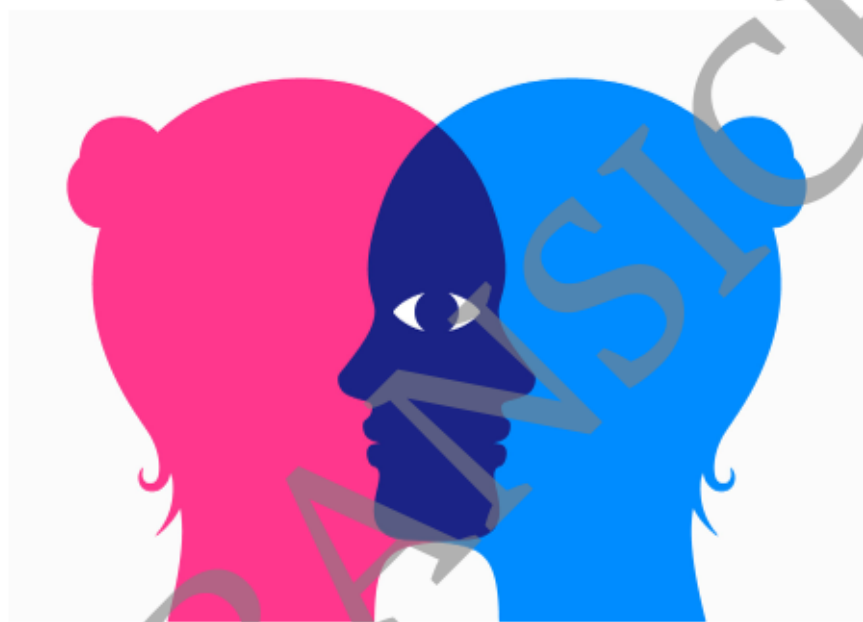


Brit Bennett: „The Vanishing Half“ – Studying the novel and its themes

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Anhand des Romans „The Vanishing Half“ und passenden Sachtexten behandeln die Materialien zentrale Themen wie Rassismus, *colourism*, Identität, Gewalt, Genderfragen und Alzheimer. Durch Methoden wie Recherche, Textanalyse, Diskussionen, Rollenarbeit und kreatives Schreiben arbeiten die Lernenden abwechslungsreich und handlungsorientiert. Dabei stärken sie Analyse-, Kommunikations-, Recherche- und Schreibkompetenzen. Die Verbindung von Literatur und aktuellen gesellschaftlichen Debatten schafft einen hohen Lebensweltbezug und motiviert die Lernenden nachhaltig.

Auf einen Blick

1. Stunde

Thema: Race, colourism and identity

M 1 **Being coloured** / Recherchieren und vergleichen wie Hautfarbe, *colourism* und Identität in einem Roman, einem Zeitungsartikel und einer Kurzgeschichte dargestellt werden

Benötigt: Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang

2. Stunde

Thema: Twins and separation

M 2 **Being a (separated) twin** / Vor- und Nachteile des Zwillingsseins diskutieren; reale Fälle getrennter Zwillinge recherchieren und literarische Zwillingsstreifen in „The Vanishing Half“ analysieren

Benötigt: Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang

3./4. Stunde

Thema: Racism and discrimination

M 3 **Prejudice and discrimination** / Formen von Rassismus untersuchen; Texte und Beispiele aus „The Vanishing Half“ analysieren; reale Fälle von Diskriminierung recherchieren; Stellungnahmen und Lösungsansätze gegen Rassismus entwickeln

Benötigt: Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang

5./6. Stunde

Thema: Desegregation in the USA: its history and political context

M 4 **Steps towards desegregation** / Die Geschichte der Desegregation recherchieren; politische Entwicklungen in Textauszügen analysieren; die Frage, ob weiße Politiker Erfahrungen in schwarzen Communities machen sollten, um Rassismus besser zu verstehen, in Rollen diskutieren

7./8. Stunde

Thema: How violence reshapes identity, family ties and the idea of home

M 5 **Domestic violence** / Recherchieren, analysieren und reflektieren wie häusliche Gewalt in einem Sachtext und im Roman dargestellt wird; eigene Texte dazu verfassen

Benötigt: Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang

9. Stunde

Thema: Gender identity and transgender experiences

M 6 **Defining gender** / Zu Gender und Transidentität recherchieren; Figuren und Perspektiven im Roman analysieren; gesellschaftliche Fragen rund um geschlechtliche Identität diskutieren

Benötigt: Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang

10. Stunde

Thema: Alzheimer's disease

M 7 **Memory loss and caregiving** / Zu Alzheimer recherchieren; die Darstellung der Krankheit im Roman analysieren; eigene reflektierende Texte über den Umgang mit Betroffenen verfassen

Benötigt: Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang

LEK

Thema: Colourism and Jude's struggle with her skin tone / Jude's Problem und ihre Beziehungen analysieren; mit dem Romanauszug arbeiten und zu Gleichheit oder Werbung schreiben bzw. diskutieren



3. Working with excerpt 1

- a) Describe Jude's experiences with racism at school.
- b) Analyse the language Brit Bennett uses in this excerpt and show its effect on the reader.

4. Working with excerpt 2

- a) Outline the reasons for the dispute between Kennedy and Cindy.
- b) Analyse what the reader learns about Stella's and Loretta's character.

5. Working with excerpt 3

- a) Examine Stella's reasons for speaking up at the neighbourhood meeting.
- b) Analyse the narrative perspective and how it affects the readers.

6. Working with excerpts 1–3

- a) Describe the people who behave in a racist way and explain their reasons.
- b) "A racist is someone who is mean to another person based on the colour of their skin." Taking the definition as a starting point, assess different forms of racism and its consequences.

7. How to fight racism

- a) Using the message of the cartoon as a starting point, write an article for your school magazine suggesting ideas on how to reduce racism at your school.
- b) Use this German text to prepare a short speech about the fact that racism against people of colour also occurs in Germany: <https://raabe.click/racism-Germany>.



"How hard could it be to end racism, sexism and intolerance? The only thing supporting them is ten million years of mental evolution."

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Domestic violence

M 5

Tasks

- Pre-reading
 - Read this leaflet and sum up its main pieces of advice:
<https://raabe.click/domestic-violence>.
 - In a group, discuss why domestic violence is a topic that is not spoken about publicly most of the time. Then create a flyer for your school to raise awareness.
- Read the excerpt.
 - Put the information about Desiree's relationship with Sam into chronological order. Then distinguish between the time before and after violence became part of the relationship.
 - Brit Bennett uses the narrative techniques of flashbacks and foreshadowing in this excerpt. Find examples and explain their effect on the story and on the readers.
 - The word "home" is used several times in this excerpt. Analyse its meaning and its importance for the main character.
- Post-reading
 - Write a diary entry Desiree's mother might have written after her long-lost daughter showed up at her door.
 - Watch this video and take notes on how to weigh an argument:
<https://raabe.click/weighing-arguments>. Then make a list of arguments discussing whether choosing to go home after all those years was a good idea for Desiree. Afterwards discuss the weight of your arguments.

Excerpt

Desiree finally decides to return to Mallard after having been the victim of domestic violence many times. Her daughter Jude has never been to her grandmother's house before, nor has Desiree been in touch with her mother for several years.

She tried to search for anything familiar, fiddling with her scarf. Through the gauzy blue fabric, you could barely see the bruise.

"Mama?" Jude said. "We almost there?"

She was gazing up at Desiree with those big moon eyes, looking so much like Sam [Desiree's husband] that Desiree glanced away.

"Yes," she said. "Almost."

"How much more?"

Defining gender

M 6

Tasks

- Working with two articles
 - Read this article and explain why the story is extraordinary:
<https://raabe.click/Guevedoces>.
 - Analyse this article and make a list of pros and cons of gender neutral upbringing:
<https://raabe.click/children-without-gender>.
 - Using these arguments, state your own point of view and engage in a group discussion.
- Work with the excerpts and the poem.
 - Read the two excerpts. Collect similarities and differences between Theresa and Barry.
 - Analyse the point of view chosen in both excerpts and describe the effect on the reader.
 - Analyse the language of the poem "The Unseen Battle" and decide whether it could have been written by any of the characters above. Explain your decision.
- Use this text to write an article for your school magazine that explains the problems, challenges and legal aspects of gender transformation:
<https://raabe.click/gender-transformation>.



Excerpt 1

When Jude starts college, she meets Reese and Barry. Both are transgender.

On the road from El Dorado, Therese Anne Carter became Reese. He cut his hair in Plano, hacking off inches in a truck stop bathroom with a stolen hunting knife. Outside of Abilene, he bought a blue madras shirt and a leather belt with a silver stallion buckle; the shirt he still wore, the buckle he'd pawned in El Paso when he ran out of money but mentioned wistfully, still feeling its weight hanging at his waist. In Socorro, he began wrapping his chest in a white bandage, and by Las Cruces, he'd learned to walk again, legs wide, shoulders square. He told himself that it was safer to hitchhike this way, but the truth was that he'd always been Reese. By Tucson, it was Therese who felt like a costume. How real was a person if you could shed her in a thousand miles?

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