

German Day
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

MIDDLE SCHOOL

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Participation is limited to grade levels in your MIDDLE school. Students from (senior) high schools MUST participate in the regular German Day.

2. Active participation is limited to a maximum of ten (10) students, though up to 20 students may come from a given school. All students must be accompanied by a teacher or a parent.

3. There are two primary contests:

- A. POETRY - students recite/sing/act out poem/song.
- B. SPELLING - students spell words from the list attached.

The basic judging criteria are similar to those for high school German Day. The list of words are of common classroom activities and objects. There are no words in the list with umlauts or ess-zetts; we want to keep it straightforward. The poems are listed in ascending order of length. It might be best to have younger students (Grade 6) choose the shorter ones, and let older students (Grade 8) try the longer ones. However, any student may choose any poem to recite or sing.

4. In addition to POETRY and SPELLING, there are three other contests:

C. MUSIC

D. SKIT

E. POSTER

The basic guidelines for these contests are the same as for high school German Day.

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POETRY

Guidelines

1. A maximum of *three (3)* students per school may recite poems from the list below. Most poems should require no more than one to two minutes recitation time.
2. Students may have the text of the poem in front of them, but may not simply read it off the text copy.
3. The recitation will be judged on the basis of pronunciation, clarity of recitation, and the ability to show that the student understood the poem well enough to "act" it out.
4. A student may bring other students or the teacher along to the recitation for encouragement or to act as an audience, but these may not prompt the student reciting.

The poems for Middle School German Day are:

Es war eine Mutter ...
Kommt ein Vogel geflogen ...
Weisst du, wieviel' Sternlein stehen ...
Die Jahresuhr
Herr Matz
Luftballon sitzt im Gras.
In meinem Haus.

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SPELLING

Each school may have a maximum of two teams for Spelling. Each team has a maximum three students. Students may, however, participate as individuals, that is, in teams of one, but then only up to a maximum of two such one-person teams. In the *first round*, each student in a team will be asked to spell three words. Once the first student has spelled three words, the second student from the team will be given three words to spell, followed by the third. If a student misses two words, that student is eliminated from further competition. If two of the three students in a team are eliminated, the entire team is eliminated from further competition. The team receives zero (0) points. If two or all three members spell at least two words each correctly, that team moves to the second round.

The *second round* is like the first, except that some teams have two members, others three. Now, if two members fail to spell all *three* words correctly, the team is eliminated from further competition and is awarded one (1) point. If at least two members survive the second round, the team continues to the third round.

The *third round* is "sudden death." Only one member of the team does the actual spelling. He/She will be given up to ten words in a row to spell. If he/she misspells one single word, the team is eliminated, and will be awarded two (2) points. If the designated team member spells all ten words correctly, the team is awarded three (3) points in Spelling at its respective level.

Rules for Spelling are:

(1) The standard German alphabet, as well as other orthographic conventions, is in force. If a team wishes to have use spelling variants common in Austria or Switzerland, they *must* indicate this beforehand.

(2) Capital letters must be called out as such (Großes A, Großes Z usw.). Misspelling will be called for a word that must be capitalized. Likewise, words that are not normally capitalized (except as first words in a sentence) will be considered misspelled if they are erroneously capitalized.

Team members must give their responses by saying the word, spelling it, then repeating the word, as follows:

Judge: *Wie schreibt man "Wolke"?*

Team member: *Wolke großes-w-o-l-k-e Wolke*

Team members may correct themselves while spelling, either by clearly correcting an individual letter or by starting over. Once a word has been said the second time, the spelling will be considered finished and will be judged as such.

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MUSIC

1. "Music" for purposes of German Day means vocal music, that is, voice music plus text, not instrumental music.
2. For Middle Schools, there is only one category, Music. It can be Solo (one song from one person from a given school) or Ensemble (one song from any number of persons from a given school), but only one Music contest can be presented per school. There are no restrictions in terms of grade, age, class, or academic background. Any student from a given middle school may participate.
3. A *capella* performance is strongly encouraged, but performers may bring recordings with instrumental accompaniment only, but neither pianos nor other instruments will be available for live accompaniment in Memorial Union. No electronic equipment will be available either. Keep it simple. Keep it a *capella*!
4. All songs must be sung in German without exception. Any type of song is acceptable, including folk, art, traditional, classical, modern, popular, etc. as long as it is in German. While still acceptable, songs translated from other languages into German should be avoided, unless the translation is generally recognized as standard in the German-speaking world. Translations of songs from other languages made specially for German Day are, therefore, not permitted.

Comment: the purpose of the event is to highlight authentic German music, not, for example, translations of British or American hit songs into German, such as the German-language Beatles songs. There is a wealth of music composed in German by German speakers, popular, classical, folk, novelty, country (yes!), etc. Participants should draw from it.

5. All performances may last no more than three minutes.
6. Performances will be judged on three criteria:
 - a. pronunciation and articulation of the words (lyrics)
 - b. style (interpretation of the music)
 - c. technique (overall technical skill)
7. The decision of the judges will be final.

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SKITS

Guidelines

1. Each middle school may stage only one (1) Skit. Each skit should be put on by a minimum of five (5) students. The themes of the skits are yours to choose, but experience shows that original material or creative adaptations of familiar material is best.
2. *The language of all skits is German.* Skits presented in English, even with German themes, will be disqualified, and awarded no points, no matter how imaginative or well acted. Avoid English as much as possible!
3. All skits must be *memorized*, not read off of printed scripts. Each school may bring prompters, but students should have rehearsed their scripts so well that prompters can stay in the background.
4. Each skit lasts a *maximum of five (5) minutes*. The time slot allotted for set up, presentation, and wind down is ten (10) minutes, so that six skits can be presented and judged per hour. Rehearse your skit so that you can be finished in five minutes. Skits should be imaginative, lively, humorous, but, above all, short!
5. The decisions of the judges will be final and binding on all participants.
6. Any skit that contains racial slurs, sexual references, or scatological language will be disqualified, with zero points awarded. This includes goosestepping, stiffarmed saluting, and Hogan's Heroes German. The purpose of German Day skits is to present your program in its best light, not to underscore the stereotypes of the ignorant or the bad taste of the immature. In other words, know what your students are saying and why!

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POSTER

Guidelines

1. Poster contest motto: ...

---> Posters should work with and around the motto ("Hebt das D-A-CH!"), but judges will judge the overall quality of the work according to the Scoring Guidelines, not whether or not a Poster keeps to the motto.

2. Each school may submit only ONE (1) poster for the actual competition, but may bring others to display, space permitting.
3. The posters may be prepared by individual students or done as class project. No distinction is necessary between various class levels. This is one area where even all students in your German program can participate. All posters represent the entire school and its German program.
4. Poster size: standard size, between 18" x 24" and 24" x 36".
5. The name of the student(s) or class, the teacher, and the school must be written clearly *on the back of each poster*. You may, however, identify your school on the front of any of the posters.
6. Teachers should approve each poster. Posters that contain racist or sexist material will be removed from competition. Students should be encouraged to emphasize the positive about learning German.
7. Posters should be brought to Memorial Union and be given to an usher who will take them to the Reception Room where they will be displayed.
8. The decisions of judges will be final and binding on all participants.
9. All posters remain the property of the schools and the students who produce them and should be removed at the end of the day. There is no guarantee that posters left in Memorial Union will be returned.