

Camille Acker: *Cicada* – Analysing a short story

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Camille Ackers short story Sammlung „*Training School for Negro Girls*“ bietet Schülerinnen und Schülern beeindruckende Leseerlebnisse, die alle Merkmale einer Kurzgeschichte erfüllen. Ihr Fokus auf Diskriminierung behandelt gegenwärtige gesellschaftliche und politische Themen, was die Aktualität ihres Buches unterstreicht. In der Kurzgeschichte „*Cicada*“ geht es um Ellery, die an einem Klavierwettbewerb teilnimmt und mit Themen wie *identity* und *fitting in* konfrontiert ist. Die Unterrichtsmaterialien umfassen *pre-*, *while-* und *post-reading* Aufgaben, die das Verständnis fördern und die Lernenden zur Reflexion anregen.

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Competences and skills:

When working with the short story, the focus is initially on strengthening students' **reading competence**. This is demonstrated, among other things, through the insights they gain from **analytical skills**. Part of this competency involves enhancing the **intercultural competence**. Furthermore, students optimise their **listening and visual comprehension skills** when they deal with videos. Through the completion of tasks based on the information acquired, students practice their **speaking and social abilities**.

Overview:

List of abbreviations:

A Analysis**D** Discussion/debate**LVC** Listening/viewing comprehension**R** Research**T** Working with a text**CT** Creative Task**G** Group work**PR** Presentation**RC** Reading comprehension**W** Writing

Topic	Material	Methods/Skills
Camille Acker: <i>Cicada</i>	M1–M3	A, CT, D, G, LVC, PR, R, RC, T, W

Edition of the short story used for this unit:

Camille Acker: *Training School for Negro Girls*. Feminist Press at the City University of New York. New York 2018. ISBN: 978-1-936932-37-5.

Topic: Camille Acker: *Cicada*

M1 Worksheet – Before reading the short story

Pre-reading activities

1. Focus on competitions.



- Make a list of different competitions. Divide them into competitions everyone could be part of and competitions one needs special qualifications to take part in.
- Give a two-minute-speech about one of the collected competitions. Include your opinion on the importance and effects of competitions.
- Now brainstorm in class how one can deal best with defeats.



- Watch this video about the Schubert Club Music Competition and respond to the tasks. <https://raabe.click/SchubertClub>
[last access: 21/10/2023]



- Tick the arguments Ming-Hui enlists in favour of competitions.

<input type="checkbox"/> earn money	<input type="checkbox"/> increase one's experience
<input type="checkbox"/> earn a scholarship	<input type="checkbox"/> gain extra motivation
<input type="checkbox"/> get a chance to perform	<input type="checkbox"/> get a job as a music teacher
<input type="checkbox"/> make new friends	<input type="checkbox"/> practise competing

- Match the sentence parts to complete Madison's arguments. There are two extra completions.

1. Competitions are important	a) to get used to performing in front of an audience.
	b) gives you the chance to make money.
2. Performing helps you	c) for everyone's education.
	d) for students to practise competing.
3. Taking part in a competition	e) to progress with your music.

Worksheet – Working with the text

M2

Reading comprehension

1. Read the short story *Cicada* and create a flowchart that illustrates the plot. Then, using the chart, narrate the story to your classmates.

Analysing the short story

2. Work with a partner to introduce the two main characters.
 - a) Use this website to create an avatar of the main characters.
<https://raabe.click/Avatar> [last access 21/10/2023]
 - b) Add information about the social background to your picture.
 - c) Find examples of behaviour that define the character.
 - d) List adjectives that describe the character.
 - e) Now choose one character and present it to the class. As a starting point, explain why you chose this avatar.
3. Work in groups to define the nine elements of a short story.
<https://raabe.click/ShortStory> [last access: 21/10/2023]



Character	Wish/Goal	Conflict
Decisions	Climax	Ending
Setting	Point of view	Change

- a) Name the element that has been assigned to you and explain what it means.
- b) Say why this element is typical of a short story.
- c) Apply your findings to *Cicada* and give evidence from the text.