



Bringing German to Life in the Classroom

The Culture Corner Project

by CT Jennifer Maverley & FLA Sophia Ennemoser
at Loreto College, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin

Introducing ourselves

Jennifer Maverley

German teacher at Loreto College
Passionate about the German language and culture in the different German speaking countries

Sophia Ennemoser

Language assistant from Austria
Passionate about teaching students about the Austrian culture and language
#Austria is not Germany



which is why we decided to create the Culture Corner



Die Kulturecke

The Culture Corner

Sociocultural Awareness

Creating awareness through providing the students with all sorts of cultural information and resources

Sociocultural Comparison

Encouraging the students to draw comparisons between German and Austrian culture and their cultural backgrounds

Sociocultural Similarities

Highlighting the differences and the similarities of German and Austrian culture and the students' cultural backgrounds

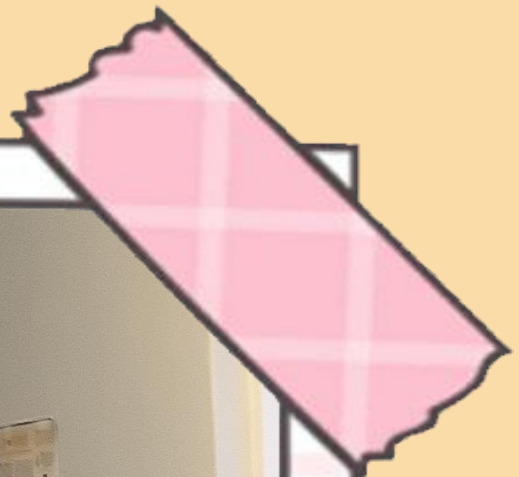
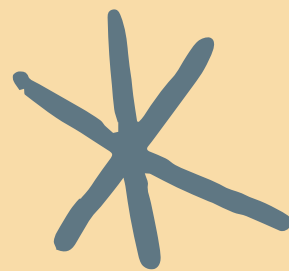




In cooperation with ...

The culture corner project is created together with all German year groups, but the transition year students contribute most to it. The project's target group, however, is not limited to the German language students. The culture corner has been put up in the hallway next to the language classrooms which means that in-between classes students of other languages get the chance to look at it and learn about German and Austrian culture too.

TYs at work on the Culture Corner





The Corner Stones of the Culture Corner



Posters on recent events in German speaking countries



Advertisement of German activities at the school



Playlists, Social Media & more

Posters on recent events



Posters on Recent Events

Why?

One way of bringing culture into school and to life is to inform students about what is going on in the countries where the language they learn is spoken.

How is it done?

In October the TYs did some research and made posters about the German and Austrian national day. They included QR codes to the national anthems.

In class we talked to the different year groups about those, and other German autumn traditions like for example Oktoberfest.

Future outlook:

Every month new events and festivities will be presented and explained (e.g. New Year traditions, Carnival, Easter, ...)

→ *Christmas special edition*



Christmas Special Edition

Christmas time is a time full of traditions, events and festivities. Therefore, we planned something special. Together with the TYs Ms Maverley and I made an advent calendar.

Why?

First of all, an advent calendar offers the chance to present 24 facts about Austrian and German Christmas traditions in a more exciting way than a poster. Secondly, the advent calendar was invented in Germany which makes it the ideal medium to talk about Christmas traditions in the German speaking countries.

Every day the students open one bauble, which includes a fact in German and English, a picture and a QR code to an online resource (e.g. video, song, recipe). The tree is accessible for all students., however, the German students deal with it more intensively, as we dedicate the first minutes of every class to opening the baubles, watching the QR code content and talking about it.



A closer look at some baubles

To give an example of what kind of information the advent calendar provides, the next couple of slides show some of the baubles the TYs and I have made.

All baubles start with a fact saying “Did you know that...” in English and in German. They all include a picture and a QR code.

The first bauble

The first bauble explains the German origin of the advent calendar and provides the QR code to a video that explains it further.



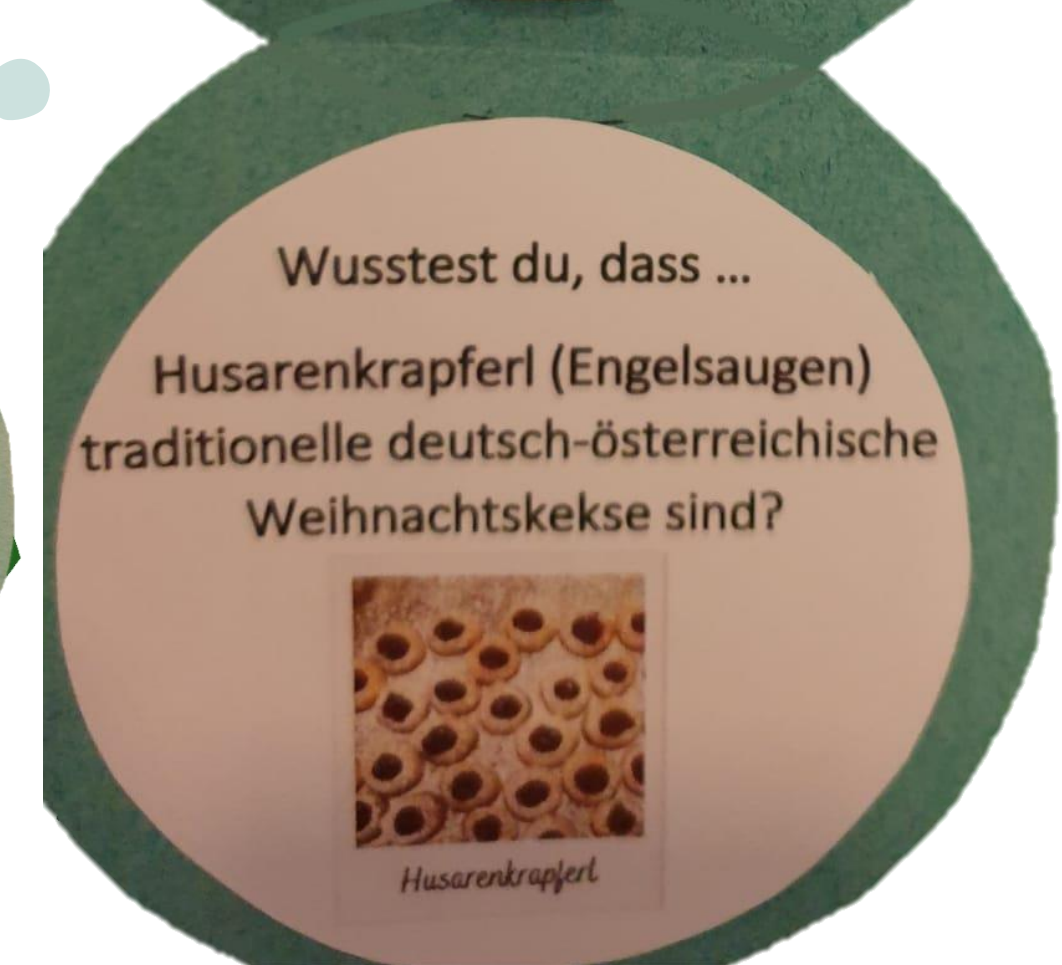
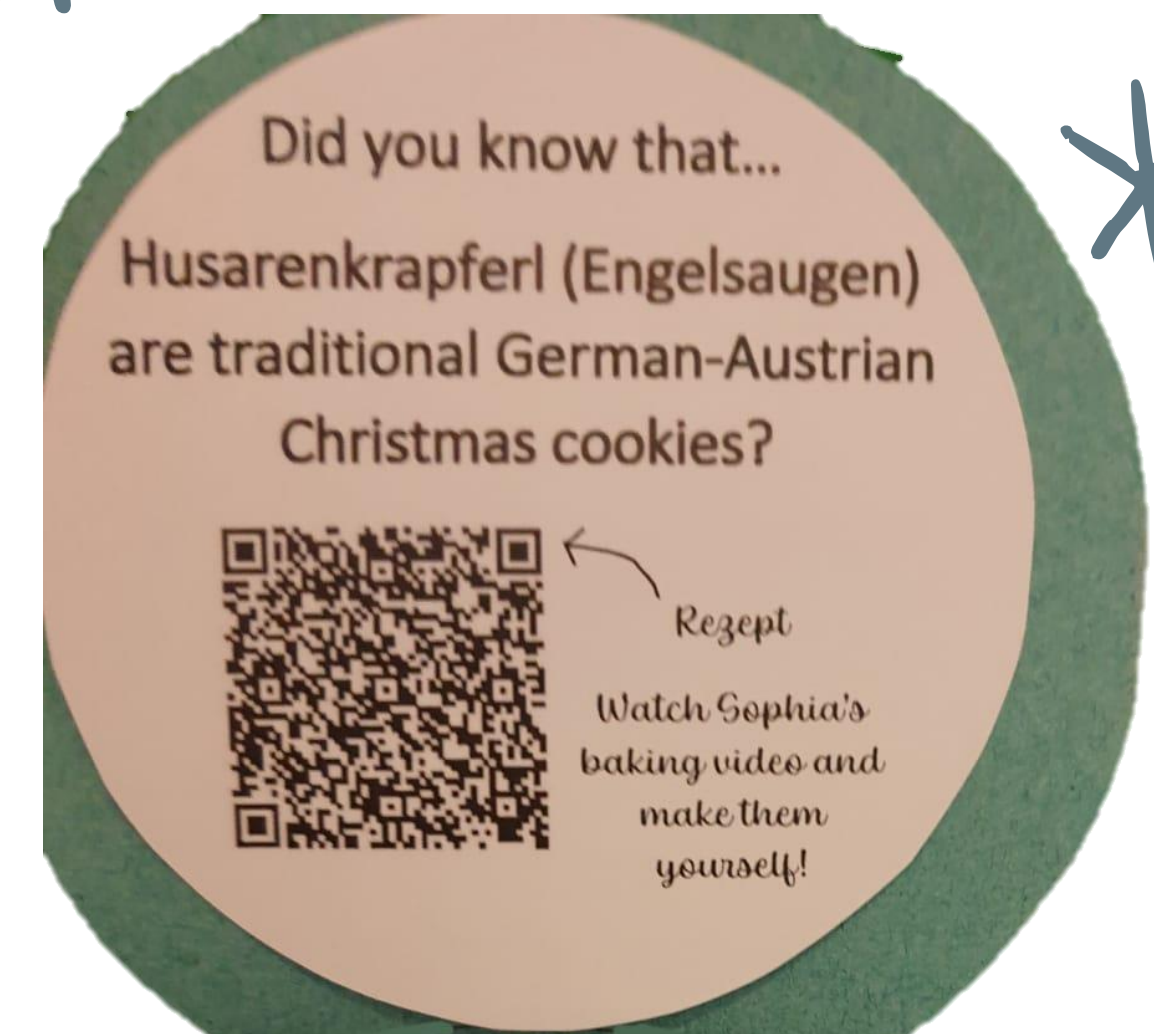
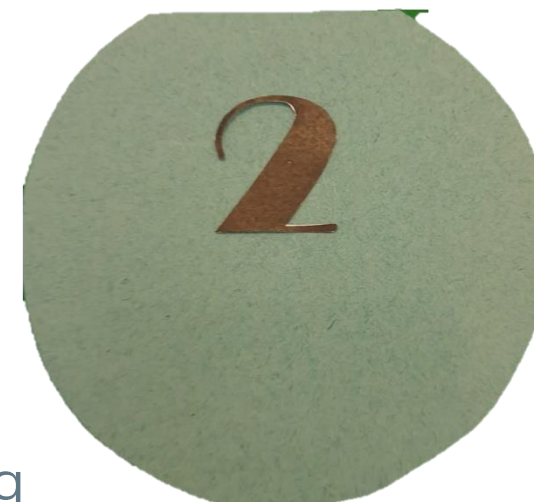
A closer look at some baubles

The second bauble

The second bauble shows a typical German–Austrian Christmas cookie and the QR Code brings them to a recipe video that I filmed for them.

This bauble was part of a little project we did with the second-year students. The second-year students had recently finished the chapter on food and we decided to put their knowledge into practice. Everyone should film a German baking video and bring the baked product and the video to school for a little “tasting and video session”.

I also made a video that we then included in the advent calendar. The video is recorded in German but in the beginning the recipe is provided in English as well, to make it accessible for everyone who would like to try it.





The video from the 2nd bauble

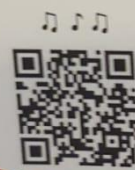


A closer look at some baubles

3

Did you know that ...
today the first candle on the
Advent wreath is lit and a song
about Advent is sung?

♪ ♪ ♪
„We herald the dear Advent.
Look the first (2nd 3rd 4th) candle burns.“



Wusstest du, dass ...
heute die erste Kerze am
Adventskranz angezündet wird und
man ein Adventslied singt?

♪ ♪ ♪
„Wir sagen euch an den lieben Advent.
Sehet die erste (2. 3. 4.) Kerze brennt.“



4

Wusstest du, dass ...
heute Zweige abgeschnitten und
in eine Vase gestellt werden? Sie
heißen Barbarazweige und wenn
sie bis Heiligabend blühen, bringt
das Glück und Segen.



Did you know that...
today twigs are cut and put in a
vase? They are called “Barbara’s
twigs” and if they bloom until
Christmas Eve, it brings luck and
blessings.

Why are they
called
Barbarazweige?



Did you know that...
today is “Krampus” day? A
“Krampus” is a devilish creature
that accompanies the Nikolaus and
punishes naughty children.

Watch Christoph
Waltz, a famous
Austrian actor,
explain the
Krampus



Wusstest du, dass ...
heute Krampustag ist? Ein
Krampus ist eine teuflische Gestalt,
die den Nikolaus begleitet und
unartige Kinder bestraft.



5

A closer look at some baubles



Did you know that...

today is "Nikolaus" day? Saint Nicholas brings sweets and little presents to nice kids. In some regions shoes are placed outside the door, which Saint Nicholas then fills. In other regions Saint Nicholas enters the house and hands out the presents with the help of angels.

Watch a short video about Saint Nicholas and German/Austrian traditions



Wusstest du, dass ...

heute Nikolaustag ist? Der heilige Nikolaus bringt artigen Kindern Süßigkeiten und kleine Geschenke. In manchen Regionen werden Schuhe vor die Tür gestellt, die der Nikolaus dann befüllt. In anderen Regionen kommt der Nikolaus ins Haus und verteilt die Geschenke mithilfe von Engeln.



7

Did you know that...

„Weihnachtsmann & Co. KG“, a 26-part cartoon series, has been shown on German and Austrian TV every year around Christmas time since 1997?

Watch the first episode here

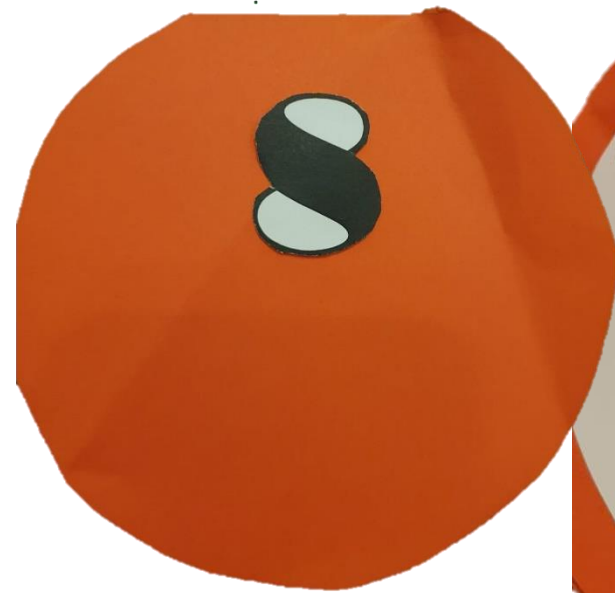


Wusstest du, dass ...

Weihnachtsmann & Co. KG, eine 26-teilige Zeichentrickserie, seit 1997 jedes Jahr zur Weihnachtszeit im deutschen Fernsehen läuft?



A closer look at some baubles



Did you know that...
the song „In the Christmas bakery“
is the perfect „soundtrack“ for
baking cookies? At least in my
opinion...

Listen to the song
and bake some
cookies :P



Wusstest du, dass ...
das Lied „In der Weihnachtsbäckerei“
der perfekte „Soundtrack“ fürs
Kekse backen ist? Zumindest
meiner Meinung nach...

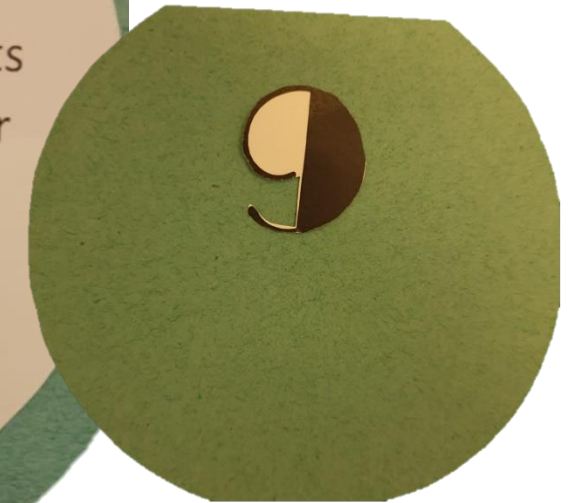


Did you know that...
around Christmas time nativity
scenes are put up in many
Austrian houses and one visits
other houses to look at their
nativity scenes?

Take a virtual tour
through a nativity
scene museum



Wusstest du, dass ...
in der Weihnachtszeit in vielen
österreichischen Häusern Krippen
aufgestellt werden und man in
andere Häuser geht, um sich die
Krippen anzuschauen?



A closer look at some baubles

10

Did you know that...
the advent wreath was invented
in Hamburg in 1839 and
originally had more than just
four candles?

Watch this funny
video about a
foreigner learning
about the
Adventskranz



Wusstest du, dass ...
der Adventskranz 1839 in
Hamburg erfunden wurde und
ursprünglich mehr als nur vier
Kerzen hatte?

♪♪♪ „Gehet die **zweite** Kerze brennt!“ ♪♪♪



Did you know that...

there are between 1500 and
3000 Christmas markets or
„Christ child markets“ in
Germany and Austria?

Watch this video to
learn **MUST-KNOW**
phrases for every
Weihnachts- and
Christkindlmarkt



11

Wusstest du, dass ...
es zwischen 1500 und 3000
Weihnachtsmärkte bzw.
„Christkindlmärkte“ in
Deutschland und Österreich gibt?



Advertisement of German activities



Advertisement of German activities

Why?

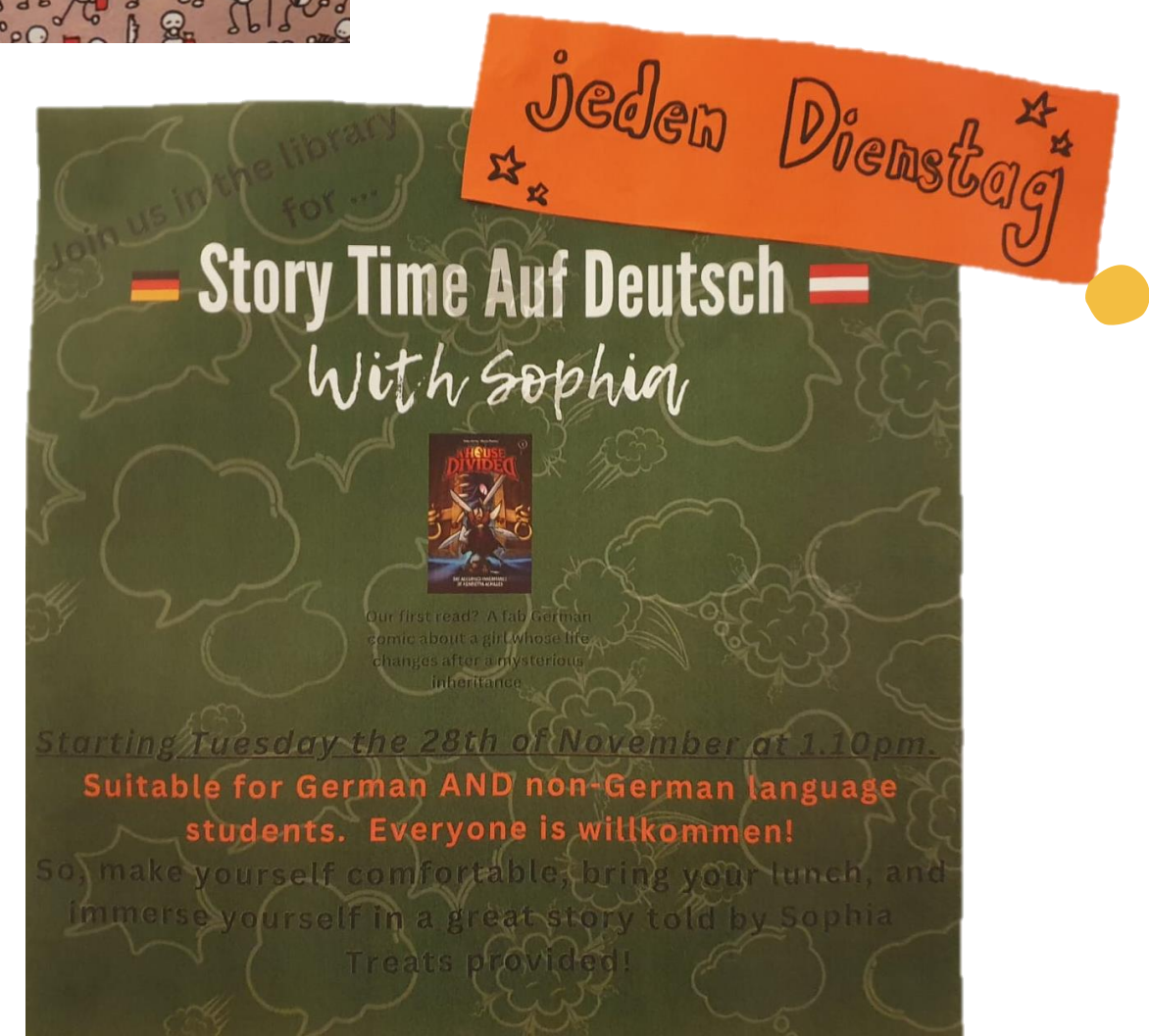
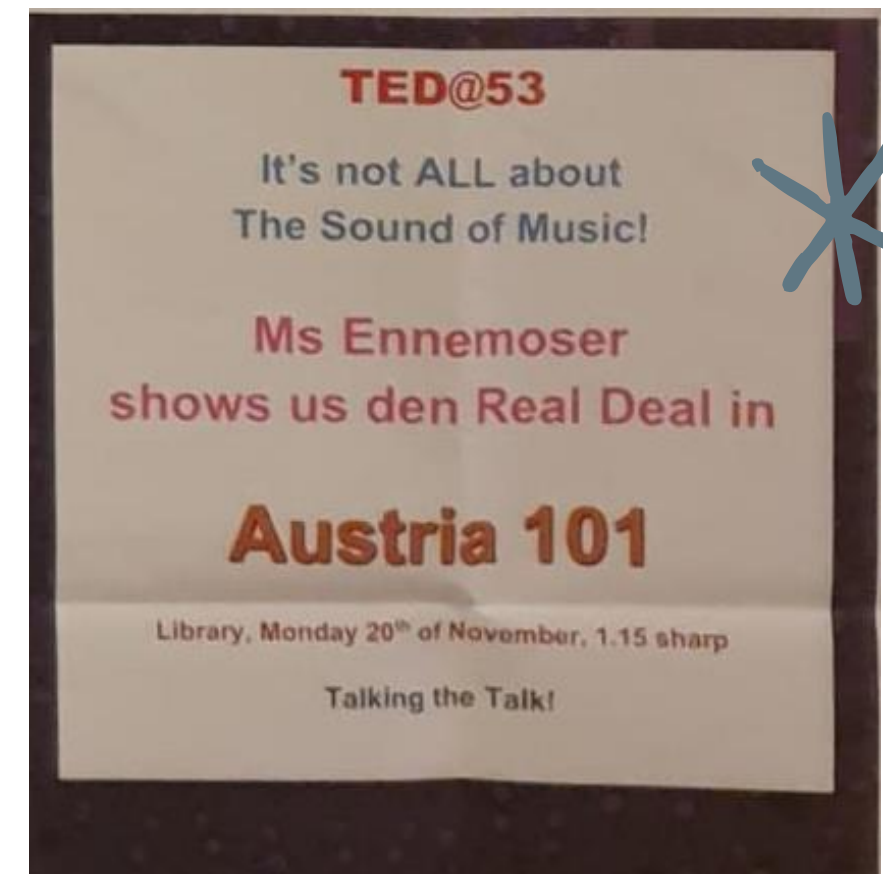
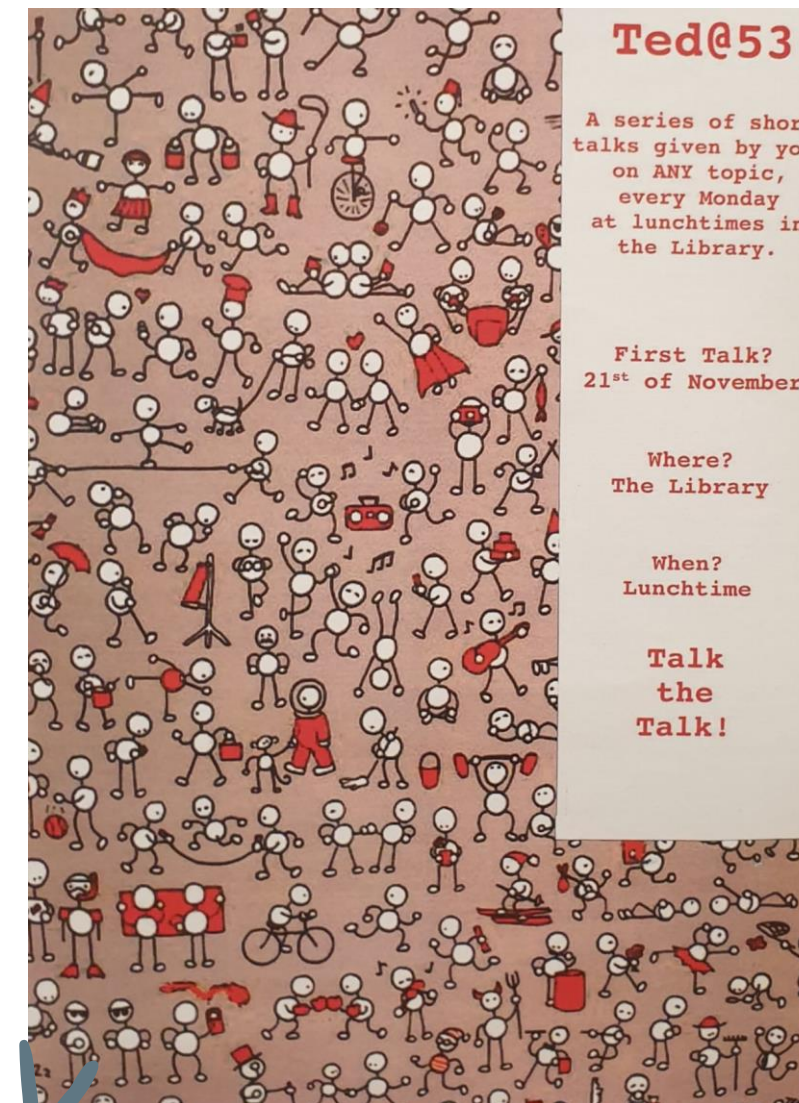
Students receive many emails a day and might overlook the email informing them about activities and events organised. Passing by the culture corner they are reminded of all the extracurricular German events

What is advertised?

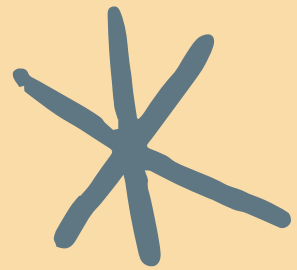
So far, a Ted Talk (where I talked about Austrian stereotypes, the relationship between Austria and Germany and other facts) and the weekly story time session (where I read a German comic and plan fun exercises around it) were advertised.

Future outlook:

All future extracurricular events will be advertised on the culture corner.



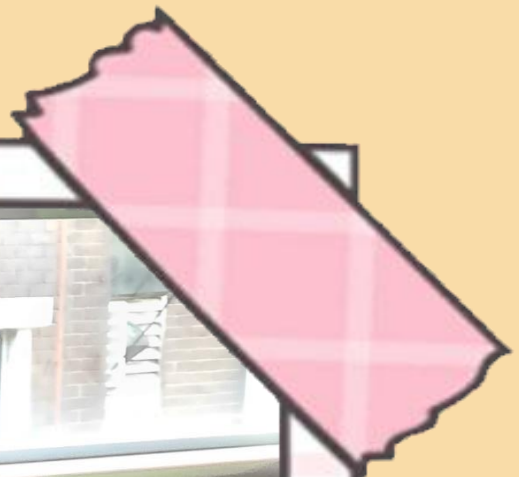
The TedTalk



German Story Time



German Story Time



German Storytime

Why?

Often there is not enough time in class to deal with literature in the target language, which is why we organized a German Story Time at lunchtime. Loreto College has a lovely library and an enthusiastic librarian, who enables German Story Time every Tuesday so that students can experience the German language in a different setting.

For whom?

Again we tried to include students that do not study German but have an interest in languages. This is why a German comic has been chosen. The pictures are put up on the projector so that everyone can follow the story while I read. Moreover, I develop exercises every week that help non-German speakers and beginning learners to understand the story.



Playlists, Social Media & More



Playlists, Social Media & More

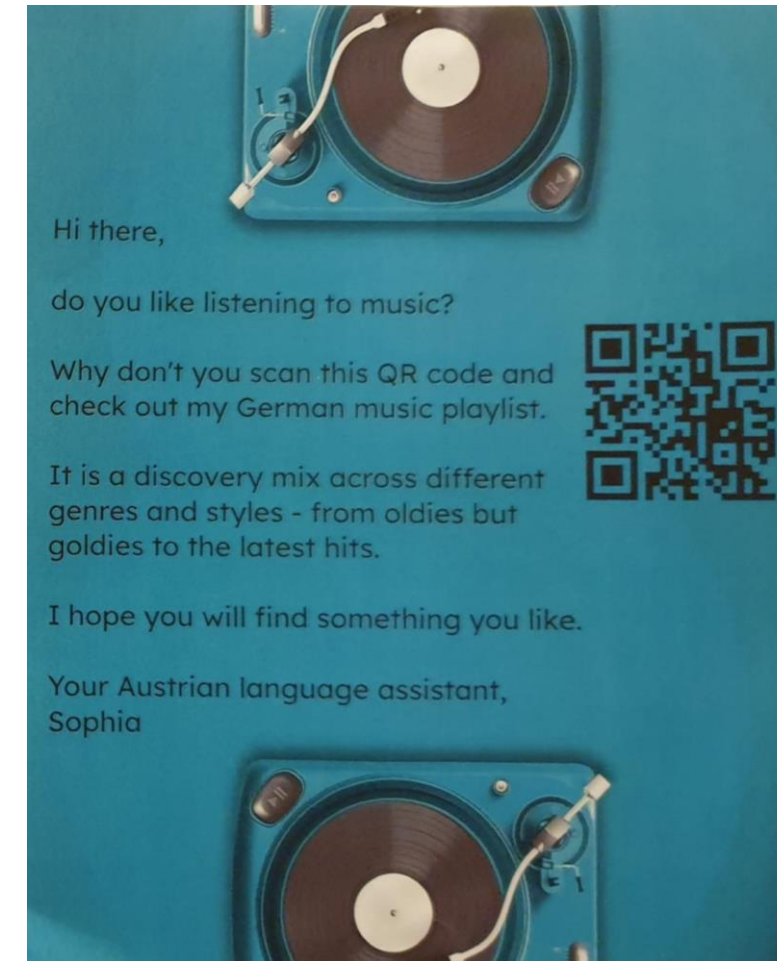
Why?

Most students spent a lot of time on social media and like listening to music. Through creating a German music playlist and sharing funny German memes and videos the students deal with the German language outside the classroom.

How does it work?

The students scan the QR code on the poster and find a German music playlist that I created for them. It includes almost 80 songs across genres, from classics to brand-new hits. We talked about the songs in class and the students shared Irish artists with me on Mentimeter.

The students scan the QR code on the smartphone poster and will find a funny video or meme. The text message on the phone also invites them to send an email to me with funny videos or memes they have found about the Austrian and German culture and language so I can share them with everyone.



Soziale Medien



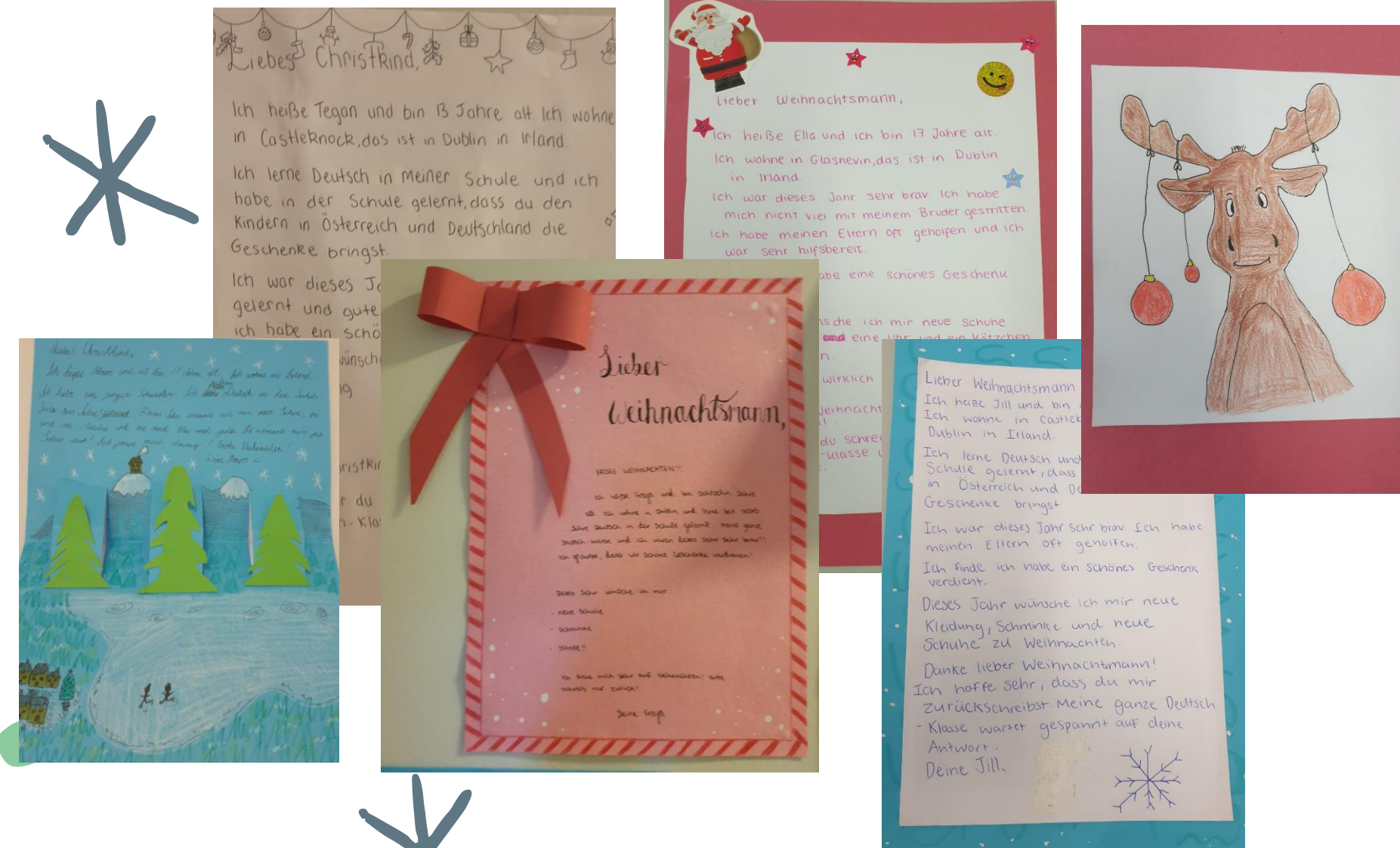
Latest Additions

German Christmas Music Playlist

As the German music playlist has proven to be very popular and this not only among the German language students but also with students of other languages. I have put together another playlist this time with German Christmas songs. Again classics and new hits invite the students to listen to more German music in their free time.

Letters to the “Weihnachtsmann”/”Christkind”

Another addition to the Christmas section of the Culture Corner are the letters to the “Weihnachtsmann” and “Christkind” (who bring presents to the children in Germany and Austria). While listening to the Christmas playlist and chatting in German every year group wrote their letters and put them up in the Culture Corner. One letter will be sent to a special Christmas post office in Austria or Germany, which will then send us an answer from the “Weihnachtsmann” or “Christkind”.



Some of the Letters



Incorporating class projects

Why?

Whenever a project we do with a German year group is a success and suitable for the culture corner we include it there so that other students can learn about it as well.

An example:

The second-year students dealt with the chapter on food and we thought this would be a great way to inform them about Austrian (and German) food culture. I think food and culture go hand in hand and one can learn a lot about a country when looking at what people eat. This also enabled a comparison to other cultures' cuisines.

Future outlook:

We will keep incorporating class projects we do with different year groups into the culture corner to show them and other students the interesting things we have learnt.



Incorporating class projects

How did we do it?

I printed out pictures of traditional Austrian (and German) dishes with their names on it, as well as places where one could get them. This included for example the bakery, the Alm (mountain huts that serve food), the pastry shop and “an Austrian granny’s kitchen”. I laid those out on the table and each student received a couple of dishes and their task was to match each dish with a location. We also did little games such as “Guess which dish I am?” where they had to ask yes-no-questions like “Am I sweet?” to find out where they have to put their dish.

In the end we had an overview over many Austrian (and German) dishes and where one can order them. We used it to further talk about what kind of dishes they would like to try or not. Finally, we made the poster with the dishes they found most important or interesting which we then put up in the culture corner.



& More

Being open to cooperation

Through attending classes of other teachers and showing openness for cooperation I was able to teach a geography lesson. The students were learning about mountains, so I was invited to talk about Austria and the Alps.

This gave me the opportunity to talk about what it is like living in a mountainous part of Austria, to deal with some stereotypes and misconceptions, to answer questions and simply to reach an audience I would not normally have been able to reach.



AUSTRIA AND THE ALPS

AUSTRIA - FACTS

- Area: 83 800 km²
- Inhabitants: 9 million
- Capital city: Vienna
- Language: German (Austrian German)

Emblem **Flag**

Austria in the middle of Europe

Austria its nine states and 8 neighbouring countries

THE ALPS - FACTS

- 1200 km long fold mountain range
- 8 alpine countries: Monaco, France, Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, Austria and Slovenia
- Highest peak: Mont Blanc (4 807m)

The mountain range of the Alps

2/3 of Austria are in the Alps

but 80% of the Austrian population live in areas of under 600m. (oetk.at) Why? Because people live in valleys or in less mountainous parts of Austria (e.g. Vienna)

& More

The Culture Corner Booklet

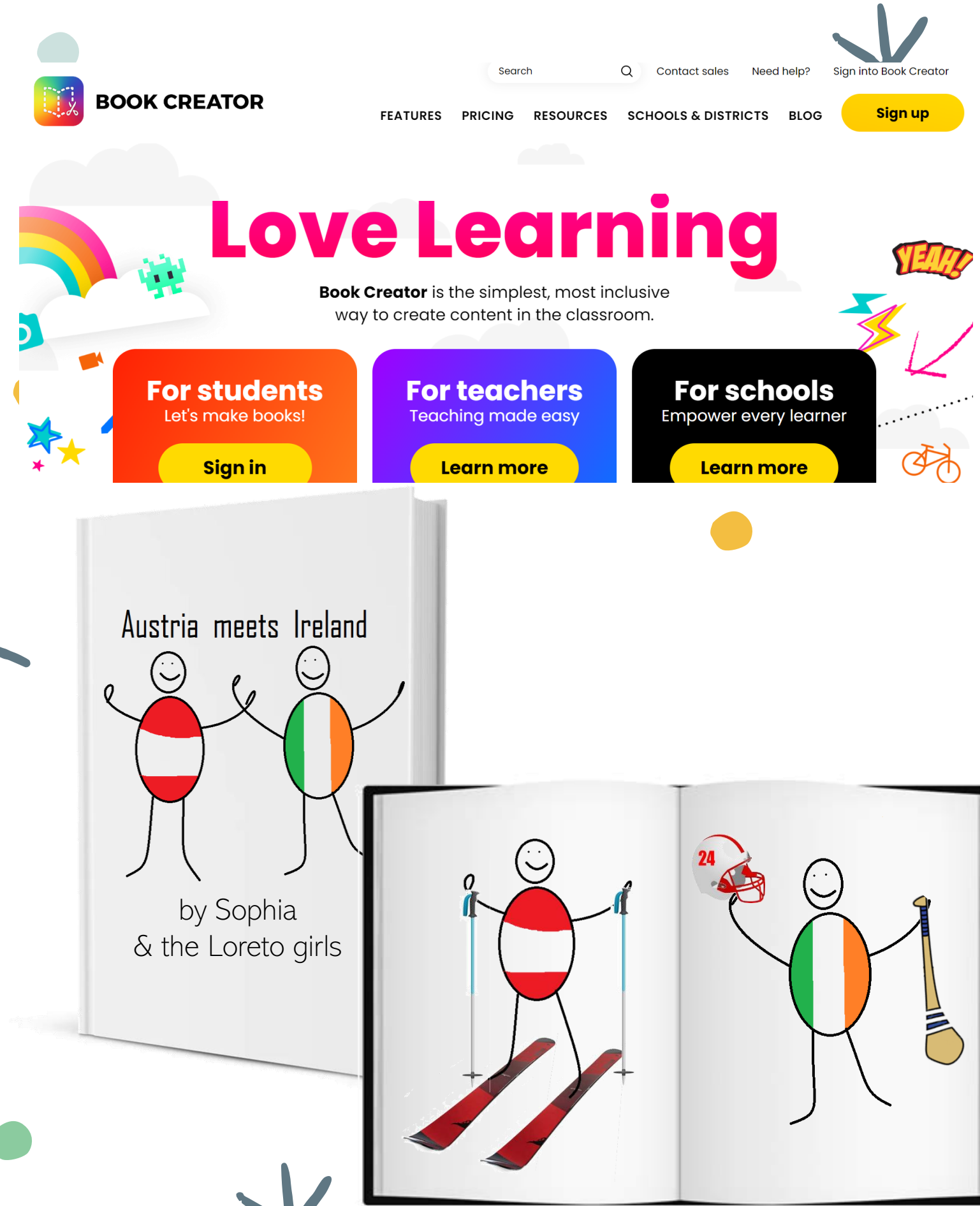
We are currently planning the Culture Corner Booklet “Austria meets Ireland” which will be made in cooperation with all year groups but mainly the TYs.

In this booklet the two countries get to know each other. Every double page is about one topic. On the left page the Austrian perspective on the topic is given in German, on the right page the Irish perspective is given in English (and some words in Irish).

The topics will be things like the capital city and its sights, national sports, food, festivities, music, ...


The booklet is a resource to increase sociocultural awareness not only here with the German learners, but I will also use it back in Austria with my English learners.

Moreover, when creating it on Book Creator it can be published online so that EVERYONE can access it!








Feedback on the Culture Corner

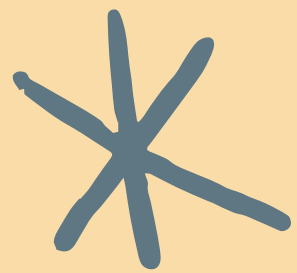


The feedback we received on the culture corner was very positive so far and many German and non-German students (and teachers) showed an interest in it. Especially the playlist, the German story time and the advent calendar received lots of attention. We are sure our latest additions will be equally popular.





We believe that the culture corner can be easily incorporated into any language classroom and can be a source of inspiration on how to share one's culture with others!




The students' positive response has already inspired another language teacher to create a playlist and an advent calendar.



We have also reached some non-German students with our Story time session who told me how proud they are to know and understand a little German.

And the German students feel like experts when explaining something to new learners.





Moreover, the Culture Corner can be incorporated into every lesson and in every year group and it is customisable to the interests and needs of your students.

When will you start your culture corner?

...to teach others about your culture, to get them thinking on the similarities and differences between their culture and yours and to make them draw comparisons between the cultures they know.

