

Topic 2 Cultural Geography of Germany

Lesson 5 What do Germans do for recreation?

Lesson Objective

The student will compare and contrast daily life in Germany to a family in the United States.

Materials and Resources

- Transparency 8 “Leisure Time”
- Handout 4 “Daily Activities”
- Transparency 9 “Daily Activities”

Strategies

The most popular sport in Germany is soccer (called *Fußball* / football in Germany). Children start playing it at a very early age. This is one of the reasons why a German team is usually among the finalists of the World Cup soccer competition that is held every four years. American-style football and baseball are not typical German sports, but basketball and ice hockey are popular. Children are also introduced to track and field events at a young age. They also play a game called *Handball*, which is like soccer, except that the ball is thrown instead of kicked. Many girls prefer doing gymnastics or ballet dancing. Like children in the United States, German children like horseback riding, swimming, tennis, and volleyball. Skiing, skating and sledding are popular winter activities.

In addition to sports, many Germans also enjoy attending concerts, strolling through parks, reading, growing flowers and vegetables in a home garden, watching television, eating with family and friends at a sidewalk café, playing computer games, etc. **Transparency 8, “Leisure Time”** can be used as a visual depiction to introduce some of the favorite pastimes of the Germans to students.

Photo 1 Soccer – the most popular sport for all ages

Photo 2 Violin playing – playing an instrument is definitely a popular hobby in Germany

Photo 3 Kite flying – not only in fall but also in other seasons people of all ages fly kites

Photo 4 Biking – bicycles are often used for shopping trips as well as recreation

Photo 5 Painting – art is taught at school and is also practiced at home

Photo 6 Water park – swimming is a popular sport for young people

Photo 7 Games – many families enjoy playing board games together such as dominos, backgammon, Trivial Pursuit, chess and many others

Photo 8 Theatrics – many children like to dress in costumes and perform plays for their families

The teacher should help students generate a list of leisure time activities they enjoy. The survey should include such items as watching television, listening to music, reading, hobbies/clubs, playing computer games, attending theater/concerts, visiting museums, and community education courses. Use the list to survey students as to their personal leisure time activities and then tally the results into an appropriate graph. The teacher should then lead a class discussion of the similarities and differences of leisure time activities in the two countries.

Have students identify the events taking place on **Handout 4 and Transparency 9, “Daily Activities”** and ask them, which of the activities might take place in the U.S. as well.

1. *Adventure Playground* – Since the 1960s play areas for children in parks have totally changed from traditional sandboxes, swings to really adventurous and challenging areas. Even grown-ups enjoy visiting them.
2. *Gardening* – Contact to nature is very important, not only through visits and observations but also through action. Allotment holders work in their gardens during the weekend and every possible free afternoon and evening.
3. *Lunch break* – Germans are said to be extremely industrious. Nowadays, people also enjoy, relax and dream.
4. *Shopping/Street café* – Shopping is a daily activity, with breaks in a street café, especially when you’ve got an attractive surrounding as on the historical market place in Bonn.
5. *Market strolling* – Specialized handicraft- or farmers’ markets attract shoppers from all over Germany, as it is shown here in Weimar, with the beautiful yellow front of Goethe’s famous home.
6. *Skating, Cologne* – The international trend of inline skating is followed by German youngsters of all ages. Here, two amateur artists practice in front of the famous Cologne Cathedral.
7. *Walking in a park* – Whether it is in the countryside or in cities, walking is perhaps the most preferred outdoor activity in Germany.