

V/259

Unterrichtsmagazin

Poems and songs as social commentaries – Kreativ mit Gedichten und Songs umgehen (ab Klasse 9)

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Gesellschaftskritik, globale Phänomene, personale Konflikte – zunehmend nutzen Autoren die Ausdrucksform *poetry* dazu, gesellschaftliche und politische Themen aufmerksam zu machen. Diese Materialzusammenstellung macht Gedichte und Songs in englischer Sprache für Lernende der Mittelstufe und Fortgeschrittene zugänglich. Sie behandelt Themen, die sich auf soziale Anliegen und globale Herausforderungen beziehen. Die Lernenden tauschen Emotionen, Verständnis und Meinungen aus und bauen dabei mögliche Abneigungen lyrischen Texten gegenüber ab. Doch vor allem geht es um die Arbeit mit Gedichten und Songs.

KOMPETENZPROFIL

Klassenstufe/Jahr: ab Klasse 9

Dauer: 12–14 Unterrichtsstunden (1–2 Stunden pro Material)

Kompetenzen:
1. Selbstkompetenz: die eigene Position artikulieren; 2. Lese-/Hörverstehen: sich durch Bedeutungsaushandlungen (*negotiation of meaning*) Zugänge zu Gedichten und Songs verschaffen;
3. Schreiben: kreative Texte schreiben

Thematische Bereiche: gender roles, generations, being old, climate change, ethnic minorities, racism, war, framing language, American society, LGBTQ Pride, migration

Material: Texte, Bilder, Videos

Auf einen Blick

Gedicht

- M 1** **Margarita Engle, *Tula* [“Books are door-shaped”]** / sprachliche und inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts; interpretatives Lautes Lesen
- Einbettung:** gender roles, family, education
- Klassenstufe:** ab Klasse 9

Gedicht

- M 2** **John Arden, *Being old*** / inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts unter Berücksichtigung der multiplen Intertextualitäten; Schreiben eigener Gedichte zum Thema „Alter“
- Einbettung:** family, being old
- Klassenstufe:** ab Klasse 9

Song

- M 3** **Neil Young, *Here I Am* / *Shut it down*** / inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Songs vor dem Hintergrund eigener Einstellungen; kreativer Textsortentransfer in Form eines Gesprächs
- Einbettung:** climate change
- Klassenstufe:** ab Klasse 9
- Benötigt:** Möglichkeit, ein Video zu präsentieren, z. B. Beamer

Song

- M 4** **Mumukshu Bhaskar, *Oil, Beds are burning*** / analytische (strukturelle) und inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Songs; rhythmisches Sprechen, Schreiben eines Kurzessays
- Einbettung:** ethnic minorities
- Klassenstufe:** ab Klasse 9
- Benötigt:** Möglichkeit, ein Video zu präsentieren, z. B. Beamer

Gedicht

- M 5** **Jamal Smith, *To White People*** / inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts, Formulierung einer persönlichen Position zum Inhalt; Schreiben eines Manifests
- Einbettung:** racism, “Black Lives Matter”
- Klassenstufe:** ab Klasse 10

Gedicht

M 6 **Naomi Shihab Nye, *For Mohammed Zeid of Gaza, Age 15*** / inhaltliche und analytische Erarbeitung des Gedichts; Zusammenstellen möglicher Visualisierungen des Gedichts

Einbettung: framing power of language, war, political activism

Klassenstufe: ab Klasse 10

Gedicht

M 7 **Tato Laviera, *lady liberty*** / sprachliche, strukturelle und inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts; interpretatives lautes Vorlesen

ZM 2 **Vocabulary and cultural references for M 7**

Einbettung: American society

Klassenstufe: ab Klasse 11

Benötigt: Kopien in Gruppenstärke der vier Abschnitte von ZM 2

**Gedicht**

M 8 **Jameson Fitzpatrick, *A Poem for Pulse*** / inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts; Formulierung einer persönlichen Position zum Inhalt

Einbettung: diversity, LGBTQ Pride

Klassenstufe: ab Klasse 11

Gedicht

M 9 **Rodney Gomez, *Their Bodies a Xylophone*** / inhaltliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts in einem Schreibgespräch; Schreiben eines Gedichts zum Thema

Einbettung: Immigration

Klassenstufe: ab Klasse 11

Gedicht

M 10 **Sherman Alexie, *A Dispatch from Seattle or, Nervous in the Hot Zone*** / sprachliche Erarbeitung des Gedichts u. a. in Hinblick auf das Verhalten von Menschen in einer Krise

ZM 3 **Vocabulary and cultural references for M 10**

Einbettung: American society; human behaviour

Klassenstufe: ab Klasse 11

Benötigt: Kopien in Klassenstärke von ZM 3



M 1

Margarita Engle, *Tula* ["Books are door-shaped"]

A. Preparing for the poem

1. Have you experienced any situation in which either man or woman has been at a disadvantage because of their gender? Were the situations connected with work, or family, or social life, or what? Make notes.
2. Talk with a partner about such situations. Have they had any influence on your attitude to the opposite sex?
3. Work with the picture on the right.
 - a) Write down all ideas and associations it arouses.
 - b) Share your ideas in pairs.
 - c) Find a one-word title for the picture. This is also shared in pairs.
 - d) Use the ideas for a plenary discussion.



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Books are door-shaped
portals
carrying me
across oceans
5 and centuries,
helping me feel
less alone.

But my mother believes
that girls who read too much
10 are unladylike
and ugly,
so my father's books are locked
in a clear glass cabinet
at entrance covers
15 and mysterious titles,
I am rarely permitted
to touch
the enchantment³
of words.

20 Poems.
Stories.
Plays.
are forbidden.

Girls are not supposed to think,
25 but as soon as my eager mind
begins to race, free thoughts

rush in
to replace
the old⁴ ones.

30 I imagine instant times
and faraway places.
Ghosts.
Vampires.
Ancient warriors.

35 Fantasy moves into
the tangled⁵ maze⁶
of lonely confusion.

Secretly, I open
an invisible book in my mind,
40 and I step
through its magical door-shape
into a universe
of dangerous villains⁷
and breathtaking heroes.

45 Many of the heroes are men
and boys, but some are girls
so tall
strong
and clever
50 that they rescue other children
from monsters.

Source: **Engle, Margarita:** *Tula* ["Books are door-shaped"]. In: *Engle, Margarita: The Lightning Dreamer*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston 2013; found at: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/141835/tula-books-are-door-shaped> [last access: 21/09/2020].

M 3

Neil Young with Crazy Horse, *Shut it down*

A. Preparing for the song

1. Visualise a place where there have been many changes in the environment. Concentrate on specific changes. Tell a partner about this place.
2. Work in groups of four.
 - a) Choose one of these quotations:

"It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment." – Ansel Adams

"We're in a giant car heading towards a brick wall and everyone is arguing over who they're going to sit." – David Suzuki

"There is a tendency at every important but difficult crossroad to pretend that it's not really there." – Bill McKibben

Source: www.goodreads.com



- b) Paraphrase the quotation into simple English.
 - c) Decide whether the quotation is relevant to your lives and your country today, and if so, give specific examples.
 - d) When each group has finished, report to the class. Note the most interesting conclusions on the board.
3. Decide what the three quotations have in common and choose a theme.

<p>Have to shut the whole system down Have to shut the whole system down People tryin' to save this earth From an ugly de</p> <p>5 Have to shut the whole system down People tryin' to live, working In a world of meat factories Have to shut the whole system down All around the planet</p> <p>10 There's a blindness that just can't see Have to shut the whole system down They're all hearing climate change as cool as they can be Have to shut the whole system down</p> <p>15 Shut it down, shut it down Shut it down, shut it down Have to shut the whole system down is the only way we can all be free Have to shut the whole system down</p> <p>20 Start again and build it for eternity! Have to shut the whole system down What about the animals? What about the birds and bees?</p>	<p>25 What about the bookshelves? What about the history? Have to shut the whole system down Shut it down, shut it down Shut it down, shut it down</p> <p>30 Shut it down, shut it down Shut it down, shut it down Have to shut the whole system down When I look at the future I see hope for you and me</p> <p>35 Have to shut the whole system down Working, working for eternity Work it now Have to shut the whole system down When I look at the future</p> <p>40 I see hope for you and me Have to shut the whole system down Working for eternity Gonna shut the whole system down Got to shut the whole system down</p> <p>45 Got to shut the whole system down</p>
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Shut it down, lyrics and music by Neil Young, © 2019 Storytone Publishing/Melodie der Welt GmbH.

1 **eternity**: here: very long time

B. Working into the song

1. **Respond:** Watch the video of the song at https://raabe.click/en_shutitdown. What emotions does this video most strongly convey to you? Talk to a partner and explain.

2. **Green lights, yellow lights, red lights:** As you review the song text, consider the questions below. Highlight and annotate.



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- What are the green lights here? That is, what ideas do you accept and agree with?
- What are the yellow lights here? That is, what ideas slow you down a bit, give you pause, and make you wonder whether they are accurate?
- What are the red lights here? That is, what ideas stop you in your tracks as a reader / listener because you doubt their truth or accuracy?

3. Answering back

- Individual work. Select one of the suggestions below and work on it.
 - ▶ The songwriter is a friend of yours and has send you the song text as comment – how do you reply?
 - ▶ You have come across the song text in a magazine. There are certain questions you would like to ask or comments you would like to make. Write them down and make a rough draft of your letter to the songwriter.
 - ▶ You have been asked to translate the song text into your own language. The writer has agreed to help you (in English). Note down questions you would like to ask him, e.g. "What do you mean when you say 'working for eternity'?"
- When you have finished, work with a partner, one as 'reader / translator', the other the 'song writer'. The 'friends / readers / translators' present their comments or put their questions; the 'writers' must try to react or answer them. Then, roles are reversed.



C. Working out from the song

4. As a class, brainstorm different relationships: psychotherapist / patient; old person / young person; politician / voter; CEO / political activist etc.

5. In pairs: Read the song text again and choose one of these relationships. Then work on one of the following two tasks.

- Write a dialogue. Take one of the roles above e.g. psychotherapist. Imagine that the song's words are by the patient. What would you say as a psychotherapist? How would the patient (i.e. Neil Young) respond? Example:

Psychotherapist: How do you feel? How could we solve the problem?

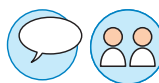
Neil Young: Have you shut the whole system down!

- Write in the role of one of the above giving your response to the text.

Example: The patient has a strong and persistent fantasy about shutting the whole system down. I feel that it is important ...

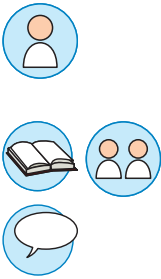
6. Either perform the dialogues or post up your written work for others to view.

7. Evaluation: How do the different interpretations change your appreciation of the song? Do you like the song more or less now?



M 5

Jamal Smith, *To White People*



A. Preparing for the poem

1. Would you regard yourself as any of the following? Be honest in your reply.
intolerant – narrow-minded – stereotyping – biased – prejudiced – xenophobic
2. If you answered yes to any of the above, what do you think you can do about it?
3. The text below gives you an idea what the Confederacy stood for. Read it and then study the photo carefully. So, if people march through the streets flying a confederate flag, what are you declaring to others and the world? Work in pairs to suggest what message the photo displays against the background of the text.

In his „Cornerstone Speech“ on 21 March 1861, the Confederacy’s Vice President Alexander Stephens stated, „The Constitution [of the United States] [...] rested upon the equality of races. This was an error. [...] Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea: its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon the great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.“



Source: **Stephens, Alexander H.:** *Cornerstone Speech*, Georgia, March 21, 1861; found at: <https://studylib.net/doc/7805982/cornerstone-speech---national-humanities-center> [last access: 21/09/2020].

As a law enforcement officer¹ I solemnly swear to uphold the constitution of the United States and of the State of Minnesota; That I will bear true faith² and allegiance³ to the same; That I will enforce the laws of the United States, of the State of Minnesota, and of the City of Saint Paul impartially⁴; That I will work in partnership with the public of the City of Saint Paul toward providing a safe environment and enhancing the quality of life consistent with the values of our community; That I will adhere⁵ to the ethical values of professionalism, integrity, responsiveness, sensitivity⁷; respect and fairness; That I will perform this obligation freely, without any mental reservation⁸ or purpose of evasion⁹; and that I will well and faithfully discharge¹⁰ the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.—

10 I wish I had something more to say about this actual oath¹¹

...us died for
...but all lives matter
...here, to
...equality is still
...a discussion
...an argument

Source: **Smith, Jamal:** *To White People* (extract). Published independently in the United States 2020.

- 1 **law enforcement officer:** police officer – 2 **(to) bear true faith:** (to) support – 3 **allegiance:** loyalty to state – 4 **impartial:** not favouring one person or side more than another – 5 **to enhance:** to improve – 6 **(to) adhere:** (to) follow instructions exactly – 7 **sensitivity:** the quality of being sensitive to the concerns of others – 8 **mental reservation:** a tacit withholding of full assent made when one is taking an oath (*geheimer Vorbehalt*) – 9 **evasion:** here: avoidance of a moral or legal obligation – 10 **(to) discharge:** here: (to) carry out a duty – 11 **oath:** a legally binding pledge to do sth. such as tell the truth in a court of law

M 10

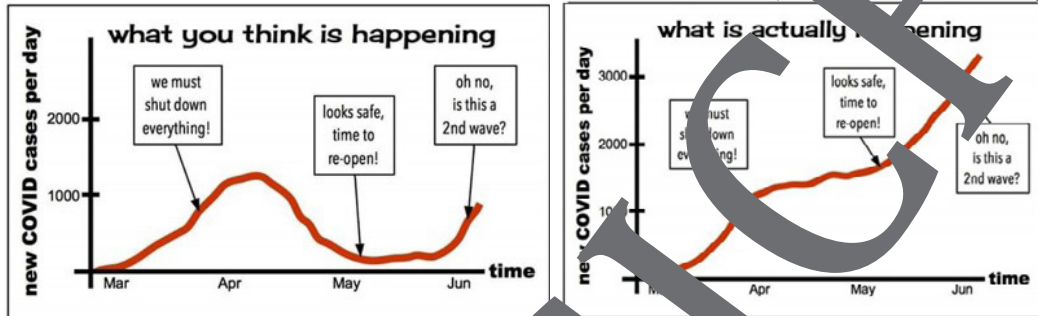
Sherman Alexie, *A Dispatch from Seattle or, Nervous in the Hot Zone*



A. Preparing for the poem

Myths and Facts

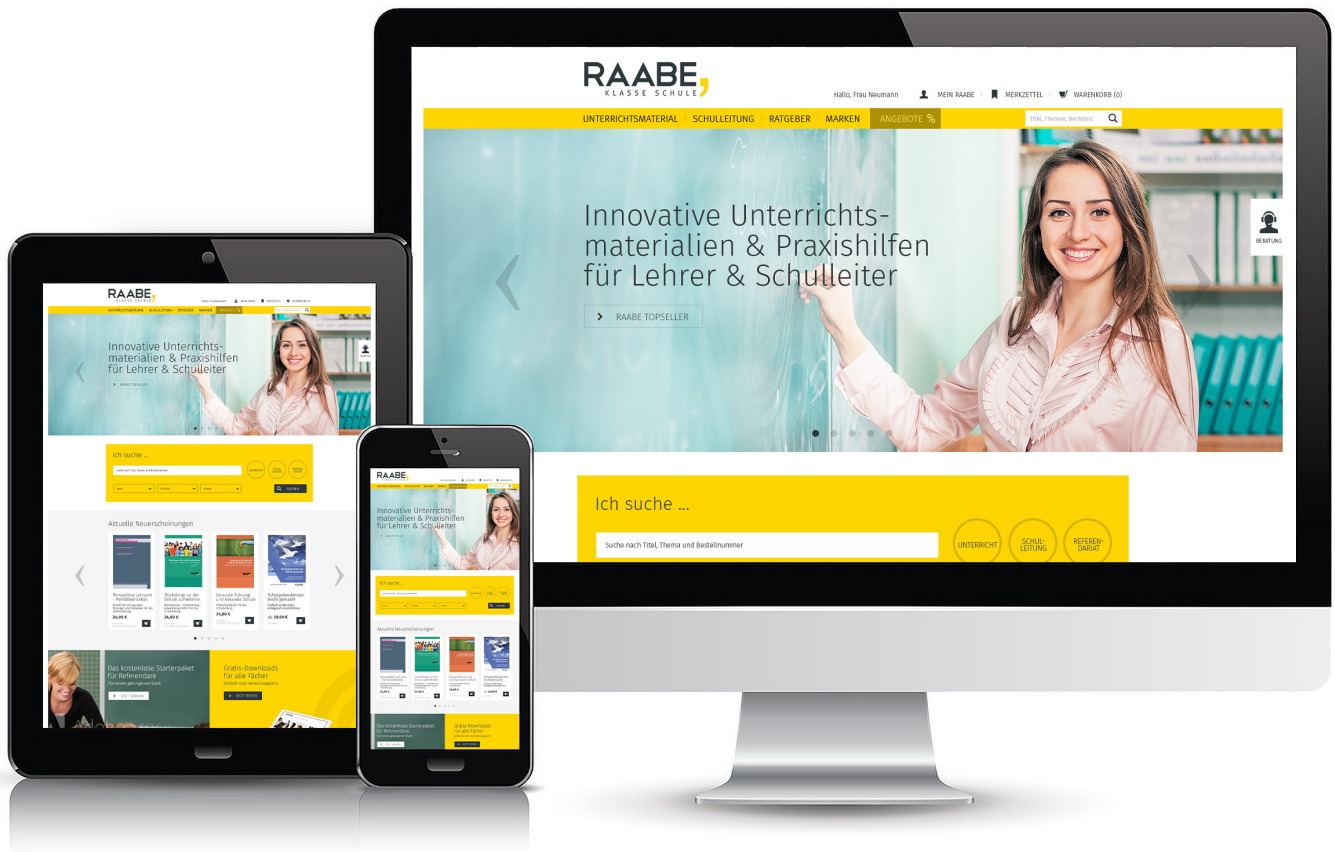
1. In pairs, examine the graphics below and list the facts and the myths in them.
2. In class, discuss why you think so many people choose to ignore facts and to believe in myths.



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Yes, we're scared but we also make
 zombie apocalypse jokes
 By texts. I don't know when I'll see
 my friends in person again.
 5 We don't want to panic and overreact
 but we don't want
 To underreact. Some of my friends
 are still hosting parties.
 Some of them are still planning
 10 to take their previous
 Scheduled trips overseas. Some are
 the politicians¹
 Who are buying all the toilet paper
 in Seattle.
 15 "God bless you," I text to one of them.
 "You'll be fine."
 The most hygienic and well-stocked
 shops in the city.
 Some of my fellow Native Americans
 20 are performing
 The highly sacred Indigenous² shrug³,
 "Dude,
 They're not giving us smallpox
 blankets."⁴
 25 But, hey, it's the Trumps. Their
 wicked incompetence
 And delusional⁵ arrogance is
 striking us
 With smallpox of the soul.
 30 I try to listen
 Of the health experts,
 but the dipshits⁶,
 Conspiracy theorists, partisan
 Hacks⁷, trolls,
 35 And the mentally ill dominate
 the discourse,
 As they always do. How did
 we get to a place
 Where the borderline personalities⁸
 40 get quoted
 As if they were experts by borderline
 journalists
 Who also act as if they're experts,
 as well?
 45 Maybe the true pandemic is
 Immodesty⁹.
 Maybe the true pandemic is
 the loss
 Of a shared and common
 50 decency.
 But, hell, that's big talk
 for someone
 Like me, who just angrily,
 impulsively,
 55 And paranoidly bought
 \$500 worth

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