

# **German 4 AP**

## **Course Syllabus**

### **Course Overview**

German 4 AP is an advanced course where students are engaged in a rigorous and fast-paced study of German. This course is offered to those students who wish to excel in their ability to comprehend, speak, read, and write in German. Although grammar and vocabulary units are included in the course, the major emphasis is perfecting listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. This class is conducted completely in German, with the exception of grammar concepts and occasional cultural or historical discussions for clarification only. This course provides intensive preparation for the AP German Language Exam, which the students may choose to take at the end of the year.

The course has no primary textbook. Instead we use a variety of materials, which include the short stories and exercises from *Der Weg zum Lesen* and from *Mal was anders*, a collection of short stories and poetry. We read the play *Besuch der Alten Dame* and a variety of articles from current magazines, newspapers and a variety of German websites such as google.de, yahoo.de and Spiegel.de. We do vocabulary, grammar and listening activities from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*, in addition to *Reisefieber*, a story about a family on a trip around Germany in a series of ten listening segments that are broken into two parts, each part with questions, analysis and a quiz. Both listening activities are appropriate for a college level course. We listen to a variety of music incorporating the song lyrics and we watch the video series from *Fokus Deutsch* and other video segments, which are appropriate to what we are studying from a variety of sources. Throughout the year, we do several projects including but not limited to a project on poetry, famous Germans, Berlin, and a travel project in order to integrate all four of the language skills utilizing authentic materials. Finally, we watch several movies throughout the year including *Schwarzfahrer*, *The White Rose* and *Good Bye Lenin!* to contribute to their cultural and historical understanding of the language and German speaking people.

### **First Semester Pacing**

#### **Overview of a Week**

**Mondays:** I begin every Monday with an informal writing assignment in their journal mostly using this question as a prompt: "Was hast du am Wochenende gemacht?" or something similar. They write for approximately 10 minutes and then report out anything interesting they encountered, in German, be it school, family or culture related. Once the discussion is over I present them with their writing topic for the week. We brainstorm ideas and vocabulary for the topic. On alternating weeks, if they listened to a *Reisefieber* segment the previous week, then they take a quiz on that segment.

**Tuesdays:** I begin with a recap of the writing topic and vocabulary from Monday. I follow that with a chapter from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*. We discuss the finer points of the grammar topic and do the practice exercises from the chapter, some individually, some as a class, some for homework. I assign them vocabulary from the chapter as well.

**Wednesdays:** Grammar work is finished and we discuss the vocabulary. I continue with a reading from *Mal was andres*, such as *Ein Tisch ist ein Tisch* by Peter Bichsel or *Mittagspause* by Wolf Wondratschek. The readings are shorter towards the beginning of the semester and gradually get longer and more difficult as the semester continues. The students must choose 'personal vocabulary' from each reading and create their own vocabulary list to be shared with the class on Friday. They also answer questions and write a short summary for each reading in German.

**Thursdays:** I begin with a discussion of the reading and sharing of personal vocabulary in German. Thursday is our language lab day so I continue with an aural comprehension practice using the first *Hörverständnis* from the cassettes of the current chapter from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* or we listen to a segment from *Reisefieber*, both appropriate for a college level course. They answer questions and prepare topics for discussion from the listening. In addition, they have a speaking prompt that they must address each week. It can be a picture, a question, a story or an article they read during the week and they must record their response and send it to me.

**Fridays:** I begin with a vocabulary and grammar quiz based on the current chapter in the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*. After the quiz we discuss and go over the week's listening activity, including any discussion, questions and analysis thereof in German. And on alternating Fridays, we do ten to twenty of the *Blitzfragen* provided on the AATG list serve or watch a segment of the video from *Fokus Deutsch*.

### **Overview of a Month**

**Weeks One and Three:** *Reisefieber* quiz, writing assignment, personal vocabulary, grammar exercises and listening from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*, reading assignment, grammar and vocabulary quiz, ten to twenty of the *Blitzfragen* provided on the AATG list serve.

**Weeks Two and Four:** Writing assignment, personal vocabulary, grammar exercises from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*, listening from *Reisefieber*, reading assignment, grammar and vocabulary quiz, watch a segment of the video from *Fokus Deutsch*.

**Projects/Units:** Poetry, Famous Germans or the "Gravestone" project, Einstein, Immigrants in Germany. Each project is an integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening, with the students presenting their project/work at the culmination of the project and their classmates taking notes and sharing a spoken or written recap in German.

**Week before Midterm:** We do a review of all of the short stories and articles we read throughout the first half of the semester. We also review any grammar concepts and vocabulary.

**Week before Final Exam:** We do a review of all of the short stories and articles we read throughout the second half of the semester and any grammar concepts and vocabulary. We also do a sampling of different AP Released Exam reading selections along with the multiple choice questions from previous years' released exams.

## **Second Semester Pacing**

Second semester follows a similar pace to first semester, but adds a more intensive and specific preparation for the AP German Language Exam each week leading up to the exam.

### **Overview of a Week**

**Mondays:** I begin every Monday with an informal writing assignment in their journal using this question as a prompt: "Was hast du am Wochenende gemacht?" or something similar. They write for approximately 10 minutes and then report out anything interesting they encountered, in German, be it school, family or culture related. Once the discussion is over I present them with their writing topic for the week, which will gradually approximate the length and timing of the writing section of the AP German Language Exam. They must now brainstorm ideas and vocabulary for the topic *on their own*, without explicit help from me or the class. On alternating weeks, if they listened to a *Reisefieber* segment the previous week, then they take a quiz on that segment.

**Tuesdays:** I begin with the students sharing a recap of the writing topic and vocabulary from Monday in German. I follow that with a chapter from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* and alternate with segments from the cloze passages from previous years' AP Released Exams and others from a variety of sources. If it's a grammar week, we discuss the finer points of the grammar topic and do the practice exercises from the chapter, some individually, some as a class, some for homework. Instead of vocabulary from the *Handbuch* I now assign them vocabulary that I have compiled from topics and information from previous years' AP Released Exams.

**Wednesdays:** Grammar/cloze work is finished and we discuss the AP vocabulary. I continue with a reading from *Der Weg zum Lesen*, such as *Der Hellgraue Frühjahrmantel* by Wolfgang Hildesheimer and *Das Verliebne Buch* by Hermann Harry Schmitz, and later in the semester *Besuch der Alten Dame* as an independent reading assignment after the AP German Language Exam. The readings from *Der Weg zum Lesen* are shorter towards the beginning of the semester and gradually get longer and more difficult as the semester continues. Each story has several exercises geared towards all the different verb tenses and are quite intensive; the students must do these exercises and answer questions for each reading in German.

**Thursdays:** I begin with a discussion and analysis of the reading and we go over the exercises. Thursday is our language lab day so I continue with an aural comprehension practice using the first *Hörverständnis* from the cassettes of the current chapter from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* or we listen to a segment from *Reisefieber*, both appropriate for a college level course. They answer questions and prepare topics for discussion from the listening. In addition, we spend approximately ten minutes each Thursday going over the cartoon picture sequence and the twenty-second directed response section for speaking practice, as well as several listening selections from AP Released Exams.

**Fridays:** I begin with a vocabulary and grammar quiz based on the current chapter in the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* or a quiz on the cloze activity and AP vocabulary. After the quiz we discuss and go over the week's listening activity, including any discussion, questions and analysis thereof in German. And on alternating Fridays, we do ten to twenty of the *Blitzfragen* provided on the AATG list serve or watch a segment of the video from *Fokus Deutsch*.

## **Overview of a Month**

**Weeks One and Three:** *Reisefieber* quiz, writing assignment, AP vocabulary, grammar exercises and listening from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* or cloze activity, AP German Language Exam picture sequence and directed response, reading assignment, grammar and vocabulary quiz, ten to twenty of the *Blitzfragen* provided on the AATG list serve.

**Weeks Two and Four:** Writing assignment, AP vocabulary, grammar exercises from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*, listening from *Reisefieber*, AP German Language Exam picture sequence and directed response, reading assignment, cloze activity quiz, watch a segment of the video from *Fokus Deutsch*.

**Projects/Units:** Culture and everyday life, debates on current topics, Berlin and Berlin Wall, Travel Project and Movie Project. Each project is an integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening, with the students presenting their project/work at the culmination of the project and their classmates taking notes and sharing a spoken or written recap in German.

**Week before Midterm:** We do a review of all of the short stories and articles we read throughout the first half of the semester. We also review any grammar concepts and vocabulary.

**Week before AP German Language Exam:** We do a review of all of the short stories and articles we read throughout the second half of the semester and any grammar concepts and vocabulary. We also do a sampling of different AP listening selections and readings along with the multiple choice questions from previous years' AP Released Exams.

### **After the AP German Language Exam**

A full month of school remains after the AP German Language Exam. We read *Besuch der Alten Dame* and continue with the pacing regarding listening and journals. They do the Travel project and Movie project where they choose a scene from an American movie and they must re-write the script and using their own voices 'dub' over the scene in German. We do not have final exams for seniors, so we can relax a bit at the end of the year and watch *Shrek* without subtitles.

## **Teaching Strategies**

### **Reading**

Throughout the year the students read one short story, poem, article or novel a week, and a play after the AP German Language Exam. The short stories and novels are mostly from the twentieth century, with a variety of topics. The poetry covers a huge range of poets and writers spanning from the eighteenth century to the twentieth century. The articles are all from current sources including magazines, newspapers and the internet.

First semester the readings come primarily from *Mal was andres* and are a sampling of stories from a variety of authors. The students must read each story, answer questions, provide an analysis of the story and choose vocabulary from the reading that they find interesting or compelling. I also include a sampling of poetry from a variety of sources that the students must read, and then during the poetry project they must write their own poem and share it with the class. I choose from a vast variety of sources for articles, including but not limited to *Der Spiegel*, *Das*

*Fenster* and the internet such as google.de and yahoo.de. Some of the readings are done in class and some are done at home. Every reading is discussed in class and a summary of the reading is shared by one or two students. Every reading requires the students to answer questions and/or share a spoken or written summary in German.

Second semester the readings come primarily from *Der Weg zum Lesen*, a college level text, and are a sampling of stories from a variety of authors. The students must read each story, answer questions, provide an analysis of the story which we discuss. I choose from a vast variety of sources for articles, including but not limited to *Der Spiegel*, *Das Fenster* and the internet such as google.de and yahoo.de. Later in the semester we read the play *Besuch der Alten Dame* partially in class, mostly at home. Every reading is discussed in class and a summary of the reading is shared by one or two students. Every reading requires the students to answer questions and/or share a spoken or written summary in German.

To help students practice for the AP Released Exam for first semester and the AP German Language Exam for second semester, I use the reading passages from previous years' AP Released Exams. We read the selection, answer the questions, and discuss the answers and any concerns they may have had about the reading.

### **Writing**

Throughout the year the students have weekly writing assignments in their journals and also a weekly essay. The journal writing is informal and mostly uses this question as a prompt: "Was hast du am Wochenende gemacht?" They write for approximately 10 minutes and then report out anything interesting they encountered, in German, be it school, family or culture related. The essay topics are those I have amassed from many years of AP Released Exams. At the beginning of the year and throughout first semester, the students write an essay that is approximately one hundred words in length and that illustrates correct form, function and grammatical structures. The students are allowed to use a dictionary and the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* to assist with their writing and vocabulary. We also brainstorm ideas in class to assist with the complexity of some of the topics.

Second semester as the year progresses the essays become longer until they reach two hundred words and are written without the assistance of a dictionary or text. Further, the writings become timed to incorporate that element of the AP German Language Exam. In addition, the students write summaries of several of the readings they do in class, as well as a written summary of *Reisefieber* for every 2 segments. They also do a cloze activity every other week during second semester, either from an AP Released Exam or one that I have made myself.

### **Speaking**

Throughout the year the students have weekly access to our language lab, where they practice speaking skills. These skills will gradually be expanded as the year progresses and include a variety of activities and scenarios that incorporate both formal and informal speaking assignments.

First semester they have a speaking prompt that they must address each week. It can be a picture, a question, a story or article they read during the week and they must record their response and send it to me. Second semester we spend 10 minutes each week going over the cartoon picture sequence and the 20-second directed response section for speaking practice. In addition, they practice answering

*Blitzfragen* every other week throughout the year. These questions are probative and require more than a short answer. Students share their personal vocabulary with the class each week during first semester and report out and summarize any readings and listening activities we have done.

### **Listening Comprehension**

My primary sources for listening comprehension are from the *Hörverständnis* from the cassettes of the current chapter from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* and *Reisefieber*. Both sources are appropriate for a college level course and are accompanied by questions or a worksheet to allow an in depth analysis and/or summary, and they do a quiz for every segment of *Reisefieber*. At the beginning of the year the students find *Reisefieber* very difficult since the language and vocabulary are high level, but by the end of the series they are begging to see what the family is up to and where the episode will go.

In addition, we also watch several of the the *Fokus Deutsch* video segments and a variety of other video clips and movies through the year from a variety of sources. The *Fokus Deutsch* video segments are fifteen minutes each and are very structured and continue throughout the year. The series ranges from lower-level segments appropriate for high school level classes to higher-level segments appropriate for college level courses and is a great way to incorporate listening skills in an authentic video format.

To help students prepare for the AP German Language Exam, they do the listening selections from previous years' AP Released Exams.

### **Grammar**

I use the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* as my primary source to review and reinforce a multitude of topics from German grammar. The first three years of German class I incorporate a very structured presentation of German grammar, but often the more difficult topics need to be covered again. The *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik* is a college level text and has a lot of high level practice and also includes listening practice that incorporates the grammar as well.

Second semester the students read selections from *Der Weg zum Lesen*, also a college level text. I require the student to read each story, answer questions, provide an analysis of the story which we discuss, but each story also has a section where the students must re-write parts of the story in different verb tenses. This is a great review of the many different verb tenses and forms, which can be daunting and difficult to recall.

### **Vocabulary**

I use three sources for explicit vocabulary acquisition and comprehension. The students choose their own personal vocabulary from the current reading they are working on, they focus on the vocabulary from the current chapter from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*, or I give them specific vocabulary that I have compiled from topics and information from previous years' AP Released Exams. They are encouraged to incorporate the current vocabulary in any writing or speaking they are doing and have quizzes over some of the vocabulary as well.

## ***Student Evaluation***

Students are evaluated on all work that they do for class. Their grade is comprised of several different categories, which are weighted according to department and school guidelines. I use a variety of assessments including essays, journals, projects, oral presentations, quizzes, class participation, class work, homework, AP Exam practice, Semester Midterm Exams, and a Semester Final Exam.

### **Formal Assessments (35%)**

This category carries the most weight and includes all essays, oral presentations, journals, quizzes and AP Exam practice. Essays and oral presentations comprise the largest part of this category and are most frequently used in my class for evaluation of student output. Students have an essay and an oral presentation every week based on topics given to them by me, which are based on the AP Exam writing topics or on the current reading. Journals are also weekly, but the writing therein is more informal and usually this question is used as a prompt: "Was hast du am Wochenende gemacht?" They write for approximately 10 minutes and then report out anything interesting they encountered, be it school, family or culture related. Students are also evaluated using vocabulary and/or grammar quizzes based on the current vocabulary of grammar topic from the *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*. AP Exam practice is not a huge part of first semester but a large part of second semester's grade. It is comprised of a variety of segments from previous years' AP Released Exams.

### **Projects (15%)**

Students work on approximately 4-5 projects per semester. First semester projects include: Poetry, Famous Germans or the "Gravestone" project, Einstein, Immigrants in Germany. Second semester projects include: Culture and everyday life, debates on current topics, Berlin and the Berlin Wall, Travel Project and Movie Project. Each project is an integration of reading, writing, speaking and listening, with the students presenting their project/work at the culmination of the project and their classmates taking notes and sharing a spoken or written recap in German.

### **Participation (15%)**

Participation includes active participation in class and written class work. Class work is primarily based on vocabulary and grammar work, and also includes any work done in concert with weekly listening or video activities.

### **Homework (15%)**

Homework includes vocabulary and grammar work not finished in class, and handouts which accompany weekly readings or listening activities. Students are required to turn in homework after we have gone over the work and they have corrected or amended any information therein.

### **Semester Exam (15%)**

The semester exam for first semester follows the format of the 2002 AP Released German Language Exam.

### **Midterm Exam (5%)**

There is a midterm exam during first and second semester and each follows the format of the 1997 AP Released German Language Exam.

## **Teacher Resources**

### **Collections of Short Stories, Poetry, and Plays**

Dürrenmatt, Friedrich. *Besuch der alten Dame*. Zurich: Diogenes Verlag, 1998.

Federspiel, Jürg, and Margit Meinel Diehl. *Mal was Andres*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, INC. Out of print, have permission to use.

Vail, Van Horn and Sparks, *Der Weg zum Lesen*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1974

1992 *AP German Language Released Exam*. New York: The College Board, 1992.

1997 *AP German Language Released Exam*. New York: The College Board, 1997.

2002 *AP German Language Released Exam*. New York: The College Board, 2002.

### **Grammar**

Rankin, Jamie, and Larry D. Wells. *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik: Wiederholen und anwenden*. 3rd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001.

### **Movies and Videos**

*Fokus Deutsch*. 1999. Distributed by WGBH Boston, Inter Naciones, and the Goethe-Institut. 1999. 48 segments, 15 minutes each.

*Good Bye Lenin!* 2003. Directed by Wolfgang Becker. Distributed by Sony Pictures Classics, 2004. 121 minutes.

*Schwarzfahrer*. 1993. Directed by Pepe Danquart. Distributed by Film Movement, 2003. 12 minutes.

*Shrek*. 2001. Directed by Andrew Adamson and Vicki Jenson. Distributed by Dream Works, 2001. 93 minutes.

*The White Rose*. 1982. Directed by Michael Verhoeven. Distributed by The National Center for Jewish Films, 1982. 108 minutes.

### **Online Resources**

*Das Fenster Online*: [www.dasfenster.com](http://www.dasfenster.com)

*Fokus Deutsch*: [www.learner.org/resources/series104.html](http://www.learner.org/resources/series104.html)

Google: [www.google.de](http://www.google.de)

Reisefieber: [www.ur.se/reisefieber/](http://www.ur.se/reisefieber/)

*Spiegel Online*: [www.spiegel.de](http://www.spiegel.de)

Yahoo!: [www.yahoo.de](http://www.yahoo.de)