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Auszug aus:

Donald Trump - The "unpresidential" President?

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Donald Trump – The “unpresidential” President?

by Waltraud Feger



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Das „Phänomen Donald Trump“ ist seit seiner Wahl zum U.S.-Präsidenten im Jahr 2016 nicht mehr aus den Medien wegzudenken. Gleichzeitig ist er eine der umstrittensten Persönlichkeiten der heutigen Zeit. In dieser Unterrichtseinheit lernen Ihre Schülerinnen und Schüler einige politische Handlungen sowie Merkmale des Verhaltens und des Charakters von Donald Trump mithilfe verschiedenster medialer Zugänge und Themenbereiche genauer kennen und analysieren seine sprachlichen Besonderheiten und sein Verhalten. Dabei erarbeiten sie sich abiturrelevante Kenntnisse, die zum Abschluss der Einheit mithilfe von Klausurvorschlägen überprüft werden können.

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Competences and skills:

In this unit, students get to know and analyse the language, characteristics and political attitudes of Donald Trump regarding different topics, among others “immigration” and “climate change”. By working with various texts, articles, videos and cartoons, students enhance their reading comprehension, listening and viewing comprehension as well as their analysis and interpretative skills. Furthermore, the topics are suited for practising comment writing and creative writing, along with discussion competences and methods like role play and hot seat. Moreover, students develop their mediation competences. The unit ends with two exam proposals in which the students can apply their skills.

Overview:

List of abbreviations:

A Text-/Video-/Cartoonanalysis

CT Creative task

I Text-/Video-/Cartooninterpretation

MD Mediation

PR Presentation

RC Reading comprehension

T Working with a text

C Comment

D Discussion

LVC Listening/Viewing comprehension

PW Project work

R Research

RP Role play

V Vocabulary

Topic	Material	Method
1: The presentation of Donald Trump	M1–M2	C, R, RC, T
2: Trump on a shopping tour	M3–M4	CT, LC, RC
3: Trump and illegal immigration	M5–M6	A, CT, I, MD, PR, RP, T, V
4: Trump – the environmentalist?	M7	A, I, LVC, PW, RC
5: Trump in action	M8–M10	A, C, D, LVC, R, RC
Written exam I		A, C, I, MD
Written exam II		A, CT, I, RC

Donald Trump – The “unpresidential” President?

Facts

Donald J. Trump is not what you would call a politician. As a business man and real estate agent he does not seem to be prone to become the President of the United States of America. What is he like? As he had never had a career as a politician, one cannot expect him to become one just after his inauguration. His professional career shines through at every moment, since making a “deal” seems to be of major importance to him. However, the Americans elected him.

Diplomatic actions do not seem to be an aim he is striving for. On the contrary: Oftentimes he goes for a fight with economic partners and tries to influence their decisions with tariffs. This has negative impacts on the relationships, so that it is called a trade war. “Making America great again” – a statement that puts America first and might be seen as his declaration of war. By blurring the line between America’s national and economic security, the President risks to negatively influence important international relationships. Moreover, his political actions are characterised by rolling back many contracts and regulations from the Obama-era. As far as regulations for energy and environment are concerned, Trump’s decisions have devastating consequences for climate change. When making his decisions, he is guided by his stated goal of creating jobs, renewing coal production and bringing back industrial production.

From what can be seen in the media, Trump seems to have a rather unconventional character for a president of the United States. He seems to have a high self-esteem and self-confidence. Oftentimes, the press, who he likes to call “Fake News”, reports of situations in which he seems to degrade people, especially his political opponents. Examples for this are “incompetent Hillary [Clinton]” (in his first election) and “sleepy Joe [Biden]” (in his re-election campaign). He does not seem to want to lose which leads him to unconventional ways of handling political situations. This can be seen in the Ukraine-Affair, in which Trump was accused of abuse of power for pressuring Ukraine to assist him in his re-election campaign by damaging Democratic rivals. In return, he

allegedly mandated a 400 million military aid package for Ukraine. This affair resulted in an impeachment process which, however, has not been successful.

Notes on the material

The presented material aims at tackling some of Trump's prominent characteristics by using videos, cartoons and (mediation) texts in order to give students an impression of his peculiar traits of character, which provokes discussions about his suitability for the presidency. Its focus is on President Trump and the various topics treat different aspects of him and his presidency.

Topic 1 contains the presentation of Donald Trump as to the official homepage of the White House. Students warm up to the topic by jotting down their prior knowledge. This is followed by a text comprehension task which asks students to finish sentence beginnings. Students describe and analyse the presentation of the president in the text and discuss the credibility of the text. By working in pairs, they collect information on Trump on the Internet to set up a critical blog entry for social media.

Topic 2 is based on a newspaper article from *The Guardian* about Trump's intended Greenland "deal" and a short video. The reading and viewing comprehension is checked by a multiple choice exercise and a grid to fill in. In a further exercise, students write a letter to the editor, in which they discuss the controversial depiction of President Trump in the media.

Trump and illegal immigration is the issue in **topic 3**, which is presented via an article from the newspaper *Der Standard*. It deals with the separation of children from their parents and a new regulation of keeping children of illegally immigrated parents in detention longer. Students first work on a paraphrasing exercise to advance their ability of mediating the article and their vocabulary. The article is mediated to an American friend. Students then work with a cartoon that addresses Trump's relationship with immigration. By using a grid as a scaffold, students describe and analyse the cartoon. Finally, a panel discussion with role cards initiates a further activity, in which students debate the topic.



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