

GRAMMAR A2 EINHEIT 14

The grammar introduced in this unit is really not new. You've been using the words and constructs all along.

The first deals with indirect questions (*Indirekte Fragen*). This is pretty much any situation in which a clause is introduced by a question word. You see this a lot with *wissen*. *Ich weiß nicht, wie alt der Deutschlehrer ist. Wissen Sie zufällig, wie man zum Bahnhof kommt?* The key point to remember is that the question word introduces a subordinate clause (*Nebensatz*); the verb is at the end of the clause.

Although certainly the most common, *wissen* isn't the only verb that anticipates an indirect question. *Ich frage mich, wie es unseren Nachbarn geht..* (I wonder how old our neighbors are). *Können Sie mir sagen, warum es in Ihrem Haus immer so kalt ist?*

The only other point of grammar dealt with in this unit is the so-called *Indefinita*. These are basically words that deal with indefinite numbers or indeterminate quantity. You are already familiar with most of the words. They can be separated into three categories – those that apply only to inanimate objects, those that apply only to people, and those that can be used to describe either.

Etwas (oftentimes one says only *was*) and *nichts* can not apply to people. *Hast du (et)was verstanden? Nein, ich habe überhaupt nichts verstanden.*

Niemand (nobody) obviously applies only to people. It is singular and may be used with or without endings when it is in accusative, dative, or genitive cases. Realistically, you will only see it with endings in the accusative (*en* ending) and dative (*em* ending). Everything that was just said about *niemand* also applies to *jemand* (someone).

Niemand kann mir helfen. Ich habe niemand(en) gehört. Das gibst du niemande(em).

Etwas (or *was*) cannot be applied to people und means “something” or “some”. The same is true of *nichts* (nothing).

Hast du (et)was gesehen oder gehört? Ich möchte noch etwas Kaffee. Ich esse nichts.

Alle (all), *viele* (many), *wenige* (few), *andere* (other), *einige* (some), *mehrere* (several), and *manche* (many) can apply to both animate and inanimate objects. There are special rules that apply to these words and the endings on the adjectives that follow them, but at this point you simply need to know them as listed above.

Alle (manche, viele, usw.)Kinder lernen Deutsch.