

Kreatives Schreiben auf Englisch im Unterricht

In mehreren Bundesländern gehört das Kreative Schreiben auf Englisch zum Kerncurriculum dazu – sogar schon ab der neunten Klasse, spätestens zu finden in der gymnasialen Oberstufe. Kreatives Schreiben erweitert nicht nur die Schreibkompetenz, sondern auch den Wortschatz, vertieft Verständnis für die Sprache, und kann auch die Analysekompetenzen von Texten stärken; etwas selber zu machen hilft immerhin es zu verstehen. Wäre dies nicht so wären Experimente in den Naturwissenschaften, oder Übungen in jedem erdenklichen Fach immerhin komplett wegdenkbar.

Kreatives Schreiben, so mag man denken, ist eine reine Kunstform und daher hat eine Person entweder das Talent, oder eben nicht. Allerdings ist dies nicht ganz richtig: wie in jeder Disziplin folgt auch kreatives Schreiben bestimmten Formen, welche erlernbar sind und durch Übungen erlernt werden können. Das macht einen Schüler vielleicht nicht über Nacht zu Emerson oder Shelley, aber diese haben sicherlich auch nicht über Nacht ihre besten Werke aus dem Nichts auf das Papier gebracht!

Es gibt viele Möglichkeiten kreatives Schreiben zu unterrichten. Je nachdem wie viel Zeit der Schulalltag bietet kann eine Einheit groß oder klein gestaltet werden. Übungen können immer wieder zur Vertiefung von Wortschatz eingeflochten werden. Zu sehen wer es schafft die neuen zehn Vokabeln kohärent in einem Absatz in einer Kurzgeschichte zu verwenden mag mehr Spaß machen als Vokabellisten auswendig zu lernen (auch wenn Lerntypen sich natürlich unterscheiden).

Daher hier, als kleine Inspiration, eine mögliche kleine Unterrichtseinheit, welche einige Grundpfeiler abdeckt. Darunter zählen die *Key Elements of a Story*, *Plotting*, und *Character Building*. Wir hoffen Ihnen dadurch den Einstieg in das eventuell fremde Thema zu erleichtern und ein paar kreative Köpfe unter den Schülerinnen und Schülern zu fördern und fordern. Die Materialien und Arbeitsvorschläge sind für eine neunte Klasse, Niedersachsen, entwickelt worden.

Writer's Ink e.V.

Verein zur Förderung Kreativen Schreibens auf Englisch für Nicht-Muttersprachler



9th Grade, Creative Writing: A teaser

Educational objective: The students can rewrite a known iconic fairy tale creatively.

Phase	Content	Social form	Media / Material
Introduction	Shows the comic to the pupils. What do they think about the story? Explanation of the goal of the lesson.	Classroom discussion	Comic: Hansel and Gretel
Work phase I	Getting started. (Gathering prompts.) What is needed to write a story? What do you need to think about in advance before you start? Distribute worksheet What are the typical elements of a story? → Write down examples on slips of paper (e.g.: location → dumpster)	Partner discussion	Slips of paper worksheet
Consolidation I	Gathering the information on blackboard / overhead transparency sans examples Gather examples in tote bag	Classroom discussion	Blackboard /transparency
Work phase II	Exchange of prompts → the examples on the slips of paper are mixed and handed out again to the pupils. The ideas may be used to prompt the story / must be mentioned in the story. Then the students start to write their version of Hansel and Gretel. It may any genre, any era, characters may be gender swapped. The plot must remain recognisable!	Individual work	Slips of paper bag envelops with vocabulary help if needed
	Possible exchange of stories for peer-to-peer feedback? Maybe homework?	Partner discussion	
Consolidation II	Stories may be read out, feedback in class	Classroom discussion	



Abbildung 1. Comic by Esmeralda Maneggs

Worksheet: Elements of a Story

Before you write a story it can be wise to **plan ahead**. The least you should do is figuring out the **key elements** of your story.

Those key elements are needed to write a story. After you read the comic version of Hansel and Gretel try to identify with a partner the key elements.

Make some **short notes**.

Then, write an alternative example according to your group on your slip of paper.

<p>1) Setting</p> <p>Time: _____</p> <p>Place: _____</p>	<p>1. 1) Genre</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>2) Characters (names and short description)</p> <p>Character 1</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Character 3</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Character 2</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Character 4</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>3) Problem</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>4) Solution</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

Creative Writing: Cheat Sheet

Word	Meaning	Translation
woodcutter	A person whose job is to cut down trees	Holzfäller
dearth	A lack of something	Mangel
famine	The lack of food	Hungersnot
to persuade sb into sth/into doing sth	To make sb do sth by giving them good reasons for doing it	Überzeugen
to abandon	To leave sb behind you are responsible for without the intention of returning	Zurücklassen; jmd fallenlassen
pebble	A smooth round stone that is usually found near water	Kieselstein
wicked	Morally bad; mischievous	Boshaft
to feed someone up	To give someone more food than necessary with the intention of them gaining weight	Mästen
breadcrumbs	Very small pieces of bread that can be used in cooking or to leave a trail	Brotkrumen
To leave a trail	To leave markings behind on a path to find a way back	Eine Spur legen
treasure	Something of value, e.g. gold or jewelry	Schatz
Cannibalism	When a human eats human flesh	Kannibalismus
to escape	To get away from a dangerous place or situation	Flüchten; fliehen
cage	A box made of wire or metal bars usually used to keep animals	Käfig

Useful adjectives:

Adjective	Synonyms
articulate	eloquent, fluent, persuasive, expressive
bossy	pushy, overbearing, controlling
careful	Cautious, alert, wary, diligent, scrupulous, deliberate, attentive
defiant	Resistant, obstinate, noncompliant
energetic	Animated, bouncy, bubbly, active
honest	Sincere, truthful, frank, open, straight
imaginative	creative, inspired, inventive, resourceful
joyful	happy, cheerful, jolly, joyous
messy	dirty, grubby, grimy
scary	heinous, terrifying, cruel, disgusting, eerie
tricky	sharp, sly, deceitful, calculating

Creative Writing: Cheat Sheet

To write a story you should be aware of some key elements. Those are:

setting and genre

This point defines when and where your story takes place, and in which genre. You can go completely wild. A steampunk story in space taking place in 1894? Done! A grim, dystopian setting taking place in the far future? Whatever floats your boat!

Characters

A lot of authors and readers agree: good characters make or break a story. Make them interesting, describe them with a few adjectives, similes, or metaphors. Hansel can be as clever as a fox, for example. Your witch can be beautiful. Remember: creativity is allowed. Just make sure that your story remains recognisable!

the problem of your story

For Hansel and Gretel the problem is, of course, the witch who tries to eat the children. Or maybe it is the famine destroying the land. It could be a sign of the apocalypse, after all, since famine is known to be a sign of the end of the world. Quite simply, it could also be an economical, social, or financial problem. It might be easiest to go with the plot of the story but here, as well, you can vary the emphasis of your story.

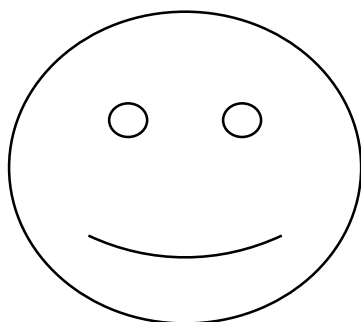
the solution

Now, violence is of course seldom a solution - unless absolutely necessary in self-defense. Depending on your emphasis on the problem there might be a different solution (and the children might find a different treasure in the witch's house).

Structure

This is important. It sounds silly but remember that every story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

And, as a friendly reminder, add detail. As you can see, there is a lot of difference in detail! So don't



be cheap with your descriptions!

9th Grade, Creative Writing: Character Building

Educational objective: The pupils learn how to construct a complex character to develop their writing competence, and to become acquainted with important aspects when analysing characters.

Phase	Content	Social form	Media / Material
Introduction	Tell me a story without a character. Without any sentient being.	Classroom discussion	
Work phase I	Take three papers. On blue write a profession, on green a trait, and on cream an action. Then we will exchange them.		Different coloured paper, three bowls/bags
Work phase II	Read your notes. Ask a few pupils about their combinations. Take out a pen and a piece of paper. Answer the following questions about your character quickly!		Pen paper
Consolidation I	Describe your character to your neighbour. Get feedback. E.g.: good character traits? Well described? Illustrated character through their deeds?	Partner work	
Work phase III	Imagine your character in this situation: They had to make sure that no one noticed ...		Pen and Paper
Consolidation II	Read out portraits		

9th Grade, Creative Writing: Plotting

Educational objective: The pupils learn how to construct a plot and how to differentiate a plot from a story.

Phase	Content	Social form	Media / Material
Introduction	<p>Can anyone spot the difference between these two sentences? Pupils learn that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - plot develops through the actions of the characters - plot is a logical/causal progression of events which lead to change in the story world - story is what happens 	Classroom discussion	<p>“Story: The king died. The queen died. Plot: The king died and then the queen died of grief. - E.M. Foster”</p>
Work phase I	<p>Distribute well known examples of pop culture. Pupils are to determine the plot and/or title. Unknown examples may be exchanged. Given Example: Romeo & Juliet Plot: Two teenagers fall in love. Because their families are enemies their relationship is forbidden. Because of the bloody feud the boyfriend is exiled and the girlfriend then fakes her death to be reunited with him. Because the boyfriend never got the letter which should have informed him of the plan he returns and commits suicide at the church. When the girlfriend awakes and sees him dead she commits suicide as well. Because of that the two families reunite over losing their children. Story: Two teenagers fall in love despite their families being enemies. Both die. Families unite.</p>	Pair work	<p>14 pieces of paper with written examples</p> <p>This should include stories that are either popular at the moment, or have been read in class before. Instead of pair work it can be modelled as another classroom discussion, or group work. It can even be competitive – who can figure out most titles?</p>
Consolidation I	Pupils read out their plots. The class must guess the film or book it has been taken from.	Classroom discussion	
Working phase II	Pupils develop their own plot in short notes.		<p>Story Dice for scaffolding Their own crafted character</p>
Consolidation II	Give your partner feedback on their rough plot. Use the handout to help you give meaningful feedback		Handout: Plot and Story + Feedback
Working Phase III	Develop your plot further and start to write down your story. You may start ab ovo, in medias res, or at the end.		
Consolidation III	Pupils read out their stories in the plenum. Pupils refer to the feedback sheet to give positive feedback.		

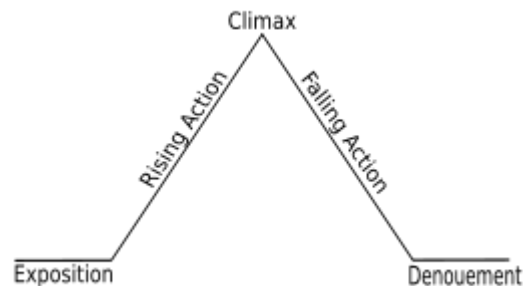
Handout: Plot and Story

Classical definition of a short story

=> a story that can be read in one sitting (Edgar Allan Poe) and thus is:

- Short
- concentrates on a single incident¹
- single setting
- single plot
- small cast of characters (1-2)
- covers a short period of time
- concerned with creating a single dynamic/dramatic effect

Another classic definition of plot is based on Aristotle and developed by Gustav Freytag:



Plot

Plot = a series of *related* events, linked to characters, that lead to permanent change in the world of the story

Story: The king died. The queen died.

Plot: The king died and then the queen died of grief.

- E.M. Foster

Setting

The time, place and social/cultural environment in which a story takes place!

"Every story would be another story, and unrecognizable, if it took up its characters and plot and happened somewhere else."

- Eudora Welty

Characterisation

¹ incident – Begebenheit; Ereignis

A character in a story should be a character in action, not a walking mass of background data...

- Ansen Dibell

There are four ways to **show** a character's traits:

- Action
- Speech
- Appearance
- Thought

Action = what a character **does**

Speech = what a character **says** and how he says it (body language, tone, repetition, word choice, etc.)

Appearance = what a character **looks** like (posture, clothes, details like e.g. laugh lines or a mouth accustomed to sneering²)

Thought = what a character **thinks** (prejudices, convictions, etc.)

=> *Good characterization is a blend of all four methods.*

Cornerstones of characterization

- Desire
- Contrast
- Consistency³

Conflict

There are four types of conflict: character vs. character, character vs. self, character vs. nature, and character vs. society.

Feedback

1 = agree completely, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = room for improvement, 5 = needs editing

	1	2	3	4	5
Your plot was consistent and logical. I could follow and understand why the story developed like it did.					
Your plot led to a change in the story world.					
Your character developed and advanced the story through the plot.					
The story was exciting and built up tension.					
The story was well written: the character acted believably good choice of vocabulary good description of events					

Further feedback on what you liked and *why*. How something was described, a plot twist, the build-up up of tension, ...

²To sneer – höhnisch/spöttisch lächeln

³consistency - Folgerichtigkeit