



Kinder lernen Deutsch Textbook Evaluation Project, Grades K-8, 2009

Edited by Iris Busch

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1 Table of Contents; Introduction; Acknowledgements

Materials Reviewed:

2-3	Auf in den Zirkus!	20-21	Ping Pong neu 1
4-5	Bärenspaß 1	22-23	Ping Pong neu 2
6-7	Das neue Deutschmobil 2	24-25	Ping Pong neu 3
8-9	Der grüne Max 1 & 2	26-27	Sowieso 1
10-11	Deutsch Aktuell 1	28-29	Tamburin 1; Deutsch für Kinder
12-13	geni@I A1	30-31	Tamburin 2; Deutsch für Kinder
14-15	geni@I A2	32-33	Tamburin 3
16-17	Komm mit! Level 1	34-35	Wir2
18-19	Meine Freunde und ich (Lehrerhandbuch)		
36-37	Criteria for Evaluating Textbooks and Other Printed Curriculum Material		
38-39	List of Additional Materials; LangSource		
40	Age / Proficiency Level Rubric		
41	Descriptions: ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking		
42	Descriptions: CEFR Achievement Levels		

Introduction

The AATG is pleased to publish the fourth edition of the *Kinder Lernen Deutsch* materials evaluation project. The first three were produced in 1988, 1992, and 1999 at the request of teachers who needed guidelines and criteria for selecting textbooks and supplemental materials as well as recommendations of commonly used texts in K-8 German classrooms produced in the United States and Germany.

The list of criteria on pages 36-37 is adapted from Languages and Children: Making the Match by Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Dahlberg. The template is designed for easy reference to major aspects in the process of textbook selection and is followed by a concise summary and information about specific aspects of each.

In addition to a critical evaluation of the selected texts, the committee members reviewed them for their reflection of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning and identified a proficiency level for each text based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Acknowledgements

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Thanks also go to the members of the 2008 evaluation committee: Max Achtau, Community Middle School, Plainsboro, NJ; Iris Busch, University of Delaware, Newark, DE; Phyllis Farrar, Kansas State Department of Education, Topeka, KS; Kerstin Hopkins, Die Deutsche Sprachschule, Potomac, MD; and Helene Zimmer-Loew, AATG. We also thank Kerstin Hopkins, Die Deutsche Sprachschule, Potomac, MD, for her assistance in collecting the listing of additional materials, and Iris Busch, University of Delaware, as the editor of this document.

Criteria for Evaluating Textbooks and Other Printed Curriculum Material

Title	
Author(s)	
Publisher	
Source	
Date	
Teacher's Manual (language)	
Intended Age	
Language Proficiency Level	
Components	
KLD Level Recommendation	

Goals

Are the materials standards-based and oriented toward student performance?	
Are the goals of the program or authors clearly stated?	
Is the scope and sequence for the entire series carefully developed and clearly presented?	
Do the materials reflect authentic use of language?	
Is this the way people in the target culture <i>really</i> express themselves?	
Are the materials suitable for the interests and maturity level of the proposed audience?	

Communication

Does <i>communication</i> rather than <i>grammar</i> serve as the organizing principle?	
Does work with grammar concentrate on functional use in context rather than on form?	
Is the use of English avoided in student and teacher materials?	
Do the materials reflect an understanding of the use of current methodologies (pairs, small groups, individual work)?	
Is the material oriented to activity and experience rather than to exercise and drill?	
Do the materials provide opportunities for meaningful, purposeful language use in the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes?	
Are the materials designed to develop a solid oral language base upon which to build reading and writing skills?	

Culture

Is culture integrated into the materials?	
Is there emphasis on <i>experiencing</i> culture rather than on learning <i>about</i> culture?	
Is culture presented from a global perspective rather than focusing on a single country, region, or ethnic group?	
Does culture include products, practices and perspectives?	
Are the situations and language presented culturally authentic and up to date?	
Do the materials promote an appreciation of and empathy toward the value and richness of cultural diversity?	
Are there resources provided or suggested for authentic songs, games, and children's literature?	

Subject Content and Thinking Skills (Connections)

Are there grade-appropriate, interdisciplinary content and activities in the target language?	
Are the materials conducive to the development of higher-order thinking skills, and not restricted to rote learning?	
Are there opportunities for students to personalize language, culture, and content learning?	
Are there opportunities for students to discover new information using the target language?	

Bias

Are the illustrations and text free of racial, gender, and cultural bias?	
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Flexibility

Are the materials adaptable to different program models and time allocations?	
Do the materials provide options for a variety of student learning styles—visual, auditory, kinesthetic?	

Physical Characteristics

Are the student materials visually appealing and colorful?	
Do the color photographs and other visuals support the printed material?	
Is the size of print in student materials the same as that used in subject content textbooks used at the same grade level?	
Are the materials durable? Can they withstand handling by many children over the period of time covered by a textbook adoption?	
Is the content listing clear?	

Support Materials

Does the teacher receive adequate and effective guidance in the use of the materials?	
Are there relevant and effective charts, transparencies, flash cards, pictures, tapes, web-based materials and activities, and other support materials available in addition to the basic program?	
If taped materials are available, do they feature age-appropriate, native-speaker voices speaking naturally in the presentation of songs, rhymes, and stories?	
Are there audio and visual materials available that include program-relevant sound effects and background music?	

Budget

Are the materials affordable?	
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Standards (Note the integration of standards into the materials in the categories below)

Comparisons	
Communities	

Please write your concise comments about the material based on the guidelines you have just reviewed.

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Adapted from: Languages and Children: Making the Match, 3rd edition, by Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Dahlberg. ISBN-10: 0205463711. Publisher: Allyn & Bacon.