

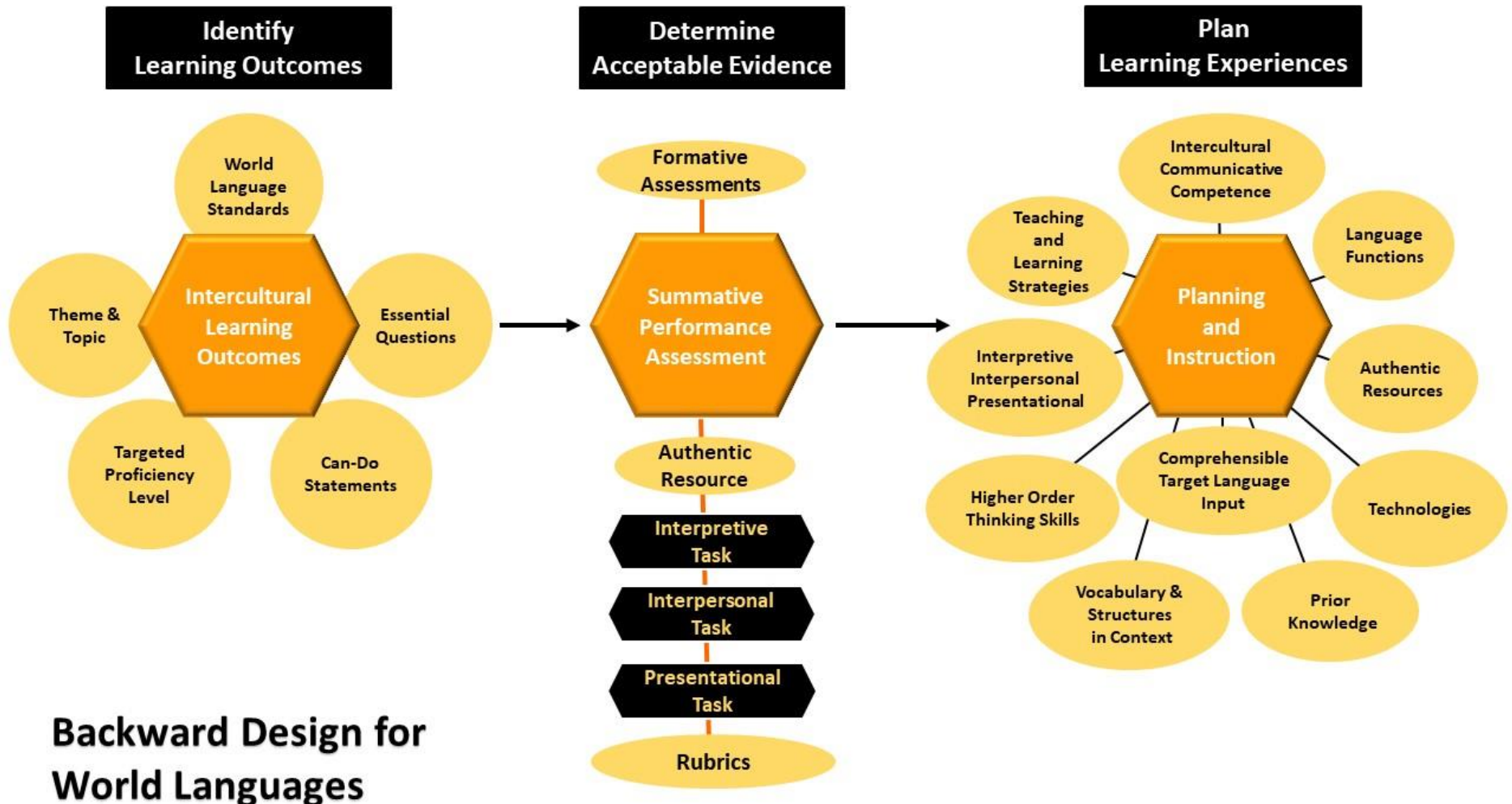
Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

Backward Design of a German Intercultural Unit and Assessment

This sample intercultural unit shows the detailed step-by-step process for Backward Design planning. For each step of the process, the left column provides an explanation and links to relevant resources from the Ohio World Languages and Cultures Model Curriculum. All curricula will be developed at the local level.

Note that Backward Design is an integrated, non-linear process. Moving backward and forward throughout the template is expected. Most important is that there are strong intercultural and communicative learning outcomes, and that assessments and activities build reliably toward those outcomes.

Download this unit template and a variety of other planning and assessment templates [on the World Languages and Cultures Unit Samples webpage](#).



Backward Design for World Languages

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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<p>Explanations for each step of the unit plan, with links to the relevant resources from the World Languages and Cultures Model Curriculum</p>	<p>Step-by-Step Backward Design of the unit. Learn more about Backward Design</p>
<p>Targeted Proficiency Level</p> <p>Choose the proficiency level that this unit is targeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View proficiency targets based on the difficulty of the target language. • Refer to the Ohio World Languages and Cultures Learning Standards for descriptors of Novice Low – Advanced Low language learners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Novice learners use a mixture of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences and questions to talk about very familiar topics. Learners understand the general topic and basic information in simple texts or media. ○ Intermediate learners create original questions and series of connected sentences to talk about familiar or personal interest topics and negotiate meaning in conversations. Learners understand the main idea and related information in texts or media. ○ Advanced learners use various time frames and paragraphs to talk about and discuss familiar and unfamiliar or researched topics. Learners understand the main message and supporting details in complex texts. 	<p>Targeted Proficiency Level</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Novice Mid / High</p>
<p>Unit Overview</p> <p>Choose the theme, topic and essential question(s) that will guide the learning process and outcomes for the targeted proficiency levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential questions are open-ended and have no singular right answer. These questions provide a context for intercultural content, stimulate long-term inquiry and help learners increase their critical thinking skills. Find more essential questions for world languages. 	<p>Unit Overview</p> <p>Theme: Families and Communities</p> <p>Topic: Cultural Celebrations</p> <p>Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are celebrations in the target culture similar to and different from our celebrations? • How do cultural celebrations reflect a community’s identity?

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Step-by-Step Backward Design of the unit.
[Learn more](#) about Backward Design

Intercultural Learning Outcomes

Choose the intercultural communication goals for this unit. Sample intercultural progress indicators for each proficiency level can be found in both the Ohio World Languages and Cultures [Learning Standards](#) and in the NCSSFL-ACTFL [Intercultural Can-Do Statements](#)

- Intercultural learning outcomes focus on investigation of products, practices and perspectives in the learner's native culture and the target culture(s), as well as interactions using culturally appropriate language and behavior.
- Using intercultural outcomes to drive communication will help the teacher focus on the relevant content, vocabulary and structures that learners need to know to be successful.
- [Learn more](#) about building intercultural competence.

Intercultural Learning Outcomes

- I can identify and compare important elements of cultural celebrations in my own and other cultures.
- I can identify the value of cultural celebrations for communities.

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Standards

Indicate the standards for intercultural communication and literacy that are being targeted from the Ohio World Languages and Cultures [Learning Standards](#).

- **Interpretive Standards:** Learners comprehend the main idea and relevant details in a variety of culturally authentic and age-appropriate oral, written or signed texts, both nonfictional and fictional, as well as overheard, observed or written conversations. Learners derive meaning using listening, viewing and reading strategies.
- **Interpersonal Standards:** Learners initiate and sustain spontaneous meaningful spoken, written or signed communication by providing and obtaining information, expressing feelings and emotions and exchanging opinions in culturally appropriate ways. Learners actively negotiate meaning across languages and cultures to ensure their messages are understood and they can understand others.
- **Presentational Standards:** Learners present prepared or spontaneous information, narratives and viewpoints on a variety of topics to audiences of listeners, readers or viewers for varied purposes. Learners use their understanding of culture to convey messages in a manner that facilitates interpretation by others where no direct opportunity for the active negotiation of meaning exists.

Targeted Standards: Novice Mid / High

Interpretive Intercultural Communication and Literacy

- INT-C.NM.3: Understand very basic information in: a. Authentic informational texts; b. Authentic fictional texts; c. Overheard or observed conversations.
- INT-C.NH.1: Identify and compare typical products and practices related to familiar, everyday life in native and other cultures to help understand perspectives.
- INT-C.NH.2: Identify and compare familiar or everyday behaviors in native and other cultures.
- INT-LIT.NM.1: Recognize cognates and words from context, as well as non-traditional letters, accents, characters or tone marks.
- INT-LIT.NH.1: Recognize cognates and infer meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases using context clues and background knowledge.
- INT-LIT.NM.3: Use literal or factual self-questioning before, during and after engaging with texts, such as “What time, who is, why or how?”
- INT-LIT.NH.3: Use a mixture of literal and inferential self-questioning before, during and after engaging with texts, such as “What happened or what might happen next?”
- INT-LIT.NM.4: Make personal connections to a text using prior knowledge or experiences.

Interpersonal Intercultural Communication and Literacy

- INP-C.NM.3 & INP-C.NH.3: Request and share simple information on familiar or everyday topics.
- INP-C.NM.5: Express basic preferences or feelings and react to those of others.
- INP-C.NH.5: Express, ask about and react to simple preferences, feelings or opinions on familiar topics.
- INP-LIT.NM.1: Use familiar, relevant vocabulary and structures and rehearsed or imitated cultural behaviors to communicate, react and show interest.
- INP-LIT.NM.2: Use very simple verbal and nonverbal interjections, rejoinders, requests for clarification, interrogatives or transition words.
- INP-LIT.NH.2: Use simple interjections, rejoinders, requests for clarification, interrogatives and transition words.
- INP-LIT.NM.3: Increase comprehensibility using gestures, hand shapes, facial expressions, repetition, word substitution or awareness of pronunciation, tone or pitch.

Presentational Intercultural Communication and Literacy

- P-C.NM.2: Present in very familiar intercultural situations using practiced or learned language and behaviors.
- P-C.NM.3: Give simple information about very familiar topics.
- P-C.NH.3: Give simple descriptions of familiar and everyday topics.
- P-C.NM.4: Provide simple details about self, interests and activities.
- P-C.NH.4: Provide details about personal life, interests and activities.
- P-LIT.NM.3: Communicate with awareness of pronunciation, spelling, mechanics, hand shapes or signing parameters to increase comprehensibility.

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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Explanations for each step of the unit plan, with links to the relevant Ohio Model Curriculum resources

Summative Assessment

Design a [holistic performance assessment](#) where learners can demonstrate how well they have mastered the learning goals of this unit. The assessment should use [authentic cultural resources](#) and be scored using performance or proficiency [rubrics](#). The assessment could be given at the end of the unit, or different components could be given throughout the unit.

- A summative performance assessment will not test discrete content, grammar or vocabulary. Rather, it will allow learners to apply what they know and can do in a meaningful context and will help the teacher determine whether the learners have performed at the targeted proficiency level.
- Summative assessments might include individual or group projects, interpretive assessments, performance assessment, presentations, portfolios, exhibits, reports, writing topics, videos, interviews, role plays, conversations, discussions, etc.

Step-by-Step Backward Design of the unit.
[Learn more about Backward Design](#)

Summative Assessment Tasks

Note: View the full assessment at the end of this unit template.

Authentic Resource:

[Video: Lisa auf dem Weihnachtsmarkt](#)

Interpretive Task

The video above provides students with a connection to how German-speakers celebrate winter holidays and will allow students to compare and contrast these practices with their own. It also shows the role that the Weihnachtsmarkt plays in a German community as well as how Lisa, as a young adult, fits into that community.

Interpersonal Task

You're going to a German Christmas market while staying with a German family as an exchange student. Make a shopping list in German with an exchange student friend of the items that you both would like to buy for each member of your host families for Christmas and why you think they will like it.

Presentational Task

Using photos in Google Slides of an authentic German Christmas market that you imagine visiting, give a presentation of the experience. Explain what you did, what you ate and drank, what you especially enjoyed, the atmosphere or the emotions of the people around you and what you bought and for whom.

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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<p>Prior Knowledge or Pre-Assessment</p> <p>Activating prior knowledge before teaching a new concept helps learners see connections to previous learning or personal experiences and build on this knowledge. Learners can show what they already know and give the teacher insight into areas of strength or focus throughout the unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities might include surveys, brainstorming, short quizzes, drawing, checklists, games, graphic organizers, concept maps, interactive technology tools or personal, reflective or content questions. 	<p>Prior Knowledge or Pre-Assessment Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students if their family has any specific German holiday traditions during the winter. If so, what do they celebrate and how? For Novice-Mid, these activities may be completed in English, if necessary. Ask students if they know any Christmas songs originally sung in German? If none are mentioned, tell students that you'd bet most of them know at least one of two that you will play for them; it's just that they may not realize that they were originally composed in German. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher plays a bit of <i>Stille Nacht</i> (Silent Night, from Austria) and <i>O Tannenbaum</i> (Oh, Christmas Tree). After hearing a sample of each, ask students if they know these songs. Stille Nacht (video with lyrics), O Tannenbaum - Nat King Cole. Discuss what students do at home to anticipate celebrating the holidays. For example, if you celebrate Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas or any other winter or big holiday, is there a related custom or tradition that you do to lead up to this holiday and to build anticipation?
<p>Language Functions/Forms and Vocabulary</p> <p>Determine the language functions and forms learners will need to meet the learning outcomes of this unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language functions refer to what students do with language, such as compare/contrast, express opinions or make predictions. Language forms refer to grammatical structures, such as adjectives or verb forms. Present grammar in a meaningful context as chunks of language or as a concept in order to impact language acquisition. Focus on meaning before form. Learn about the PACE model for contextualized input. <p>Determine the essential vocabulary for this unit and present it in a meaningful context, such as with images or stories. Learn more about [i+1] and how to contextualize target language at all proficiency levels to make it more comprehensible.</p>	<p>Language Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare and contrast Describe, summarize Ask clarifying questions <p>Language Forms/Structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive adjectives Verb forms and modal verbs Basic conjunctions and adverbs of time <p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holiday/Christmas words and phrases such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bald ist Weihnachten Weihnachten feiern der erste/zweite/dritte/vierte Advent Tannenbaum / Weihnachtsbaum / Christbaum in die Kirche gehen das Christkind

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Geschenke geben, bekommen ○ Lieder singen ○ Socke / Schuh / Stiefel ○ St. Nikolaus, Nikolaustag ○ Krampus ○ der Weihnachtsmann, Weihnachtspyramide ○ der Schornstein ○ Weihnachtsmarkt besuchen
<p>Authentic Cultural Resources</p> <p>Choose authentic cultural resources that are relevant to the learning outcomes of this unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACTFL defines authentic texts as content that has been created “by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group.” Authentic materials provide cultural perspectives and real-life examples of everyday language use and are a rich source of input needed for language acquisition. Exposure to authentic materials begins at the Novice Low level. • Ohio’s K-12 grid of Interpretive Literacy standards and progress indicators has scaffolding and tasks that promote comprehension of authentic texts and media from Novice Low to Advanced Low. ACTFL has an Interpretive template for literacy-based tasks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These scaffolds and tasks could also be used with textbook or teacher-created materials as a bridge to help beginners access authentic texts as early as possible. • Novice-level authentic resources include lists, headlines, posters, simple infographics, catalogs, maps, menus, brochures, ads, calendars, short poems, schedules, social media, short podcasts, cartoons, commercials, jingles, songs, etc. • Intermediate-level authentic resources include infographics, charts, graphs, current events, blogs, poetry, literature, comics, podcasts, social media, informational texts, websites or media, interviews, short or long films, song lyrics, TV shows, etc. 	<p>Authentic Cultural Resources</p> <p>Authentic and Cultural Resources for the Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infographic: So feiern die Deutschen Weihnachten 2017. Percentages indicate how popular various Christmas activities were in Germany in 2017. This helps students identify what value various cultural celebrations have to German-speakers as well as enabling students to identify and compare important elements in German-speaking countries and in their own. • Gingerbread House Recipe. Using cognates and the photo of all ingredients needed, what ingredients can students identify from the provided list of ingredients? What do they notice about the measurements? This allows students to notice how celebrations in a German speaking country are similar/different to their own. • Use Shoes for St Nicholas to print shoes for students to decorate and build to fill with goodies. This is taken from the following website: https://www.stnicholascenter.org/. This also allows students to compare/contrast their cultural celebrations with those of a German speaker. • Krampus und Nikolaus Besuch This 2-minute video shows what a visit from Nikolaus and Krampus at home can look like. This also allows students to compare/contrast their cultural celebrations with those of a German speaker. • Song: Lasst uns froh und munter sein Traditional song sung by kids on Dec. 5th as part of Nikolaustag celebrations. This allows students to identify important elements of cultural celebrations in German-speaking areas. • AATG Adventskalender ideas/activities - Open one door on the digital <i>Adventskalender</i> per day to discover a fact, song, story or activity related to German holiday traditions in December (updated each year). • Adventskalendar - Google slides created by Maria Herman. Contains links to many Christmas authentic resources. Please make a copy of the google slides for yourself to edit and use.

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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Instructional Strategies

Create learning experiences related to the unit outcomes that will reach a wide range of learners, using [strategies based on Universal Design for Learning](#) principles (i.e., a variety of ways for engagement, practice and demonstration of learning).

Integrate a [variety of activities](#) that focus on intercultural competence; interpretive, interpersonal, presentational and literacy skills; relevant vocabulary and structures; technology integration; real-life or career connections; and a variety of informal or formal formative assessment.

Step-by-Step Backward Design of the unit.
[Learn more about Backward Design](#)

Instructional Strategies

Interpretive Reading and Listening/Viewing Activities

- These activities show how German-speakers celebrate the Christmas holiday, allowing students to make comparisons between their own culture and that of a German-speaker:
 - [Weihnachten u. Advent \(Das Unterrichtsmagazin für Zusammenleben u. Integration in Österreich\)](#) - Read short descriptions, dialogues and a letter about Christmas, *Nikolaustag* and Advent.
 - [Kling Glöckchen](#) - YouTube video with text that students can compare to an American holiday song.
 - [Sendung mit der Maus/mit dem Elefanten - Weihnachten 2016](#) - View the episode of this children's TV show and discuss one or more of its segments. Segment topics include the origin of Christmas, kids explaining what they enjoy about Christmas, the construction of a gigantic snowman and how to create a Christmas craft.
 - [Watch die Sendung mit der Maus Weihnachtsbräuche](#) - View and discuss this 3.5 minute video, in which children from around the world who live in Germany explain their Christmas traditions. It's all in German, but Christmas traditions in other cultures are explained from an immigrant child's standpoint.
 - [Bald ist Weihnachten](#) by die Prinzen - Listen and discuss this modern song about the mix of feelings that Christmas can provoke. Teacher could create a cloze reading exercise with the lyrics as students listen and fill in the words on the provided blanks.

Interpersonal Activities

- Discuss the shoes that each student made to celebrate Nikolaus - using color words and words like pretty, small, big. Then, when shoes are filled, ask if they like the candy/goodies that they received.
- After watching the *Sendung mit der Maus Weihnachtsbräuche*, with a partner, compose two questions you'd ask one of the children from the video. Then, between groups, exchange the questions you wrote and write the answer from that child's perspective.

Presentational Writing and Speaking Activities

- After watching *die Sendung mit der Maus Weihnachtsbräuche*, prepare a 1-2 minute explanation (similar to what you saw in the video) with Google slides that contains pictures of how you celebrate at your home. OR, prepare a similar presentation from the perspective of someone in the video.

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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Contextualized Vocabulary and Structures

- Use German Christmas songs and infographics to introduce/review vocabulary and grammar/structures in context.
- Use vocabulary and grammar/structures in context as part of interpersonal and presentational practice (creating shopping lists and a Christmas day timeline of events, sharing holiday experiences, etc.).

Technology Integration in Activities or Lessons

- Create/record asynchronous lessons in Zoom, Loom, Google Meets, Google slides, EdPuzzle, or Nearpod so students can review the material as much as needed.

Native/Heritage Speakers

- Native speakers can share their traditions and perhaps even some of the concrete items (Pyramide, etc.) that they use to celebrate the holidays.

Students With Disabilities:

- Post links to all print and videos so students can read/watch them ahead of time and after, at their own pace and as much as they need. Provide target language subtitles, if helpful.
- Provide closed captions for those with hearing impairment.
- Break down the interpretive/interpersonal activities into steps.
- Create a Google slides template with specific instructions/information on each slide.
- Depending on accommodations, limit the requirements (number of sentences or ideas, etc.)

Gifted Students

- Create or build a Weihnachtspyramide.
- Create an Adventskalender (online hyperdoc) with a holiday word/phrase/picture behind each door.

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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Formative Assessment #1

- **Authentic Resource:** [How people in Germany celebrate Christmas.](#)
- **Interpretive Tasks:**
 - This [comprehension exercise](#) is provided on the Deutsche Welle page.
 - This [comprehension task](#) is based on the ACTFL interpretive template.
 - [DocMorris](#) - Three-minute film about the way in which an old man's desire to bond with his granddaughter on Christmas motivates him to become more fit / healthy. Encourage students to express what this man values in his holiday traditions in Germany.
- **Interpersonal Task:** Ask your partner questions about how they celebrate Christmas, or another important holiday for them, and tell your partner how you celebrate Christmas or another important holiday.
- **Presentational Task:** After working with your partner, create a Venn diagram that shows:
 - Vocabulary words and phrases to represent items that are always included in their celebration of Christmas or another big holiday.
 - Vocabulary words to represent items that are always included in German celebrations of Christmas. Be sure to put the words that these traditions have in common in the middle of your Venn Diagram.

Formative Assessment #2:

- **Authentic Resource:** [Wie-deutschland-weihnachten-feiert](#)
 - Note: If you click the settings icon at the bottom of the video, you can set the playback speed to be slower. If you open the video in YouTube and click "cc," some closed captions will appear simultaneously with the video.
- **Interpretive Task:** Using the video and text from the website above, [complete this activity](#).
- **Interpersonal Task:** Pretend you are writing a letter to the Weihnachtsmann. Knowing he will be bringing gifts to deserving kids soon, what reasons could you give him to show him that you, too, are deserving of gifts? Also add a list to your letter, giving him 5-8 suggestions for gifts that you would like to receive. Trade the lists with a partner and either create a Venn diagram of the presents you want and of the ones they want or write a letter back to your partner from the Weihnachtsmann.

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentational Tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a timeline with the activities Germans do at Christmastime. (ex: buy tree, put up tree, go to church, eat, open presents, etc.) Include the dates and times of day to this timeline. ○ Create a digital scrapbook, showing some pictures from your holiday celebration and/or a German holiday celebration. For each photo, write a caption in German that explains what is happening in the photo along with your reaction or opinion to what is being shown.
<p>Student Engagement</p> <p>Help learners determine the relevance of this unit to their current life or future goals. Why and how is this content or learning useful to them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio's World Language Career Connections has lessons, videos, activities and ideas for making world language content relevant for learners. 	<p>Student Engagement: College, Career or Life Connections</p> <p>Video: Lisa auf dem Weihnachtsmarkt</p> <p>Students examine the role holidays play in their own lives and consider how the woman in the video connects her college studies and part time work to her career goals during the holidays.</p> <p>Novice Mid Questions:</p> <p>Do you think Lisa (from the Weihnachtsmarkt video) needs to know a world language in this job?</p> <p>For which careers do I need a world language?</p> <p>Would knowing a world language be a benefit at the Weihnachtsmarkt?</p> <p>In which careers would knowing a world language be a benefit?</p> <p>Which holiday/seasonal professions/jobs are valued in the German-speaking culture?</p> <p>Novice High Questions:</p> <p>Which professions are necessary for Germans to celebrate Christmas in their community?</p> <p>Which professions interest me?</p> <p>How do I prepare myself for a profession?</p> <p>In which professions would I utilize my language skills?</p>

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

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<p>Intercultural Reflection</p> <p>Encourage learners to engage in deeper reflection on the cultural content of the unit, either in class in the target language, or outside of class in English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the NCSSFL-ACTFL Reflection Tool With Sample Questions for ideas on creating deeper reflection questions in English outside of class and target language activities in class: “Learners’ awareness and understanding of their own and others’ cultures grow with each new intercultural encounter. It takes reflection, however, to process a depth of understanding that develops openness and promotes an examination of values and attitudes. The primary focus of language education is to develop language proficiency; however, deep reflection normally occurs in one’s native language. For this reason, reflection activities are designed with maximum use of the target language during instructional time and an option for use of English at home for deeper reflection.” (NCSSFL-ACTFL Reflection Tool, 2017). 	<p>Intercultural Reflection Questions</p> <p><i>(In the target language in class or in English/native language outside of class)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the ways in which many people in Germany celebrate a winter celebration. How are these ways similar and/or different from the way that you celebrate ? Why do American and German families celebrate holidays? How do they enrich the lives of those who celebrate them? How has celebrating holidays shaped who you are as a person? How might cultural celebrations shape other people’s identities? How does the celebration of Christmas in Germany reflect the values of those who celebrate it in the German community? How comfortable or uncomfortable would you be celebrating Christmas as the Germans do? Why do you think you would feel this way? How important would it be to adjust your behavior to fit in with Germans while in Germany? What do you think German teens would think about some of our American winter celebrations in the United States like Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or Christmas and why? (If you and your family celebrate one winter holiday in particular, speak to that particular one.) What new insights have you gained about yourself and others from thinking about German winter celebrations?

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

Backward Design of a German Intercultural Unit and Assessment

Summative Assessment – Interpretive Tasks

Novice Mid / High

Interpretive Communication

Authentic Resource: [Der Weihnachtsmarkt](#)

Complete the following table about the video **IN ENGLISH**.

1. Name	
2. Age	
3. How does Lisa spend her time when not working at the Christmas market?	
4. What does Lisa study at the university?	
5. Who in her family celebrates Christmas with her? (List all family members mentioned.)	

Novice Mid/High – Cultural Celebrations

Backward Design of a German Intercultural Unit and Assessment

Traditions at the Christmas market:

6. When does the Christmas market begin and end? (Day & Month)

7. What can you buy at the Christmas market? (Please list at least 3)

8. As you hear and read the following sentences, to which specific items shown do these sentences refer? Name at least THREE specific items.

(Es gibt) Geschenke für die ganze Familie und natürlich findet man viele Leckereien. Viele der angebotenen Waren sind handgefertigt und aus Holz oder anderen natürlichen Materialien.

Interpersonal Communication (Use the [Ohio rubrics](#) to score the interpersonal section)

Situation/Prompt

You're going to a German Christmas market while staying with a German family as an exchange student. Make a shopping list in German with an exchange student friend of the items that you both would like to buy for each member of your host families for Christmas and why you think they will like it.

Presentational Communication (Use the [Ohio rubrics](#) to score the presentational section)

Situation/Prompt

Using photos in Google Slides of an authentic German Christmas market that you imagine visiting, give a presentation of the experience. Explain what you did, what you ate and drank, what you especially enjoyed, the atmosphere or the emotions of the people around you and what you bought and for whom.