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Auszug aus:

How to deal with different types of texts

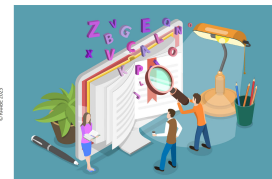
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How to deal with different types of texts –
Characteristics of prose, drama, poetry,
non-fiction and visuals

by Rita Reihelmeier-Wolf



Textsorten sind durch spezifische Merkmale definiert. Die grundlegende Kenntnis dieser Merkmale ist die Voraussetzung für den kompetenten Umgang mit Textsorten. Die Einheits-
How to deal with different types of texts präsentiert den SchülerInnen und Schülern in
knapper Form eine Definition von prose, drama, poetry, non-fictional texts und visuals.
An ausgewählten Textbeispielen wird die Arbeit mit den spezifischen Merkmalen geübt.

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How to deal with different types of texts – Characteristics of prose, drama, poetry, non-fiction and visuals

by Rita Reinheimer-Wolf



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Textsorten sind durch spezifische Merkmale definiert. Die gründliche Kenntnis dieser Merkmale ist die Voraussetzung für den kompetenten Umgang mit Textsorten. Die Einheit *How to deal with different types of texts* präsentiert den Schülerinnen und Schülern in knapper Form eine Definition von *prose, drama, poetry, non-fictional texts* und *visuals*. An auserwählten Textbeispielen wird die Arbeit mit den spezifischen Merkmalen geübt.

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Competences and skills:

The unit contains texts and tasks that can be classified as level B2/C1 (*Europäischer Referenzrahmen*). By working with various materials, students enhance their general **reading skills**. Furthermore, they practice their competences in explaining and **analysing** texts when engaging closely with the extracts of prose, poems, texts and visuals. Students' **speaking and presentation skills** are improved by giving short talks and presentations in small groups or in front of the class. A number of tasks focus on the **writing competence** and the **thematic vocabulary knowledge** of the students.

Overview:

List of abbreviations:

A Analysis	C Comment	CT Creative task
D Discussion/debate	G Group work	L Language
P Working with a picture/cartoon	PR Presentation	R Research
RC Reading comprehension	S Summary	T Working with a text
W Writing		

Topic	Material	Methods/Skills
1: How to deal with prose	M1–M4	D, G, RC, T
2: How to deal with drama	M5–M7	C, CT, G, L, PR, R, RC, T, W
3: How to deal with poetry	M8–M10	A, CT, G, L, T
4: How to deal with non-fictional texts	M11–M16	A, D, G, L, RC, S, T
5: How to deal with pictures and cartoons	M17–M21	A, P, W

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Facts

Students are constantly confronted with materials at school with the goal of turning them into competent and critical readers. But engaging with various materials involves a great number of subskills, such as reading between the lines, analysing the intention of a writer, denoting the message of a text, analysing literature, recognising rhymes in poetry and decoding the messages of a visual. In their near future, students will have to prove that they can successfully deal with all kinds of demanding texts. These skills represent the key to the A-level exams (*Abitur*) and later, to productive studies at university.

This unit offers students the opportunity to practise a whole range of text skills and to become familiar with very useful strategies when working with diverse genres. The main features of the genres are briefly presented in informative and concise texts. By working through this unit, students will learn that the way to tackle written materials depends on the kind of text itself. Analysing an excerpt from a fictional text requires other strategies than dealing with a newspaper article. At the end of the unit, students will have developed a good understanding of the relevant major strategies.

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Notes on the material

The unit presented here consists of five topics. **Topic 1** serves both as an introduction to dealing with various text types and as a practice for analysing the extract from a novel. The questionnaire with eight questions about personal challenges makes students reflect on their possible strong and weak points when tackling different genres. An info text on prose provides an overview of the characteristic features of fictional texts. The reading text is an extract from Kazuo Ishiguro's dystopian novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005). The passage is used to practise students' competence to analyse the narrator's character, the choice of words and the atmosphere of the novel. **Topic 2** centres around drama as a challenging genre.

Again, an info text on drama including a reading comprehension task is presented to build background knowledge for students. An extract from Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth* from Act III, scene II serves as a classical example of drama. Students act out certain lines from the scene to develop a feeling for the seriousness of the situation and the emotions of the protagonists. While working with the text, students rephrase selected sentences from *Macbeth* in modern English. Then, they will add stage directions so that they become more familiar with the atmosphere of the scene. In a further task, students analyse the state of mind of both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. Finally, in case students have not read *Macbeth* in class, they do some research about the content and theme of the tragedy. However, if they know the play well, they write a comment on the question, "Is *Macbeth* a modern play?". This task can be used as a preparation for a *Klausur*. **Topic 3** focusses on analysing poetry. The short info text on poetry is followed by a matching exercise. The poem *Weekend Glory* by the African American poet Maya Angelou deals with a special outlook on life presented by the female Black working-class speaker. Students work on the general meaning and content of the poem, carry out a formal analysis and come to a final assessment. These tasks will inform students of the standard strategy to analyse poetry. A class survey on life priorities completes the topic. Students develop a questionnaire and ask their classmates, with which they enhance their speaking competence in a personal way. **Topic 4** deals with non-fictional texts. A brief info text on it is followed by an exercise with the thematic vocabulary. Next, students are confronted with a newspaper article on violence against women from *The Guardian*. When working with the article, students answer questions on the structure of different parts and the general message of the text. Students also write a summary of the article. Additionally, they work on language and its effect or function. Both language support for this formal analysis and a glossary of stylistic devices is included in the topic. **Topic 5** deals with the genre *visuals* (pictures and cartoons). A very brief info text and two grids with essential guiding questions offer support when dealing with pictures and cartoons. As a central task, students examine a picture taken of a street sign from East London (Brick Lane). It includes the street name both in English and Bengali. When working with the picture, students analyse the visual elements and their effect and appeal on the viewer and the general message. They also deal with a cartoon on poverty in the USA. With the help of the guiding questions, students write a complete analysis of this cartoon.

Topic 1: How to deal with prose

Questionnaire: How to deal with selected tasks and types of texts – My personal challenges

M1

Pre-reading activities

1. Look at the questionnaire about tasks and text types. Respond to the tasks and tick the answers that are relevant for you.
2. Then, exchange your questionnaire with a partner and read through his/her responses on his/her questionnaire.
3. **Card survey:** With your partner, agree on three major challenges when dealing with different text types. Specify these challenges and make notes.
4. In class, discuss the challenges one is confronted with when dealing with texts.



Questionnaire

1. Which of the following text types do you consider most difficult to work with?
Tick your answer.
 novels plays poems non-fictional texts pictures, cartoons
2. Name your main problems when dealing with your most difficult text type.
3. What are the reasons for your specific problems?
4. Name the strategies that you use when dealing with different text types.

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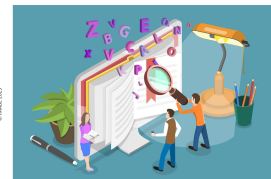
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