

# First-year German • Individual Project for Kontext 05

## “Wir und unsere Familien” • “About Us and Our Families”

Final version due 2 weeks from start of assignment, which is \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity:** begin a simulated written exchange of friendly language and personal information with a German speaker (or speakers) your family might host for a few weeks

**Result:** a half-page letter and an interesting picture or two with friendly captions

**Level:** K5 (with vocabulary added from front material and student's own searches)

**Time:** ca. 4 hours over 10 days (2 hours for stage 1, 2 hours for stage 2); additional 10 minutes to 1 hour for optional stage 3, if needed

**Resources** (other than basic textbook materials): family pictures or “cute” drawing; picture or drawing of your residence (both outside and inside if possible); simple A-Z dictionary or pictorial dictionary; WWW resumés (search under the word “Lebenslauf”, which means “resumé” or “CV”; then look for personal / private documents, rather than business resumés, which tend to be dry and use headings and brief phrases rather than the “chatty” language of personal bio-descriptions)

### Objectives

- 1) learn and use, in simple sentences, terms from the following content areas: family and friendship; immediate personal environment (house, rooms, yard); basic personal physical characteristics, perhaps customized (brown eyes, tall);
- 2) learn and use basic expressions of possession and belonging (my, our)
- 3) solidify simple verb management (I am / play, my brother is / plays; Are you...? Do you play basketball?)
- 4) acquire skill of “stealing:” plugging own terms into framework provided by others (ex: modify a WWW personal resumé with own bio-information)

**NOTE:** The project has two main stages; the first is due ONE WEEK from when you get the assignment, and the second a week after that. You are welcome to turn in the stages earlier, even in brief and fragmentary form, so that you can receive **additional help from your instructor**. It's your tuition money.

**Stage 1: Let us check whether you are on the right track.** Find (or draw) a picture of yourself and some other persons or creatures you are close to. Consult your resources (see above) for basic family / friend terms (“sister,” “puppy,” etc.) and some simple words to describe their appearance and, perhaps, activities and personalities. (Avoid colorful expressions, such as “a little spacy” or “thinks he's God's gift to women,” since they likely won't convert to another language easily.) **Then write down IN GERMAN and turn in:** a) a list of 10 words that would be useful in describing your family, friends, and pets; b) 3 sentences that describe yourself and your characteristic activities; c) 3 questions you could send to your German-speaking guest (ex: “Do you have a cat?” “Are you taking math too?”); d) 3 captions for your picture(s) – avoid simple labels, and aim instead for juicy phrases (“little guy, but big ears, huh?”) or even sentences (“We're fishing on my birthday.”) (Note: German has separate words for talking about how human beings eat [=essen] and how animals eat/feed [=fressen]. But you can use “fressen” to describe people who behave like animals: “Mein Bruder frißt wie ein Elefant.”)

**Stage 2: Compose the short letter and put it together with the picture and captions.**

Aim for 8-10 sentences of 5-10 words (“My house is old and we have a lot of rooms.”). Deal with perhaps 3 topics (ex: something about your family, something about your town / neighborhood / house, and one other topic—maybe leisure interests). If you're wondering how to begin and end a letter in German, look at how we did it when we replied to your initial e-mails to us. Please write / type / print your letter clearly, and fit it and your picture with captions onto just **one page**. For “pretend” purposes that's so it would go as one FAX page or at the cheapest postal rate; for “German class” purposes that is so we can keep our records and maintain your portfolios more conveniently.

**Stage 3 (optional):** Consult scoring guide & instructor's comments; revise & hand in.