

The Curriculum of the German State of Thuringia and the competencies described within, both generally and subject-specific, form the basis for the pedagogical work for the subject of Religious Education at the Elementary School level (Grades 1-4) at the German International School Washington. Due to the unique nature of a German school abroad, however, it is necessary to modify Thuringia's Curriculum and adapt it to the local conditions.

In grades one through four, Religious Education is taught in a confessional-cooperative, non-denominational manner for all children, in mutual dependence on confessional identity and ecumenical understanding.

Students come from a wide variety of religious traditions or have no affiliation. They live in the greater Washington D.C. area in an international environment with significant cultural and religious diversity. Religious Education has the task of providing a space that, on one hand, offers the children guidance, supports the development of an individual stance, and strengthens their grounding in their own belief system. On the other hand, the students should be empowered to engage with and have dialogues with other religious and worldview positions.

In addition, the subject of Religious Education at the GIW is tasked to specifically convey certain Christian traditions, such as Thanksgiving and St. Martin's Day, which are not celebrated in the American context.

The focus of this learning area is on the children, on their relationship with themselves, with others, and with God. They are increasingly developing into independent and communicative personalities. They learn to recognize, verbalize, express, and critically question their own needs. They develop trust in themselves and in the world and actively participate in shaping relationships. In doing so, they experienix hy (e)--6 (p)10-0.8 (t)5.9 (l)-3.(i)-3.3 (e)7.6 (n)-0. (h)-0.75 ()JJ-29.76.9 (t)fheyho5nirinyhn6 (r)-2.8 (i)f0.6 (t)-3 (h

The student is able to:

- Recognize, describe, and interpret their own talents as well as those of others,
- Identify and interpret statements of doubt and trust in texts, songs, images, and various forms of expression, such as:
 - The Storm on the Sea (Mark 4:35-41),
- Describe using examples how joy and trust strengthen relationships, such as:
 - The Ten Lepers (Luke 17:11-19),
- Describe using examples how guilt can strain relationships with others and with God, such as:
 - Everyday experiences,
 - The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17),
 - Esau and Jacob (Genesis 27:1f.),
- Describe ways of forgiveness and reconciliation and relate them to personal actions, such as:
 - Jacob's Reconciliation with Esau (Genesis 33:1-16),
- Name fundamental human experiences and express them using selected psalms, such as:
 - Fear (Psalm 23:4),
 - Hope (Psalm 139:5),
 - Joy (Psalm 31:8),
 - Gratitude (Psalm 103:2),
 - Grief (Psalm 31:13),
- Name examples of how people can fall into distress,
- Derive rules for successful coexistence based on the commandment of love,
- Describe the life cycle and related life stages,
- Report on ways of coping with grief,
- Explain that from faith arises the hope for life after death.

The student is able to:

- Apply methods of self-reflection,
- Develop and present performative games (e.g., role play, improvisation),
- Apply conversation rules,
- Reflect on their own and others' actions in conversations,
- Work in diverse social learning forms.

The student is able to:

- Describe and represent feelings and emotions in themselves and others.

The focus of this learning area is on discovering the church as God's house and as a place of community for people. In preserving traditions, in remembering and living together as a congregation, and in diaconal actions, the goal is to understand the customs of Christian traditions and to learn appropriate behavior in the practice of the Christian faith. Through experiencing church festivals, children grow into these traditions and develop an understanding of religious practices in everyday life.

Telling biblical stories, singing songs, looking at art, and celebrating together opens spaces for children and show them that they are welcome in the Christian community. By including out-of-school learning environments, the opportunity is provided to explore the church as a building, an institution, and a community of Christians. In doing so, children meet people who live the calling of service and help within the Christian community. Diaconal actions should be practiced in concrete actions on-site.

Children ask:

- What do you do in church?
- Can God be found in the church?
- What does a church look like?
- Why are there Protestant and Catholic churches/Christians?
- Why do we celebrate Pentecost?
- What does the word "Diakonie" mean?

The student is able to:

- Discover traces of church festival times in everyday life and talk about them, including:
 - Advent/Christmas,
 - Easter,
 - Harvest festival,
- Provide information about Jewish festivals like Hanukkah and Passover.
- Relate church festivals to biblical traditions, including:
 - Christmas – Luke 2:1-20,
 - Easter – Mark 16:1-16,
- Recognize the church as God's house,
- Explain baptism as the initiation into the Christian community and name baptismal symbols,
- Name and explain the external features of the church building and the items inside it in their function,
- Discover and interpret Christian symbols (e.g., light, path, water),
- Describe angels as messengers of God,
- Inform themselves about the work and life in a church congregation and report on it,

- Tell stories of faith role models from traditional customs (e.g., St. Nicholas of Myra, St. Martin of Tours),
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This structure not only engages children in theological and moral discussions but also builds a sense of community and solidarity, which are key components of religious education. The integration of different methods (such as artistic expression, szenisches Spiel, and media use)