

TANDEM PROGRAMME

- You want to improve your **German language skills**?
- Do you have difficulty understanding mothertongues/ native speakers?
 - Would you like to learn German outside of a course/ the classroom?
- Are you looking for a German student to help you with pronouncing difficult words in a more relaxed setting?
 - You want to **learn a foreign language**?
 - Would you like to test and improve your language skills with a native speaker?
 - Do you find that your language instructor doesn't have enough time to answer all your questions in class?

The Tandem programme gives you the opportunity to improve your language skills in one-on-one or small group meetings. On the one hand, you profit from your partner's knowledge and cultural experiences. On the other hand, you can share your own knowledge about a language and get practice in teaching a language. The tandem programme is about creating a learning and teaching environment that allows both of you to improve your ability.

Your tandem meetings can be considered for the Intercultural Competence Certificate, which is issued by the International Office.

For further information, please contact jane.fischer@jade-hs.de.

In the following, we offer you some ideas to make the best of your tandem.

Tandem – Preparation & Rules

A tandem is an efficient and cost-free way of learning languages. With no teacher around you and your tandem partner are alternately adopting the roles of the learner and the teacher. It is up to you to decide, **where, what** and **how** you want to learn. The following guidelines will help you to structure your tandem in such a way that both of you improve your language skills and have fun learning together.

Preparation

- **Collect** ideas for **vocabulary** that you would like to discuss. What would you like to say in a conversation about the topic?
- Before every session look up some **phrases or terms** that you consider interesting, but difficult to use. **Try them out** during the upcoming meeting.
- Take care to **practice both languages separately** (don't mix them in one conversation).

Your role as a teacher

- Try to avoid direct translation, but **encourage** the other person **to describe and rephrase** what he/she wants to express.
- Introduce a **summing-up talk** at the end of your meetings. Here you can note down new terms, elaborate further examples and situations related to your topic.
- **Correct** your partner in a clear but polite way!
- Try **not to interrupt** your partner's speech, give him/her time to search for the right word/phrase.
- Concentrate on what your partner wants to

tell you and not on mistakes.

- Ask what your partner wanted to say by **using the right phrase/term** in the conversation.

Your role as a learner

- **Try to express** what you want to say in the foreign language.
- Make clear if you need **help!**
- **Take notes** to help you remembering phrases and vocabulary. Use them to refresh your memory in preparation for your next session.

Finally these are the "3 golden rules" of tandem-learning:

- Meet on a **regular** basis!
- **Prepare** yourself for the meetings!
- **Respect** your partner!

Tandem – frequently asked questions

Time - WHEN?

- Agree on **how long** you want to conduct the tandem (3 months, 6 months, 1 year...)!
- Agree at least in the beginning on **fixed dates!**
- It is recommended to meet around **two times a week** in the beginning.
- Each session is dedicated to train **one** language only.
- There are no recommendations about the duration of the meeting, but you should not over-do it!
- If you meet longer than one hour: **change the language** after the first half of the meeting!

Location - WHERE?

- A **quiet and neutral place** in the beginning (the cafeteria outside lunchtime, an unused seminar room or a quiet café)
- Places of common **interest** (exhibitions, museums or sports events)
- After a while you can shift your meetings into more personal surroundings, for example to your home.
- In times of social distancing, we suggest online meetings. Make yourself comfy, have your tea and a snack with you as in the first suggestion. Look into the future regarding the second point – once you could meet in such places, which one would you be interested in to meet for your tandem?

Content - WHAT?

- Decide what to discuss and what to learn!
- You can get some ideas from our **topic list**.
- To get prepared for each meeting, it is important to agree on a topic beforehand, e.g. **in the end of the last session**

Material - WITH?

- You can bring all kinds of material you consider interesting and helpful to discuss the topic of the session (**Photos, newspaper articles, little items or even food and drinks**).
- Bring a **dictionary**!
- The **tandem diary** can be helpful to collect everything you discuss during your sessions (Keep track of all the terms and phrases you got to know)

Corrections - HOW?

- Concentrate on what your partner **wants to tell you and not on mistakes!**
- Give your partner a chance to ask for a correction.
- Ask him/her if your partner is searching for the right word or you could not understand him/her.
- You can give corrections by asking what the other wanted to say or by using the right phrase/ term in the ongoing conversation.
- Correct mistakes straight, without complicated explanations and politely

Finally: Language tandem in a nutshell - Useful advices

- Practise each language separately!
- The same amount of time and attention to each language!
- Alternate in being the teacher and the learner!
- Meet regularly!
- Inform your partner in advance if you can't keep the appointment!
- Clarify the way you would like to learn!
- Agree on the way of giving and receiving feedback!
- Take notes and discuss mistakes at the end of the meeting!
- Let your partner know when something is bothering you!
- Discuss the progress of your tandem learning once a month and make adjustments when necessary!

Tandem questions before you start

Guidelines for starting tandem language learning

In the beginning of a language tandem partnership it might be useful to clarify **expectations** and **availabilities** in order to make the experience a pleasant and enriching one. Answer the questions below and bring the form to the **first meeting** with your partner. Discussing the answers will help you getting started and developing a successful tandem partnership.

1. Why do you want to take part in tandem learning?

2. How long do you want the tandem to last?

3. Which of the following language skills do you intend to improve? What are your priorities?

- a) Oral communication
- b) Reading
- c) Listening
- d) Writing
- e) Subject specific vocabulary (e.g. business words)
- f) Others (give details!)

4. When do you want to meet? For how many hours?

(Recommendations: minimum 2 hours per week, 1 hour for each language)

5. What method of communication do you want to use preferably?

- a) Personal meetings
- b) Telephone
- c) Email
- d) Chat
- e) Letters

6. Where do you want to meet?

(Recommendation: location / atmosphere should be relaxed and not too noisy)

- a) In the library
- b) At the Mensa
- c) In a café, bar or restaurant
- d) At home
- e) At public events (e.g. sports or cultural)
- f) Virtually/ Online
- g) Somewhere else (give details)

7. What kind of topics would you like talking about? Make a personal list.

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

8. Which material do you want to use?

- a) Articles from newspapers/ magazines
- b) Books (literature of grammar/ exercise)
- c) Music
- d) Movies/ television shows
- e) Souvenirs or other authentic material

f) Others

9. How do you want to be corrected?

- a) Every time you make a mistake
- b) Only for repeated mistakes
- c) In case there is a more common way to say it

10. When do you want to be corrected?

- a) Instantly
- b) At the end of the phrase

Tandem topics

In the tandem program, you can pick the topics you want to discuss self-responsibly. To help you keeping topics in mind, we prepared a short **overview**. Of course you can repeat the "classic" contents of language courses, but there are many other topics you can pick up!

The basics

If you are entirely new to a language, it might be helpful to start your learning process with the "**classic**" expressions and basic words, which you will know from language courses.

- Welcome and farewell
- Introducing yourself
- Finding out about similarities and differences to your own native language

The country and its people

- Culture and traditions
- Food culture
- Intercultural differences, non-verbal expressions
- Why am I interested in the other country's language and culture?

General topics

- Family
- Leisure time and holidays
- Music, arts, literature
- Sports and events

Me and Jade University

- What are you doing at Jade University?
- Why did you decide to study here?
- What do you like/ don't you like about the university and your course?

Everyday life

- Job perspectives in the other country
- Young people and youth culture
- Everyday language: Dialects and phrases

Getting around abroad

This might especially be interesting to you if you are **about to go for a stay abroad**, or have **just arrived** in Germany:

- Arriving in a new country: Opening hours, health insurance, where to buy a bus ticket...
- Your tandem partner can help you to understand the "bare necessities" of the other culture.
- Forms and administration: Annoying, but unavoidable

Student life

- Student housing abroad
- Learning culture: Is a deadline really a deadline or merely a recommendation?
- Abbreviations and other vocabulary outside the dictionary
- Student jobs abroad

Tandem Diary

>>Date:
>>Topic:

>>Place:

>>Learning goal

>>What could be small tasks and sub-topics?

>>Is there any material we would like to use?

>>Notes

>>Anything to prepare for next week?