



# GRADE 9 TO GRADE 12 GERMAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

## Planning for Instruction and Assessment

Why Plan 3

General Information on Planning for German Teachers 6

Task-based or Project-based Language Learning 11

Unit Planning 15

Planning Tools 17

Sample Plans

Grade 9: The Family and Family Celebrations 33

Grade 10: Health 129

Grade 12: Wohnungen in Deutschland 213



# PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

## Why Plan?

- Creating a plan increases teacher awareness of learning outcomes and student needs, and enhances teaching practices.
- Teachers are more likely to effectively meet the expectations of the curriculum, school, students, and parents.
- Topics can be sequenced in a logical way, providing important linking for students.
- Planning well gives teachers confidence. It enables the teacher to anticipate and be prepared for meeting individual student needs and alternative situations that arise in the classroom.
- Planning well reduces many management problems in the classroom.
- Advance planning helps teachers to access resources, and it reduces stress and increases effectiveness.
- Planning well ensures a sound rationale is evident and ready for presentation to parents, students, and administrators.
- Collaborative planning allows teachers to engage in professional dialogue about curriculum, successful practices, individual student needs, and effective use of resources.

## Developing Plans

In developing plans, teachers need to effectively

- select an approach to planning
- read and understand the general and specific learning outcomes provided in the German Language and Culture curriculum
- consider student needs, background knowledge, and experience
- select the appropriate learning outcomes and the sequence in which they will receive focus
- select teaching and learning activities
- select learning resources
- consider assessment and evaluation

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes in German Language and Culture assist classroom teachers and other educators to

- plan learning activities that support German language growth and student achievement in German Language and Culture
- establish goals for learning, instruction, and assessment in German Language and Culture
- monitor student progress in achieving learning outcomes in German Language and Culture
- communicate with students, parents, and guardians about student progress in German Language and Culture
- select appropriate resources to support student learning

## Planning with Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes separate the four components of communicative competence: language competence and applications, intercultural competence (Global Citizenship), and strategic competence. When planning, teachers need to reflect on how these components can be integrated through activities that involve meaningful communication. Planning needs to include a careful analysis of the learning outcome statement to determine appropriate instructional materials. The following example shows how the four components are integrated in one learning activity.

Consider an activity where a student is asked to prepare a classroom presentation and a poster summarizing the information gathered on an aspect of the culture of a specific German-speaking nation that he or she finds appealing. The guidelines for the activity are as follows:

- Brainstorm potential themes or topics for the exercise and select one. (Applications/Strategies/Global Citizenship)
- Use a concept map to detail what information is required, and develop a plan for gathering the information. (Strategies)
- Identify key vocabulary or terms related to the theme or area of interest. (Language Competence/Lexicon)
- Undertake research, drawing on at least four web-based and print-based German resources and summarize information gathered. (Language Competence/Global Citizenship)
- Prepare presentation and poster using visuals to aid in communicating your ideas. (Language Competence/Applications)
- Check and edit your presentation to ensure correct spelling and grammatical structures. (Language Competence)
- Present to classroom. (Language Competence/Applications)

- Reflect on the experience and identify what you learned, how you learned it, what gaps in learning you perceived, and what was most challenging. (Strategies)

## Selecting Learning Outcomes

Selecting learning outcomes is the critical component in developing unit or lesson plans. Which aspects of language learning do you want to focus on? Where are your students in their development of their linguistic and cultural skills?

In targeting learning outcomes for unit or lesson planning, teachers also need to consider how they relate to one another. Once learning outcomes are identified the next step is to consider which learning activities or tasks lend themselves to the development of the learning outcomes.

## Considering Assessment and Evaluation

Planning for assessment is an essential aspect of unit and lesson planning. It is important that teachers consider what information they need to collect and what is directly related to the learning outcomes. How will students demonstrate these learning outcomes in the context of the learning tasks and activities selected?

Finally, it is important to select the type of assessment tools best suited for the assessment focus. See Classroom Assessment, page 9.

## Selecting Resources

Planning lessons and assembling resources for a language course means more than finding a good text with accompanying workbook and listening tapes. As much as possible, students should work with all kinds of resources. Authentic documents, that is, documents that were designed for German speakers rather than for the purpose of second language teaching, are particularly interesting. By using authentic documents, students gain experience in finding, exploring, and interpreting different kinds of texts, and have models for producing texts of their own.

By using a variety of resources rather than a single text, teachers can better accommodate the diverse learning needs of students found in the average classroom. Even though all students in the class are working on the same task, they may be using different resources depending on their preferred learning styles, level of proficiency, or cognitive development.

## Approaches to Planning

There are several approaches to planning for instruction. These may be categorized as thematic, integrated, content/subject based, and task-based approaches. These are not mutually exclusive and often elements of each will be used by teachers to plan for instruction.

Thematic approaches focus on a specific topic or central idea which forms the basis for the unit or the lesson being planned. The theme chosen serves as the organizer for the instructional activities. Themes may be broad or may be specific in nature (e.g., Deutsche Klassische Musik versus Ludwig van Beethoven). School-based themes provide an opportunity for cross-subject and classroom collaboration.

Integrated approaches are closely related to thematic approaches. They focus on choosing themes that allow for connections with various subject areas or for drawing on a broad range of skills and concepts. Integrated units allow for collaboration between subject area teachers. Students may value integrated learning experiences because they are more “real-life” in nature and relate to other school subjects.

Task-based approaches focus on the engagement of students in very meaningful tasks rather than elements of language. Generally, in task-based approaches, learning tasks have a clear beginning and end.

Regardless of the approach or combination of approaches one may prefer, all of them may be applied to the development of yearly, unit, or lesson plans. These are described in the following section.

## General Information on Planning for German Teachers

### Types of Plans

#### Yearly Plans

In creating a long-range plan, a teacher looks at students and elements of curriculum, and considers the school’s goals and the year ahead. On this basis, the teacher makes a tentative sequencing of classroom instruction units that would be effective.

#### Unit Plans

To develop a unit plan, a teacher looks at the students and their needs, and organizes strategies and selects specific learning activities which are aligned with several identified student learning outcomes.

#### Lesson Plans

Lesson plans ‘map out’ in detail instructional and learning activities in support of one or more learning outcomes. Usually lesson plans refer to daily plans.

## Planning for Balance

Planning for a balanced German Language and Culture delivery needs to take the following into account:

- Specific learning outcomes stated are end-of-year learning outcomes; while students may reach the level of competence described by the learning outcomes at any time during the year, the learning outcomes describe end-of-year performance. Educators must consider the series of instructional steps that will lead to accomplishment of the learning outcomes by the end of the year.
- Learning is recursive and integrative. Many of the learning outcomes need to be addressed repeatedly in different ways throughout the school year. Students need practice in many meaningful contexts to consolidate new knowledge, skills, and strategies. As well as developing new literacy skills and strategies, students need to review, maintain, and refine those learned previously.
- Planning is continual and informed by needs that become evident through classroom assessment.
- A variety of instructional approaches, classroom management techniques, assessment practices, tools and strategies, and language arts learning experiences are essential.
- Students may be taught in a variety of organizational structures, including multi-graded classrooms.

Developing balanced, integrated German instruction is a creative process that is shaped by the teaching style, resources, and strengths of each teacher, by the interests, abilities, and talents that each new group of students brings to the classroom, and by the needs of the community.

Some areas of balance to consider in planning include the following:

- four general learning outcomes
- three modes of communication: productive, interpretive, and interactive
- text types: oral, written, and multimedia texts (which include a variety of expository or informational, narrative, poetic, and dramatic texts; and a variety of forms and genres such as videos, magazines, letters, charts, and computer programs)
- various functions: imparting and receiving information; expressing emotions and personal perspectives; getting things done; extending knowledge of the world; forming, maintaining, and changing interpersonal relationships; and for imaginative purposes and personal enjoyment
- grouping patterns: individual, pairs, small groups, large groups, whole class, heterogeneous, homogeneous, student-directed, teacher-directed
- various levels of language proficiency and the language background and experiences of the student
- various learning styles and multiple intelligences

- various rates of student learning, addressed by providing pre-teaching, review, and additional practice for some students, and challenging extension activities for others

Planning for balance while ensuring sufficient instruction and practice in all the learning outcomes defined for a particular grade or course is a challenging task. Choosing particular ideas and strategies precludes using others. It is unlikely that a teacher would use all the suggestions for instruction and assessment for a specific learning outcome with a particular grade. For example, various types of journals and logs are discussed: personal journals, reader response journals, learning logs, and writers' notebooks. Students likely would not maintain all of these simultaneously.

## Yearly Planning

Long-range planning is making difficult decisions about the direction of our programming based on our best professional judgment. Long-range planning is problem solving. Long range plans are often viewed as a finished product rather than a working document and as a "means to an end." If planning is to be effective and of value to the teacher, risk taking, continual monitoring, and subsequent modifications are valued parts of the process. A real year plan will reflect changes and will be a working document, not a polished masterpiece.

To begin long range planning:

- Know and use the curriculum.
- Focus on how the planning will help you and your students, not on the product or what someone else might expect.
- Look at the different types of long-range planning and consider those which best meet your needs.
- Remember that there is no one right way to plan.

There are many types of long-range plans. Teacher should choose a style that meets their needs and the needs of the specific instruction groups.

## Thematic Planning

Traditionally, thematic planning has been considered the domain of primary teachers although it has been widely used in gifted education. Varieties of thematic planning are now in many settings from early education onwards.

Thematic planning has proven especially helpful to teachers of multi-age and combined class groupings. Where teachers plan for a wide range of abilities, thematic teaching allows all students to build knowledge, skills, and attitudes—experiencing success at their own level within a collaborative whole-class environment.



Thematic planning also is chosen by teachers who tend to look at the global picture, rather than seeing discrete, sequenced units. It may also be preferred by teachers who like to work collaboratively with other teachers or draw on the concepts and experiences which students are being exposed to in other settings. Although there are many approaches to thematic planning, basically thematic teaching differs from subject-based planning in that priority curricular expectations are linked and/or clustered deliberately across subject areas. Thematic teaching often takes place in larger blocks of time created by merging periods of time apportioned to each subject area.

In another thematic approach, teachers pick up a **common thread** within several subject areas.

Teachers may **sequence** topics or units of study to coincide with one another. Similar ideas are taught together at the same time.

Some teachers base their year around large issues or questions that **encompass** all or almost all areas of curriculum. This planning requires in-depth knowledge of curricula and a willingness to create or modify existing resources.

### Benefits of Thematic Planning

Recent **brain research** tells us that learning is enhanced when inter-related areas are linked. To maintain and extend memory networks, students need to test their memories in stimulating and meaningful contexts. Both the relevance of the material to the learner and the emotional involvement of the learner are important components in effective learning. By choosing themes that are relevant and of interest to students in the classroom, thematic planning links and builds knowledge in a “brain-friendly” way.

**Motivation** is important in learning. In well-conceived thematic instruction, successful experiences are fostered for a wide range of students and differing expectations become the norm. Thematic planning allows for more extensive and intensive exploration of a specific area of interest or study. This helps students build enthusiasm and become more reflective and involved in their own learning.

The thematic approach allows a wide range of students to experience success and **achievement** at their own levels. Disadvantaged students link with their background knowledge and read materials on the theme at their own level, enhancing achievement. Gifted learners move beyond a core of basic learning experiences. Thematic units that allow for more in-depth explorations and learning allow students to process more and become more active learners. Authentic assessments tend to be utilized within the thematic approach, allowing more students to demonstrate their success.

**Effective instructional techniques** are fostered within the thematic structures. Teachers gain enthusiasm by learning along with students – acting as role models of continuous learning and problem solving. Important changes may occur in classroom dynamics as teacher and students use the word we more than I. With instruction that is less fractured, many teachers enjoy the flow of thematic teaching and experience a feeling of success in reaching more students.

## Helpful Hints for Thematic Planning

- Choose themes and/or topics that are guided by the learning outcomes you wish to develop. These should be the focus of the planning.
- Carefully select themes that are appropriate for the age and interests of students and complement the areas of experience recommended.
- Try, where you can, to choose broad rather than narrow thematic topics or open up topics through the use of ambiguous titles. Check the area of experience for each grade level to guide your selection of unit and lesson plans.
- Start with a manageable project in thematic planning and build from there. It's all right to start your year with a theme, and then focus on specific tasks or areas of language development!
- Communicate learning goals for the year and your thematic plans to parents and students. Chart your thematic year plan for Open House at the beginning of the year.
- Ensure that parents see curricular expectations specifically on student assignments, displays, evaluations, and portfolio samples throughout the year to reassure them. Regular newsletters previewing upcoming themes and activities add to parental buy-in.
- Remember that a year plan is a working document that will be periodically reviewed and revised.
- Teachers may choose to teach thematically, but continue routine task-based learning activities such as dialogues, role-playing, learning journals, etc.

## Long-Range Planning Review

- Choose a style of planning that suits your needs: subject-based, thematic (integrated), strategic, or a combination of several.
- Select priority expectations from the curriculum based on your knowledge of your students, and highlight these on curricular checklists.
- Develop a year plan that logically flows and develops priority curricular expectations.
- Remember that a year plan is a working document that will be periodically reviewed and revised.
- Focus on what the students will learn, not just the activities they will engage in.

## Task-based or Project-based Language Learning

A task-based approach to learning German is designed to have students develop language competence and communicative skills by doing things rather than by simply studying the language. The students no longer begin by learning the form or grammar of the language. Instead, they find themselves in a situation where they must use the language for a definite purpose, to complete a clearly defined task or project. The task is defined at the outset and creates the need to know certain elements of the language, thus giving meaning and context to all language activities.

All content, activities, and evaluation in the unit grow out of the task. Specific language content is determined once the task has been identified. Explicit teaching of grammar rules, exercises which concentrate on form, and practice of specific strategies all have their place in the classroom, but they will be done as a result of the students' need to know elements of the German language in order to accomplish the task more effectively. The task provides an organizational framework within which all skills, knowledge, and attitudes are developed.

### Choosing a Task or Project

The choice of tasks will be based on the interests of students while at the same time covering as broad a range of areas of experience as possible. It is important that the task be flexible enough to allow for some differentiation. In this way, students with different levels of proficiency, different interests, and different backgrounds can work together and learn from one another.

Good projects or tasks should

- match the interests of the students
- require students to focus on meaning and purpose
- draw objectives from the communicative needs of students
- involve language use in carrying out the task
- provide opportunities for language practice
- allow for flexible approaches to the task, offering different routes, media, modes of participation, procedures
- allow for different solutions, depending on the skills and strategies drawn on by students
- be challenging, but not threatening
- require input from all students in terms of knowledge, skills, and participation
- promote sharing of information and expertise
- allow for co-evaluation by the student and the teacher of the task and of the performance of the task

- provide opportunities for students to talk about communication (metacommunication) and about learning (metacognition)
- provide for monitoring and feedback
- be effective and efficient (i.e., the effort to master aspects of the language should “pay off” in terms of communicative competence, or cognitive and affective development of the learner)

The order in which the tasks are undertaken is usually decided based on their level of difficulty, which depends on a number of factors:

- the characteristics of the learner
- the amount of contextual support provided to the learner
- the cognitive difficulty of the task
- the amount of assistance provided to the learner
- the complexity of the language which the learner is required to use
- the amount and type of background knowledge required

Some of these factors are variable (e.g., the amount of support provided), while others are not (e.g., characteristics of the learner).

In the following table, some of the factors which determine the relative difficulty of a task are outlined. By examining a task in relation to these factors, a task that is appropriate for the students can be chosen.

less difficult	→				more difficult
cognitive complexity	describing		sequencing		choosing
	classifying		identifying principles		evaluating
listening	one speaker	two speakers	three speakers	four or more speakers	
	familiar topic			unfamiliar topic	
speaking	taking short turns			taking long turns	
	familiar, sympathetic conversation partner			unfamiliar, uninvolved individual or group	
	familiar topic, well-organized memory			new topic or experience, not well organized	
text type	description	instructions	storytelling	proving and justifying opinions	
	few elements, properties, relationships, characters, factors			many elements, properties, relationships, characters, factors	
	ample contextual support (titles and subtitles, pictures or diagrams, etc.)			little contextual support	
language	simple			complex	
	less interpretation required (information is explicit)			more interpretation required (information is implicit)	
	more redundant (information is repeated in different ways)			more dense (information is given only once)	
task type	one-way transfer of information			two-way exchange of information	
	convergent			divergent	
	concrete, "here and now"			abstract, different time or place	
support	more			less	

Sometimes a task may, at first, appear too difficult for the students, but if it is of great interest to them, it can be sometimes be undertaken by adjusting some of the above variables to make it less difficult. In the same way, the same task can also be made more or less difficult for different groups of students in mixed-level classes.

The table below provides some ideas for tasks that students could undertake at this level. Students can be expected to complete between five and eight of the more complex tasks in the course. Some tasks could be the focus of a unit of study which could take from 15 to 20 hours to complete. See the next section for more information on unit planning.

Global Task List		
Make a/an	Learn a/an	Do a/an
list booklet big book pamphlet or brochure dictionary recipe book guide picture album poster mural collage model class display crest map calendar greeting card menu family tree cover (book, CD, video) game board advertisement comic strip puppet classified ad	game sport song dance poem story nursery rhyme craft (then make up a new one)	survey research project simulation role play interview demonstration debate biography critique
	<b>Keep a log of</b>	<b>Plan a/an</b>
	books read TV programs watched weather travel	trip self-improvement project exchange immersion weekend excursion meal celebration guest speaker visit
	<b>Present a/an</b>	
	fashion show puppet show play dance concert	
<b>Solve a problem</b>		<b>Write and send a/an</b>
jigsaw task information gap cloze activity grammar dictation science experiment math problem make a decision		personal letter greeting card email message letter to the editor business letter invitation

## Unit Planning

Unit planning when using a task-based approach to second language learning is a little different than planning for a more traditional language-based approach. Instead of beginning with the linguistic content (vocabulary, grammar, functions), you begin with a theme or topic and a task. The language content grows out of the task and the resources used for the task. The following steps provide a list of considerations for unit planning:

1. Choose a theme or a topic which is of interest to the students, which offers possibilities for developing the students' communicative competence in German, and which allows for some general learning as well. Students can participate in this step of the planning process.
2. Decide on a unit task that is appropriate to the theme, is of interest to the students, and is within their capabilities, both from a cognitive and a language point of view. Students can participate in this step as well. This task becomes the main element around which the unit is organized. The unit task will most often take the form of a project that can be worked on over a period of several weeks. See the Global Task List on the preceding page for suggestions.
3. Look for resources which might be useful in preparing students to carry out the task. Resources should be attractive and rich in visual supports such as charts, pictures, diagrams, etc. Once the resources have been found, analyze them for elements that might need to be introduced, for example, a particular accent in an audio text, a cultural reference, strategies needed to deal with an authentic document, idiomatic expressions, and so on.
4. Analyze the task to determine what the students will need to know and to learn in order to be able to carry out the task. Think about the product the students will produce (the project or task), but also about the process they will go through in producing the product (e.g., working in groups, doing research, interviewing people). Think about language functions, vocabulary, grammar, text types, historical and contemporary elements of the culture, strategies, general knowledge, and so on. Think about the resources you have found for the unit.

5. Outline a series of steps or mini-tasks directly related to the unit task to help the students learn and practise the language they will need to carry out that task. Some of these mini-tasks might focus on particular language functions (applications), building vocabulary around the theme or topic, learning and practising specific grammatical structures, analyzing the characteristics of a particular text type, developing a cultural element, working on a learning strategy, and so on.
  - It is a very good idea to begin a unit with an activity that stimulates the students' interest in the topic, and helps them make connections between what they already know about the topic and what they will be learning. This introductory activity also starts to establish the linguistic base necessary for the rest of the unit, although it should not include the formal teaching of a pre-determined list of vocabulary. Vocabulary for the unit is better taught as the need arises throughout the whole unit.
  - It is also very helpful to end the unit with an activity that leads students to reflect on the unit. This can include discussion about what they learned, the strategies they used, and how their attitudes may have changed. It can also include planning for future units based on perceived gaps in their knowledge and skills. This step is important for developing metacognitive strategies and independent learning.
6. Determine the specific learning outcomes for the unit, keeping in mind all four components (applications, language competence, global citizenship, and strategies).
7. Think about aspects of the unit that could be adapted to accommodate the needs, interests, and aptitudes of different students. Be prepared to be as flexible as possible without compromising the objectives of the unit.
8. Plan student assessment and evaluation. Integrate assessment throughout the unit.

Although unit planning is presented above as a series of steps, for most people, it will involve going back and forth between steps, rather than progressing straight through from step 1 to 8. Some of the planning will take place beforehand, and some as the unit progresses.