

# German A level

## Transition Booklet

Year 11 to Year 12

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# ITCHY FEET in GERMANY



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[www.itchyfeetcomic.com](http://www.itchyfeetcomic.com)

## **1. Introduction**

A-Level German is an exciting and varied course! Over the next two years, you will not only have the chance to perfect your language skills, further deepening your understanding of grammar and vocabulary. You will also learn about culture, history and politics of German-speaking countries, and study a film and a literary text.

Before you go through the booklet, it's worth reminding yourself of why learning German is a good idea.

Using the links below as well as your own reflections, answer the following questions:

- a. In which countries is German spoken?
- b. What are the top 5 benefits of learning German for you personally?
- c. List 5 surprising facts about Germany as well as a German-speaking country other than Germany.

Links:

<https://german.uiowa.edu/why-study-german>

<https://www.goethe.de/en/spr/wdl.html>

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/student-blog-why-study-german>

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jul/02/why-we-should-learn-german-john-le-carre>

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/aug/18/savvy-millennials-rush-to-learn-german>

[https://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_mcwhorter\\_4\\_reasons\\_to\\_learn\\_a\\_new\\_language?utm\\_source=tedcomshare&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=tedsread](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_4_reasons_to_learn_a_new_language?utm_source=tedcomshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tedsread)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMmOLN5zBLY>

## **2. Course Overview**

The following information is from the exam board that you will be studying. You can find more information of their website:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/german-7662/subject-content>

‘The approach is a focus on how German-speaking society has been shaped socially and culturally and how it continues to change. In the first year, aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of the artistic life of German-speaking countries. In the second year, further aspects of the social background are covered, alongside the German political landscape, both in relation to Germany itself and its place in Europe. The past and its role in shaping the present is viewed through the reunification and its consequences while the focus on young people and politics looks forward to shaping the future of German-speaking countries.’

You will be studying issues that are crucial in order to understand German-speaking societies, for instance: the Reunification of East- and West Germany; festivals such as Oktoberfest; migration and racism.

### **Subject content areas**

- 3.1 Social issues and trends
- 3.2 Political and artistic culture
- 3.3 Grammar
- 3.4 Works
- 3.5 Individual research project

### 3. Examinations

Your A-Level German comprises three papers, which together assess both your language skills and your cultural knowledge of German-speaking countries, in particular of a film and a literary work.

The following information is taken from the website of the exam board AQA; feel free to browse this in more detail here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/german-7662>

#### Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing

What's assessed

- Aspects of German-speaking society
- Artistic culture in the German-speaking world
- Multiculturalism in German-speaking society
- Aspects of political life in German-speaking society
- Grammar

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- 100 marks
- 50% of A-level

#### Paper 2: Writing

What's assessed

- One text and one film or two texts from the list set in the specification
- Grammar

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 80 marks in total
- 20% of A-level

### Paper 3: Speaking

What's assessed

- Individual research project
- One of four themes (Aspects of German-speaking society or Artistic culture in the German-speaking world or Multiculturalism in German-speaking society or Aspects of political life in German-speaking society)

How it's assessed

- Oral exam: 21–23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation time)
- 60 marks in total
- 30% of A-level

#### **4. Important vocabulary**

You can find and practice high frequency German words here - these are the words that you will hear (and see) most often:

<https://www.memrise.com/course/909233/german-high-frequency-words/>

#### **5. Reading Comprehension**

Some linguists (scientists who research languages) argue that reading is all you need in order to become fluent in a language; certainly, it is the best way to expand your vocabulary and improve the general quality of your language. I would recommend that you read as much and as regularly as you possibly can, ideally one short piece every day.

##### **General Reading Tips:**

- Don't look up every word, only words that are essential to comprehension. You might want to keep a record of new words, for example in a notebook or in Quizlet.
- For your regular reading practice, choose texts that you enjoy and are interested in!
- Read aloud to yourself. It may sound weird, but there is plenty of evidence that reading aloud improves our reading and speaking skills.

##### **Exercises you can do to improve your reading fluency:**

Pre-Reading Tasks. Doing these will help you free up space in your brain so you can focus on the text itself.

- Before you read the text, jot down 2-3 sentences on what you think it will be about, using only the title as reference (this can be in German but also in English).

- Prepare a list of keywords for the topic so that when you read, you can focus on the text.
- Identify what kind of text you will be reading: journalistic, scientific, a novel etc. Who is the audience?

### Post-Reading Tasks.

- Write a short summary, in English or in German.
- Write a list of questions that you would like to ask the author.
- Analyse the use of tenses and/or point of view in the text.
- Produce a short bilingual glossary of key words.
- Use the exercises in the PiXL Independence booklet. (Go to: <https://auth.pixl.org.uk/members/1#!/independence/GCSE/German/German> and download 'Student-Led DTT Templates Booklet')

### Where to find German reading material:

#### News:

[www.nachrichtenleicht.de](http://www.nachrichtenleicht.de)

[www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com) (Deutsche Welle is a radio channel, so you also have plenty of listening material).

#### Science/Knowledge:

[www.planet-wissen.de](http://www.planet-wissen.de)

[www.wasistwas.de](http://www.wasistwas.de)

#### About German culture:

<http://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/lp/prj/mtg/deindex.htm>

#### Literature:

There is some fantastic material online available for free. I recommend that you start by exploring 'Paralleltexte', where the English translation is printed alongside the German. The most important factor is that **you enjoy** the text!

[www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) is a free online library that works just like an offline one: you need to register your account and then you can 'borrow' books.



For example: <https://archive.org/details/germanshortstori00vari>

## **6. Favourite film in target language**

To prepare you for Paper 3, in which you will be asked to write about a film, write an analysis, in German, of your favourite film - you can choose any film you like, as long as you are passionate about it (and as long as it is appropriate for school).

### **Aufgabe 1: Glossary**

Look the following words up in the dictionary and complete this short glossary. Feel free to add your own keywords.

English	Deutsch	Definition
Actor		
	Der (die) Regisseur(in)	
mise-en-scene		
		Die Art des Films, z.B. Thriller, Krimi, Western..
	Die Beleuchtung	
The plot		
		Alle Geräusche im Film
The prop		
	Der Winkel	
	Die Einstellung	
		Die Leute, die den Film sehen oder für die der Film gemacht ist
The character		

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### **Aufgabe 2. Zusammenfassung.**

Write a summary (ca 250 words) of your chosen film. Include the following elements:

- Genre
- Hauptfiguren
- Struktur: ist der Film klar strukturiert, von Einleitung zu Konflikt zu Resolution, oder ist die Struktur kompliziert?
- Mise-en-scène: welche audio-visuellen Elemente stechen hervor? (z.B.: Farben, Musik, Ton...)

### **Aufgabe 3. Symbolanalyse.**

Symbols are objects or props that point to something bigger and that can give us hints about a character or the relationships between characters. This happens in daily life too: for example, a neatly kept workbook symbolises that you take pride in your work. Important symbols usually appear several times in a film. Sometimes they signify abstract concepts, such as love, freedom, hope...

Pick an important symbol from your chosen film and analyse its significance. To do so, write short answers to the following questions:

- Wann erscheint das Symbol im Film?
- Was passiert mit dem Symbol?
- Beeinflusst das Symbol die Erwartungen der Zuschauer? Z.B.: macht das Symbol den Zuschauer optimistisch, dass der Film gut endet?
- Was sagt uns das Symbol über die Figuren im Film?

## **7. Research-based tasks.**

As part of the speaking exam, you will prepare an individual research project on a topic that relates to a German-speaking country and that interests you. This tests your research skills, that is, how well you can find information, pick out the most important elements and present them in clear and accessible language. This will also stand you in good stead for university life!

In preparation for this, research **at least one of the following topics** and then summarise your findings in 300 words. You can pick an example from any German-speaking country - in fact, I would encourage you to look not only into Germany, but also Austria, Switzerland, Lichtenstein or Luxemburg.

1. Ein/e deutschsprachige NaturwissenschaftlerIn
2. Ein historisches Ereignis in einem deutschsprachigen Land
3. Ein/e deutschsprachige KünstlerIn, Künstlergruppe, Musikband oder Kunstbewegung

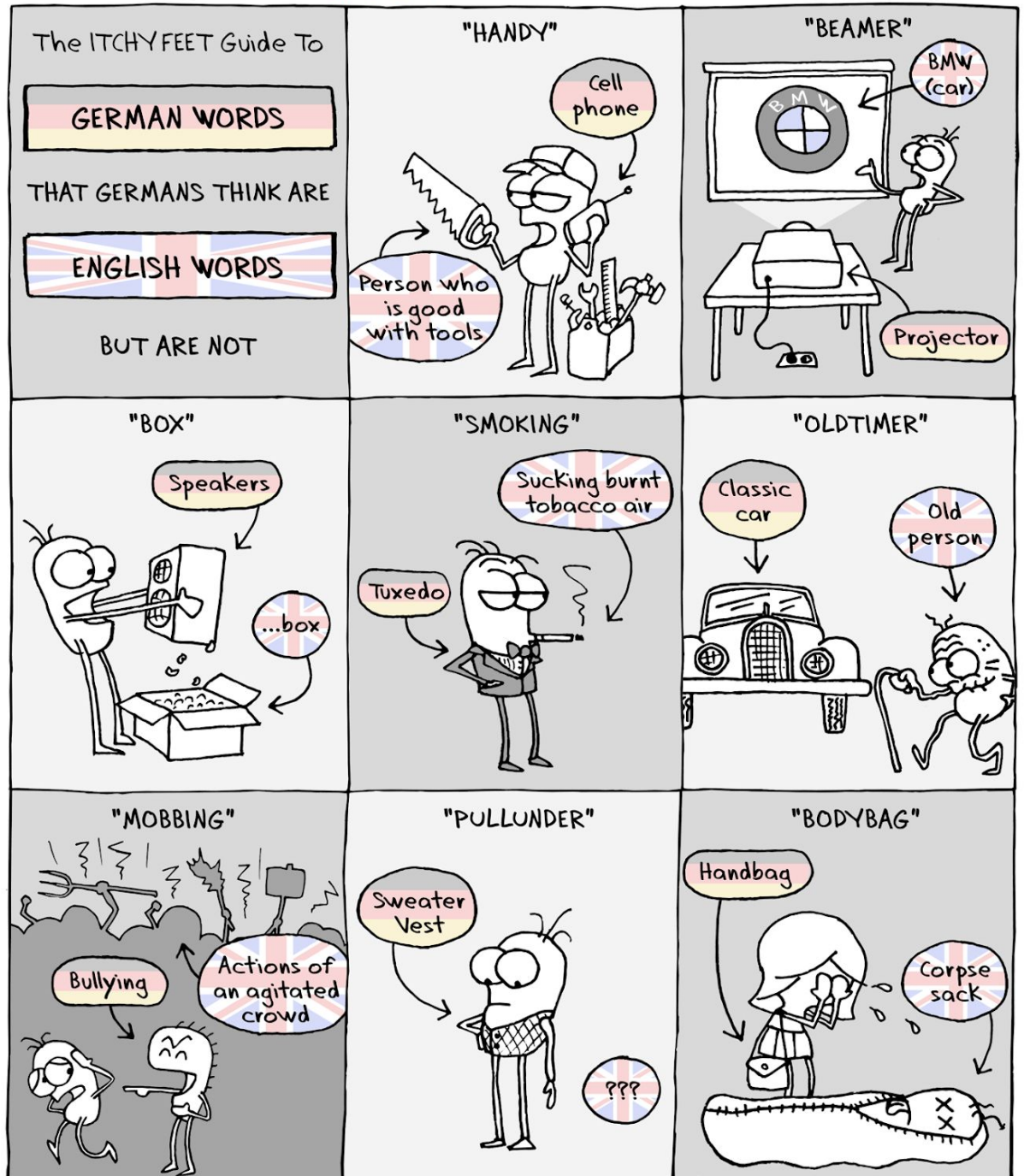
### **Steps to writing your summary.**

- a. Do your research. Read at least three German-speaking sources, plus, if you want, some English-speaking ones. (see links at the end)
- b. Once you feel you know enough, write down three key ideas. Rank these by importance.
- c. Now write your summary, structuring it around the three key ideas.
- d. Cite your sources. Give authors' first name and names, date of the publication, title of the publication and if applicable, URL of the website.

## 8. Translation Tasks

A. False friends. Watch out for these, particularly when you translate!

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Complete the grid below. As you come across more false friends, feel free to add more words. The colours are to mark the gender of the noun (colour-coding makes the articles easier to remember).

English word (false friend)	Correct German translation	Deutsch (falscher Freund)	Correct translation (English)
actually			currently
also			Hence, thus
	Die Kunst		Type, manner
	werden		
chef		Der Chef	
		eventuell	
	Die Kritik	The critic	
To mob		mobben	
The sea			The lake
	sensibel	vernünftig	
To spend		spenden	

**B. Things to watch out for when translating (not an exhaustive list ...)**  
**(Taken from FrauSue, Tes.com). Don't worry if you don't immediately**  
**recognise these grammar points - this list can function as a point of reference**  
**later on!**

**Adjectives**

- De → En: Is the adjective functioning as an adverb?
- En → De: Which ending do you need?
- Both ways: Is the adjective/adverb in its comparative or superlative form? Is it regular/irregular in this form?

### **Adjectival nouns**

- De → En: Look carefully at the ending and context to decide if the noun is singular/plural.
- En → De: Think very carefully about your endings.

### **Tenses**

- De → En: -ing form or not?
- Both ways: Are we in the perfect or pluperfect? Is the verb in a conditional form? Is the verb irregular in English/German? Is it reflexive?

### **Singular / Plural**

- De → En: In the genitive, “der” can refer to singular or plural nouns – check the noun or verb form too!
- En → De: Remember to add an ‘n’ in the dative plural.
- Both ways: Some nouns are singular in one language and plural in the other.

### **Passive**

- Know the forms of werden (singular / plural and present / past)

### **in + AKK/DAT**

- En → De: Remember that ‘in’ is followed by accusative for action (movement across a boundary) and dative for position (or movement within certain limits). You will need appropriate adjective endings depending on which form you choose.

## **helfen**

- En → De: Remember that helfen (and gelingen, gehören, gefallen ...) take the dative.

## **Possessives**

- Both ways: Sein = his/its (from er/es) and ihr = her/its/their (from sie/sie). They take the “ein” endings.

## **Word order**

- De → En: Follow the rule TMPO (time, manner, place, object) for word order.

## **Seit**

- This is a classic exam translation trick. “have/has been doing ... for X years” = “machen/macht seit X Jahren ...”.

## **Immer ...er**

- This is another classic exam translation trick. “immer ...er” = “more and more ...” or “...er and ...er”.

## **Bundes-**

- This is another exam classic: translate “bundesweit” as “nationwide” or “across Germany” and “Bundesbürger” as “German (citizen)”.

## **C. Übungen (Taken from FraueSue, Tes.com)**

Try to work out what is being tested in each of these phrases / sentences from past papers and then translate them into German.

- a) Within two years a new village had been built.
- b) Something had to change.
- c) Statistics show that East Germans are more racist.
- d) They are continually confronted with ...
- e) Aid is always needed.
- f) Refugees were brought here in 1993.
- g) This organisation has been supporting hospitals in Switzerland for many years.



- h) In countries where there is conflict, ...
- i) In this project, ...
- j) Noone knows how best to integrate migrants into society.
- k) More and more foreigners have become victims of violence.
- l) ... the consequences of their actions.
- m) After the end of the war, ...
- n) The Turks who came to Germany 30 years ago
- o) The state offers the unemployed financial aid.
- p) It has been difficult for the foreign doctors to adapt.

**D. German to English. Watch out for the following points:**

- You will sometimes need to change the worder, so make sure the sentences sound correct in English.
  - Compound nouns in German are usually translated by two nouns in English, here 'Schulversammungen', 'Grammatikkentnisse' and 'Sprachlehrer'.
  - The noun in German can mark the gender of the person you are referring to. You should only translate this into English when the gender matters for the meaning.
- 
1. Die Schüler und Schülerinnen nehmen nicht gerne an Schulversammlungen teil, denn die Lehrer und Lehrerinnen reden oft zu viel.
  
  2. Grammatikkenntnisse spielen in der Prüfung keine wichtige Rolle.
  
  3. Die Sprachlehrerinnen sind an unserer Schule sehr engagiert.

**E. Authentic Texts. Try your hand at translating these!**

a. Advertisement - from 1957!



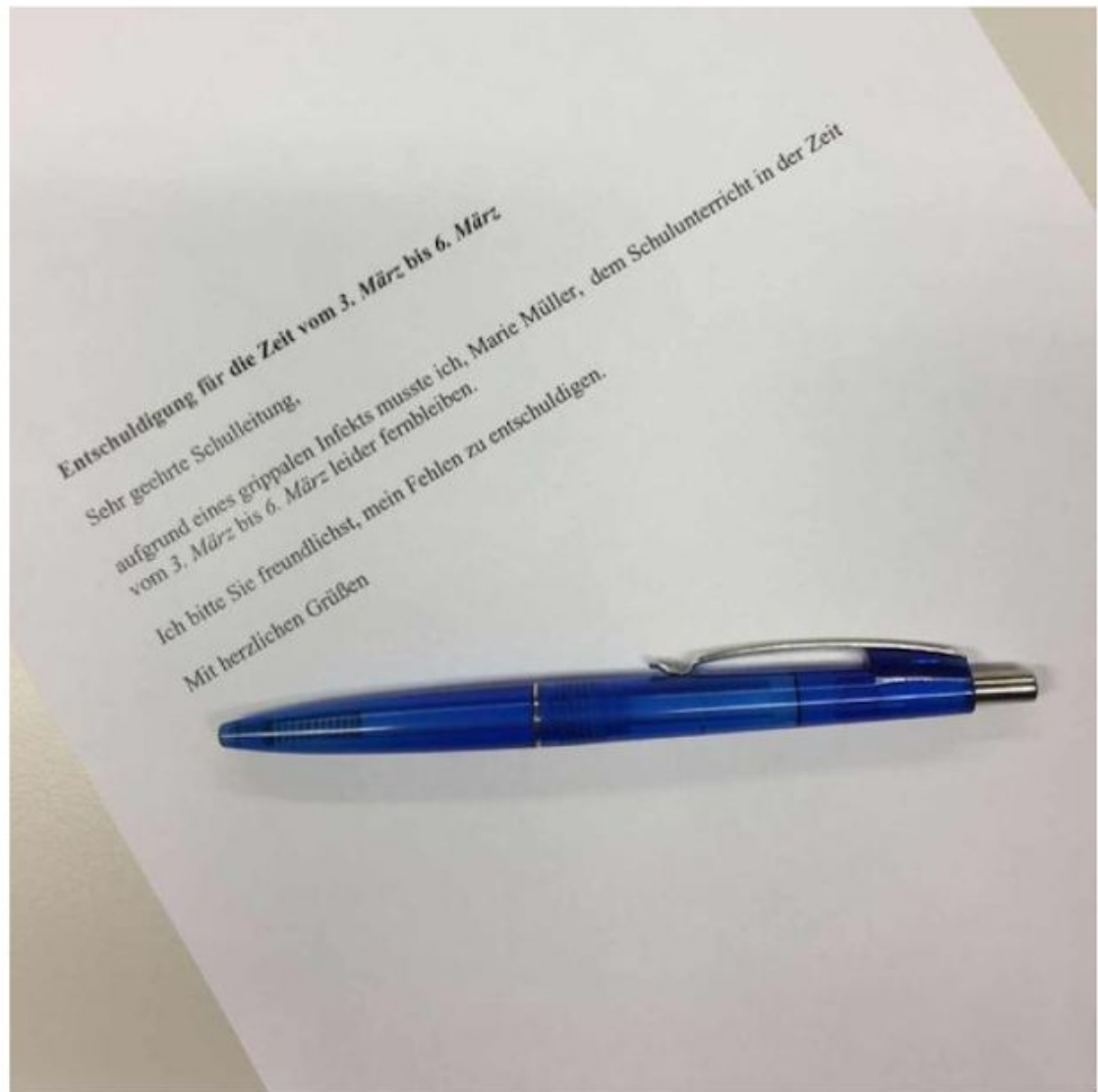
**Ein Tip**

um Freude zu bereiten.

Osterfreuden – Frühlingsfreuden! Legen Sie Ihren Lieben eine Tafel „Milka“ auf den Frühstückstisch! „Milka“ ist der freundliche Ostergruß für jung und alt.

**Milka** die feine Alpenmilch-Schokolade in dem bekannten lila Umschlag.

b. A letter



Wenn du deine Entschuldigung für die Schule selber schreibst, solltest du auf die Formulierung achten

- c. A literary work (from famous Austrian children's book author Christine Nöstlinger)

### Wie der Franz lesen lernte

Der Franz ist sechs Jahre und sechs Monate alt. Er ist ziemlich klein für sein Alter. Er hat Kornblumen-Augen und einen Kir-schenmund. Er hat rosarote Plusterbacken und keine Haare auf dem Kopf. Aber eine echte Glatze hat er nicht. Zweimal die Woche lässt sich der Franz von seinem Papa den Kopf rasieren.

Früher, wie der Kopf noch nicht rasiert war, haben viele Leute den Franz für ein Mädchen gehalten. Für ein Mädchen mit blonden Ringellocken. Das hat den Franz sehr gestört.



- d. An internet article (adapted from:

[https://www.planet-wissen.de/technik/energie/erneuerbare\\_energien/index.html](https://www.planet-wissen.de/technik/energie/erneuerbare_energien/index.html))

#### Energiequelle Wind

Schon im Mittelalter nutzten die Menschen mit ihren Windmühlen den Wind, um Korn zu mahlen. Heute sind die Windmühlen technisch ausgefeilter und greifen den Wind in viel größeren Höhen ab. Ein Nachteil ist aber geblieben: Der Wind ist keine konstante Größe. Mal weht er, mal ist Flaute im Getriebe.

Allerdings können Meteorologen heute genaue Windvorhersagen machen, auf die sich Stromnetzbetreiber und Stromhändler dann einstellen können. Windflauten bei uns können so durch Wind- und Wasserstrom aus anderen Regionen sowie mit Hilfe von Stromspeichern ausgeglichen werden.



Obwohl Deutschland nicht zu den windreichsten Ländern der Welt gehört, ist es mittlerweile Windenergie-Weltmeister. Im Jahr 2018 produzierten die deutschen Windräder mit einer Leistung von mehr als 110 Terrawattstunden fast 20 Prozent des deutschen Strombedarfs. Damit sind die Windräder in Deutschland der größte Produzent von Strom aus erneuerbaren Energien.



## **F. English to German**

A. A story (From : <https://easystoriesinenglish.com/brave/>)

### **The Brave Little Tailor**

Once there was a tailor, who was very brave but quite stupid. He lived alone in a small town, and made and sold clothes all by himself. His business never did quite well, but he was happy, although sometimes he thought about leaving the town.

‘After all, there are so few people here. There are more people in the big cities, so I would make more money there!’

One day, he was sitting by his window and making a pair of trousers. An old lady walked past, crying, ‘Jam, fresh jam for sale! Come and get it! Delicious fresh jam!’

The tailor, who had forgotten to eat that morning, suddenly felt hungry. ‘And what would be nicer,’ he said, ‘than a lovely piece of bread with jam on it?’

B. A news report (from

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/witn/ep-150902>)

## **Notting Hill Carnival**

One of the world's largest street music festivals has taken place in London. Around sixty bands in colourful costumes took part in the Notting Hill Carnival. Thirty-eight sound systems entertained the crowds. Revellers at the annual event donned raincoats and held umbrellas as west London was hit by downpours. More than a million people are believed to have attended the event across its two days.

## **9. Grammar**

For grammar exercises, see

<https://auth.pixl.org.uk/members/1#!/independence/GCSE/German/German>

And download ‘PiXL Independence - MFL - GCSE - German - Student Booklet’

## **10. Additional recommended Reading and Links**

BBC Bitesize - Grammar practice (designed for GCSE but still useful)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/z8j2tfr>

Lots of exercises grouped by topic and difficulty level

<https://uebungen.sprachportal.at/cornelsen.html>

Translator in context

<https://www.linguee.com/>

Translator in context

[http://www.reverso.net/text\\_translation.aspx?lang=EN](http://www.reverso.net/text_translation.aspx?lang=EN)

More links on the A-Level Topics:

<https://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/en/spr/unt/kum/dfj/alv.html>

Lighthearted comics about language learning:

[www.itchyfeetcomic.com](http://www.itchyfeetcomic.com)