EDUCATION.
Discover fellow educator's ideas on teaching modern Germany in the classroom.

DIALOGUE.
New TOP Tools for Professional Development Workshop Leaders.

EXPERIENCE.
Learn how to apply for study tours to Germany.
It is the morning of June 26, 2014. TOP Participant Allen Sylvester successfully defends the goal during recess at the Eichholzschule in Sindelfingen: a true display of German-American friendship only hours before the two national teams face off in a historic group-round match during the FIFA World Cup.
Greetings from the offices of the Transatlantic Outreach Program in Washington, DC! It’s been a busy year for us here at TOP and we’re so excited to share all of our recent projects and upcoming events in the latest edition of Modern Germany Update.

TOP had to say goodbye to its Director, Mr. Klaus Brodersen, in June of 2014, after 5 wonderful years of leadership. As the new Regional Director of Languages for Europe at the Goethe-Institut in Brussels, Belgium, we wish him all the best in his new endeavor. TOP also has the honor of welcoming a new staff member, Jenny Windell, who joined the team in May 2014 as the Program Administrator. In addition to other talents, Jenny has brought new energy to TOP’s Social Media Strategy (page 5). With a slightly larger team and continuing enthusiasm, TOP is looking forward to serving educators in a larger capacity!

As the summer comes to a close and we reflect on recent study tours and adventures, we’re excited to present our Fall/Winter 2014 Newsletter full of engaging fellow articles and some new features, all designed to help you explore current topics in Social Studies and modern Germany. We invite you to check out Dr. Mark Peary’s article comparing German and American perspectives on Social vs. Sozial, revel in Germany’s World Cup victory with Bill Wyss’ piece on Fussball Culture, and explore the new direction of TOP with Sarah Segal’s musings on STEM education in the Social Studies (and modern Germany) classroom. Finally, TOP is pleased to announce the publication of its newest educator resource, The TOP Toolkit for Workshop Leaders, a comprehensive guide on how to modify lessons, navigate our materials, and lead successful workshops for your target audience on modern Germany curriculum. Please visit our Author’s Introduction on pages 24-25 of this edition for further information on the Toolkit and how to get started.

As we begin to plan for 2015, the TOP Team looks forward to the prospect of new projects in Intercultural Communication and Transatlantic Understanding, a continuation of the TOP+ Initiative exploring the potential of STEM in the Social Studies classroom, and a continued relationship with the Fellows who make this program all that it is. We invite you to read through this edition, like us on Facebook, and enjoy the resources the Transatlantic Outreach Program provides on modern Germany for your classroom and students.

The TOP Team

If social media is the new frontier, then TOP has hitched up its wagon and is heading west. In 2014, TOP has been expanding its online presence through a variety of social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, and Flickr! These new platforms provide our growing TOP “community” a place to connect, share, inform, remember, and discover. What’s more, social media makes it easier for you to share information about TOP with other educators in your social network by sharing a post, sending a pin, or retweeting.

“Like” TOP on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for updates about the program and our materials; information about workshops in your area; new opportunities to engage with TOP; news from Germany; and advice from former travelers about topics such as what to pack for your study tour. On Pinterest, we have collected hundreds of online resources to help you prepare lessons and teach your students about modern Germany. Our YouTube page features TOP promotional videos; playlists of videos that can be used in your lessons; and travel videos from previous TOP study tours. Flickr, a photo sharing site, allows study tour participants to easily share pictures from their trip with other members of their group and to discuss memories of the TOP experience.

The purpose of our engagement on social media is to support you as educators in the important work that you do by providing information about the Transatlantic Outreach Program for your professional development and by sharing quality resources about modern Germany for use in your classroom. If you have a suggestion about what types of information you would like to see on our social media platforms, or if you have ideas about new ways to use our social media, we would love to hear from you!

The TOP Team
The Transatlantic Outreach Program would like to announce the launch of our new promotional video! Available on our website and YouTube channel, this new two-minute video introduces the Program and offers insight into the impact it can make in the professional development of teachers who take part. The video was filmed in the summer of 2013 and follows a group of North American social studies teachers as they travel through Germany on a professional development study tour with the Transatlantic Outreach Program. The video shows what a typical study tour is like and offers interviews from members of the tour group about their experience. A longer version of the video, which will be available in the coming months, also includes interviews with representatives of each of TOP’s sponsors: the German Federal Foreign Office, Goethe-Institut, Deutsche Bank, the Robert Bosch Foundation, and Siemens.
One of the things I love most about being a teacher is that I am always learning. This past summer I had the incredible opportunity to assume the role of a wide-eyed student by participating in the Transatlantic Outreach Program (TOP)-a two-week study tour of Germany for teachers. I was inspired to immerse myself in German culture after teaching a German student in class last year and getting to know her delightful family.

By joining TOP I was able to learn firsthand about life in modern Germany. I savored every bite of homemade apple strudel; biked around the historic town of Potsdam; wandered around the ruins of Heidelberg Castle. I was humbled passing by the stepping-stones embedded in the sidewalks of Berlin that commemorate Jewish individuals who lost their lives at concentration camps. I got to envision myself in Cold War Germany at Point Alpha, the U.S. observation post that separated East and West Germany near the Fulda Gap. I spoke with students about their experiences in vocational schools, a hallmark of the German education system, and with experts about the role of Germany in the European Union.

The most exciting part of my trip has been sharing the experience with my students. I recently showed my class photographs of the Deutsche Bank Headquarters in Frankfurt, which is the first "green" skyscraper in the world, certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. I showed them ways in which the architect accomplished this environmental feat: windows that open, no air conditioning, solar panels, rainwater used for plumbing. Then I asked the students to design their own "green" buildings, using this German skyscraper as a model. They sketched their own creations enthusiastically and articulated the importance of making things "green".

This exercise was a great reminder for my students that we are indeed members of a global community with certain responsibilities and that learning from other cultures is both vital and rewarding.
CULTURAL | CORNER

Check in for TOP’s picks on what’s relevant in the modern Germany classroom today, what’s new in educational resources and what can’t be missed.

IN MEMORIAM

The Transatlantic Outreach Program continues to reflect on the life and career of James “Drew” Wendt of Charleston, West Virginia who passed away on June 22nd, 2014. A 2009 TOP Fellow and consultant for TOP, his enthusiasm for Germany and passion for teaching was an inspiration to the entire TOP Team. Whether he was jumping in fountains in Berlin or making mix tapes for TOP staff, Drew’s excitement and charm radiated in whatever he did. We extend our sincerest condolences to his family, friends, and students. Memorial contributions may be made to Nitro High School, c/o James Andrew Wendt Memorial, Nitro, WV.

93-year-old Margot Friedlander’s memoir, “Try to Make Your Life: A Jewish Girl Hiding in Nazi Berlin tells a harrowing story of underground survival in Nazi Germany as a young Jewish girl, Margot’s immigration to the United States after liberation from a concentration camp, and her return to Germany in 2010.

WHAT WE’VE BEEN READING, WATCHING AND ENJOYING

IN MEMORIAM

93-year-old Margot Friedlander’s memoir, “Try to Make Your Life: A Jewish Girl Hiding in Nazi Berlin tells a harrowing story of underground survival in Nazi Germany as a young Jewish girl, Margot’s immigration to the United States after liberation from a concentration camp, and her return to Germany in 2010.

TEXT

A 7o thumbs up for, Treasure Trove: An Educator’s Journal of Inspired Moments, a thoughtful teacher’s journal written by 2010 TOP Fellow, Jessica Stock, ‘packed full of encouraging prompts and heartwarming stories’ from educators including some of our very own TOP Fellows!

SCREEN

Always a favorite for those interested in the occasionally comical side of East Germany, reunification, and Ostalgie, Goodbye Lenin! (2004): German with English subtitles, rated (R), tells the story of a young Eastern German youth (Alex) trying to transition his proudly Socialist mother from Communism to Capitalism.

In a more serious look at the very dark side of the Stasi regime, The Lives of Others: German with English subtitles, rated (R), captures the reality of the dangerous and deadly surveillance of East German citizens by members of their own communities. Winner of the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2007, this film comes to us from German director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck.

Following the theme of East Germany during the Cold War, TOP recommends Sonnenallee (1999): German with English subtitles, a comical film following East German youths in the 1970s as they navigate teenage years full of unnecessary restrictions and try to keep mainstream youth culture alive by sneaking those rock-n-roll records past East German guards.

In J. Elke Ertle’s memoir, Walled-In: A West Berlin Girl’s Journey to Freedom, readers travel back to Cold War Germany from the perspective of a young West-German girl and follow her path to understanding what it means to have her country divided.

All of the above titles are available online at Amazon.com. Got a book or recommendation you think we should check out? Let us know by email: top@washington.goethe.org!
GERMANY: ALREADY A STEM ROLE MODEL

I remember that early morning commute in November 2012, hearing on the radio for the first time that there are “Three million open jobs in the U.S., but who’s qualified?” Shocked, I grappled with how more than 10 million unemployed Americans lack the skills needed to fill these positions. However, employers overwhelmingly continue to report they can’t find qualified workers for jobs. A common buzz phrase, this phenomenon is now termed the “Skill Gap”.

In response, the Obama Administration is currently turning their attention to America’s job training programs, and the role of education in bridging this disparity. According to the recent NPR segment, “What Germans Know Could Help Bridge U.S. Workers’ Skill Gap” (March, 2014), Vice-President Joe Biden is reviewing America’s worker preparation programs for bolstering student’s concrete acquisition of real-life skills, for application in today’s job force. Seeking international models, Germany’s apprenticeship for trade workers has historically created centuries of skilled employees, and has resulted in the modern absence of a skill gap.

At the K-12 level in the United States, optimism for igniting interest in fields of ingenuity is formulating through the STEM Education initiatives. Integrating science, technology, mathematics, and engineering, STEM connects the design process in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Described in the 2009 National Academy of Engineering report to President Obama (Engineering in K-12 Education), STEM ultimately promotes learners’ engineering “habit of mind” through processes incorporating system thinking, creativity, advancing design, collaboration, communication, and attention to ethical consideration.

TOP believes that opportunity exists to integrate STEM subjects within the context of teaching modern Germany to the mutual benefit of both social studies and STEM educators and intends to build off of lessons submitted by its inaugural STEM study tour participants. Plans are in the works to offer another tour in 2015. Please visit the “Study Tours” section of the TOP website for more information on how Social Studies teachers and STEM educators can take part in the future!
The inaugural TOP+STEM study tour group enjoyed many notable visits, including the award-winning Solarhaus at the University of Darmstadt, from the Taunusgymnasium-STEM Excellence school (left, bottom left), and the Mathematikum museum in Gießen (bottom right).

Varying examples and complexities of Germany’s engineering “habit of mind” were explored during our TOP travels. Berlin’s Innovation Center for Mobility & Social Change (InnoZ) campus brought to light the ‘intelligent city of the future’ design. A living laboratory, InnoZ designs and develops systems integrating renewable energy, mobility networks, telecommunications, and perceptive infrastructure for modern cities. InnoZ’s foundation is rooted in the future of urban development. Tasked with conceptualizing urban layout based in social and economic sustainability, InnoZ provides a real-world model of STEM’s “application of the design process”.

Savoring adventure at every turn, our TOP teacher cohort reveled in the opportunity to zoom around the InnoZ campus behind the wheel of electric cars, test our individual ability to generate racing-speed momentum propelling electric bikes, and gawk at the innovative transportation design proposals for Germany’s future. InnoZ is currently developing an interconnect mass transit system which will give Germans access to schedule and pre-pay for car-shares, fueling stations, train and boat tickets, and electric bikes - all from one’s mobile device. Planned to eventually span the entirety of Europe, our big, self-indulgent, question - can we, as foreigners, also access this convenience?

According to a 2009 National Academy of Engineering report, the Engineering Design Process is described as “combining knowledge and skills from a variety of fields with the application of values and understanding of societal needs to create systems, components, or processes to meet human needs”.

As a TOP participant, it became obvious that Germany’s conscious ‘engineering habit of mind’ lifestyle permeates throughout the society. Strolling Berlin’s Turkish Market, alongside the Landwehr Canal, I noticed a family leisurely floating the waterway aboard a solar-powered boat. Void of noise pollution and fuel stench, I expect the afternoon drift through the Kottbusser Tor neighborhood was exquisitely enhanced from the peaceful river perspective. Continuing my meander to the northwest, I was magically lured toward a green space occupying a corner of the Moritzplatz roundabout. I discovered an urban utopia in the form of a community garden. The Prinzessinnengarten welcomes the public to come together to relax, share, and grow. Prinzessinnengarten volunteers employ system-thinking practices, throughout Berlin, by transforming disused land including building sites, car parks, and roofs into sustainable organic urban vegetable gardens. Even at the national level, the German government has established environmentally responsible system ingenuity. With the 1999 Reichstag restoration, architectural engineers redesigned the building to reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 94%. The Reichstag now uses renewably refined vegetable oil to power itself and surrounding government structures, retains consistent in-building climate through a system that regulates temperature by storing surplus heat as hot water 990 feet below the monument, in addition to numerous other green renovations.

Already an established global leader in what STEM refers to as “21st Century skills,” Germany’s national values based in social consciousness, economic sustainability, environmental viability, and preparing future generations for occupational contribution is a natural model for addressing the U.S. “Skill Gap.”
In 2013, I had the opportunity to experience the personal and professional impact of overseas travel for the first time, as part of the Transatlantic Outreach Program (TOP) and its mission “to promote education about Germany, to encourage intercultural dialogue, and to provide the opportunity for North American social studies educators to experience Germany in person” (Transatlantic Outreach Program, 2014). When featured in a standard U.S. social studies classroom, Germany is hardly ever shown in a flattering light. Instead, it is represented as a major component (and often a cause) of some of the most horrific, unsettling experiences in modern history—for instance, World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. These may be important parts of German history—maybe, defeasibly, the most important parts—but it is hardly definitive of a nation. The manner in which Germany is often presented in social studies classrooms is not only reductive, it stands in contrast to the commitment to complex thinking and open-mindedness marked by a global perspective (Merrifield, 1998). Germany is a country of 81 million, with the largest economy in Europe and the fifth largest in the world (“What Germany Offers the World,” 2012, April 14). It is also a nation that faces contemporary issues that are in many ways analogous to those faced in the U.S.—debates over climate change policy, the use of renewable energy, funding for education, and a burgeoning dilemma over immigration.

Yet in Germany, the policies taken as possible solutions to these issues enjoy remarkable consensus among the general population (with the possible exception of immigration). Most Germans agree on the need for renewable energy, for instance; in German schools, teachers enjoy great autonomy and control over curricula, and Germany as a whole ranks near the top of industrialized nations in educational attainment, outstripping the U.S. on the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) in reading, writing, and science (Programme for International Student Assessment, 2012).

A global perspective is one which enables us, among other things, to critically examine the impact of a nation’s character on the formation of national policy. Travel abroad, to experience this firsthand, is patently beneficial for developing that perspective. Such travel is often difficult to manage for many teachers, however, given financial obstacles. The Transatlantic Outreach Program’s willingness to provide this sort of experience, then, is a tremendous opportunity for social studies educators. For me, the chance to encounter Germany across a wide variety of experiences—in schools, historical landmarks and memorials, corporations and in private homes—also provided insight into the elements of national character which seem to promote such remarkable unanimity among the population. It is derived from a unique and collective sense of the obligation of government and individual, which is invested in national identity, governmental structure, and historical identity.

Throughout my experiences, I noticed a theme that wasn’t clear to me until, quite literally, my last day in Germany; one which, once uncovered, made the seemingly disparate elements of German society I had seen more coherent, and thus the substance of a lesson we may learn in the United States. The German concept of sozial—a national commitment to collective memory, responsibility, and dignity, in its history—is derived from the recent German past and the national embrace of that past, positive and negative; and it provides examples for American educators, particularly in the social studies. 
My experience in Germany highlighted the tremendous value they represent for teachers to improve their own sense of "global mindedness." The impact of overseas travel, and the opportunity to interact with different cultures in an immersive setting, has enormous impact on not only the practical strategies adopted by a teacher, but also the perspective that he/she brings to the choices made about those strategies (Germain, 1998).

On the final day of the trip, I had a lengthy conversation with one of our guides, Stefan. I told him about my impressions of Germany—the commitment to collective security and national memory—and I asked him where he thought it came from. "In Germany," Stefan said, "the most important thing is dignity." The German constitution, in fact, is anchored in this concept. The first lines of the Grundgesetz, the "Basic Law," read: "Die Würde des Menschen ist unantastbar. Sie zu achten und zu schützen ist Verpflichtung aller staatlichen Gewalt."—"The dignity of man shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority" (cited in Eberle, 2008, p. 3). Stefan called it "sozial thinking," similar to the English "social," but with a deeper connotation of collective obligation. In America, the word "freedom" may be better conceived as liberty, "secured through a focus on governmental structure designed to...limit it authority and thereby empower people to live their lives largely as they determine, free from governmental restraint" (Eberle, 2008, p. 2-3). The German concept of freedom, and the free exercise of rights, is joined with a concept of duty, which the individual owes the community.

Social studies teachers can help their students develop a global-minded perspective in part by fostering an understanding of where essential elements of a nation's character derive. Why, for instance, are historical memorials in the U.S. often more anthropomorphic and personal, like the Vietnam Soldiers’ Memorial in Washington, D.C, and less abstract, like the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe? Why do American schools rely more heavily on standardized assessments than their German counterparts? Why is apprenticeship and vocational training seen as somewhat demeaning among Americans, and not so in Germany? These questions, raised (and answered) during my experience overseas, can form the cornerstone of critical inquiry in the classroom, and contribute to the development of a global perspective.

Social studies teachers routinely bemoan the fact that students don’t take their subjects seriously or understand it imperfectly. I’m sure that German teachers often say similar things—but I also believe that the national commitment to historical memory and community mitigates this issue. I recently gave a presentation on my findings in Germany, after which an attendee came to me and said, "Now I’m thinking of moving to Germany!" Though I emphasize with that view, I would suggest that, rather than imagining living in a place where a commitment to social justice, equity, and civic obligation are conventional beliefs, we should consider instead how to foster those beliefs here. In our ability to promulgate a global perspective and the moral value of such understanding, social studies teachers are uniquely situated to lead in this effort.

Since the majority of my students have athletic interests, I have long utilized sports as a method of associative learning. Clearly, combining modern German football culture with classroom activities is an obvious method to engage my students. Having had the opportunity to view the World Cup while in Germany this year, I observed a unique perspective. My groups experienced boisterous public viewings in cities such as Nuremberg, Stuttgart, Weimar, and—of course—Berlin. After two consecutive third place finishes, this year I was able to witness the fantastic 1-0 extra time German victory over Argentina! Along with TOP Fellows Kim Gilman and Scott Noet, I left my Alexanderplatz public viewing location the night and I asked myself whether our experience was even a little bit like the celebration on the very same streets during the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. My task now is to capture that Weltmeister energy and insert it into new and better lesson plans that fuse sports and social studies. There is no need for fun and learning to be mutually exclusive entities. As I learned long ago "edutainment" has a place in the learning environment and as new state and national standards more rigorously emphasize academics, we must remember that our students are still young people. They must be approached with a balanced perspective that recognizes their level of cognitive development. Why not interject competition, excitement, and passion into the classroom? TOP has provided me the worldview to do so and I encourage others to follow along. Remember that Canada will host the Women's World Cup in 2015! It's time to add gender studies to the list of topics that tie to football culture.

Youth in Berlin celebrate Germany's 2014 World Cup Victory.

Bill Wyss, Louisville High School, Louisville, OH

As a TOP study tour participant, I have benefited in countless ways through tours of multiple regions of Germany. The cultural, economic, historical, political and sociological knowledge that I have gained has resulted in many specific classroom lessons, but more importantly in the development of a multicultrual world view that has permeated every aspect of my teaching. Since most of my students have not had the opportunity to travel extensively, I have utilized my TOP experiences to bring the world to my classroom. Whether I am teaching government, history, psychology, or world issues, I have been able to design effective German case studies that are both fun and educational.

I encourage other teachers to study the dynamics of German football culture and to fashion lesson plans that fuse sports and social studies. There is no need for fun and learning to be mutually exclusive entities. As I learned long ago "edutainment" has a place in the learning environment and as new state and national standards more rigorously emphasize academics, we must remember that our students are still young people. They must be approached with a balanced perspective that recognizes their level of cognitive development. Why not interject competition, excitement, and passion into the classroom? TOP has provided me the worldview to do so and I encourage others to follow along. Remember that Canada will host the Women's World Cup in 2015! It's time to add gender studies to the list of topics that tie to football culture.

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SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS AS GLOBAL CITIZENS: A STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE

Since the beginning of the 20th century, citizenship has been an important concept in social studies education (Reid, Gill & Sears, 2010; Richardson, 2002). The purpose of social studies is to develop “good citizens” (Sears, 2004; Shields & Ramsay, 2004) and a culture of responsible and active citizenship that includes openness and recognition of diversity (Gérin-Lajoie, 2006; Peck, Thompson, Chareka, Joshee & Sears, 2010). According to the National Council for the Social Studies (2008), the ultimate goal of social studies programs is to “prepare students to identify, understand, and work to solve the challenges facing our diverse nation in an increasingly interdependent world.” Although education falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction in Canada, the shared vision of citizenship education is to guide students, from kindergarten through grade twelve, in their development as citizens.

Indeed, fostering awareness of local, regional, national, and international perspectives in a democratic society is at the heart of various social studies programs in Canada. In Eastern Canada, for example, the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) believes that social studies must focus on developing both national and international citizenship: “The knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed in the Social Studies curriculum empower students to be informed, responsible citizens of Canada and the world and through participation in the democratic process to improve society” (CAMET, 1999, pp. 1-2). In Western Canada, Alberta’s social studies program “promotes a sense of belonging and acceptance in students as they engage in active and responsible citizenship at the local, community, provincial, national and global level” (Alberta Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 1). In Ontario, responsible citizenship and pluralism are at the core of the curriculum in social studies, history, and geography: “The proposed course of study encourages the development of a sense of citizenship so that the student may become a responsible citizen in a pluralistic and ever-changing society” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 3).

Given our increasingly diversified society and classrooms, educators are being called upon to create new teaching methods and curriculum initiatives to promote social cohesion, individual and collective identities, and a sense of belonging and citizenship in the world (Gérin-Lajoie, 2006; Merryfield & Subedi, 2006; Richardson, 2006). This raises the following question: What role does professional development play in enhancing teachers’ knowledge and skills with respect to awareness of global perspectives in the context of a pluralistic society?

It is appropriate to examine the complex nature of this global outlook by focusing on cross-cultural dialogue and global citizenship through educational policies and professional development opportunities. One example of a professional development opportunity related to global citizenship and cross-cultural dialogue is the Transatlantic Outreach Program (TOP), which provides teachers with an engaging learning experience and gives them a chance to revitalize their social studies teaching practice. This program is organized by the Goethe-Institut (GI), which is “the Federal Republic of Germany’s [leading] cultural institution operational worldwide” (Goethe-Institut, 2013).

Taking place in Germany every summer, the purpose of the Transatlantic Outreach Program’s study tours is to help teachers (from kindergarten to grade 12) better understand various current aspects of life in Germany from sociocultural, historical, political, and economic perspectives. It also aims to promote cross-cultural dialogue with an emphasis on instilling in students a sense of global citizenship and belonging in a democratic society. In short, the program is rich in learning opportunities and provides an overview of the range of national and international perspectives on the interrelated (and contested) notions of citizenship, identity, and community.

During my trip to Germany in July 2010, I particularly enjoyed learning from the American teachers about their diverse experiences and points of view. We share the same concern for public education, pedagogy, and intercultural issues. I was deeply impressed by their knowledge, dedication, and enthusiasm for promoting a genuine openness to diversity. Through this experience, I not only re-examined my own perceptions of American and German cultures and societies, but I was also inspired by my American and European colleagues’ skills and wealth of knowledge. Engaging in such pedagogical and cross-cultural dialogue motivated me to reflect upon my practice and to explore new teaching methods that could illustrate the complexity of global perspectives.

As a Francophone teacher from Canada, I am very grateful for the opportunity I had to take part in the Transatlantic Outreach Program, which offered a discovery-learning approach to social studies. Some highlights include our trip to Berlin and to schools (3) and non-government organizations, and our visit to the Internationale Jugendbibliothek München (the

1 TOP offers six study tours every summer. During our tour, there were 16 participants, including me, and we were all social studies leaders in our own schools, school boards, and communities. Participants came from such places as Chicago, New York, Miami, and Minneapolis. I was one of two teachers from Canada.

2 The themes discussed during our study tour in Germany included the environment, economic issues, history (including a visit to concentration camps), culture, religion, and immigration. Discussion centered on issues of common interest to the teachers and the German partners.

3 In the state of Bavaria, elementary and secondary students attend school until the end of July, so we were able to visit two schools outside Munich.

4 See the article “Building Bridges of Intercultural Understanding: The International Youth Library” (Thompson, 2011).
International Youth Library in Munich). I was deeply touched by the vision of Jella Lepman, who founded the International Youth Library after the end of World War II “to awaken a new understanding for other people and nations” (International Youth Library, 2013) through children’s literature and to create a safe space for cross-cultural dialogue. Upon my return, I created the course “Teaching Social Studies with Children’s Literature” to support the political, pedagogical, and cultural endeavors that Lepman began and to better understand and communicate the multiple ways of looking at the world by providing ample opportunity for listening and discussion.

The TOP study tour in Germany offers participants the opportunity to develop multiple ways of understanding the world. Such professional development experiences, I suggest, can help teachers contribute to their society and profession by becoming better-informed, more critically aware and engaged citizens. When it comes to increasing global awareness among social studies teachers, I believe there is no better experience than a summer study tour in Germany through the Transatlantic Outreach Program.

Bibliographic References


Laura A. Thompson is a Franco-Ontarian from Sudbury with Nova Scotia Acadian roots. She has been a professor of citizenship education at Acadia University since 2008. An expert in Francophone education in minority settings and in curriculum theory, she is conducting several research projects on questions of interculturality, identity, and citizenship in Canada. laura.thompson@acadiau.ca
The Transatlantic Outreach Program is proud to announce the publication of the TOP Toolkit for Professional Development, designed to support facilitators with various tools, resources, and strategies to promote and enhance TOP Instructional Guides: Let’s Explore Modern Germany and Germany In Focus!

**WHO WILL FACILITATE TOP WORKSHOPS?**

Educators who:
- Plan to apply for a TOP Study Tour,
- Have participated in a TOP Study Tour,
- Have attended a TOP Workshop,
- Have reviewed either of the Instructional Guides.

The Toolkit is available for educators who will facilitate workshops to:
- Share information about TOP curriculum programs and resources,
- Engage participants with innovative standards-based instructional strategies,
- Inform audiences about an application process for all expenses-paid Study Tours to Germany,
- Promote other TOP professional development opportunities.

TOP encourages social studies educators to take leadership roles and become involved. We are confident that you will find the tools useful for planning and facilitating workshops with various audiences, including:
- Social Studies Educators in School Districts
- Regional Social Studies Events
- State-Wide or National Social Studies Conferences
- Other Venues for Professional Development

**HOW IS THE TOP TOOLKIT STRUCTURED?**

The Toolkit is framed around Drawers with Tools that facilitators can use for planning and conducting TOP Workshops. For every TOP Workshop Agenda, there are some essential elements that need to be included. However, there is flexibility for facilitators to create and modify various strategies. Here are the Drawers with brief descriptions:

- **Drawer 1: Tools for Using the Toolkit** - Introductions and a TOP Toolkit Table of Contents with specific tools for each drawer.
- **Drawer 2: Tools for Navigating the TOP Curriculum Program** - Overviews for key elements of the program.
- **Drawer 3: Tools for Planning Professional Development Workshops** - Planning tools that encompass ‘Before, During, and After Workshops’.
- **Drawer 4: Tools for Designing Agendas** - For a full description and specific contents of each drawer, please see TOP Toolkit Table of Contents.

**SECTION 1**

**Agendas** - Samples Agendas, Agenda Components, and a sample Agenda Template.

**Overviews** - Overview documents to use for workshops: Please refer to Tools for Navigating TOP Curriculum Program.

**SECTION 2**

**Standards** - Indexes, Abbreviated and Extended Codes, and Strategies for Aligning Standards, including: National Council for Social Studies Standards, Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, plus other state or local standards.

**SECTION 3**

**Short Strategies and Icebreakers** - Variety of strategies to actively engage participants during the opening or other segments of a workshop. They vary in length and may be adapted for content or procedures.

**Modified Lesson Strategies** - Samples of interactive strategies that have been adapted for workshop participants. The strategies model standards-based learning with: individual and collaborative tasks; differentiated instruction; literacy, complex thinking, and presentation skills. Each of the samples includes Purposes, Directions, and supporting resources. This is a flexible Drawer. It allows facilitators opportunities to choose a Lesson, explore the Procedures and Instructional Resource Disc and then design a Modified Lesson Strategy that matches professional interests with a particular audience. Depending on the time frame or audience for a workshop, facilitators may include more than one strategy for an agenda.

**SECTION 4**

**TOP Study Tours** - Application Procedures, Frequently Asked Questions, Graduate Credits, Photo Collages, and links for specific information are provided.

**Reflections and Evaluations** - Various resources for Workshop Reflections and Evaluations; Facilitator Evaluations; Lesson Evaluations; and Workshop Participant’s Information Forms.

- **Drawer 5: Tools for Extending Agendas** - Sample Modified Strategies for extending and enhancing workshops with Field Trip to Berlin... A DVD and Instructional Guide including: a Focused Viewing Jigsaw, Curriculum Applications, and Photo Analysis activities. This section also includes TOP online materials and resources.

- **Drawer 6: Tools for Enhancing Agendas** - Multi-media components including Sample PowerPoints and Video Clips for use with Sample Agendas.

Again, TOP invites you to facilitate, use, and adapt the TOP Toolkit for Professional Development to promote and extend Let’s Explore Modern Germany and Germany In Focus.

Sincerely,

Connie Manter and Jackie Littlefield
TOP Toolkit Authorship Team
In recent Workshop Leadership, Dr. Paul Dickler conducted three "Trainer Network" workshops in spring of 2014 in Norman, Oklahoma, on the campus of The University of Oklahoma and in the Norman Public Schools. Dr. Dickler’s all day workshop was primarily based on the new book Germany in Focus. It featured lessons on the Berlin Wall and the American Presidency, and German and American Immigration. Participant teachers modeled the lessons and demonstrated the relevance and liveliness of the content. German and World Geography were also addressed. In addition, teachers were shown a range of other teaching materials and supplied with the information to apply for the summer TOP study tours in Germany. The two other workshops were held at the OKAGE State Geography Conference and had an emphasis on German geography. For elementary participants the emphasis was Let’s Explore Modern Germany and its geography components. For secondary teachers Germany in Focus was used and geography was emphasized. The Oklahoma teachers were an amazing group to work with. They were energized and excited to share their knowledge and experiences, and to learn from the workshop.

To order materials, visit the TOP website: www.goethe.de/top
In July of 2014 TOP had the unique opportunity of facilitating a Research Project in Germany on the subject of Cross Cultural Understanding and viewing modern German culture through the cross-cultural lens. 10 participants from all over North America were selected for further research and study in Germany after having completed initial tours in previous years. The result of the project, comparative studies of immigration, sports, reunification, economy, labor unions, education systems and youth culture through cultural lenses, will be published in fall 2014 and available for distribution.

“We have moved past the survey course of the initial tour and on to the upper level where we apply the knowledge and skills we have acquired. I had the difficult task of thinking about not only investigating what it means to be German for kids of various ancestry, but also how we can work to transfer those thoughts and discoveries to our own increasingly diverse classrooms and what it means to be American to our students. This has brought up some interesting entry points for teachers to talk about identity, immigration, assimilation, diversity etc.”

- Research Project Participant

Come check out the workshops of the Transatlantic Outreach Program at a conference near you! Stay involved on our Facebook page or check the listings below for when TOP comes to town:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>Oregon Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference in Portland, OR</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 9-11</td>
<td>Financial Literacy and Economic Education Conference in Dallas, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 16-17</td>
<td>Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference in Johnstown, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 18</td>
<td>German American Heritage Center in Davenport, IA</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 24-25</td>
<td>SPECIAL EVENT! Virginia Council for the Social Studies Conference in Arlington, VA</td>
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<td>October 25</td>
<td>Arizona Council for the Social Studies Conference in Mesa, AZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 14-15</td>
<td>Ontario History and Social Sciences Teachers’ Association Annual Conference in Toronto, ON</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 20-22</td>
<td>SPECIAL EVENT! National Council for the Social Studies in Boston, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6-8</td>
<td>California Council for the Social Studies Conference in Oakland, CA</td>
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For more information on how you can get involved in further research in Germany, please visit the TOP website and 2015 Study Tour Application Form, available online in fall 2014.

CALLING ALL TOP FELLOWS AND ALUMNI! The Transatlantic Outreach Program is proud to announce the kick-off of a stronger Alumni Network and Association by announcing future projects, events and competitions for Alumni and prospective Fellows. Check out the list below for opportunities to stay involved in TOP and continue the promotion of studying modern Germany!

RECEPTIONS: Come and visit TOP at Alumni Events and Receptions in fall 2014! Join us at the Virginia Council for the Social Studies Conference from October 24-25 in Arlington, VA for a DC / Virginia / Maryland TOP Reunion and Alumni Reception and at the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference November 21st in Boston, MA. Eat and drink with us and enter yourself in our free raffle with travel prizes! More details coming soon.

COMPETITIONS: Calling all bloggers and photogs! TOP is looking for the best travel blog and best Germany photograph to be featured on its website. Please send all submissions (either photo or blog, or both) to Sarah Yabroff at syabroff@washington.goethe.org by December 1st for this season’s competitions. Photo submissions should be unaltered; simply send your photo directly from your camera’s (or phones) memory chip. In addition to being featured on TOP’s website, winners will receive a prize!
Dear Social Studies Educator,

We would like to thank you for taking interest in the Transatlantic Outreach Program. We know your time is precious and we hope you have enjoyed the latest edition of our newsletter.

Whether you are one of our experienced Fellows or learning about us for the first time, we hope you have found something in this newsletter that will encourage you to build a professional relationship with TOP. The articles contained herein were written by educators just like you, who only a short time ago had never heard about the opportunities available to them through our program. Should you decide that your classroom is ready to "span continents," be it through the use of specific teaching materials, leading workshops, going on a study tour, or engaging in any type of student exchange with teddy bears, video conferencing, or otherwise, then we hope you will strongly consider the Transatlantic Outreach Program as a partner on your journey.

The Transatlantic Outreach Program (TOP) - a non-profit, public/private partnership between the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, the Goethe-Institut, Deutsche Bank, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, and the Siemens Corporation - was founded in 2002. To promote education about Germany, TOP promotes awareness of Germany within the context of its education and political systems, vocational training, corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability, culture, history, geography and more.

One of the first questions many people ask us is, Why Germany? Well, for one, many Americans have German ancestry. Germany is home to one of the world’s largest economies by GDP and is one of the world’s leading exporters. Germany is a prime mover in European integration and was a founding member of the European Union. Germany is an immigrant nation, bordered by more countries than any other in Europe. Germany is a global leader in environmental protection and "green" technologies. Germany and the USA are important international partners that share common problems and must work together to find common solutions. Finally, promoting dialogue between countries and cultures is the cornerstone of German foreign educational and cultural policy. It is about actively building bridges between peoples in an effort to foster greater understanding and enable nations to be viewed in their cultural and historical contexts. If you are ready to learn more about what TOP has to offer you and your students, then we invite you to visit our website, send us an e-mail, or even "like" us on Facebook!

Thanks for reading!

The TOP Team
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