

First-year German • Individual Project (Kontext 17)

“Unsere Musik – Our Music”

Description: Find favorite music (or something similar) in the target language, and write a message that describes it as part of achieving a specific purpose (joining a jam session, etc.)

Level: Context 17

Time: 4-5 hours over 14 days (2-3 hours for stage 1, 1-2 hours for stage 2); additional 30 minutes to 1 hour for optional stage 3. Some of this is web-surfing and listening, NOT work!!

Due: Stage 1 is due 1 week from start of assignment (earlier is better, so you will have more help on stage 2). Stage 2 is due at next class meeting after Stage 1 is due. Final version of the 2 messages is due 2 weeks from start of assignment.

Objectives

- 1) find out about another culture's patterns of experiencing music of choice (as opposed to “official” music [=classical or traditional folkmusic], unless that is really the music of one's personal choice);
- 2) learn music terminology *beyond* the minimal survival level (“song,” “acoustic guitar,” instead of just “concert” and “hear”);
- 3) learn and use terms for “to like”, and distinguish “like (to)” (to enjoy [doing]), “would like” (to request, desire), and “like” (such as, similar to); if possible: “like” in the slang sense of “well, like, you know”

Procedure

- 1) Find and explore some target-language websites or equivalent print and sound resources which are about music that resembles your favorite music. (If you don't have much interest in music, or don't want to reveal it, choose the favorite music of someone you care about.) One way to find internet resources is to do a search on the kind of music (example: “jazz”) and “deutsch”. Another is to follow the subject divisions of your browser or a large-scale search program. You can also go to the site <<http://dmoz.org>>, which is a very comprehensive registry of sites by language and topic. The continuation <...org/World/Deutsch/Kultur/Musik> will lead you to a link to “genres.” Click that and you'll see a long list of possibilities (“country western,” “rap,” etc.). Another source are pages where people present their résumés with their personal interests; especially useful are pages where the résumé is in narrative form rather than as business-style lists with headings. A search under “Lebenslauf” (=résumé, CV) will yield many hits, but some of them will be employment adds that require a résumé. Try adding “über mich” (about me) or even just “ich” to the search combination. You could even add “Musik” to the search combination.
- 2) Fill out the worksheet and turn it in with any related material. THIS IS STAGE 1.
- 3) Compose two messages (in either order):
 - a) In English, write a report about your research experiences and methods to someone you know who is interested in similar music and wants to emulate your experience, but does not understand German. Include a resource where you have to give some intensive help with language, even a short translation, such as song lyrics or the tidbits of personal information that a “fan” site or “fanzine” offers.
 - b) Come up with a specific reason why you might write to someone about your music investigation, such as looking for rare recordings, wanting to join a jam session, applying for a music scholarship. Then, in the target language, write up to a page (250 words), telling what kind of music you like, why you like it, what you think of the similar music you found in the target culture, and why you are writing your message (other than as an assignment for a language course). This will be a lot easier if you “steal” vocabulary well; doing the English message first may help you formulate your thoughts, though it will not work simply to translate it.
- 4) Turn in your English and target-language messages and support materials. THIS IS STAGE 2.
- 5) If your score on project is too low to suit you, revise it. THIS IS STAGE 3.

Looking for off-beat or just quaint German music? (as compared to your own favorite, which you think is normal but other people think is strange or square, of course)

These terms may help: Jodel / jodeln; Schrammelmusik; Tingel-Tangel; Minnesänger; Alphorn; Ländler; Schuhplättler; Dudelsack (but be careful when searching the internet – that last word has another meaning in German slang)

Name _____

Project K17 “Unsere Musik – Our Music” – Stage 1

The “Stage 1” worksheet is intended to provide structure to your research activities and to help you find language that you can then apply in your “Stage 2” writing. During your research you will probably want to take notes in addition to what you write on the worksheet.

1. List here at least 3 websites or other music-related resources (music-store catalog, library book, etc.) that you found useful for this project. Give a short description of each (in English, if you want). Aim for these kinds of resources: lists of useful links (for example, clubs where that kind of music is played); personal information about people interested in the music (résumés, chatrooms / bulletin boards); detailed descriptions of the music (often on personal webpages, but also in chats or fan-group electronic newsletters or advertisements for bands); audio and visual resources (MP3 downloads, etc.)

URL or other identification	description

2. List here two pieces of music from the target culture that you found in your resources, and provide the sources

music (title, group, etc.)	source (URL, etc.)

3. Using your resources, find expressions for “like” in the senses listed below. Write out the key term (“go for”), quote the surrounding language (so you can steal entire phrases or sentences [“I really really go for traditional Bluegrass”]), and provide the source (URL, probably) of the language found.

English word/phrase	key equivalent	surrounding language	source
to enjoy, find interesting, “go for,” etc.			
to request politely something you would like to have			
to provide an example (“such as,” “for example”) or state a similarity (“just like,” “close to”)			
“filler” word (“It was, like, so cool.”)			

4. From your resources make two vocabulary lists of 10 or more items each

useful general musical terms		"juicy" words for describing your <i>special</i> kind of music	

Note about searching for vocabulary: Expect to find most of your words right on the websites, and in some cases to have to understand them by context rather than looking them up in a dictionary or using the English version of a website. There are two reasons: 1) some of the words that are most useful may well not be in your dictionary; 2) words change meaning over time and space – your dictionary may not give the right word.

Write here for your instructor any questions or requests that will help you on Stage 2.