



GR 351 GERMAN LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT: INDEPENDENT ABROAD I

IES Abroad Berlin

DESCRIPTION: Students who enter this level are able to accomplish everyday needs required to live in a new culture. In this course, students will begin to develop independence and autonomy so that, when communication does break down, they have some tools at their disposal to resolve these challenges independently. Students should welcome correction and guidance from their instructors, hosts, and others in the community as they progress.

By the end of this course, students will begin to converse at a rate of speed approaching normal conversation. They will start to become creative, spontaneous, and self-reliant as they solve problems, interpret texts, negotiate, and express their opinions, likes, and dislikes in the culture. Although students will make errors and experience communication breakdowns, they are sometimes able to resolve these on their own. Students will understand some colloquial expressions and slang, and will begin to understand a wider variety of native speakers from different backgrounds. By the end of this level, students will be capable of achieving the learning outcomes outlined below.

CREDITS: 4 credits

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: German

PREREQUISITES: Students who are placed in this level should have achieved the outcomes in the Emerging Independent Abroad level as defined by the IES Abroad MAP for Language and Intercultural Communication.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Reading and listening comprehension
- Participation in class discussions
- Small group work
- Partner work
- Interviews
- Short presentations
- Individual studies
- Internet research
- Homework (mainly written)
- Essays

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

Regular attendance and participation in class work, regular assignments, tests and quizzes, final exam.

Grading:

30% Oral participation

25% Written homework and composition assignments

20% Tests and quizzes

25% Final exam

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who are placed in this level should have achieved the outcomes in the Emerging Independent Abroad level as defined by the IES Abroad *MAP for Language and Intercultural Communication*.

By the end of the course, students will be able to achieve some of the outcomes for the Independent Abroad level as defined by the *MAP for Language and Intercultural Communication*. The key learning outcomes from the MAP are summarized below.

I. Intercultural Communication

- A. Students will begin to identify at a basic level key host cultures, subcultures, habits, norms, and behaviors in a variety of settings, and they will be aware of the risk that generalizations can lead to stereotypes.
- B. Students will start to identify their own cultural beliefs, behaviors, and values by contrasting and comparing them with those of the host cultures.
- C. Students will be able to identify some gestures and body language, and they may be able to integrate some of those nonverbal actions into their interactions with native speakers.

II. Listening

- A. Students will be able to understand some spoken communications of moderate complexity (media, speeches, music, conversations, etc.) on a wide range of concrete everyday topics as well as abstract topics covered in classes.
- B. Students will begin to understand native speakers from a variety of backgrounds and limited experience with non-native speakers, and they will comprehend common colloquial expressions and slang.

III. Speaking

- A. Students will be able to speak on and discuss concrete everyday and personal topics, abstract topics covered in classes, as well as other topics of particular interest to them.
- B. Students will be able to participate and respond actively in a variety of interactions.
- C. Students will be able to give short presentations on topics related to the host culture.

IV. Reading

- A. Students will be able to read and understand articles, stories, and online texts using background knowledge to aid their comprehension.
- B. Students will begin to read and understand the key ideas of academic texts on familiar topics with assistance.

V. Writing

- A. Students will be able to meet many everyday writing needs (notes, text messages, formal and informal letters, emails, chats, online forums).
- B. Students will be able to write essays for class that narrate, describe, report, compare, contrast, and summarize on a wide range of topics with developing degrees of grammatical and lexical accuracy.
- C. Students will be able to edit their own and their peers' writing for common errors covered in class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

For our up-to-date attendance and exam policy, see: <https://moodle.iesabroad.org/mod/page/view.php?id=1004317>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students are expected to abide by the IES Abroad Academic Integrity Code. Assigned papers need to be properly and amply footnoted where appropriate, with all sources attributed. Poorly written and grammatically sloppy papers will be judged more severely.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments	Corresp. Learning Outcome(s)
1	1. Functional: - Memory test (remembering and applying new information) - Understanding a street survey on the topic of learning - Talking about your own learning - Explaining expressions - Understanding opinions in texts	- Give tips on learning - Write an apology by email - Reproduce a written text - Write a comment (express your own opinion)	I A, B II A III A IV A V A, B

	2. Grammatical: • Infinitive with and without 'zu' 3. Vocabulary: • Vocabulary exercises on the topic of 'learning' 4. Culture: • Portrait: Learning without borders: DAAD, Erasmus, OEAD		
2	1. Functional: • Understanding forum posts • Reporting on your own experiences 2. Grammatical: • Modal verbs and alternatives • es → man 3. Vocabulary: • Ask for information politely • Provide information 4. Culture: • Film: How do we learn?	• Formulate rules in writing and orally • Understand a blog entry about mistakes • Write a funny story	I A, B, C II A III A, B IV A V A, B, C
3	1. Functional: • Talking about special places Talking about travel • Understanding a text about the history of travel • Understanding and discussing important information on the topic of 'travel and the environment' 2. Grammatical: • Plural forms of nouns 3. Vocabulary: • Vocabulary exercises on the topic of travel • Organizing vocabulary in mind maps (learning strategy) 4. Culture: • Film: Environmentally friendly travel	• Understand travel offers and write about them to friends • Agree or disagree with opinions in a comment	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B IV A V A, B, C
4	1. Functional: • Understanding experience reports • Expressing your own opinion • Passing on information from a report to others verbally • Understanding a discussion • Discussing travel • Passing on information • Reaching agreement in a group with different opinions • Summarizing a discussion for others 2. Grammar: • Separable and inseparable verbs 3. Vocabulary: • Portrait: Helpers in times of need – the railway station mission 4. Culture: • Describing local transport connections and asking for information	• Understand a conversation about a stay abroad • Talk about a (fictional) vacation	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B IV A, B V A, B, C

5	1. Functional: - Understanding a podcast - Talking about tips for keeping things tidy - Talking about cultural differences when it comes to living arrangements - Addressing and clarifying uncertainties in everyday situations (talking about cultural differences) 2. Grammatical: - Giving location information: Wechselpräpositionen, local prepositions 3. Vocabulary: - Vocabulary exercises on the topic of moving and living 4. Culture: - Film: Alternative living on a manufactured home community	- Write a short story - Understand a conversation between friends - Understand house rules - Write a text about rules for living together	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B, C IV A, B V A, B, C
6	1. Functional: - Understanding information in a magazine article - Writing a story - Summarizing information from a magazine article for others - Understanding a radio interview 2. Grammatical: - Adjective declension 3. Vocabulary: - Talking to the landlord and asking for information 4. Culture: - Portrait: This can still be useful – recycled buildings	- Understand an email about a special event - Prepare and give a presentation - Write a text about city and country life	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B, C IV A, B V A, B, C
7	Midterm exam		
8	1. Functional: - Talking about cartoons - Understanding and presenting career developments - Talking about professions - Repeating biographical information orally - Understanding tips for applying for jobs - Writing a cover letter 2. Grammar: - Genitive case and prepositions with the genitive case 3. Vocabulary: - Vocabulary exercises on the topic of “work and careers” 4. Culture: - Interesting start-ups	- Evaluating the midterm exam - Presenting a cartoon from your own country in German - Telling a joke in German - Understanding a podcast on the topic of career choices - Finding suitable job advertisements for friends	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B, C IV A, B V A, B, C
9	1. Functional: - Understanding forum posts and an interview - Expressing and writing your own opinion - Listening to and noting down information about dealing with conflicts - Addressing a conflict constructively, responding and agreeing on a solution	- Passing on information in writing in an email - Formulating dialogues politely and acting them out	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B, C IV A, B V A, B, C

	2. Grammatical: - Sentence connections: causal, concessive, and consecutive clauses 3. Vocabulary: - Making small talk 4. Culture: - Film: Finding your career at your own pace		
10	1. Functional: - Talking about happiness - Understanding an interview - Writing a text about friendship or family - Understanding a street survey and a literary text - Writing a story 2. Grammatical: - Reflexive verbs 3. Vocabulary: - Vocabulary exercises on the topic of happiness and bad luck 4. Culture: - Portrait: The Ministry of Happiness – an initiative	- Understanding and giving tips on how to make friends - Understanding an article on happiness as a school subject	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B, C IV A, B V A, B, C
11	1. Functional: - Understand and summarize information from a feature on the topic of emotions - Describe and evaluate the development of a fictional character - Finish writing a story - Understand newspaper reports - Describe how a person changes over the course of a story 2. Grammatical: - Making comparisons: comparative and superlative - Comparisons with “als” and “wie” 3. Vocabulary: - Vocabulary exercises on the topic of emotions 4. Culture: - Film: Fall down, get up, keep going	- Understand a longer voice message - Verbally describe information from a graphic to others - Understand statements made by different people in a survey	I A, B, C II A, B III A, B, C IV A, B V A, B, C
11	Final exam		

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

- Koithan, Ute; Mayr-Sieber, Tanja; Schmitz, Helen; Sonntag, Ralf; Pilaski, Anna (2024): Kontext B1.1+. Deutsch als Fremdsprache. Kurs- und Übungsbuch mit Audios und Videos. Stuttgart: Klett. (=ISBN: 978-3-12-605332-7)
- Handouts provided by the instructor according to the students' needs

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:

- Buscha, Anne; Szita, Szilvia (2024): B-Grammatik. Übungsgrammatik Deutsch als Fremdsprache.

(08/2025)