

## C. Analyzing Modal Particle Usage

### Answer Key 4: Analyzing Modal Particles in Context: *denn*

- I. 1. The MP *denn* appears only in interrogative sentences (questions).
2. In all these examples, the MP *denn* immediately follows personal pronouns (*es, ihr, du, uns*).
3. In line 10, the form “steckste” represents a contraction of a verb form (*steckst*) and a second person pronoun (*du*). Such contractions are typical for informal, colloquial conversations.
- II. 1. In lines 6 and 19, the subject is expressed by noun phrases (*der aus Heidelberg; die Amerikaner*). In these cases, the MP *denn* precedes the subject and follows the finite verb. In lines 7 and 20, the subject is expressed by a personal pronoun (*er, sie*). In these cases, the MP *denn* follows the subject.
- III. 1. The formulaic pattern containing *denn* in these lines is:  
*Wie geht es dir/euch denn?*
2. This pattern is a typical greeting at the beginning of a conversation, email, or chat.
3. An answer is actually expected to the question “*Wie geht es dir/euch denn?*” (as opposed to the American ‘How’s it going?’). For example, in 8, 9, and 12 this first turn is extended by another more specific question. In 11, the German partner provides an answer to this question by providing information about herself, thus indicating that she is expecting similar information from her American partner.