



GRADE 7 TO GRADE 12  
GERMAN LANGUAGE AND  
CULTURE

Introduction



# INTRODUCTION

## German Language in the World

German is one of the top ten languages spoken in the world. Approximately 95-100 million people speak German as their first language. German is the official language of Germany, where it is spoken by approximately 75 million people; Austria, where it is spoken by approximately 7.5 million speakers; and the Principality of Liechtenstein. It is one of the four official languages of Switzerland, and one of the three official languages of Luxembourg and Belgium. In addition, it is an important minority or regional language in many countries in Europe, such as Italy (where it has official recognition), France, Denmark, the Baltic republics, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine. It is also an important regional or minority language outside of Europe. It is spoken in Namibia, which is a former German colony in Africa, and in the Americas. In the U.S., the Amish and some Mennonites speak a dialect of German. *Ethnologue* estimates that there are 28 million second-language speakers of German worldwide. It is one of the twenty official languages of the European Union.

German was once the lingua franca of central, eastern, and northern Europe. Today, it is the second most studied language in Europe and Asia. In the United States, German is the third most commonly taught language in schools and universities. The popularity of German is supported by the wide availability of German television in Europe.

## History of German Immigration to Manitoba

Immigrants from Germany or of German-speaking origin have played an important part in shaping our nation and province. The first historical record of settlers of German-speaking origin was made in 1816-17 when Lord Selkirk dispatched some 100 German-speaking Swiss mercenaries of the de Meuron and the de Watteville regiments to help protect and populate the Red River Settlement. Thousands more new immigrants followed and homesteaded on the Prairies in the late 1800s, and many of them were of German origin. These settlers often came not from Germany itself, but from Russia, the Austro-Hungarian empires, and the Balkan countries, where German colonies had been established in the eighteenth century.

Mennonite immigrants, primarily from the Palatinate (Germany) and from Russia (including the region that is now Ukraine), have been an important part of the German-speaking community in Manitoba since 1874. By 1890, census information indicated that 12,000 Mennonites lived in southern Manitoba along with 6,000 Germans, of whom 1,600 lived in or around Winnipeg.

Today German-speaking immigrants continue to be an important component of new arrivals to Manitoba. Since 2002, Germany has been the second most important source country for new immigrants coming to Manitoba. In 2006, 1,620 immigrants or approximately 16% of immigrants arriving in Manitoba were from Germany, maintaining its status as the second top source country for immigrants to Manitoba.

## German Ethnicity and the German Language in Canada

People of German-speaking origin continue to play a significant role in contributing to the diversity that is a characteristic of Canadian and Manitoban society. In the 2006 Census of Canada, 3,179,425 individuals reported having German ethnic origins, either solely or in part. Of these, 216,775 were from Manitoba. In the same 2006 census, 450,570 Canadians (67,030 of whom were living in Manitoba) reported that German was their mother tongue. German was one of the most frequently reported mother-tongue languages among first- and second-generation Canadians from European backgrounds.

### Background

In 2000, the *Common Curriculum Framework for International Languages, Kindergarten to Grade 12* was developed through the cooperative efforts of the provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta, under the auspices of the Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education. The intent of that document was to provide a common foundation and support for the development of curricula for international language programs.

Subsequently, drafts of *Program of Studies: German Language and Culture Grade 7 to Grade 9* and *Program of Studies: German Language and Culture 10-20-30* were developed for use in the province of Alberta. These documents provided the basis, with some adaptations, for the WNCB *German Language and Culture, Six-Year Junior/Senior High School Program* curriculum document. To support the implementation of this new curriculum, the *German Language and Culture, Six-Year Junior/ Senior High School Program: Implementation Manual* was developed collaboratively by the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. The *Grade 7 to Grade 12 German Language and Culture: A Foundation for Implementation* is an adaptation of that manual for use in Manitoba.

### Purpose

This implementation manual will assist educators as they

- plan for instruction that supports student achievement of the learning outcomes
- monitor student progress in achieving the learning outcomes
- select learning resources to support their professional development
- select student learning resources to enhance instruction and assessment

Educators, administrators, and parents may use this document in a variety of ways.

## Teachers (Educators)

Classroom teachers will find theoretical information and research concepts in the German Language and Culture: Implementation Overview. Specific programming and classroom information are found in Achieving the (Grade 7 to Grade 12) Learning Outcomes.

## Administrators

Administrators will find essential information in the German Language and Culture: Implementation Overview, and Achieving the (Grade 7 to Grade 12) Learning Outcomes. These sections may be of particular value in

- developing a programming plan for a school
- identifying directions for professional development
- developing school/divisional assessment policies and procedures
- selecting professional resources

## Parents

Parents may be directed to German Language and Culture: Implementation Overview for information about German as an international language and about second language learning in general. Achieving the (Grade 7 to Grade 12) Learning Outcomes provides grade-specific information and insights into classroom practices.

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## NOTES