

A-Level German 2015-16

We are writing to you in advance of starting your AS-Level German studies here in September to advise you on how you may best prepare for the demands of the course.

There are two areas which pupils find most challenging: writing an essay with sufficient depth of content, and having thorough knowledge of the wide range of grammatical structures covered beyond GCSE level.

With regard to the former, you should aim to read or watch the news regularly, but pay particular attention to news stories which concern topics studied at AS:

TV: benefits and dangers of watching TV, discussing viewing habits and giving opinions, the future of TV

Advertising: different types of advertising, targeting adverts at children, stereotyping in advertising

Communication Technology: uses for/dangers of the internet, importance of electronic technology nowadays

Cinema: giving a film critique, different types of films, different means of viewing films (e.g. cinema vs. DVD)

Music: eras/trends in music, effect of music on people

Fashion: how clothes reflect your image, definitions of beauty

Sport/Fitness: traditional vs. new sports, benefits of sport and exercise, role models in sport, disabled people in sport

Health and Well-being: effects of smoking/alcohol/drugs, eating disorders, work-life balance

Holidays: holiday preferences, benefits of holidays, 'green' tourism

Family: definition of a good parent, the changing definition of family, bridging the generation gap

Friendships: characteristics of good friends, conflicts with friends, the difference between friendship and love

Marriage and partnerships: changing attitudes towards marriage, divorce and cohabitation, changing roles of men and women, benefits of staying single

It is suggested that you note ideas and opinions given in articles you read in an 'ideas bank' for each topic, to be filed away in preparation for use in the weekly essays you will write during the course. In addition, you could Google news articles from the past couple of years about the above topics to add to your ideas bank. Suggested sources for this task are: any British broadsheet newspaper, www.bbc.co.uk, www.welt.de, www.focus.de, <http://neuneinhalb.wdr.de>, www.tagesschau.de.

From time to time, links to relevant news articles may be posted on the QMGS Languages Twitter page, @QMGSLanguages, but you should by no means rely on this and instead, conduct your own

research as often as possible over the coming months. On our Twitter page you will also find information on other Languages events in school.

To refresh your understanding of German grammar, we suggest that you purchase a copy of *Schaum's Outline of German Grammar*, which is available from Amazon for £10.99 (or much less for a used copy). This book contains explanations, exercises and their answers, and therefore lends itself well to independent study over the summer. If your time is limited, we suggest concentrating on the sections which deal with the case system, verbs and conjunctions.

Of course, one of the rewards of learning a foreign language is the sense of achievement experienced when using the language in the country where it is spoken. Therefore, Queen Mary's is pleased to be able to offer all AS and A2 German students the opportunity to participate in a work experience exchange in Germany, kindly organised by our foreign language assistant, Mrs Tack-Benton. This allows you to experience working life in Germany first-hand and bolster your university application.

With 70% of companies expressing a need for workers with foreign language skills, but only 2% satisfied with their graduates' language skills, you will be part of a minority of British school leavers whose ability to communicate in another language is highly valued by employers. We therefore look forward to seeing you in September and helping you achieve your learning goals.

Please bring a lever arch file to your first lesson; thank you.