

**Pre-A level  
preparation for  
German  
Summer 2022**



## **Einleitung (Introduction)**

We're delighted that you've made the (very wise!) decision to take German at A level, and so give you a skill which will set you apart from many other people in the UK (and one which you will have life-long), allow you to broaden your horizons and provide you with many opportunities in your future life and career.

The A level course in itself is stimulating and challenging and you will get a lot out of it. You will be aware, however, that like any subject, those who are most successful and get the most out of their A level studies are the ones who engage in the subject outside of the classroom, explore their particular interests in the subject further through wider reading and listening. You are in a hugely fortunate position of having virtually limitless access to the language at your fingertips, via the internet. And the current, unusual circumstances we find ourselves in also gives you the perfect opportunity to get your teeth into the subject and improve your language skills even before you start the A level course.

Over the summer, you can be developing fantastic independent learning habits. The wonderful thing about independent learning in a language is that you can improve rapidly by reading things and listening to programmes, podcasts etc. on topics that interest you! So if you enjoy history, get into the habit of reading articles or watching programmes on history. If you are a science fiction fan, there are programmes available which will appeal. If you enjoy science and nature, there are thousands of programmes, reading resources etc. If you are a literature buff, then similarly, it's never too early to start exploring.

What follows are some basic tips and guidelines on what you should be doing over the summer in the way of listening, reading and generally getting into good habits. You will see very quickly that developing good habits of regularly listening and reading will allow you to really fly in the language. I've divided the main part into listening and reading. Following that, there are some tips on how to get your grammar up to scratch before we start the A level course proper. In addition to these things, I will also be sending you links and suggestions of things to read and watch over the summer (to your school email addresses).

Viel Spaß!

## **LISTENING**

With broadband and TV and radio now broadcasting their programmes via the internet, you have a wonderful opportunity to improve the level of your German immeasurably. Through accessing German media on a regular basis, you will very quickly expand your comprehension skills, your vocab and your own accent and intonation (for speaking purposes). Have you ever wondered why the Germans (and other nationalities) speak such good English? It is because they regularly access the British media, listen to radio, watch the news in English. You will be aware you are expected to engage in independent listening on a weekly basis (and indeed, if you are hoping to get anything above a grade C at A level, this will be a basic requirement!). This SHOULD NOT be an onerous task, but indeed one which you should enjoy. Initially, listening to and watching German TV may be difficult BUT: you are not expected to understand every word. Focus on 'getting the gist' and listening out for words that you do recognise. If you do this, within the space of about six weeks you will be very proficient in listening.

Below I give you tips of the best things (short programmes, podcasts) to be doing regularly over the summer and also provide some tips on other things, depending on your interests.

## **Listening tip 1**

### **Regular access to LOGO (teenage news programme).**

You should be aiming to do this at least 3 times per week (even better if you get into the habit of watching it every day). It is a ten minute programme which summarises the news of that day in lively, digestible and accessible form. The images and visuals used to accompany the reports are a great aid to understanding. Here are the instructions to access the programme.

It is worth keeping a diary/notebook of the programmes you watch, briefly sketching down the date, the basic content of the reports and noting down any interesting words/phrases that you may have picked up. Overleaf is a template for an 'independent listening worksheet' that might help you record your listening.

*To access LOGO follow these steps*

- 1) Go to the website [www.zdf.de](http://www.zdf.de)*
- 2) Click on the SUCHE tab (to the middle right at the top of the page)*
- 3) Type in LOGO! which will take you to the programme (you will be able to get all programmes from that week)*
- 4) I recommend you watch with the subtitles (there is a little icon which looks like a speech bubble to get these. You can only get subtitles on a computer (not a tablet I think!))*
- 5) There is an option to download the programme (so you can watch anywhere)*

*In the appendix to this booklet is an independent notes sheet for the LOGO programmes.*

## **Listening tip 2**

Deutsche Welle

<https://www.dw.com/de/deutsch-lernen/s-2055>

Go to the Deutsch Lernen section of the Deutsche Welle website (link given above)

There are a whole variety of really excellent listening practice materials to help your listening skills get into top shape!

- a) *Langsam gesprochene Nachrichten* (slowly spoken news).

*This is on daily and the link is on the first page of the above website.*

*Even better is the fact that there is a manuscript so you can read along.*

<https://www.dw.com/de/20052020-langsam-gesprochene-nachrichten/a-53504896>

- b) *Video Thema:*

*This is a weekly mini-programme addressing an aspect of German culture or world events. It is accompanied by exercises and the transcript as well as a glossary. Brilliant practice and often fun topics!*

<https://www.dw.com/de/deutsch-lernen/video-thema/s-12165>

*YOU CAN ALSO DOWNLOAD THIS /SUBSCRIBE AS A PODCAST  
(SO GREAT FOR 'ON THE GO')*

- c) *Top Thema:*

*Similar to the above with more current affairs based events. Again, the LEKTION section offers some nice exercises, the transcript of the programme and also a glossary for vocabulary!*

<https://www.dw.com/de/deutsch-lernen/top-thema/s-8031>

*Again, you can subscribe to this as a podcast.*

- d) *Also a listening app, but more if you wish to expand your vocab (always a good tip!), this 'Deutschtrainer' is available as a podcast and is a brilliant resource (vocab is divided into topics and themes)*

<https://www.dw.com/de/deutsch-lernen/deutschtrainer/s-32888>

### **Listening tip 3**

#### **ARD website**

*The German public service broadcast provider (like our BBC) has set up a huge bank of programmes for teenagers and school pupils during the coronavirus crisis and it is neatly divided into themes: languages, history, science and technology, geography, nature etc. etc.*

*It is a brilliant resource to search topic areas that appeal to you. Please get into the habit of using this! Just scroll along the main topics and you are sure to find something of interest.*

<https://www.ardmediathek.de/ard/search/planet%20schule>

*In addition to these 'subject' related programmes, the ARD Mediathek has a vast range of entertainment programmes. All you need to do is scroll down the main site to find an area that interests you. There are many excellent (and easy-watching) films, as well as soaps, comedies, documentaries. It's quite simple really, and not using this resource is a huge wasted opportunity! Use it!*

### **Listening tip 4**

#### **ZDF website**

*The other main public service broadcast provider also has a Mediathek with a vast range of TV programmes. As with the ARD website, you can explore the categories, depending on what your interests are. I would recommend the 'Fernsehfilm der Woche' – often a good thriller. I particularly recommend those programmes and films which have a subtitle option (that's subtitles in German!) Just click on the speech bubble icon and this should come up. This is brilliant for improving both your listening and your reading skills!*

<https://www.zdf.de/>

*In addition to these two main channels, you can access German radio. Sometimes it's great just to have on in the background. You pick things up 'subconsciously'. This website takes you to all radio stations which can be livestreamed.*

<https://tunein.com/radio/Germany-r100346/>

Making the most of these resources is essential if you are serious about becoming competent in the language. A\*/A candidates at A level tend to listen to at least 3 hours of German every week. The good news is that you watch and listen to what is fun and interests you!

---

**Please see next section for reading tips!**

## **READING**

It is equally important that you get into the habit of accessing written German articles which are not necessarily part of the curriculum. Again, this will hone your reading skills (and make you aware that reading a foreign language isn't about translating every word individually, but about getting the gist, broader understanding and of course, if required, then looking for details.) Regularly reading German is essential so that you become a fluent reader. Start early and reading will become more fun!

You should aim to read articles not only relating to the contemporary world and your A level topics but, more importantly, you should access websites of issues which you are interested in: music, film, fashion, history, science: anything and everything is good. You will be asked about what you have read and expected to note down the vocabulary. You should get into the habit of reading at least a few articles a week for enjoyment.

As a department we subscribe to two excellent current affair magazines which you can borrow: *'Dein Spiegel'* and *'Presse und Sprache'*. They are accessible and are brilliant for topic vocab and generally improving your vocabulary. Presse und Sprache also has a listening programme, for which you can get the password.

*Here are some other suggestions for general websites and more specific areas of interest:*



## **General**

[www.spiegel.de](http://www.spiegel.de) (the most prominent German current affairs magazine (with articles on many things). Go to the tab 'Dein Spiegel' which has many articles for young people and is in more accessible language.

[www.planet-wissen.de](http://www.planet-wissen.de) This is a superb site which will take you to topics on anything and everything and give links to other articles on other web pages.

[www.zeit.de](http://www.zeit.de) (another popular, but relatively high-brow German weekly publication)

[www.bravo.de](http://www.bravo.de) – probably the best known and most popular youth magazine (and amusingly cheesy!) General trash culture!

More specific areas of interest:

## **Pop music**

[www.rollingstone.de](http://www.rollingstone.de)

[www.musikexpress.de](http://www.musikexpress.de)

## **Sport**

[www.spowo.ch](http://www.spowo.ch) (a Swiss sports magazine online)

[www.kicker.de](http://www.kicker.de) (a very famous and popular football magazine)

[www.tennismagazin.de](http://www.tennismagazin.de)

## **Fashion**

[www.brigitte.de](http://www.brigitte.de)

[www.vogue.de](http://www.vogue.de)

[www.elle.de](http://www.elle.de)

## **BOOKS:**

*Many of you like reading, which is perfect for all A level subjects. You should get into the habit early on with reading around the subject. We have an expanding German library where you can borrow **‘Easy Reader’** books and short novels for teenagers, which you will find accessible and fun to read and also help you improve your reading skills very quickly. You will be provided with an independent learning log on return to school and, if you are striving for higher grades, you are expected to work your way through at least some of these.*

*In addition, there is a brilliant website which offers free access to online books. I am giving you the link for Kinderbücher here (not because I think you’re children, but that this is the best place to start when you are setting out reading longer texts in German. Besides they are fun and there are lots of classic tales which you will be able to access!)*

[https://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/DE\\_Kinderbuch\\_\(Bücherregal\)](https://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/DE_Kinderbuch_(Bücherregal))

## Other ways to improve and prepare yourself for A level – grammar and language practice.

I have no doubt whatsoever that reading and listening are the things you should be doing most and they are also the best ways to really ignite your interests and explore which areas of German culture you are interested in! In addition, however, there are a number of other things you can be doing to get yourself really ahead of the game before we start A level proper.

- 1) *Bridging the gap grammar workbook. This will be sent to you by email and covers the essentials/basics of grammar. Certainly lots of this will be familiar to you, but it's an excellent resource to get you drilled and give you plenty of practice so you feel confident with verbs, tenses, cases and word order (the three 'big things')*  
*If you do not receive a copy, please email me:*  
[dan.wilton@caistorgrammar.com](mailto:dan.wilton@caistorgrammar.com)
- 2) The website [www.nthuleen.com](http://www.nthuleen.com) is a superb website. Go to the grammar section and you can tackle any area you wish to revise. There will be quite a lot here that looks unfamiliar and which we will tackle in class, so don't worry about doing things which are completely unfamiliar.
- 3) *Learn German with Herr Antrim is a really quirky and funny site with an American German teacher who covers a whole range of topics and useful scenarios where you can practise your German*  
  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MrLAntrim/featured>

## **Vocab**

*In addition to these things (which should keep you busy), it is important that you review vocab regularly (you will need to have very good vocab knowledge to do well at A level and you are expected to learn 70-100 words per week if you want to be in the running for the higher grades. Why not get ahead now? (Actually reviewing the GCSE vocab will be a great place to start!). But also, when you're doing reading or listening, get into the habit of writing down new words and phrases that you think might be useful! If you start a vocab book now, that's a great start!*

*Finally, I am contactable by email for most of the summer. If there are further questions regarding best ways to prepare for your A level, please contact me on [dan.wilton@caistorgrammar.com](mailto:dan.wilton@caistorgrammar.com)*

*We will be doing occasional 'online' lessons (which will relate to some of the things above).*

*Whilst the lockdown and the restrictions are frustrating, try and take what is positive from them and use the time to get stuck into your subjects!*

*Bis bald!*

*DW*