R.21

Literature – Short stories, fables and fairy tales

Allegra Hyde: „Democracy in America“ – Analysing a short story

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Democracy, Manifest Destiny, equality, the American Dream – dies sind kulturelle Narrative, auf denen die Gesellschaft der USA basiert. Allegra Hydes Kurzgeschichte „Democracy in America“ projiziert diese Narrative in ein dystopisches amerikanisches Setting der Zukunft und regt dazu an, zeitgenössische Trends innerhalb der U.S.-Kultur, -Gesellschaft und -Politik zu hinterfragen. Die Einheit unterstützt die Lernenden dabei, Hydes Kritik zu verstehen und gegenwärtige Entwicklungen kritisch zu bewerten.

VORANSICHT

Auf einen Blick

1./2. Stunde

Thema:	National narratives within U.S. culture
M 1	**Understanding American national narratives – Pre-reading tasks /** Kulturelle Narrative der USA recherchieren
Benötigt:	Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang für die Recherche

3. Stunde

Thema:	Part I (up to l. 18, "[...] matters to discuss.")
M 2	**Reading part I – Honey and the narrator /** Part I der *short story* zusammenfassen und analysieren

4./5. Stunde

Thema:	Part II (up to l. 202, "[...] which I still needed to learn.")
M 3	**Reading part II – The practice of consignment /** Part II der *short story* zusammenfassen und analysieren

6./7. Stunde

Thema:	Part III (up to l. 408, "[...] Beaumont's open palm struck my face.")
M 4	**Reading part III – Understanding America in its entirety /** Part III der *short story* zusammenfassen und analysieren

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8./9. Stunde

Thema:	Part IV (up to l. 549, "[...] where we had always planned to be.")
M 5	**Reading part IV – "not-Honey" /** Part IV der *short story* zusammenfassen und analysieren

10. Stunde

Thema:	Part V (up to the end)
M 6	**Reading part V – The ending /** Das Ende der *short story* zusammenfassen und analysieren

11./12. Stunde

Thema:	Lenny Kravitz: "American Woman"
M 7	**The short story in general – Post-reading I /** Einen Song untersuchen; ein Vorwort verfassen
Benötigt:	Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang zum Anhören des Songs

13.–16. Stunde

Thema:	Different aspects/topics of the short story
M 8	**Designing a one-pager – Post-reading II /** Arbeitsteilig in Gruppen einen *one-pager* zu einem thematischen Bereich erstellen
M 9	**Creating a one-pager – Criteria and guidelines /** Kriterien und Checkliste für die Erstellung des *one-pager*
M 10	**One-pager – Grading rubric /** Bewertungsraster für den *one-pager*
Benötigt:	Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang für die Recherche

Zusatzmaterial zum Download

ZM 1 Short story Die Kurzgeschichte „Democracy in America“

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M 3 Reading part II – The practice of consignment



Tasks

1. Read l. 19, “Honey’s announcement” up to l. 202, “which I still needed to learn”.
   a) Summarise the plot.
   b) Collect more information about Honey, the narrator and their relationship. Note down your findings in your grid.



2. Work in pairs.
   a) Close-read the following sections and complete the tasks:
      - Partner A: l. 110, “She had been impulsive” up to l. 120, “in my future book”
        Analyse: What does this section reveal about Honey and the narrator?
      - Partner B: l. 153, “My breath caught” up to l. 171, “on the other side”
        Explain: Why does the narrator change their opinion? What is Honey’s reaction?
   b) Meet and share your results. Add your findings to your grid.
   c) Together, reread the end of the section, starting from l. 186, “I turned down one sidewalk”. Discuss the narrator’s motives for deleting Honey’s message and number. Add your findings to your grid.
3. Consignment
   a) What is revealed about the practice of consignment? Underline and collect.
   b) Close-read the following sections. Analyse: How does the practice of consignment connect to the U.S. national narrative?
      - l. 67, “Consignment was” up to l. 70, “or so the story went”
      - l. 141, “The process was rapidly” up to l. 147, “to transform their lives”
   c) Design a poster that advertises consignment. Use your findings from a) and b) to sell the idea to potential customers. Refer to aspects of the American national narrative.
   d) Critically reread l. 29, “I kept my face impassive” up to l. 35, “needed a new roof”. Honey refers to consignment as a “big opportunity”. Analyse:
      - What does this section reveal about the reality of America for people in Honey’s social environment?
      - What function does this section have regarding the American national narrative?
4. “I wanted to understand America in its entirety; I had the idea that I would write a book” (ll. 88/89) the narrator states as their main interest during their stay in the USA.
   a) Reread part II and collect information the narrator learns about America in a grid.



   b) Work with a partner. Close-read the following sections and complete the tasks.
      - Partner A: l. 71, “I myself had grown up” up to l. 82, “she was taking us”
        Examine how Europe is characterised in contrast to America.
      - Partner B: “Even the homeless pushed shopping carts here.” (l. 186)
        Explain the meaning and role of this sentence.
   c) Meet and share results. Add your findings to your grid.
5. Find a title for part II.

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Designing a one-pager – Post-reading II

M 8





Tasks

Split up into six groups and distribute the topics.

1. In your group, read your tasks and make sure everyone understands the instructions.
2. Work on the tasks individually and take notes on your findings.
3. Meet in your groups and share your findings.
4. Together, compile and design a one-pager to visualise your findings. Refer to M 9 for criteria and guidelines.
5. Agree on a presentation that goes with your one-pager. Everyone in your group must be prepared to explain the one-pager and your findings.
6. In a gallery walk, introduce your one-pager to your peers and listen to their findings.
7. As you listen to the presentations, take notes on new and interesting insights.
8. Meet in class, give feedback to each other and share your insights.

Group 1 – Topic: The epigraph

The epigraph to "Democracy in America" originates from Alexis de Tocqueville.

Tasks:

1. Research Alexis de Tocqueville and the quotation.
2. How do your findings relate to the short story?
3. What do you think Hyde wants to achieve by using this quotation as an epigraph?
4. Read the interview with Allegra Hyde and check whether your analysis fits her intention.

Group 2 – Topic: The ending

Allegra Hyde says she is interested in creating endings with "resonance" which she defines as follows: "Resonance is a way to talk about the music of a work of fiction, as well as the multitude of ways a piece might impact a reader. […] [Writers are] trying to disturb, subvert, or illuminate, or render a literary experience so vibratingly transcendent that it resonates inside a reader long after the last page."

Allegra Hyde: Exit Strategies: So how are you supposed to end a story? © Literary Hub: https://lithub.com/exit-strategies-so-how-are-you-supposed-to-end-a-story/

Tasks:

1. Research and define the word "resonance".
2. Analyse the ending: How does it manage to create resonance?
3. Which other parts of the story resonate with you?

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