in groups.

Task 4: Discussion

You can receive a lot of news via electronic devices, thus you don't have to go to fairs for this purpose. Do you think trade fairs will be more difficult in the future since they might have fewer visitors? What could a trade fair look like in the future? Discuss with your classmates.

Task 5: Essay

You have to be at least 16 years old to be allowed to stay alone during the Oktoberfest festival after 8 p.m. This way, many young people can get alcohol without having an official permission. Is there any way to avoid the problem? Write a short essay on the topic *Alcohol and Teenagers*. Write at least 150 words.

7 Currently Famous People

Idols are very important for our personal development, often they accompany us all our lives. Also they inspire and motivate us and have a great influence on our actions. There are many different areas where especially young people in Germany find a person to look up to; these are often musicians, influencers, actors or authors.

In the area of music, Marteria (Marten Laciny) is well-known. He is a rapper who was born in Rostock (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) on December 4th, 1982. Originally, Marteria's plan was to have a career as a footballer, then he was discovered by a model scout. But after having been in the model business for a while, he finally decided to make music. Marten's stage name goes back to the initial letters of his first name and to "Materia", the Latin word for fabric or matter. He has released about ten albums which deal with the birth of his son and his rebellious existence in his hometown Rostock. Marteria's deep voice and his clear distance from gangster-rap distinguish him. He is also known for his good live performances, for which he has already received several awards.

Relatively new is the area of social media, in which many young people see their idols. Rezo (Yannick Frickenschmidt) is a web video producer, entertainer and columnist. He was born on August 14th, 1992, in Wuppertal. On his two YouTube channels Rezo and Rezo ja lol ey he mainly publishes music and comedy videos. On May 18th, 2019, one week before the European elections, Rezo published a YouTube video directed against political positions, in particular, the Union Party and the Social Democratic Party of Germany. The



Figure 7.1: Marteria performing in 2011.

video was titled *The destruction of the CDU* and was viewed more than 18 million times; it triggered a broad social debate. On May 24th, 2019, he published a follow-up video in which more than 90 YouTubers supported his statements in the first video.

Through social media we can get information easily and quickly and get in contact with people from all over the world. Nevertheless, platforms like Instagram could also quickly have a negative impact on young people. Since the so-called influencers usually only reveal the most beautiful moments of their lives, one tends to put oneself under pressure or to follow the beauty ideal. So you always have to remember that the published contributions are far from reality.

Apart from social media stars, there are also celebrities in other areas, for example, Cornelia Funke, who is an author of books for children and young adults. She was born on December 10th, 1958, in North Rhine-Westphalia. Cornelia's novels are internationally successful and have been translated into 37 languages with a total



Figure 7.2: YouTuber Rezo (2018).

circulation of 20 million books. Her stories have influenced many people and accompanied them in their childhood. Many of her works have also been filmed. Those films have become very popular as well.

Matthias Schweighöfer is very well known in the field of acting. He was born on March 11th, 1981, in Anklam (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania). Matthias is an actor, dubbing artist, director, producer and singer. He is one of the founders of the film production company Pantaleon Films. Through his family he gained early experience on stage and pursued this more and more. Today he is one of the most famous actors in Germany.



Figure 7.3: Matthias Schweighöfer (2008).

Tasks

Task 1: Matching

Match the numbers below to the letters. There might be several correct answers.

(1) Marteria
(2) Rezo
(3) Cornelia Funke
(4) Matthias Schweighöfer

(A) was born in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.
(B) created a social debate.
(C) was born in winter.
(D) has an artist name.

Task 2: Grammar

Fill in the table with the correct part of speech.

Verb	Noun	Adjective
motivate		
	influencer	
	actor	
decide		
		initial
discover		
release		
		known
	producer	
	entertainer	
		born
publish		
		political
	information	
		beautiful
		successful
	singer	

Task 3: Discussion

What do you think is more important? Discuss in pairs.

1. Happiness or success?
2. Family or career?
3. Money or independence?
4. Individuality or mainstream?

Task 4: Discussion

Do you have an idol? Why/why not? Discuss in pairs. Consider the following points:

- who is/could be your idol,
- why – discuss the reason(s),
- describe his/her personality,
- what makes/could make him/her special and important to you.

8 Free Time

Pre-reading task: What do you like doing in your free time? Do you have a hobby?

There are many free time activities for young people in Germany in the 21st century. Most of them are chosen according to individual interests. The most important types include sports, music and art. Media consumption, which comprises social networks and the consumption of films and video games, is also part of teenage life. Apart from that, many German teenagers meet friends, go to the city center or watch a film in the cinema. Some teenagers do their homework, have a particular hobby or even a part-time job, which means they also go to work.

Statistics and Costs

t-online.de reports[1] that 829 teenagers were interviewed about their free time activities in 2013. Even though many adults think that young people mostly watch TV or spend time in front of their computers, it does not really correspond to reality. In Table 8.1 you can see which free time activities are the most popular in Germany. One of the most popular is listening to music, for example. But young people not only like listening to music, they also make music them-

[1] https://www.t-online.de/leben/familie/erziehung/id_62877160/das-machen-teenies-in-ihrer-freizeit-am-liebsten.html

Listening to music	77.4%
Meeting friends	76.9%
Surfing the internet	63.0%
Sports	44.8%
Chilling and TV	44.4%
Reading books	38.8%
Hobby	31.4%
Playing video and computer games	27.4%
Making music	20.2%

Table 8.1: Percentage of Young People Engaging into Free Time Activities.

selves! The most popular types of music in Germany are hiphop and rap. Also, many teenagers do sport in a sports club or they work out in the gym.

The most popular sport in Germany is football. Art is also a popular hobby, with drawing pictures and mangas, painting graffiti, crafting and doing things with one's own hands, for example, sewing, doing pottery and knitting.

Some teenagers do not have so much time for their hobbies because of school, which can be quite exhausting. If they have a hobby as well, they might not have many chances to spend enough time with their family and friends or just to relax, which could be an important reason for not continuing the hobby.

Whether a hobby costs any money depends on the way you want to learn it. There are two options – either you learn a hobby with professional help or you learn it by yourself. If you learn a hobby by yourself, without any professional guidance, you don't have to pay any money, apart from the materials and equipment you need for your hobby. If you would like to have some professional guidance, then you must pay for it. It means if you want to learn to play a musical instrument, for example, then you must pay for the lessons.

If you want to learn some sport, you have to pay for coaching, and if you would like to learn some crafts or art, then you must pay your teacher as well.

Free time opportunities in Güstrow



Figure 8.1: Uwe Johnson Library in Güstrow.

In Güstrow there are a number of entertainment possibilities for teenagers and young people. For example, there is a cinema, a bowling center, a swimming hall and a youth club. A youth club is an opportunity to meet other teenagers, establish contacts and become friends with them. In the youth club young people can play games, do sports together and have fun. There is also a wildlife park where

you can see animals native to Germany, for example, lynxes, wolves, owls and brown bears.



Figure 8.2: Students Enjoying Their Free Time.

There are also other parks, for example, Rose Park, Castle Garden and the park near the library. The library itself is in the middle of the town. In the town center, you can also go shopping and buy everything – clothes, food, toys, or electronic equipment. In Güstrow there is an art school, where you can try out different artistic activities, for example, how to sew, to draw and, in general, to improve your art skills. At the music school you can learn and practise musical skills, such as singing or playing different musical instruments.

If the weather is great, you can go skateboarding on the skating track or go swimming in the lake called Inselsee. Near the lake you

can find a restaurant with nice food, where you can also celebrate your birthday or just have a party. On the other shore of the lake there is a sailing club, where you can learn sailing and participate in competitions. Finally, one can say that most teenagers spend their free time relaxing at home or in the town, because Güstrow is a place with many attractions and opportunities to do something interesting.

Tasks

Task 1: Statistics

Find Table 8.1 in the text. Write a text of 80-100 words, analysing the statistics given in the table.

Task 2: Game

You are going to play a game of taboo where you have to guess the names of free time activities from other students' descriptions. Divide yourselves into two teams. A player from Team A comes to the front and is given a taboo card, prepared by the teacher. The player has to describe the activity to his/her team. He/she is not allowed to say the word on the card or any of its variations. He/she is not allowed to mime. If Team A guesses the free time activity correctly, they score a point. If not, Team B has a chance to guess the word and steal the point. You can define the time limit of one minute for each player, for example. Then a player from Team B comes to the front. Teams continue to play until all the cards have been used. The team with most points wins.

9 Sports

First Sports Clubs

The first German sports club was founded in Friedland (Western Pomerania) in 1814. It was a gymnastics club that offered a lot of sports, such as football, volleyball or handball. Today this club has about 1,000 members. The club also hosts a number of tournaments every year. The club has never won any medals at the Olympic Games because it is too small. Another famous club, founded in 1962, is a club named SCN, which means "Sports Club Neubrandenburg". It is known for numerous Olympic wins and for the famous sportspeople who are members.

National Sport

Football is considered to be the German national sport. The football club which has the most members, namely 293,000, is "Bayern München e.V.". It is also the most admired sports club in Germany. In Western Pomerania the most famous football club is "Sportclub Hansa Rostock e.V.", or just "Hansa" for short. "Hansa" has one of the biggest stadiums in Germany, although they play only in the third division. Also we have "Bayer 04 Leverkusen", the club which was founded in 1904. Its owner is the group "Bayer". The club plays in the first division of Germany and is on the fourth place now, which means it also qualifies for international play in the Champions League.

There are annual regular division games and also the "DFB-Pokal" (German Cup). This "DFB-Pokal" is a trophy that any German club can win, because all German clubs are allowed to play in this football competition, independent of the league they belong to. For competitions outside of Germany, the German national team is often considered to be one of the favorites, regardless of the format, be it the UEFA European Football Championship or the FIFA World Cup. The German national team has won the FIFA World Cup four times total (1954, 1974, 1990 and 2014) and is one of the best teams worldwide. Joachim "Jogi" Löw has been the team manager since 2006. Our national team includes a number of football legends, such as Berti Vogts, Uwe Seeler, Lothar Matthäus, and Rudi Völler.

Another famous sport is handball. The goal of this game is to throw more goals than the other team. A game lasts 60 minutes, each team has 7 players on the court. A lot of my schoolmates play handball in their free time and it is often a lot of fun. Our most famous club, "Füchse Berlin" – which in English means the "Berlin Foxes", is based in our capital city of Berlin. The most known legends of this club are Potr Stochel and Petar Nenadic.

Volleyball is a very popular sport in Germany as well, and there is a huge fan group. Every German schoolchild has to learn certain things about this sport, both practical and theoretical parts. The sport is very popular because of the fun one has when playing with friends on the beach, in the schoolyard or in the school gym. Also Germany has professional clubs which have won the European league several times.

Doping

In the GDR, the former eastern part of Germany, I can say that the state doped the uninformed sportsman. State doping is the reason why the GDR was the best in many categories. Today it is harder to use such substances because of the various doping checks throughout tournaments. In Western Pomerania, where there were a lot of positive checks in the GDR, today there is no very prominent case. But in Germany we have, even today, many such cases. Jan Ullrich (a professional cyclist) or Dieter Baumann (a sprinter) were professionals in their fields, but they were also discovered to be dopers.

Money

Money is a huge topic in the world of sports since the best club (first German football league) gets 42 million Euros annually just for playing. And then they also have TV-commercials and stadium entries. The highest paid sport in Germany is definitely football – an average club pays about 1,5 million Euros to each player. In the world rankings of earners, there are only two German men, Mesut Özil (football) and Sebastian Vettel (Formula One). However, there is no one in the highest ranking from Western Pomerania because it

is one of the poorest German federal states. It means that the clubs do not have much money to keep their members. The athletes who are extremely good often switch clubs and go to foreign countries, such as Great Britain or France.

Random Facts

League record holder	FC Bayern München
Best Sprinter	Julian Reus, 100m in 10.05s
Sports legends	Rudi Völler (football player)
	Jan Ullrich (cyclist)
	Claudia Pechstein (ice-speed skater)
	Uschi Disl (biathlete)
Biggest stadium	Signal Iduna Park (football, BVB)
Olympic medals	578 gold, 590 silver, and 589 bronze medals

Table 9.1: Random Facts on Sports.

Tasks

Task 1: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. Germany's oldest club was founded in 1818.
2. The best sprinter of Germany is Usain Bolt.
3. The biggest football club earns more than 40 million Euros only for playing.
4. The GDR doped their sports people systematically.
5. The club Hansa Rostock has never played in the third division.

Task 2: Questions

Answer the questions below.

1. How many members does our oldest club have today?
2. Name three German sports legends.
3. Name the German national sport.
4. Why do many German players switch their clubs?
5. When did the German national team win the FIFA World Cup?

Task 3: Argumentative Writing

Should the use of performance-enhancing drugs in sport be legalised? Discuss the topic in an essay of minimum 200 words.

Task 4: Poster

Choose a sport. Describe the rules and/or the course of the game (if it is a game). Name the most famous sports people in the area and their achievements. Present you poster in class.

10 Food

Pre-reading task: What is your favourite dish? What is the traditional food of your country?

German dishes

In Germany there are a lot of different foods. The most famous include sauerkraut, potatoes, sausage and currywurst (Bratwurst with curry sauce). But this is only a small part of the German food culture. Depending on the season, there are also different dishes. Germans are meat eaters. In spring, they eat a lot of lamb and rabbit or Flammkuchen (Tarte Flambee – a kind of "French pizza" with sour cream, onions and bacon). Spring is also asparagus time in Germany; asparagus is an example of very typical German food, which is usually served with potatoes and white sauce, and there is also asparagus soup. In summer, many different dishes with potatoes are eaten, such as potato salad or jacket potatoes. Jacket potatoes are mostly eaten with herb curd. Summer is also barbecue season in Germany. That means a lot of meat, but also vegetables are put on the grill, such as onions, carrots, peppers, mushrooms or even eggplant. Many dishes with beans are also consumed in summer. These are usually served with bacon and potatoes. Autumn is the month when most stews are eaten. The best known stews in Germany are bean stew and lentil stew. A lot of cabbage, such as braised cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and cauliflower is also eaten in autumn. Braised

cabbage is usually available with minced meat and potatoes. A lot of game meat is eaten in winter, such as wild boar meat, roe deer or baked duck.



Figure 10.1: Grilling Sausages and Steaks.

Eating Culture and Food Festivals

In Germany, it is common to eat three times a day. In the morning, you mostly have rolls or bread with jam or sausage. Germans also eat boiled eggs. At lunchtime, you usually eat a warm meal such as potatoes with peas and carrots and a piece of meat. In the evening, for dinner, there is alternating hot food like lunch or cold food like bread with sausage or cheese. The dishes which are the most popular with young people include pizza, burgers, pasta, fries or kebabs.

In Germany there are also various festivals that focus on food. These include, for example, the Oktoberfest in Munich, the Rügen Herring Festival, the Lampertheim Asparagus Festival and the Beer Festival in Stuttgart. The Oktoberfest (September 21st – October 6th), the largest folk festival in the world, is probably the best known one of all. At the Oktoberfest, more than 6 million liters of beer are drunk every year and more than 100 oxen, 80 calves, almost half a million chickens, 100,000 sausages and 80,000 pork knuckles are eaten.

A smaller food festival is the Asparagus Festival near Hessen. This festival features live music and artists. And of course a lot of asparagus is eaten there! This festival took place some 50 years ago for the first time.

The second main festival in Germany is the Stuttgart beer festival with 5 million visitors. It takes place at the end of September. For the first time this festival was held in 1818 after a famine. The special thing about this festival is a 24-meter-high fruit column.

In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania there is the Herring Festival on Rügen. This festival marks the start of the fishing season. The festival is held on Rügen, with the so-called "herring mile". There are many stalls, where fish and other food are offered. Herring or any other fish is a very typical food in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Apart from that, there are other dishes such as "Mecklenburger Rippenbraten", "Arme Ritter" or drinks such as grog. "Mecklenburg Rippenbraten" is a roast dish made of pork belly and local fruit. "Armer Ritter" is a dessert which consists of rolls, first soaked in a mixture of milk, eggs and sugar and then fried. A very well-known drink for Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is grog. Grog is a hot drink made from rum, water and sugar.

So, explore Germany's food culture and enjoy!

Tasks

Task 1: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. Currywurst is a typical food in Germany.
2. The largest festival in Germany is the Herring Festival on Rügen.
3. In Germany a raw egg is always eaten for breakfast.
4. On average 100 oxen are eaten at the Oktoberfest.
5. "Der Arme Ritter" is a typical meal in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

Task 2: Questions

Answer the questions with one to five words.

1. How many visitors does the Oktoberfest have?
2. What is the most famous food of Germany?
3. In which month are many stews eaten in Germany?
4. What do German youngsters like to eat?
5. What is the biggest folk festival in Germany and in the world?
6. What kind of folk festival is there in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania?

Task 3: Matching

Join the questions and the answers. There are more answers than you need.

(1) What is the second largest folk festival in Germany?

(2) When is the Oktoberfest?

(3) What time of the day is jam typically eaten?

(4) How long has the Beer Festival been held in Stuttgart?

(5) How much beer is drunk at the Oktoberfest?

(A) The Beer Festival in Stuttgart.

(B) Since 1990.

(C) Breakfast.

(D) 1 million liters.

(E) Since 1818.

(F) 6 million liters.

(G) Lunch.

(H) From September 21st to October 6th.

Task 4: Creative Work

Writing a recipe: Work in groups and think of a creative recipe. Prepare a presentation in a digital format.

Task 5: Creative Work

Making a menu: Work in groups of 3-4. Think of a name for your restaurant which serves typical German dishes. Create a menu for your restaurant, including starters, main courses and desserts. Present your menu to the class. Role-play a restaurant dialogue using the menu with one student being a waiter/waitress and the others being restaurant customers.

11 Politics

Germany is a federal parliamentary republic that is led by a Chancellor. We have 83 million inhabitants and 16 constituent states. In Germany there are three branches of power: the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary.

Legislative branch

Our legislative power is the Bundestag (the parliament of Germany) and the Bundesrat (the representative body of the German federal states). German inhabitants can vote for the members of the Bundestag, and it is the place where different views about our political future are discussed and laws are made. The main task of the Bundestag is making legislation and having control of the governmental work. One of the most significant functions of the Bundestag is electing the Federal Chancellor (Bundeskanzler/in). Since the German federal states are in the federal state system, the Federal Chamber is also involved in the legislative process. In addition to that, all the current 709 deputies of the Bundestag decide about the Federal Budget and the tasks or missions of the Bundeswehr (Federal Defence Forces) in foreign countries.

The Bundesrat represents the sixteen German federal states at the national level. All sixteen federal states have their own state governments, all of them have their own tasks to do, for example, managing the federal state's education policy. The Bundesrat is involved in law making, affecting the federal states.

Executive branch

The main executive body in Germany is the Federal Government or the Federal Cabinet, consisting of the Federal Chancellor and cabinet ministers. The Federal Cabinet makes a so-called law draft, which means it makes proposals for new laws. The Federal Chancellor, who is the head of the government and chief executive of Germany, is there to ensure that the interests of all the individual federal states are taken into account. The Federal Chancellor has to be the leader of the political party with the majority of seats in the Bundestag. The Federal Chancellor *determines the guidelines of politics and bears the responsibility for them* and therefore has the right to make fundamental directional decisions of the federal government. But she or he is not almighty and cannot intervene in the ministries and their decisions. Furthermore, she or he cannot decide everything alone and has to bow to the mutual decision of the Bundestag.

The Federal Chancellor allows the federal states to have an active say in the legislation in Germany. The governments of the federal states send 69 representatives to the Bundesrat. The number of the representatives a federal state can send depends on the number of people living in the federal state. There are two restrictions: first, the number cannot go under three representatives and second, it cannot go over six.

There is another important political figure in Germany – the Federal

President of the Federal Republic of Germany, or the president of Germany for short.

The Federal President has several tasks, the most important of which are:

1. appointing the Federal Government;
2. dissolving the Bundestag;
3. representing the confederation under international law;
4. certifying diplomatic representatives;
5. pardoning at a federal level;
6. drawing up federal laws with his/her signature and announcing in the federal gazette.

Judiciary branch

German judiciary power includes the civil law and the system of courts. The civil law is the primary source of law in Germany, and all people as well as organizations have to obey this. They must behave and function according to this law.

Political parties

In Germany there are many political parties, the main ones are:

(CDU) Christian Democratic Union of Germany, ideology: Christian democracy, liberal conservatism; position: centre-right

(SPD) Social Democratic Party of Germany, ideology: social democracy; position: centre-left

(AfD) Alternative for Germany, ideology: German nationalism, Euroscepticism; position: right-wing

(FDP) Free Democratic Party, ideology: liberalism, classical liberalism; position: centre/centre-right

(Linke) The Left, ideology: democratic socialism, left-wing populism; position: left-wing

(Grüne) Alliance 90/The Greens, ideology: green politics; position: centre left

Task 1: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. Germany is led by a Chancellor.
2. Germany has 17 federal states.
3. The Chancellor isn't the only politically important figure.
4. Citizens can vote for the Bundeskanzler.
5. The Bundeswehr is the main executive body.
6. The judiciary power of Germany includes the Bundestag.

Task 2: Discussion

Have a class discussion on the topic *Ethics in politics – myth or reality?*

Task 3: Questions

Answer the questions below. Write your answers down.

1. What are the most important tasks of the Federal President? Name two.
2. What is the main task of the Bundestag?
3. What are the requirements to become the Bundeskanzler?
4. How many deputies are there?
5. Which power does the Bundeskanzler not have?
6. Name and briefly describe the legislative power in Germany.

Task 4: Matching

Match the two sides:

(1) 83 million	(A) leader of Germany
(2) 16	(B) deputies of the Bundestag
(3) 709	(C) number of inhabitants
(4) 69	(D) representative body of the federal states
(5) 3.6	(E) federal states
(6) civil law	(F) representatives sent to the Bundestag
(7) executive	(G) judiciary power
(8) Bundeskanzler	(H) lowest and highest number of representatives sent
(9) Bundesrat	(I) one of the three biggest powers

12 Economy

General facts

Germany has a population of more than 83 million people, of which 4.9% are unemployed. The gross domestic product amounts to more than 3.263 billion Euros. Germany earns 1.203 billion Euros from exports, and it mainly exports motor vehicles and their spare parts, machinery, and chemical products to other countries. Our main export partners are the USA, France, and Great Britain. The Netherlands and China are also among them. Germany also spends 954.9 billion Euros on imports. The main import products are motor vehicles and related spare parts, data processing equipment and chemical products. The import partners are the USA, France, Netherlands, China and Italy. Germany has the largest economy in Europe and ranks 5$^{\text{th}}$ on the Economic Forum's competitiveness index. It is also the largest economy in Europe and the fourth largest economy in the world. Germany's industry mainly relates to automobiles, commercial vehicles, electronics, mechanical engineering and the chemical industry. Germany is the country that introduced the Euro on January 1$^{\text{st}}$, 1999.

Energy sources

Germany is very rich in raw materials. The most important raw materials are coal deposits, potash salt, building materials, and stone and earth. Nevertheless, we are dependent on imported raw ma-

terials. Hard coal is mainly used in the steel industry today. Not so long ago, coal was the most widely used material in energy production. However, now the most commonly used energy source is oil. Other sources are also used to generate energy, such as natural gas, renewable energy forms, and nuclear power. The production of energy from coal has fallen considerably since 2005. On the other hand, the use of renewable energies is increasing considerably.

Germany is rich in raw materials but poor in energy resources such as oil, gas and hard coal. Renewable energies are therefore one of the most important sources of electricity in Germany and their expansion is a central pillar of the energy turnaround. Germany's energy supply should become more climate-compatible and at the same time become less dependent on imports of fossil fuels. The electricity supply in Germany is becoming "greener" year after year. The share of renewable energies in electricity consumption is growing steadily: from around 6% in 2000 to around 38% in 2018. This means that the target of 35% for 2020 was already exceeded ahead of schedule. Renewable energies also play an increasingly important role in the supply of heat. Currently, the share of renewable energies in final energy consumption for heating and cooling is 13.9%. The target by 2020 was 14%.

Income and wealth

Germany has an unjust distribution of income and wealth. Income inequality has increased since the mid-1990s. Since 2000, not only income inequality but also poverty has been increasing. As already mentioned, 4.9% of Germans are unemployed. There is of course a lot of help for the people who have no work, such as Hartz IV (colloquial term for unemployment benefit, a type of welfare) and other social programs, but it is not only the unemployed who are affected by income inequality. Small businesses and freelancers also

feel the effects. You have to make sure that you have enough sales per month. Freelancers receive little or no help from the state. This means that if you have had one bad month, it is not a problem, but if you do not make enough sales, you can no longer keep the business open and will go bankrupt. The same is true for farmers and agricultural workers. But unlike freelancers, farmers are supported by the state. In addition, a whole 16.7 million hectares of Germany's land are used for agriculture. That's more than half of the total land surface.

Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is rather weaker on the ranking list, measured by the gross domestic product (GDP). It is on the 15^{th} of the 16 places and it looks like Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania can sink even lower, as the other states have a better development. Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania also ranks second the worst with its unemployment rate of 10.3%. In 2012, the annual income per capita was 17,036.00 Euros. This was the lowest average compared to the other federal states. Berlin is usually on the first place in the ranking among the federal states.

Tasks

Task 1: True/False

Read the statements below and mark them as True (T) or False (F).

1. The Euro was introduced in 1999.
2. Hard coal is used in the car industry.

3. Unemployed people get help form the state.
4. In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the income per capita was 17,036.00 Euro in 2012.

Task 2: Matching

Match the two halves of a sentence.

(1) The export partners of Germany	(A) mostly on the 15th place of ranking.
(2) The production of energy from	(B) or no help from the state.
(3) Freelancers get little	(C) are the USA, France, GB, Netherlands, and China.
(4) Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is	(D) coal has fallen considerably since 2005.

Task 3: Questions

Answer the questions below. Write your answers down.

1. How much does Germany spend on the imports?
2. Which raw materials does Germany lack?
3. Which energy can make Germany "greener"?
4. What is Hartz IV?

Task 4: Vocabulary

Find the synonyms from the text for the following words.

1. jobless
2. apparatus, machinery
3. organic matter, resources

4. development
5. sustainable
6. atomic energy
7. enlargement/increase
8. amount
9. suitable for climate
10. usage
11. earnings
12. self-employed person
13. insolvent, broke
14. every year
15. per head

Task 5: Discussion

Discuss the following questions in small groups.

1. Which of these things affect you directly or indirectly?
    - inflation
    - petrol prices
    - economic growth
    - company profits
    - budget deficit
2. Which economy will be the most important in ten years?
3. What kind of things could cause the German economy serious trouble?

13 Stereotypes about Latvia

Before You Read Work in small groups. Define the word "stereotype". Which stereotypes do you know? What are they based on? How can you categorise them? Create a mind map.



Figure 13.1: Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Jelgava.

Latvian Personality People in Latvia, like people all over the world, are different in their personality. The impression I got in Latvia is

that the people there are very friendly and like offering hospitality. I also have the impression that young people follow rules and don't use bad words. In my survey (see below), people also said they found Latvian people very shy and calm, in contrast to many Germans. In addition, many people think that in Latvia everyone speaks Russian. Latvians also love their capital city of Riga and describe it as "Paris of the North". As to their appearance, Latvians are tall and slim; they are often blue-eyed and have blond hair. With regard to money, people in Latvia are very economical; they pay attention to their expenses and don't trust business people.

Lifestyle of Latvians According to a survey in Germany, people said that Latvians live like in the Stone Age. The technology isn't that good in Latvia, and a few people still think that in Latvia there is no service and no infrastructure. Regarding the way people live in Latvia and what they do all day long, some Germans thought that Latvians drink vodka and tea. And people work there just to survive. People there always lock their door when they go out.

Clothes in Latvia Clothes play an important role in Latvia, especially folk dress. People still think Latvian people wear the same folkloric clothes from the 7^{th} century. Back then, clothes were often a sign of belonging to a particular ethnic or ethnographic group. The most common colours of Latvian dress were the natural white and grey of linen and wool. Most Latvian clothes were naturally grey, while for decoration people used an old traditional four-colour scheme of blue, red, yellow, and green. Nowadays people think that Latvians still use a lot of ornaments in their clothes.

Latvian Food If people think about Latvian food, the first thing that comes to mind is that Latvians eat the way Russian people do. When I did the survey, people first thought of Latvians just



Figure 13.2: A Street in Riga.

drinking tea and vodka in the morning and in the afternoon. In addition, people in Latvia are fish eaters. Also, Latvians eat a lot of rice and beans.

Weather The first thing people think about the weather in Latvia is that it always rains and the sun never shines there. In addition, summer lasts just for a short time while winter is very long and it is very cold there.

Survey Questions The respondents – the students of the Güstrow Free School, aged 16-18, and some of their parents

1. What is your first association with Latvia and Latvians?

2. What do you think people traditionally eat in Latvia?
3. How do you think Latvian behavior differs from that of Germans?
4. How do you think life in Latvia is different in comparison to Germany?
5. What do you think Latvians drink mostly?
6. Can you imagine how different clothes in Latvia are, in comparison to Germany?
7. What do you think the weather is like in Latvia?

Tasks

Task 1: Quiz

Stereotypes about Latvia: Read the statements to your speaking partner and let him/her agree or disagree.

1. Latvians drink a lot of vodka.

   False: Based on WHO (World Health Organization) Data the country is a leader in episodical drinking, which means 60 and more grams of pure alcohol on at least one single occasion at least once a month. However, people see Russians – and it is almost 40% of the Latvian population! – as the most drinking nation, while the maximum of total alcohol consumption per capita in 2016 was reached in France, Ireland, Germany, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Nigeria.

2. Latvians drink a lot of tea.

True: On average, a person drinks three cups of tea a day, while approximately 10% of the population drink over six cups of tea daily.

3. It is dangerous in Latvia because of mafia everywhere.

   False: Not because of mafia of course, but it is partly true, as the safety rate connects to an average income of citizens which is actually not high. But the homicide rate isn't that high in Latvia.

4. Latvians are bad drivers.

   Partly true: YouTube videos confirm it. Most people agree with this stereotype. Drivers have lack of driving culture, they could be rude and impatient, which causes many accidents.

5. Latvian women have a model look.

   True: Latvia "produces" more female models per capita that almost any country in the world. Only Estonia, Iceland, Lithuania and Denmark rank higher.

6. Latvians love potatoes.

   False: They love sorrel soup. Other popular dishes include *rupjmaize*, a type of rye bread, and *pīrādziņi*, a sort of bun filled with bacon and onion.

7. Latvians love beer.

   True: Riga even has a Beer Spa, where you can *immerse yourself in a warm beer bath... while simultaneously quenching thirst with a glass of cool beer... which will open not only pores, but also will give a totally new outlook on life* (from: `http://www.beerspa.lv/EN/index-en.html`)

All stereotypes can be true or false. It depends on the people you

meet and where you stay in Latvia. The best thing to do is to break stereotypes!

Task 2: Argumentative Writing

Discuss one of the statements below in an argumentative essay of approximately 200 words.

1. Stereotypes lead to unfair judgements about individuals and groups.
2. Categorising is a natural human inclination.

Task 3: Presentation

Prepare a presentation on the topic *Stereotypes in the Media*.

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