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Auszug aus:

Growing up

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Growing up – Under difficult circumstances

by Rita Reinheimer-Wolf

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Eines haben alle Menschen gemeinsam: sie werden – früher oder später – erwachsen. Doch der Prozess des Erwachsenwerdens kann sehr unterschiedlich verlaufen. Abhängig von Land, Kultur, sozialem Status, Familie oder zeitlicher Epoche kann der/die Jugendliche die Phase des *coming of age* sowohl positiv als auch negativ erleben. Die Unterrichtseinheit zu diesem abiturrelevanten Thema legt den Fokus auf den Aspekt *growing up under difficult circumstances*. Anhand von fiktionalen Texten sowie einer Verfilmung setzen die Schüler sich mit den Umständen auseinander, in denen die Romanfiguren aufwachsen. Dabei trainieren sie nicht nur ihr Leseverstehen, sondern schulen gezielt das Schreiben von *summaries* sowie *characterisations*.

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Competences and skills:

By working with the material, students enhance their **reading comprehension**. They also develop their **writing skills** by writing various summaries and characterisations. Furthermore, by watching the film *Precious* and by focussing on the plot, a key scene of their choice, the characters and the message/intention of the film, they improve their **viewing skills**. Students **analyse** and **discuss** the difficult situations in which the protagonists of fictional texts grow up. Finally, they practise their **speaking skills** by presenting their favourite text and its literary qualities to the entire class.

Overview:

List of abbreviations:

A Analysis

CT Creative Task

GP Group puzzle

PR Presentation

T Working with the text

C Comment

D Discussion

LVC Listening/Viewing comprehension

RC Reading comprehension

TPS Think–Pair–Share

CH Characterisation

IN Interview/Survey

S Summary

V Vocabulary

Topic	Material	Method
1: Growing up – an introduction	M1–M2	IN, RC, T, V
2: The luxury of going to school	M3–M5	A, CH, RC, S
3: Growing up and migration	M6–M7	A, C, CT, RC, S, TPS
4: Family life can be hell	M8–M9	A, C, CH, GP, LVC, PR, RC
5: Psychological problems in childhood	M10–M12	A, CH, D, PR, RC, S, TPS

Growing up – Under difficult circumstances

Facts

Every individual undergoes the same physical development from birth to becoming an adult. Before being classified as an adult, we all have to mature. This process might be physically identical for all individuals but other aspects of it differ greatly. Depending on the country, the socio-economic stratum of the parents, the century an adolescent grows up in and other specific circumstances, the socialisation of an individual can be pleasant or it can have the potential of ruining his/her psyche. Whereas the carefree youth of a young person in the middle of a loving family does not give us much food for thought, socially problematic cases deserve the reader's attention and compassion. It seems obvious that foreign learners of English should be familiarised with individuals their own age growing up in different countries, such as USA or Mexico. It is usually about two to three years before the *Abitur* that the curriculum in English focuses on the topic of "Growing up". Normally, the teacher is free to decide on the material (excerpts, novels, short stories, films etc.) he/she intends to use. Thus, the unit "Growing up – Under difficult circumstances" offers a good opportunity to deal with the topic on the basis of varied material.

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Notes on the material

The material is divided into five topics. **Topic 1** provides general introductory background information about the challenges of growing up. Students demonstrate their reading comprehension working on a true/false activity. Then, definitions have to be matched with expressions from the thematic field of growing up. In the next step, students write down examples of personal experiences to illustrate certain key statements made in the text. In **topic 2**, students start with a pre-reading activity about going to school. As a next step, they read the extract from the short story, *The Circuit*, and write a summary with the help of guidelines. This procedure is particularly useful if one has a heterogeneous group. The guidelines serve as language support.

(“Autoren” > “Personen einladen”) or a QR-code (“Konto Optionen” > “QR-Anmeldungen”). That way, all your students can work in your *Bibliothek* and create their personal viewing log by including texts, links, video files, audio files, etc.

So as not to demand too much from students at the beginning of the *Oberstufe*, they work on the film in a group puzzle. Each student of a home group focuses on one aspect of the film and discuss the chosen aspect in expert groups. As a follow-up exercise, students prepare a presentation of their chosen aspect with the help of an appropriate presentation medium (analogue or digital). They can either prepare the presentation at home or in class. Each student presents his/her results to his/her home group. **Topic 5** deals with the story of a young English boy suffering from Asperger Syndrome. Again, students write a summary of the extract from the novel. Then, they write a characterisation of the protagonist. In order to familiarise learners with inferring reading, they describe the behaviour of the protagonist’s father and its implications. As a final evaluation, students choose the text from the unit that they think presents best the problems of growing up under difficult circumstances and talk about its literary qualities in groups. This task offers an excellent opportunity to revise the topics dealt with in this material.



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