

Personal Essay

My name is Wiona Glänzer and I'm 14 years old. My family members are my two parents, my twelve year old brother Louis and our black cat Yvy. We live in a very small village near Heidelberg. Our house, with our small -but beautiful- garden is close to the forest. My parents have both studied physics and work full time in a large IT company. We have dinner together every evening and on the weekends we go on bike tours or visit lectures, concerts and exhibitions. My little brother attends another school, nevertheless we are very close to each other.

My best friend at school came from the U.S. and lived here until 2013 because her parents work for the US-Army, which had a department here in Heidelberg. I think that's one of the reasons for my fascination and interest in the United States and other countries and cultures in general. I have never traveled to the U.S. before, but it has always been like a little trip to the U.S. when I visited my friend at her house in Patrick Henry Village in Heidelberg.

I attend 9th grade at the Helmholtz Gymnasium in Heidelberg. In my class we are 28 students, we have a lot of fun working together. Special about my school are the bilingual classes. In 7th + 8th grade geography and economics were taught in English. Last year also history was taught in English and this year biology. My favorite subjects are geography, astronomy and physics.

From 5th to 7th class we were a singing class and had two lessons of choir each week. I really enjoyed these lessons and joined our school choir afterwards. I play the guitar for 2 years now. I am also playing in the guitar ensemble of my teacher twice a year.

I took part in the Henkel Team Run two times for my school. This is a 3.1 kilometer run through Heidelberg. I like running and I could imagine joining a cross country team at my school in America. Since I was 5 years old I go on skiing trips with my family and the ski club Leimen every winter. This summer holidays I learned sailing.

At the moment I am mentor for the new students at our school. I show them our school, help organize events for them and answer their questions. With one of my friends I also lead a board game lesson in the lunch break at school.

Since sixth grade I am taking part in the Hector Seminar, which offers education in natural science, mathematics and technology for the top 2 percent of students in Heidelberg region. We meet with our teachers once a week for about three hours. I found many good friends there. Last year we built and programmed Lego NXT robots and made cosmetic products in the laboratory. We also went on excursions together. I liked best as we stayed at the state observatory one night. At the moment we are planning an excursion to the North Sea to observe the animals, which live there.

On every Saturday we have our First Lego League (FLL) team meeting at our house. FLL is a worldwide robot design and research competition for kids from 10 to 16 (14 in the U.S.) years old. I also like to bake cakes or cook together with my friends.

My favorite authors are Cornelia Funke and J. K. Rowling, who both write fantasy stories. My favorite musician is Ed Sheeran, because he plays the guitar as well, but I do also like to sing along the funny texts of the German band „Wise Guys“ with my brother.

This summer holidays I stayed with a French family, who lives near Paris, for one week. They had a boy in my age, who also visited us in Heidelberg. I enjoyed this exchange a lot and hope to make such a unique experience in the USA again. I loved visiting two of the famous art galleries in Paris too. I saw plenty of inspiring pictures in the Louvre and the Musée d'Orsay.

My role models are successful entrepreneurs and innovators. For example Steve Jobs or Klaus Tschira. As Steve Jobs did, I would like to lead an innovative company when I am older. I have also joined the economics club at my school this year. Another field I'm interested in as a future profession is space travel and science in space.

From my year in the USA I would expect to dive into a new culture and get to know the differences and also similarities of the German and the American way of life. I would expect to improve my English of course and I would like to represent Germany at my guest school. After my year abroad I would like to have many different stories to tell my friends, family, classmates and maybe also future travelers to the United States.



This picture was taken during our skiing holidays in Switzerland.



On this picture you can see my choir at our spring concert in 2013.



My FLL-Team at our research presentation.