



universität
wien

DIPLOMARBEIT / DIPLOMA THESIS

Titel der Diplomarbeit / Title of the Diploma Thesis

**"EFL Goes Queer
Deconstructing Heteronormativity in the EFL Classroom"**

verfasst von / submitted by

Lisa-Sophia Feigl

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2016 / Vienna, 2016

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on
the student record sheet:

A 190 344 299

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme as it appears on
the student record sheet:

Lehramtsstudium UF Englisch UF Psychologie
und Philosophie

Betreut von / Supervisor:

Univ.-Prof.Mag.Dr. Eva Zettelmann

Diese Arbeit wurde gefördert von der Österreichischen Hochschüler_innenschaft.

Table of contents:

1.) Introduction	1
2.) Literature Review	2
3.) The Research Project	7
4.) EFL as an ideal space for the implementation of LGBT-themes	10
4.1.) The medium of instruction	10
4.2.) Personal Questions	10
4.3.) Reading - a condition of language learning	11
4.4.) The Austrian curriculum	12
4.5.) Teachers' bias	16
5.) Pitfalls in teaching LGBTQ-inclusively	16
5.1.) Positioning of the readers	17
5.2.) Selection of texts	19
5.3.) Positioning of the texts in the curricula	20
6.) Exceeding the curriculum: making a teacher's daily routine LGBTQ-inclusive	21
6.1.) LGBT-inclusive language - guidelines by Michael Weinberg	22
7.) The Founding Scholars - Jerome Bruner's and bell hooks' influence upon this paper	25
7.1.) Jerome Bruner - The Discovery Approach	27
7.2.) bell hooks - Teaching as a Practice of Freedom	28
8.) Overview of the Young Adult Novels	31

8.1.) <i>Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe</i> by Benjamin Alire Sàenz	32
8.2.) <i>Brooklyn, Burning</i> by Steve Brezenoff	33
8.3.) <i>Every Day</i> by David Levithan	34
8.4.) <i>Far From You</i> by Tess Sharpe	35
8.5.) <i>Will Grayson, Will Grayson</i> by John Green and David Levithan	36
9.) The Materials	37
9.1.) The Lesson Plans	37
9.2.) The Reading Logs	39
9.2.1.) Assessment	40
9.2.2.) The Individual Tasks	41
9.2.3.) The Group Tasks	44
9.2.3.1.) The Presentations	45
9.2.4.) Comprehension Questions concerning LGBT-topics	46
9.3.) Post Reading Activities and Handouts	48
10.) Conclusion	52
11.) Personal Statement	53
<u>Bibliography:</u>	55
<u>Appendix:</u>	57
➤ Lesson Plans	1
➤ Reading Logs	21
➤ Handouts	102
➤ Abstract	110
➤ Acknowledgements	111

1.) Introduction

On June 26, 2015 same-sex marriage has become legal in all the United States of America. Ireland, known for its Catholic population, followed on November 16 of the same year. In 2014, Austria gained a victory in the European Song Contest with a bearded but long-haired woman as a candidate, now known to the masses as Conchita Wurst. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Vienna's most-known LGBTQ-pride event the Rainbow Parade, some traffic light figures were changed into homosexual couples throughout the whole city - much geared towards the media. Popular media has also received their fair share of LGBTQ over the last decade: There has been the popular TV-series *The L-Word* from 2004-2009, which can be now said to be replaced by *Orange Is The New Black*, a Netflix-series that has started in 2013 about a women prison with mostly lesbian inmates. Twilight-Star Kristen Stewart is said to be in a relationship with another woman; Mylie Cyrus, formerly known for being a child-star in the series *Hannah Montana* publicly engages with both males and females; and actor Will Smith's offspring Jaden Smith identifies himself as gender fluid. In short, LGBTQ has successfully reached public domain, and through that, it has reached today's youth - at least outside school. Inside the murals of most school buildings, LGBT¹-issues are either completely ignored or, if mentioned at all, only once or twice during an entire school career to the effect that LGBTQ-people are represented as nonnormative. LGBTQ may have reached the public domain, but it has not even dared to properly enter primary and secondary educational institutions. Whereas there exists a body of research concerning heteronormativity in schools as well as an urgent claim to deconstruct it and bring LGBT-themes into school classrooms, theory still drags behind in providing actual guidance alongside with useful material to implement all things LGBTQ in one's teaching in a concise, responsible, and modern way. The aim of the paper at hand is to, at least partially, fill this gap by providing comprehensive guidelines for non-heteronormative teaching, especially English language teaching, accompanied by materials sufficient for a semester-long reading project involving assorted works of contemporary young adult literature. The thesis divides into two parts, the larger one is to be found in the Appendix and consists of lesson plans, handouts, and reading diary templates for actual teaching purposes; the first part provides

¹ Following Clark and Blackburn's example, the acronym LGBT is used for descriptions of themes, issues, and other abstract terms, whereas LGBTQ is used to refer to people, because LGBT-themes are still present in, for example, literature about a character questioning their sexual orientation. (*Becoming Readers* 162)

the theoretical framework. It begins with an overview of existing literature and scholars relevant to this inquiry from which the research problem is deducted. This research problem is explained in greater detail in section 2 of the paper. Chapter 4 highlights the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom as the potentially best avenue to implement LGBT-themes due to various characteristics of modern second language teaching in upper secondary classrooms, and also includes an analysis of the Austrian curriculum concerning this matter. Section 5 and 6 cover the aforementioned guidelines for teaching LGBTQ-inclusively; section 5 draws attention to the various pitfalls that should be avoided in such a teaching endeavor, whereas in section 6 features advice to modify daily teaching routines in order to overall become a more LGBTQ-inclusive teacher. Chapter 7 is dedicated to the two scholars fundamental to the considerations of this paper and the design of the reading project materials, i.e. the founder of the discovery learning approach Jerome Bruner, and liberal pedagogy advocate bell hooks. After that, the analysis progresses from existing theory to the practical material designed for the classroom. Chapter 8 gives an overview of the young adult novels central to the reading project, which are *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green and David Levithan, *Far From You* by Tess Sharpe, *Brooklyn, Burning* by Steve Brezenoff, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz, and *Every Day* by David Levithan. The last section of the thesis contextualizes the teaching materials, that are the lesson plans, reading diaries, and additional materials and handouts.

2.) Literature Review

bell hooks courageous approach to teaching that goes beyond the transfer of knowledge serves as an inspiration for many who are engaged in the development of inclusive classroom practices. The creation of settings and environments in educational institutions which offer safe spaces for critical thinking and personal development, rather than simply being venues of acquiring the content knowledge as it is specified by the curriculum is one of hook's main interests. As she states that "[t]eaching students to 'transgress' against racial, sexual, and class boundaries in order to achieve the gift of freedom is [...] the teacher's most important goal." (hooks *Transgress*, blurb) and argues that we as teachers can transform consciousness through our teaching, create an environment of free expression, and make our teaching a practice of freedom. (*Transgress* 44). Her thinking serves as the primary inspiration and general foundation to this paper, which proposes an approach of

implementing Young Adult Literature with and about non-heterosexual characters in the English language classroom; its primary aim being an inclusion of LGBT-themes, rather than an expounding of the issues LGBTQ- adolescents might face, as well as, in a broader sense, the deconstruction of heteronormative practices and prevailing stereotypes. Consequently, students shall be enabled to develop a more tolerant, open-minded style of life and thought also outside school. The theoretical didactic basis for this educational endeavor is provided by Jerome Bruner's discovery approach, which is, despite being created primarily for grammar instruction, surprisingly well suitable for cultivating values and worldviews in adolescent students.

bell hooks also inspired Ana María García and her colleague Graciela Slesaransky-Poe, who quote her both in the introduction and conclusion of their article "The Heteronormative Classroom: Questioning and Liberating Practices" (2010), which aims at the creation of a "more expansive and less dichotomous environment for children" that gives them "latitude to cross traditional gender roles"(245). García and Slesaransky-Poe adopt a feminist point of view and argue in favor of classroom practices that convey gender as a non-binary, fluid continuum. In a typically feminist manner gender is perceived as a social construct and thus, not as natural by the authors. Their main concern is finding ways to disrupt heteronormative practices that still prevail in classrooms, and which reinforce stereotypes and try to press children and adolescents into "gender closets" (255). The article also supports the claim that sexual orientation and gender expression are separate, demonstrating that non-stereotypical gender expression of school students often leads to stigmatizing and bullying. The implementation of feminist and gender-inclusive classroom practices is provided as a possible solution and also necessity for a modern classroom. Hereby, they draw on Clark and Blackburn's 2009 article "Reading LGBT-themed Literature with Young People: What is possible?": "Our work, just like Clark and Blackburn (2009) stated, is shaped, in part, by the assumption that classrooms practices can be important sites for combating homophobia and heterosexism in schools, as well as to understand the many ways in which masculinity and femininity are enacted and expressed." (García 250f). In this article as well as in another article by those two authors published in Wolf's "Handbook of Research on Children's and Young Adult Literature" in 2010, some studies about the implementation of LGBT-themed literature in classrooms are reviewed by Clark and Blackburn. It is argued that all the studies commence from a heteronormative point of departure, which is problematic in that it acts

on the assumption of all students being straight and possibly homophobic rather than inclusive towards LGBTQ-teenagers. Clark and Blackburn indicate that "[b]y refusing to position students as homophobes, teachers can, from the start, disrupt the heteronormativity that is so typical in classrooms and challenge students to live up to the expectation of being supportive of LGBTQ rights and people." (*Reading LGBT* 28) Their approach takes being a LGBTQ-person or a supportive ally as granted and through that, makes homophobia instead of homosexuality the norm-deviant behavior. Their claims align with the basic supposition of this paper and the approach to literature teaching it offers, as I also do not consider broaching the issue of homophobia and problems of LGBTQ-people as a suitable practice to fight it, because students, especially in the years of their puberty, tend to oppose everything an authority tells them. Assuming them to be LGBTQ or a straight ally has the potential to subconsciously challenge and question their own stances. Moreover, everything that comes from the students themselves without being coerced might be more effective in deconstructing prevailing practices than a teacher's urge to change something.

Laura A. Renzi, Mark Letcher and Kristen Miraglia discuss the power of literature in their article "Out of the Closet and Into the Open - LGBTQ Young Adult Literature in the Language Arts Classroom" (2012) and demonstrate, comparable to Clark and Blackburn, that "[t]he increased occurrence of LGBTQ-characters in young adult literature who are accepted, loved, and fully engaged members of society shows the reader a society that could be - a society that should be." (119f). The authors also argue against an implementation of LGBT-literature that emphasizes the problems of LGBT-youth and the necessity to abolish homophobia and instead depart from the assumption that all students are supportive allies or a member of the LGBTQ-community themselves. In this article, the importance of including LGBT-themes in the curriculum is emphasized, as it looks at a School Climate Survey of 2009, conducted by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network GLSEN, which's findings prove the hostile environment towards LGBTQ-people prevailing in most American schools that have not adopted a gender-inclusive curriculum or founded a Gay-Straight-Alliance. The Stonewall Teacher's Report (2014) provides similar findings for primary, middle and high schools in Britain together with guidelines for teachers to combat bullying and inappropriate language concerning LGBT-themes in their schools.

As Renzi, Letcher, and Miraglia show, LGBTQ-people are indeed present and integrated in

popular mass media, but school curricula seem to drag behind in this respect. Whereas García and Slesaransky-Poe, in connection to bell hooks, emphasize the importance of self-reflection and interrogation of teachers' own beliefs and biases before bringing LGBTQ-themes to a classroom, Renzi, Letcher, and Miraglia focus on the teacher's willingness to deal with this topic. Both Renzi et.al. and Clark and Blackburn highlight the selection of suitable LGBTQ-texts for the classroom, accentuating the notion that such texts must be appropriately positioned in the curriculum to not accidentally reinforce existing stereotypes and homophobic environments. Clark and Blackburn underline that it makes such a text nonnormative again, if it is only talked about once and then left aside. Positioning of the students is further emphasized also by these scholars as well as by Cynthia Nelson, who generally advocates strongly for a non-heteronormative implementation of LGBT-themes in schools claiming that "rethinking our habitual heteronormative practices can open up new spaces for exploring language and learning"(8). Renzi et.al. draw on a diversity of perspectives on this topic to provide students with a broad picture of the LGBTQ-community: "A variety of experiences must be represented in the books chosen for the English language arts classroom." (124)

Sanders and Mathis (2013) also provide fairly strong arguments for combating heterosexism in classrooms and developing LGBT-inclusive curricula by means of implementing Young Adult Literature, but then again fail to provide a booklist that does not depart from heterosexism as they focus primarily on the coming-out experience. Deconstructing heterosexism also means to withdraw importance and gravity from the coming out experience itself, as it is not seen as a necessity for heterosexuals to constantly state their sexual identity either. In order to represent a broad range of LGBTQ-variations the following Young Adult novels were chosen as teaching materials: *Far From You* by Tess Sharpe contains a female bisexual and a lesbian character; *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green and David Levithan, and *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz depict gay male teenagers; *Brooklyn, Burning* by Steve Brezenoff and *Every Day* by David Levithan focus on gender, the first tells the story of a probably transgender teen, the latter is a fantasy story which describes the life of A who is a teenage person switching bodies from day to day and thus, being genderless or gender fluid. The creation of the teaching materials found in the Appendix of this paper was greatly aided by *The Social Justice Advocate's Handbook: A Guide to Gender* written by social justice advocate and

comedian Sam Killermann in 2013. The book focuses on gender as a different matter from sexual orientation and concisely explores gender diversity, feminism, gender equity and a non-binary gender conception accompanied by illustrations, graphics and informative comics.

Anthony J. Liddicoat published an interesting analysis of transcripts of Spanish and French lessons entitled *Sexual Identity as Linguistic Failure: Trajectories of Interaction in the Heteronormative Language Classroom* in 2009. He uncovers cases of unintentional heterosexism when problems with gender markings in adjectives arise in connection to the heteronormative framework of conventional classroom instruction. Vicky Greenbaum discovers a similar case of unintentional, because conventional, heterosexism in teaching and reports in her publication *Literature Out of the Closet: Bringing Gay and Lesbian Texts and Subtexts Out in High School English* (1994) how subtexts of classic literature are taught, but those hinting at possible LGBT-themes are continuously silenced.

However, even though some authors provide the reader with more or less well selected book lists, no hands-on advice can be found in the recent literature on how a gender- and LGBTQ-inclusive classroom climate could be created with the help of assorted works.

Michael Weinberg published an article about *LGBT-Inclusive Language* in 2009 in which he proposes a "list of linguistic and behavioral guidelines to help [...] demonstrat[ing] [...] support of LGBT people." (50). Weinberg, in the final lines of his article, explains: "By paying more attention to our words and actions, we can help create an atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance that will let students know that our classrooms are places where all participants can express themselves honestly and openly." (51)

However, there are neither any contemporary materials, nor is there research on the nature of the text material useful for gender-inclusive classrooms. Therefore, this paper discusses how non-heterosexual characters in Young Adult Literature should be represented so that these books are suitable for a classroom that aims at taking LGBTQ-teenagers and supporting allies as the norm, rather than exemplifying the problems LGBTQ-adolescents might face in their lives. I draw on this framework of reference and the belief that, as a teacher, one has to challenge students' thoughts in order to change them, rather than outlining the "right way of thought" in front of them. A belief in "teaching that enables transgressions - a movement against and beyond boundaries" because "[i]t is that movement which makes education the practice of freedom." (hooks, *Transgress* 12).

3.) The Research Problem

It can be said that the research problem that arises out of the situation outlined in the previous section divides into two parts. The first problematic instance is the lack of teaching materials contradictory to the recognition of a certain necessity to bring LGBT-themes to school classrooms in a manner that avoids tokenism and a representation of LGBTQ-people as nonnormative that has already taken place in academia. The second part of the research problem goes a bit deeper as to address the fundamental problem of prevailing heterosexism in schools and society in general. Hereby, a change of the biases everyone of us has grown up with is considered, and a general change in thought is aimed at, which has to be done very carefully and which has often been done in a way that just failed to achieve the intended result, as the various studies reviewed by Clark and Blackburn (*Reading LGBT* 2009), among others, revealed. Also in an early article by Cynthia Nelson, she already states that:

All of us grew up and still live in societies that uphold heterosexism, the belief that being heterosexual is more "normal" than being gay, lesbian, or bisexual. This belief is reflected in every facet of society. As a result, lesbian and gay people continually experience discrimination. Sometimes this discrimination is blatant, and sometimes it is very subtle, but it exists nonetheless. (144)

This subtle discrimination takes place every time a classroom discussion concerning families focuses on the mother-father-child triad only; every time a teacher assumes a male person has a girlfriend and a female person a boyfriend; it basically happens every time the possibility of non-heterosexuality is silenced and ignored. As opposed to severe forms of prosecution of LGBTQ-people in the more distant past, it is this subtle discrimination with which people have to come to terms in the 21st century. It might have become acceptable nowadays that LGBT-themes are included in the curriculum and talked about in schools, but the way in which this is done still mostly departs from a heteronormative standpoint. Allen argues that "[b]ecause of heterosexism, most nongay people believe everyone else is heterosexual or that they do not know anyone who is lesbian, bisexual, or gay" (137). He thereby addresses an issue that might be of acute importance for teenagers and adolescents who still have to figure out their true identities. Heteronormativity normalizes a heterosexual identity. Moreover, it is a practice that has existed in society for a long time, reaching back to those dark times in which homosexuality was regarded as a disease and legally persecuted. It is only natural that later emerging theories still experience challenges

in being implemented in society as a norm. One of these models is queer theory which has only emerged in the last couple of decades as a descendant of postfeminism. As Nelson illustrate: "queer theory [...] claims that empirical knowledge is learned within the schema of the heterosexual culture; ideas are formed within the context of the heterosexual culture as normal and homosexuality is considered an abnormal alternative" (qtd. in Sanders, Mathis 3).

It can be derived from this quote that queer theory is, indeed, one cornerstone of this paper and the endeavor to deconstruct heteronormativity in schools and society in general. Queer theory even exceeds the issue of sexual identity as it acknowledges gender as a social construct in that it "signifies the social practices of femininity and masculinity that are constructed by the social institutions and cultural rules that we interact with." (García, Sleseransky-Poe 247) Queer theory regards gender and thus, also sexual identity not as natural, it basically states that neither gender nor sexual identity need to be fixed pillars of one's personality, that these parameters can be subject to change and that, all in all, it should not matter whether someone is gay or straight, male or female, or something completely in between. It provides a framework for a modern way of thinking about these issues, a way of thinking that is more than overdue to enter (high) school classrooms all over the world. It can be said that all analyses and lesson materials presented in this paper depart from a queer theoretical point of view, as they are based on the conceptions of gender and sexuality mentioned above.

However, the lack of hands-on materials, well-arranged booklists, handouts and reading guides make it hard for teachers to implement LGBT-themes in their lessons. A heterosexual teacher in a heteronormative society like ours might not even have considered the possibility of LGBTQ-students in their classrooms and the practices of everyday life that silence and marginalize their existence. From personal experience, it can also be said that it is well possible to complete one's teacher training program without hearing about LGBT-themes at all, least how to imply them in classrooms. Nevertheless, García and Slesaransky-Poe outlined the crux of the matter as following: "In any group as large as a class, it is extremely likely that there will be at least one person who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or who is dealing with questions about sexual or gender identity (or even whose parents are)." (254) Depending on the school's location, this likeliness is equally high

to the likeliness of meeting a student of different skin color (compared to the majority), religion or status of physical ability. Whereas these factors are often visible, as it is the case for skin colors, disabled students dependant on a wheelchair, and certain religious expressions, such as a muslim girl wearing a hijab to school, LGBTQ-people tend to remain invisible and thus, unfortunately ignored. Paradoxically, LGBTQ-people exist in all domains of society, they also exist among people of color, disabled people, people of all kinds of religious communities, so they should receive considerable recognition in society and especially school as an institution that has the duty to teach values and prepare young people for life in our time.

As the literature review has revealed, a demand to take action in the form of implementing LGBT-themes in classrooms has been established at least in academia. Sanders and Mathis recognize that "[p]edagogy needs to incorporate techniques to help dispel prejudices and strengthen positive identities of LGBT students" (1) and that "[f]urther research needs to explore how to use texts with a saturation of LGBT themes as a foundation for discussion within the classroom so that the discussion does not adhere to the bigotry of heteronormativity" (15). As it has been mentioned several times before it is simply not enough to include one text about any issue concerning LGBTQ-people in the curriculum and assume the aim is fulfilled with that. Not even if this text is taken from one of the booklists provided by a contemporary scholar willing to combat heteronormativity. Even if the whole endeavor is done with the best will of the teacher, heteronormative standpoints are easily reinforced when trying to teach a novel with LGBT-content without well-thought-out materials accompanying the reading experience. Sufficient preparation regarding the multiple questions students might ask, in short, a genuine plan of action has to be developed beforehand. The appendix of this paper provides such a plan of action, or at least one way of doing it, as it does not only contain pre-, while- and post-reading materials to five assorted works of young adult fiction, but also handouts and activities supplying a framework for teaching LGBT- and gender-relevant themes. The materials are designed for EFL teaching, so it is only natural to ask why EFL teaching and not any other subject should carry this burden. The following section will examine this question from various viewpoints.

4.) EFL as an ideal space for the implementation of LGBT-themes

4.1.) The medium of instruction

In the first place, language classrooms in general serve as ideal spaces for implementing LGBT-themes due to certain characteristics that are inherent to them. The most basic characteristic is the fact that language needs a medium through which it is taught, especially since Communicative Language Teaching has become the primary trend in language education over the last decade. A look at some textbooks for upper secondary EFL shows that the topics mostly deal with issues of interest for adolescents as they address the typical developmental tasks of emerging adulthood, such as friends and family, housing options, professions, protection of the environment, free time, and also love and partnership. Apart from gaining proficiency in a language, students also form opinions about contemporary political, economical, and private matters. LGBT-themes, as they are prominent in popular media everywhere, could be integrated in EFL teaching in the same way discussions about traditional families and other societal phenomena already are.

4.2.) Personal questions

Another characteristic of language teaching is tied to its nature of needing a medium of instruction. Not only do students read about all the themes mentioned above, they are challenged to express their opinion on them, which, in times, can become very personal and thus, fairly hard for students who feel marginalized in the recognition of their identity. "The language classroom presents a potential conflict for the gay or lesbian student in that it combines a heteronormatively constructed context with questions which makes self-disclosure a relevant activity." (Liddicoat 192) For example, the question about the ideal boy- or girlfriend is nearly inevitable in language classrooms, as the topic romance and partnership is sure to come up. In such a situation, a non-heterosexual student has two options, either to "accidentally" come out to their classmates and teacher or to intentionally hide their sexual orientation. Most classrooms do not represent a 'safe zone', a space that is welcoming enough for students to answer such questions honestly and without a second thought.

As Liddicoat says, "the language classroom, through the construction of the questions it asks, can lead to coming out as gay or lesbian as a possible response to personal-life-directed questioning practices - questions about various relationships, activities, and ideals, which

can be considered the stock-in-trade of much language-teaching practice." (192)
 Consequently, language teaching does not only provide an ideal space to discuss LGBT-themes, but it should also be obligatory for language classrooms to be open and sensitive towards these issues due to the inherently personal nature of communicative language learning.

4.3.) Reading - a condition of language learning

A substantial part of second language education for students is reading, especially extensive reading and developing literacy competence. In contrast to first language literacy education which focuses on the interpretation and analysis of narrative fiction, drama, and poetry, second language teaching is somewhat freer in the choice of the types of literature it gives attention to. Therefore, it is possible to include texts with LGBT-themes suitable for each age group and use "[t]he power of literature to encourage imagination and change lives" (Renzi, Letcher, and Miraglia 119). The usefulness of this quality for educational purposes "has been a consistent notion throughout the years" (119) and can be confirmed by supposedly all (language) teachers. Sanders and Mathis conclude with reference to other scholars in this field:

Sumara, Davis, and Iftody (2006) explain that literature plays a crucial role in the formation of identity, and experiences with literature should be included in the classroom to help students gain a better understanding of personal identity. Just as students begin to identify and understand characters in the text, they also reshape their own understandings of self. Because literature plays a role in identity formation, the teaching of literature with gay themes and characters must have a pedagogical context accompanying the text. (5)

Identity forming aided by the reading of complex art forms of literature, as in the aforementioned first language classroom, is often difficult if not impossible for students whose language proficiency is not sufficiently high.. Thus, the reading of less sophisticated and demanding literature in upper secondary almost exclusively takes place in second language teaching, which again confirms the supposition that EFL classrooms are the perfect space to engage students in reading for pleasure.

In order to ensure that students acquire world views and certain values from their readings, it is necessary that they are able and willing to connect meaningfully with the texts. Especially when reading in a foreign language, texts that are too demanding for one's level of reading proficiency easily lead to frustration as Bushman confirms: "[B]y using paraphrasing,

study guides, movies, and other aids, students are able to satisfactorily complete a novel unit without having been engaged with the novel. It's a vicious cycle: when students are faced with a reading selection that is somehow unsuitable for them, they bolt at the piece." (178)

Apart from the fact that the questions in the reading logs designed for this project make it fairly impossible for students not to read the novels carefully, the broader lesson is presumably more easily taught when students are fond of their texts. The one genre that lends itself perfectly to this enterprise is Young Adult Literature.

According to Bushman, well-selected works of young adult fiction that are written for the modern teenager and adolescent are accessible for students and therefore they are more likely to engage with the text, its relevance and the whole learning experience that happens primarily through enjoyment (Bushman 178). The characters of young adult fiction works are mostly appealing and multi-dimensional, they have to manage similar daily hassles and have to make similar choices about their lives as the readers themselves. Bull remarks the following with regards to the usefulness of young adult fiction for language classrooms: "YAL enables teachers to offer full-length, high-quality literary texts that match students' interests and build their literacy skills while simultaneously addressing standards and meeting time constraints." (223) That is to say, from a teacher's perspective, YAL is the ideal multi-purpose tool. YAL is engaging for students, addresses topics they are interested in, is very often of extremely good quality, provides full-length examples of authentic English that enhances reading fluency and general literary competence and is thus, ideal for the educational goal of deconstructing heterosexist and even possibly homophobic ideas.

4.4.) The Austrian curriculum

The Austrian curriculum for language subjects in upper secondary schools providing general education contains guidelines concerning how foreign language teaching can account for the superordinate educational goals as listed in the general curriculum. For example, regarding the greater educational goal "Mensch und Gesellschaft" ("Humans and Society") the following is stated:

Durch die Auswahl geeigneter fremdsprachlicher Themenstellungen ist die Weltoffenheit der Schülerinnen und Schüler sowie ihr Verständnis für gesellschaftliche Zusammenhänge zu fördern. Konfliktfähigkeit, Problemlösungskompetenz und Friedenserziehung sind auch im

Fremdsprachenunterricht als zentrale Lehr- und Lernziele zu betrachten. Zudem ist im Fremdsprachenunterricht eine Sprachregelung zu vermitteln und zu pflegen, die der Gleichberechtigung der sozialen Geschlechter entspricht. (1)

("students' cosmopolitanism and their understanding of societal discourses is to foster through the selection of suitable texts in the foreign language. Problem- and conflict-solving competences and education for peace are central teaching and learning goals also in language education. Moreover, foreign language education needs to mediate a language policy that corresponds to the equality of the social genders.") *[my translation]*

This chapter of the curriculum accounts for the use of critically selected readings by means of extending students' world knowledge, apart from their language competences, which are additionally mentioned in a chapter about the "acquisition of linguistic competences"

("Erwerb linguistischer Kompetenzen "). Especially notable in the paragraph quoted above is also the mention of a language policy that corresponds to gender equality. When this is in fact likely to be aimed at gendering written language, it can also be interpreted as a call for using LGBTQ-inclusive language and not tolerating expressions such as "husband" or "wife" when the gender of the person referred to cannot be derived from the context. What is more, problem- and conflict-solving competences also require that a person is at least aware of heterosexism as a dominating power structure in our society and the effects it has on certain minority groups.

Under the subheading "Vielfältige Themenbereiche und Textsorten" ("Various subject areas and text types") of the didactic principals of foreign language teaching numerous possible topics as media for instruction are listed:

Zur Erlangung eines möglichst umfassenden lexikalischen Repertoires sind verschiedenste Themenbereiche zu bearbeiten (wie zB Sprache und ihre Anwendungsmöglichkeiten; Rolle der Medien; Arbeit und Freizeit; Erziehung; Lebensplanung; Einstellung und Werte; Zusammenleben; aktuelle soziale, wirtschaftliche und politische Entwicklungen; Prozesse der Globalisierung; kulturelle und interkulturelle Interaktionen; Umwelt; aktuelle Entwicklungen in Technik und Wissenschaft; Kunst in ihren Ausdrucksformen Literatur, Musik, bildende Künste). Spezielle thematische Schwerpunkte sind jeweils im Einklang mit individuellen Interessenslagen und Bedürfnissen der Schülerinnen und Schüler sowie mit aktuellen Ereignissen zu setzen. (4)

("To obtain a comprehensive vocabulary various subject areas are to be worked on (for example language and it's areas of application; role of the media; work and leisure; education; **life planning; attitudes and values; living together in a community; contemporary societal**, economical and **political developments**; processes of globalization; cultural and intercultural interactions; environment; contemporary developments in technology and science; art in its expressive forms literature, music, visual arts). Special focus

is to be put on certain themes with regards to students' interests and needs, as well as current events." (4) *emphasis added*) [my translation]

Especially notable in connection to the LGBTQ-literature project presented in this paper are the subject areas life planning, which also includes family planning and thus, LGBT-themes; attitudes and values, living together in a community, because this also includes living together with people of various genders and sexual orientations; and the contemporary societal and political developments which certainly contain numerous LGBT-themes such as the media appearance of the Austrian transgender Eurovision Song Contest winner Conchita Wurst, the latest developments concerning LGBT-marriage in the USA and Ireland, or the little figures on traffic lights which have in parts become two women or two men in some places in Vienna during the year of 2015. To be brief, manifold political and societal developments of the last couple of years are related to the LGBTQ-community.

The common curriculum for all Austrian schools providing general education in both lower and upper secondary reveals further reasons to integrate LGBT-themes in the lessons. To begin with, it is already stated in the section "Gesetzlicher Auftrag" ("Legal Mission") (*Part 1*) that schools are obligated to teach their students certain values and develop their abilities to think individually and reflect critically. The next section "Leitvorstellung" ("General Outline") covers gender equality and declares: "Akzeptanz, Respekt und gegenseitige Achtung sind wichtige Erziehungsziele insbesondere im Rahmen des interkulturellen Lernens und des Umgangs der Geschlechter miteinander." (*Part 1*) ("Acceptance and respect for each other are important educational goals especially in intercultural learning and the interaction of the genders."). Furthermore, the curriculum postulates that schools should "deal with the relevance of the category gender on all levels of teaching and learning" ("sich mit der Relevanz der Kategorie Geschlecht auf allen Ebenen des Lehrens und Lernens auseinandersetzen.") (*Part 1*); it basically claims LGBTQ-inclusive teaching.

There even appears a whole section on "Bewusste Koeducation und Geschlechtssensible Pädagogik" ("Conscious coeducation and gender-sensitive pedagogy") which claims the following: "Es ist wesentlich, die Lerninhalte und Unterrichtsmethoden so auszuwählen, dass sie beide Geschlechter gleichermaßen ansprechen [...]. Lehrerinnen und Lehrer sind angehalten, ein (Lern-)Klima der gegenseitigen Achtung zu schaffen, [...] sowie sich ein Grundwissen über geschlechtsspezifische Sozialisationsprozesse im Jugendalter anzueignen." (*Part 2*) ("It is essential to choose lesson content and methods in a way that appeals to both

genders [...]. Teachers should create a (learning) climate of mutual respect, [...] and acquire basic knowledge about gender-specific socialization processes in adolescence.") On the one hand, the curriculum in this place demands gender-sensitive teaching in connection to the creation of a positive classroom climate of mutual respect, which is indeed benefitting for schools. On the other hand, a binary gender conception is adopted as "both genders" are mentioned and the whole text never mentions the possibility of transgender students or students that do not want to fit into a binary gender conception. A simple but LGBT-inclusive improvement would be the replacement of the phrase "both genders" with "all genders" and a mention of transgenderism concerning the basic knowledge about gender-specific processes of growing up teachers should acquire.

Another example of the common curriculum that provides a suitable argument for teaching LGBT-themes is one of the "Bildungsbereiche" ("subject areas"), which are basically goals of general education that should be realized in all subjects, specifically the subject area "Mensch und Gesellschaft" ("Man and Society"): "Die Schülerinnen und Schüler sind zu einem verantwortungsbewussten Umgang mit sich selbst und mit anderen anzuleiten, insbesondere in den Bereichen Geschlecht, Sexualität und Partnerschaft. Sie sollen lernen, Ursachen und Auswirkungen von Rollenbildern, die den Geschlechtern zugeordnet werden, zu erkennen und kritisch zu prüfen." (*Part 1*) ("Students shall be instructed in a responsible handling of themselves and others, especially in the areas gender, sexuality, and partnership. They should learn to recognize and critically reflect effects of role models assigned to gender.")

As following a curriculum always implies interpreting it, one could of course restrict one's teaching in this respect to a comparison of gender roles and the basics of feminism and equality for women, as it is done, for example, in the *Make Your Way 7* course book for 7th form. However, one could also interpret the "responsible handling" as a demand to teach students how to responsibly treat all members of society, also those who do not confine to the binary gender conception and those who are not heterosexually oriented. The effects of role models also affect LGBTQ-people, especially a non-binary gender conception that strongly differentiates between one's gender identity and ways of expressing this gender derives from the will to revolt against these stereotypical gender roles.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Austrian common curriculum as well as the curriculum for foreign language teaching demand teaching methods which display, at least, a certain sensitivity towards issues of gender and sexuality, but it has also to be noted that the will to integrate LGBT-people's realities into these considerations has to be realized by the teachers themselves, as there are no definite claims for LGBT-inclusiveness to be found in the curricula. There are merely suggestions that open up spaces to implement LGBT-themes in the lessons.

4.5.) Teachers' bias

Even though topics sensitive towards gender and sexual orientation are that well anchored in the curriculum, "[f]or some, teaching LGBT-themed texts seems impossible." as Clark and Blackburn report (*Reading LGBT* 25). They further explain: "This stance is often undergirded by a belief that teaching needs to be a value-free enterprise. Despite being personally anithomophobic, they believe that teachers must be neutral and apologetical in their classrooms." However, under closer examination this attitude is neither neutral nor value-free. The silencing and ignoring of alternative sexual orientations is, in fact, a method of reinforcing heterosexism. A neutral stance as a teacher in a language arts or EFL classroom implies treating LGBTQ people and LGBT-issues as not more or less normal than heterosexuality. Silencing LGBT-themes is not free of values, quite the contrary, it shows that heterosexuality is the only value, the only norm, and that nothing outside heterosexuality really exists or is worth talking about. Every contemporary, engaged teacher should consider this, but whereas many might be willing to teach more LGBTQ-inclusively, a lack of guidance in the form of lesson plans and materials is another reason why initial ideas rarely end in practical implementation. The following chapter will outline the difficulties and pitfalls of a teaching endeavor that deconstructs heteronormativity when teaching LGBT-themes rather than reinforcing it.

5.) Pitfalls in teaching LGBTQ-inclusively

The initial question is how to teach LGBT-themes so that LGBTQ-people are treated as 'normal', that is to say, so that teaching is not centered around a heterosexist point of departure, so that students are assumed to be supportive allies or LGBTQ themselves rather than a homogenous group of heterosexuals who are possibly homophobic (García,

Slesaransky-Poe 2010; Blackburn, Clark 2009, 2010), in short, so that students are enabled to transgress boundaries (hooks 1994). There is a number of pitfalls that need to be avoided.

5.1.) Positioning of the readers

First of all, the positioning of the readers is of high importance. Blackburn and Clark (*Becoming Readers* 150) assume that "[w]ithin school contexts [...] students are invariably positioned as straight and often homophobic" as they "are addressed by text, teacher, or institution as presumably straight and often aggressively homophobic.". This positioning is reflected in nearly every instance of the everyday teaching practice. In most textbooks only heterosexual couples are depicted and it is automatically assumed that a male person can only be romantically attracted to a female and the other way round. This especially shows in language classrooms of languages which have a genus marking in their grammar, such as French or Spanish, as Liddicoat analyzed in greater detail in the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* (2009). In these languages, questions concerning one's partner or ideal partner are often used to assess a student's command of the grammatical genus marking in the suffixes. In such cases, "a heteronormative frame becomes the resource for locating the grammatical difficulty", as Liddicoat (196) explains. In short, a male student who describes "mon copain" or "mi novio" (the French and Spanish equivalents to "my boyfriend") is often believed to make a grammatical mistake, even if the suffixes of the adjectives in the following sentences may be adjusted correctly to fit the male subject. If now the teacher tries to improve the student's speech via interruption and repetition of the 'correct', that is, female, version, this corrective feedback "rewards heterosexuality and constructs other sexual identities within a context of deviance". (Foucault 1976 qtd. in Liddicoat 201)

Moreover, the bigger part of texts that are read in schools (not only in language subjects, but in all the other subjects as well), do not address same-sex romance in any way. Subtexts that could hint at non-heterosexuality are mostly ignored as well, as Vicky Greenbaum, an openly lesbian American teacher in academia reports: "Too often, current teaching of literature in American classrooms tends to assume that lesbian and gay content is not there, that lesbian and gay students don't exist, that lesbian and gay experience is invisible." (71) With this quote, Greenbaum particularly refers to literary works of the past, in which homoerotic content was often presented as a subtexts because people were still penalized for being homosexual at that time. Even though subtexts and deeper meanings in literature are

generally analyzed in various subjects, those hinting at homosexuality are continuously left out of discussions.

The long-term effects of teaching based on heteronormative positioning of all students are outlined by Cynthia Nelson(2006) as following:

On a strictly pragmatic level, this would limit opportunities for first-, second- and foreign-language learners [...] to develop the types of fluency required to take part in - and to critique - contemporary discourses (which increasingly involve sexual diversity alongside other aspects of diversity). In a broader, ethical level, excluding queer perspectives and knowledges from our classrooms and our literature is, in effect, a way of enforcing compulsory heterosexuality, which hardly seems an appropriate role for language educators and researchers. (7)

Teachers and researchers alike often do not seem to be aware of the fact that their teaching methods which leave out any recognition of non-heterosexuality are, in fact, minimizing the students' competence to engage meaningfully with all aspects of social life in the target language as well as enforcing a certain norm or value on adolescent members of society. A first step towards a more inclusive classroom atmosphere would be to move away from the assumption that all students in a classroom are unmistakably heterosexual and due to that, possibly homophobic too. To go a step further, there is also the possibility that some students might not identify with the gender that was assigned to them at birth; transgenderism is an option as well as homo- or bisexuality is. What is more, school is one of the most important institutions in the process of self-discovery and identity forming, as children, naturally, attend educational institutions in the phase of puberty and emerging adulthood. Hardly any teacher would dare to say that they would not support transgender or LGBTQ-students, still, transgenderism is mostly discussed, if at all, in a non-normative framework and also the curriculum does not particularly demand a liberal and modern gender education that is based on the conception of gender as a social concept. This is the root of the problem and the reason why implementing one single text containing a homosexual character to show pupils that LGBTQ-people exist cannot even be an approximately sufficient option to change classrooms towards being more LGBTQ-inclusive. To enter a classroom with the basic assumption that everybody is either LGBTQ or a straight but supportive ally to LGBTQ-people causes a classroom climate in which homophobia is nonnormative, and not a particular sexual orientation (Blackburn, Clark, *Reading LGBT* 28) and thus, can be regarded as a method to combat homophobia and heterosexism in schools.

5.2.) Selection of texts

The next move that needs sufficient consideration is the selection of materials that aid this teaching aim. A great part of young adult literature containing LGBTQ-themes address topics like bullying or coming out, depicting LGBTQ-people as struggling and suffering. While these stories might comfort a LGBTQ-adolescent with similar problems, they are fairly disadvantageous when trying to combat homophobia and heterosexism on an educational level, as they show how hard and undesirable it must be not to be heterosexual. Literature suitable for classroom discussion should abstain from stereotypical representations of LGBTQ-characters as this would reinforce heteronormative practices, as Sanders and Mathis argue. They further explain that "[t]exts should be used portraying the variety of LGBT characters that actually exist." (6) The notion of a text serving as both mirror and window described by Bishop in 1992 often occurs in the literature surrounding this topic. It basically says that texts can serve as windows for heterosexual students to "see into the world of a homosexual character" (Blackburn, Clark, *Reading LGBT* 27) and as a mirror for LGBTQ-students who are then enabled to catch a glimpse of another LGBTQ-person's world and find themselves in it. However logical it may sound, this model indeed contains an element of heterosexism as it divides the audience into hetero- and homo-/bi-/transsexuals. An ideal text should serve as a window to all students as they see into the world of another adolescent character in a different environment, with a different background and different issues to deal with than their own. This, after all, is the initial purpose of young adult literature. For some students the texts may also serve as a mirror, as they identify with certain characteristic aspects of the characters in the novels. Therefore, the representation of a homosexual male character can in a particular situation also serve as a mirror for a clearly heterosexual boy, as sexual identity is basically nothing more than one characteristic. Some people have red hair, others brown; some people feel attracted to people of the opposite gender, some to people of the same; that is the equitation that constantly needs to be made throughout LGBTQ-inclusive teaching efforts. Even though the mirror-window dichotomy seems useful in explaining why LGBT-texts are read in a classroom, it also proves to be redundant in the light of what it really means to deconstruct heteronormativity in traditional EFL classrooms. Bushman got to the heart of the process of reflection which hopefully happens in most students' minds when being subjected to LGBTQ-inclusive teaching: "We are all really more alike than different, and once we move past surface

features, we discover that everyone experiences the same universal feelings." (182) These universal feelings alike to people of all genders and sexual orientation, the feelings of love, lust and attraction central to adolescents all over the world, are in the focus of the comprehension questions found in the reading logs (Appendix p.21ff). Many of them consider different kinds of love a character feels and students are often asked to put themselves in the position of a character - whether they are a straight, gay or oriented anywhere on the spectrum. The aim is to show that feelings of love and affection are similar for all of us, whether they are directed towards a person of the same or another sex and that it is possible to identify with a character, even though they have a different sexual orientation than oneself.

5.3.) Positioning of the texts in the curriculum

Apart from a conscious selection of texts, the positioning of these texts is equally important. As noted before, simply giving the students a text with LGBT-themes without any guidance in the form of reading activities and comprehension questions does not do the trick. Reading those texts in such a limited way "may lead, at best, to sympathetic responses in straight student readers who feel sorry for gay people. However, this response leaves LGBTQ students in the classroom positioned as pitiable." (Blackburn, Clark, *Becoming Readers* 2010 : 153) In other words, heteronormativity is reinforced in that LGBTQ-people are perceived as the poor outsiders of society. It is highly questionable that either any LGBTQ-person wants to be perceived that way or that it is useful to convey such a picture of LGBT-reality to students. One solution to the problem of careful implementation of texts with LGBT-themes in the curriculum is given by Clark and Blackburn: "When LGBT-themed literature is read and discussed on a single day or even in a single unit of the school year, such literature is positioned as nonnormative." (*Reading LGBT* 25) As a result of implementing literature with LGBT-themes as a singular event, being LGBTQ is represented as outside a norm. Naturally, EFL teaching cannot concentrate on LGBT-issues only, there is much more to teach as course books and curricula reveal and it is therefore fairly unlikely that LGBT-themed literature is taught more than once or twice. For that reason, one's ways of teaching need to be generally restructured in order to successfully combat the heteronormativity dominant in most schools. To put it differently, apart from doing the readings and activities presented in this paper, it is essential to realize a certain LGBT-sensibility in the classroom on an everyday basis. Concerning the reading project of this paper, it is first and foremost important not to

introduce it as a reading project concerning LGBT-themes from the start. It should rather be broadly introduced as a reading project that has to do with young adult literature and leave it that way. Consequently, students will not confront the texts with a biased view. Moreover, this detail at the start establishes the foundation for representing LGBTQ-persons as the - or at least one kind of - norm, it conveys that nobody needs to be warned in advance, that it is nothing that needs to be stated beforehand.

To summarize the most prominent pitfalls in LGBTQ-inclusive teaching endeavors, one needs to keep in mind positioning of the students as LGBTQ themselves or supportive allies instead of automatically assuming them all to be straight and possibly homophobic. Texts need to be selected carefully in order to abstain from stereotypical representations and they need to be positioned carefully. In general, a close watch should be constantly kept on the broader focus of deconstructing heteronormativity and creating a classroom climate inclusive of all kinds of gender and sexual identities. All in all, simple and seemingly small changes in one's teaching can go a long way. The following section emphasizes instances of LGBT-inclusive teaching that go beyond the selection of suitable literature for a reading project and affect one's daily teaching practice.

6.) Exceeding the curriculum: making a teacher's daily routine LGBTQ-inclusive

The first step towards being an LGBTQ-inclusive teacher is becoming careful of one's language and the instances of heteronormativity it automatically contains. The chair of the Gay Straight Educators' Alliance, a part of the National Council of Teachers of English, Michael Weinberg, published suggestions for changing one's language in order to make it LGBTQ-inclusive in an article of the *English Journal* (2009). He holds the opinion that "[s]ome careful thought about how we use language can not only help promote self-acceptance in LGBT students; it can also model respect and fairness for others. It is, after all, the responsibility of educators to prepare students to become parts of the global community." (50). What is not regarded important by the teacher or any other adult model of influence over the students, might as well not be important to them. On a side note, experience shows that because teachers in Austria often complain about gendering written language in, for

instance German, students also tend to have a negative opinion about it and do not see the real reasons that justify changing and in parts complicating written language.

6.1.) LGBT-inclusive language - guidelines by Michael Weinberg

To come back to the original argument, when teachers effectively implement changes in their language towards making it more inclusive for students of all genders and sexual orientations without constantly apologizing for it or otherwise making a fuss about it, these sensitivities in language use are more likely to be passed on to the students. Weinberg's guidelines for LGBT-inclusive language are the following:

1. Don't assume that all students are heterosexual
2. Don't assume that being LGBT is a problem
3. Don't "out" people
4. Let students self-identify
5. Don't assume that a student's gender identity and biological sex are the same
6. Watch for connotative bias
7. Consider the power of words
8. Avoid negative comments about gender expression such as "Act like a man," "Don't be such a sissy," or "You throw like a girl."
9. Be careful about unintentional heterosexism
10. Confront bias and bullying of all types (Weinberg 50f)

Guidelines 2, 3 and 4 regard the topic of coming out and self-identification. If a student comes out to a teacher, they should never be pitied in any way as LGBTQ-identities shall not be regarded as disadvantaged. The remark of self-identification in guideline 4 means that sexual identity is fluid, a student that has come out as bisexual could still identify as gay half a year later. Guideline 5 is aimed at the possibility of meeting transgender students in one's classroom. Even though transgenderism is not as common as sexual identities that are non-hetero, still roughly 700.000 people in the USA identify as transgender². When allowing students to articulate how they want to be addressed and simply accepting a male-looking student who wants to be called Sophia without further questioning, this issue can be elegantly dealt with. The connotative bias mentioned by Weinberg in Guideline 6 is

² Source: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/research/census-lgbt-demographics-studies/how-many-people-are-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender/> 2015-12-01

explained as such: "Terms such as *alternative lifestyle* and *sexual preference* suggest the element of option or choice. *Sexual orientation*, on the other hand, does not." (50) Whereas *alternative lifestyle* might not trigger any negative responses in students, *sexual preference* definitely reinforces a common, but inherently wrong picture of homo- and bisexuality, namely that it is a choice for those people to feel attracted to members of the same gender, which it clearly is not. Science and literature departs from the notion that sexual identity is an inborn quality and rather sees it as fluid continuum nowadays, but it still is not an individual decision to "turn" gay (or lesbian, or bisexual for that matter). Considering the power of words, guideline 7, refers to homophobic bullying, or, to be more concise, to microaggressions that are probably not meant homophobic but are still disturbing for LGBTQ-individuals. According to rainbowteaching.co.uk (2015-12-01): "The most common phrase is "that's so gay" - which may be so far removed in the students' minds from a reference to sexuality that they don't even recognise it as homophobia." Due to this removal from a directly homophobic meaning, such expressions are often not heard or deliberately ignored by teachers and thus, stay unchallenged. Nevertheless, simply admonishing these students for using bad language is not enough. Telling them that calling someone or something "gay" is bad language has the same effect as reminding them of slur words such as "shit" or "fuck" being bad language - to the effect that they store it as negative terms that should not be said in front of adults. Instead, the desired effect is to bring them to an understanding that the usage of such a term as swearword implies that the group of people the word originally describes is bad.

Weinberg's guideline 8 addresses a broader topic than sexual orientation, namely gender expression and stereotypes. While puberty typically is the phase of life in which different identities are tried out and most often excessively expressed outwards via clothes and behaviors, gender expression is often confused with gender or sexual identity. That is to say, "one can see the belief that there is only one way of being male or female, feminine or masculine, and that all other forms are deviant, and further, that they correlate with a particular set of sexual interests and orientation, namely gay or lesbian." (García, Slesaransky-Poe 249) A short-haired girl in baggy pants not wearing make-up is quickly labeled as 'the lesbian' by her peers, regardless of the boyfriend she might have had during the previous term. It takes up even greater extremes with boys who deviate only slightly from a male ideal. García and Slesaransky-Poe further explain: "So when a boy asks, why

can't I paint my nails, or wear eye makeup, or a skirt, the answer is because you are a boy, and this we know is insufficient and reinforces a narrow gender expression limited by a societal belief in what is appropriate and not." (254) Of course, it can be regarded as generally bad to reinforce gender stereotypes in a way that put the people in question into a kind of prison or gender closet, the reason why it is explicitly "bad" with regards to LGBTQ-inclusive teaching efforts is the erroneous connection of gender expression to sexual orientation and the devaluation of this, non-hetero sexual orientation it entails. What is the real reason why it is inappropriate for a boy to wear nail polish? Because he then is 'unmanly' and due to that, probably gay. The inappropriateness of a violation of gender stereotypes lies in the underlying supposition that one needs to be a man to desire woman and the other way round. "[G]ays and lesbians are erroneously characterized as not quite men or women by virtue of their sexual object choice." (García, Slesaransky-Poe 250) For that reason, LGBTQ-inclusive teaching encompasses an essential sensitivity towards gender stereotyping. It means uncovering the most prevalent stereotypes in that matter and finally destroying the assumption that gender expression has anything to do with sexual orientation. It does not. It does not have to do with one's gender identity either. All these instances of gender and sexuality are presented to the students via a handout as part of the post-reading activities (Appendix p.98ff) which works with Sam Killermann's more than ingenious idea of the *Genderbread Person*, a gingerbread figure that graphically outlines the different instances of one's personality, depicting gender expression, gender identity, biological sex and sexual orientation as four fundamentally different pillars of one's identity.

To come back to Weinberg's guidelines for LGBT-inclusive language, the 9th one addresses unintentional heterosexism. Most course books seem to live by unintentional heterosexism, as nearly all men are constantly married to women, girls write to the Agony Aunt looking for advice concerning boys, and all families seem to be traditionally nuclear ones - mother, father, children. A quick scan of the *Make Your Way Ahead* series, a course book that is used in most AHS upper secondary EFL classes in Austria, reveals that the one and only mentioning of LGBTQ-people takes place in year seven in the form of a listening comprehension concerning gay marriage. The listening task does not even have to be done by the teacher, neither is it contextualized appropriately. However, not only the design of the course books' topics gives way to (unintentional) heterosexism, as aforementioned, the nature of language teaching itself and the amount of self-disclosure it typically demands

from students especially in grammar and communication tasks does so as well. So as to establish and maintain a LGBTQ-inclusive classroom atmosphere, teachers have to be aware of the glimpses of heteronormativity hidden in those parts of language teaching that do not center around general education and personal development, but concentrate on grammar, vocabulary, etc.. If, for example, a task description is "Describe your ideal romantic partner" instead of "Describe your ideal boy- or girlfriend" a broader range of options is offered to the students, as such a task description does also not coerce them into making choices, i.e. deciding whether they are more attracted by the same or opposite gender and furthermore, it implies that the parameters of attraction are the same for male- and female-directed attraction. It is the teachers' task to supply what course books and teaching materials generally seem to leave out.

The last of Weinberg's guidelines focuses on biases and bullying among the students. It has been mentioned before that being LGBTQ-inclusive as a teacher involves a zero-tolerance policy towards homophobic bullying and unintentionally homophobic remarks like "That is so gay!". It is a matter of a teacher's credibility and authenticity to not only teach certain values but also realize them in critical situations in daily life.

To be brief, in order to maintain being an LGBTQ-inclusive teacher, one has to be aware of a fairly large amount of issues that could come up on every average school day. The endeavor to combat heteronormativity in the school environment, or at least in one's language classroom, the efforts made in this respect have to permeate every instance of teaching, the teacher's role has to be infused with awareness of hidden heteronormativity and its effect on students' ideologies in order to make this endeavor successful.

7.) The Founding Scholars - Jerome Bruner's and bell hooks' influence upon this paper

So far, justification for teaching LGBT-themes with the goal of combating heterosexism in schools was rooted in the pursuit of a fair, contemporary society and a will to remove homophobic thoughts from students' minds in order to reach an inclusive classroom climate for everyone. Of course, these are all goals to strive for but in fact, teaching LGBT-themes that way means teaching critical thinking, it involves challenging and perhaps changing the students thoughts and stimulating a rethinking process. The will to deconstruct

heterosexism, or any other dominant societal power structure, in the classroom implies a willingness to teach students how to think critically on their own. Therefore, such an educational endeavor entails the question how critical thinking skills are best developed in students. Experience with teenagers and adolescents proves that telling a group of 16- and 17-year-olds which kind of thinking is acceptable and which not is unlikely to lead to the desired response, especially when the thought patterns that have been developed so far get challenged and probably changed. Simply reminding them that it is not okay to bully LGBTQ-people and explaining the heteronormativity predominant in our society and why this needs to be changed is very likely to prove insufficient. Students aged 16 or 17 will hardly ever accept an authority telling them how to *think*, considering the resistance most of them exhibit towards adults reminding them of what to *do*. As soon as children are old enough to 'think for themselves', or to put it differently, as soon as they have reached puberty, genuine critical thinking can only happen when the deconstruction, that is, the change of deeply rooted thought patterns is realized by the students themselves or in their peer groups. In the end, it should not have been the teacher transmitting knowledge, it should have been the student's mind which has performed the operations of thought that led to a new understanding of the world, in this case, of the world of gender, (sexual) identity and attraction. A well-known postcard quote by Alexandra K. Trenfor reads: "The best teachers are those who show you where to look, but don't tell you what to see." Perhaps, this statement cannot be allocated to every instance of teaching, as in times a teacher might be well advised to show students how something works in order to ensure understanding and make instruction accessible to all learning types. However, when it comes to teaching critical thinking, the quote contains a considerable grain of truth. In short, critical thinking is best developed in adolescents when they have the possibility to discover the power structures of society for themselves.

This leads to the two educational scholars foundational to this thesis and the reading project materials developed for this matter, namely bell hooks and Jerome Bruner. The first one, hooks, serves as general inspiration providing the fundamental framework. The latter, American scholar Jerome Bruner, developed the discovery learning approach during the 1960s and 1970s.

7.1.) Jerome Bruner - The Discovery Approach

Even though discovery learning, also called inductive approach, was created for grammar teaching, it can be perfectly repurposed to teaching critical thinking as well. With regards to the criticism discovery learning as primary approach to grammar instruction has received over the years, labeling it as a nice but rather impractical try due to the time constraints most teachers meet in ordinary school settings, it may perhaps be removed from grammar teaching and used to teach critical thinking for its own good. Bruner's general opinion was that "[t]ypical classroom instructions fails because only the result of someone else's inquiry is presented to students" (qtd.in Takaya 21) and he assumed this to be the reason for the boredom and disinterest often displayed by students facing their learning material. In contrast, discovery teaching basically proceeds as such: The teacher states examples and encourages the students to find out their meaning, that is, the underlying rules by themselves. Whereas it could be useful for a student generally struggling with languages as such to be confronted with results in the form of rules and structures concerning grammar in the traditional way, general knowledge about the world is unlikely to be acquired via deductive instruction from a teacher only. As already mentioned in the previous section, critical world knowledge requires a kind of learning that touches deeper levels of thought, because developing critical thinking competences means that existing belief systems are called into question. Viewing things from another perspective contests deeply rooted parameters used to encounter the world. Deriving from the assumption that every person has developed their own biases and ways of encountering and coming to terms with the outside world, a fundamental change of these thought patterns is an inherently individual process. Thus, the acquisition of a knowledge that is, according to Bruner "not a mere collection of information, but a model we construct to give meaning and structure to our experience of the world and to make it economical and communicable (ibid., p.120)" (Takaya 20f) best originates from the learner's mind rather than from some deductively designed material or instruction.

The reading project central to this thesis advances in a similar, inductive manner. The examples of LGBTQ-people are provided by the books, guidance occurs in the form of the comprehension questions and tasks in the reading log. Additional guidance is provided by the teacher who is meant to monitor and aid classroom discussions as well as to be available for students for personal counseling concerning the project outside class. Through that,

students are expected to discover a non-heteronormative understanding of LGBT-themes and non-binary gender conceptions by themselves.

7.2.) bell hooks - Teaching as a Practice of Freedom

As mentioned previously, the works of bell hooks create the broader framework to the reading project's procedure and the aim of this thesis in general. hooks published a whole book on "Teaching Critical Thinking - Practical Wisdom" in 2010 in which she further elaborates on her teaching method called "Engaged Pedagogy". This method is already introduced in her publication "Teaching to Transgress - Education as the Practice of Freedom" (1994). Descending from an Afro-American working-class family and growing up during the time in which race-segregation in America was slowly demolished, hooks developed a strong, critical, feminist voice in educational theory. Education was always of great value to her and other black female intellectuals of that time as it functioned as a counter-hegemonic act. Even though segregation between black and white people is neither an equally grave problem in Middle Europe and especially Austria, nor the focus of this paper, the continuous silencing of minorities and social justice themes in general indeed calls for counter-hegemonic educational practices in the respective field. In "Teaching to Transgress" (1994) hooks presents her personal beliefs central to her teaching style which she proposes as the solution to a crisis in education caused by students unwilling to learn and teachers unwilling to teach. (12) For her, a teacher's primary goal should be "[t]eaching students to "transgress" against racial, sexual, and class boundaries in order to achieve the gift of freedom" (*blurb, backside cover*). She analyzes the teacher's role on a deeper level acknowledging the fact that there is more to teach than what is outlined in the curriculum in order to prepare students sufficiently for their lives after school or university. hooks also recognizes that students' thoughts need to be challenged to change them and advocates for a teaching style that enables students to think beyond what they already know and discover new ways of thinking, especially concerning social matters like gender or race.

In "Teaching Critical Thinking" hooks states that "[i]t is essential to our struggle for self-determination that we speak of love, as love is the necessary foundation enabling us to survive the wars, the hardships, and the sickness and the dying with our spirits intact. It is love that allows us to survive whole" (*Critical Thinking* 176). Hereby she touches root of the research problem. The act of teaching LGBT-themes and deconstructing heteronormativity

is, at heart, a radical act in the favor of love, as it touches one's ability to love in a honest and committed way. Heteronormative practices do not only influence sexuality or individual identity, they govern which kind of love is acceptable and which not. It has to be emphasized that the ability to love dearly and wholeheartedly is an inherent characteristic of every human being, nevertheless, if this love is directed at a person of the same gender it is perceived as nonnormative, as wrong. LGBTQ-people are not only discriminated concerning their choice of sexual partners, on a deeper level their natural instinct to give love is restricted. I strongly believe that the increase of violence and hardness in our society is closely tied to the abolishment of love as an act of peace and freedom and thus, speak up for pedagogic practices that aim at the emotional capacities of young people rather than emphasizing only cognitive competences that focus on producing a faster, more efficient workforce that does not make too many demands on their own. These claims, fuelled by hooks' thinking outline the basis for bringing LGBT-themes in the classrooms and sensitizing students for the varieties of love that can exist between people of all kinds.

bell hooks also ties love to self-determination, something especially teenagers constantly strive for, as they want to be independent from their parents and authority in general. That is to say, puberty is a phase of life in which practices of self-determination are well received. She claims that "[f]or love as the foundation of all social movements for self-determination is the only way we create a world that domination and dominator thinking cannot destroy. Anytime we do the work of love we are doing the work of ending domination." (*Critical Thinking* 176) In the end, adolescents should leave school as self-determined, critical and well educated members of society, which makes it a necessity to implement social justice issues in one's teaching.

Teaching LGBT-themes as a counter-acting of heteronormative practices exemplifies this "domination and dominator thinking" mentioned by hooks (*Critical Thinking* 176), as it shows, at least in one field of inquiry, how dominant societal practices and norms govern and even harm individuals and groups that do not fit these norms. Therefore, deconstructing heteronormativity is an ideal avenue for the development of critical thinking capacities. In hooks' words, deconstruction urges "people to think long, hard, and critically; to unpack; to move beneath the surface; to work for knowledge." (*Critical Thinking* 10) Finally, the deconstruction of heteronormative practices as it is done in the course of the LGBT-

literature project, shall not only lead students to a sensitive understanding of gender and sexual orientation concerns, it is also aimed at leading them towards self-determination and genuine critical thinking.

bell hooks's works furthermore contain advice concerning the implementation of classroom practices that aid such a teaching endeavor. First of all, bell hooks' general educational approach is called "Engaged Pedagogy" and "begins with the assumption that we learn best when there is an interactive relationship between student and teacher" (*Critical Thinking* 19). Pillars of engaged pedagogy are mutual trust and communication. When one demands from students to open up and share personal thoughts, this can only successfully happen when the teacher, on the one hand, is willing to share too and, on the other hand, managed to create a classroom atmosphere of mutual respect in which everyone feels safe to contribute. Moreover, all this requires a teacher willing to give up their role of sole leadership in the classroom in order to reach a common ground for exchange. As hooks (*Transgress* 39) points out: "[t]he unwillingness to approach teaching from a standpoint that includes awareness of race, sex, and class is often rooted in the fear that classrooms will be uncontrollable, that emotions and passions will not be contained." In other words, the teacher's dedication to do this project and the deconstruction of heteronormative practices is of indispensable importance. The project is nothing that can be successfully done when done halfheartedly or in a classroom environment that does not show signs of mutual trust. On a side note, this is also the reason why the LGBT-reading project is designed for upper secondary students at the end of 6th or the beginning of 7th form; the establishment of mutual trust between students and the teacher in a high-school classroom might to a great extent depend on students' maturity as well.

The second pillar of engaged pedagogy is communication and dialogue as a teaching and learning method. Hooks states that "[t]he future of learning lies with the cultivation of conversations, of dialogue" (*Critical Thinking* 44) and further that "[o]ne of the ways we become a learning community is by sharing and receiving one another's stories" (*Critical Thinking* 51). These stories are, at least in the reading project, initially given by the young adult novels students have to read. They serve as basis points to which more personal stories from students' individual lives will be added when the reading logs are worked on. Communication as a basis for a learning community full of trust and respect is realized in the design of the reading project as basically one extensive group work activity, because

"[c]ritical thinking is an interactive process, one that demands participation on the part of teacher and students alike." (hooks, *Critical Thinking* 9).

In summary, even though hooks' is more engaged in a university teaching setting and also primarily concerned with issues of race and women's studies, she promotes a way of teaching that touches students' emotions, builds a diverse and cooperative learning community and, finally, enables students to develop critical thinking, that is, to transgress boundaries and find intellectual freedom from society's constraints. The ideals and beliefs that build her distinct and revolutionary teaching style serve as first and foremost inspiration for selecting the young adult novels and designing the whole LGBT-literature project. An overview of this selection is given in the following chapter alongside a more detailed description of the various LGBTQ-characters appearing in the novels.

8.) Overview of the Young Adult Novels

Cart and Jenkins developed a taxonomy of texts with LGBT-content assigning them to three different categories. The first one are "stories of homosexual visibility" (Cart, Jenkins as quoted by Clark, Blackburn, *Becoming Readers* 149) which typically show one character's struggle with their sexual orientation, including coming out experiences and sometimes also discrimination. With regards to the aim of combating heterosexism, novels of these type might be least useful, as they again emphasize the problems adolescents could have when coming out as non-heterosexual and thus, depict homo- or bisexuality as nonnormative. In contrast, "[g]ay assimilation (GA) stories [...] present gay/lesbian characters as no different from straight characters" (Cart, Jenkins qtd. in Clark, Blackburn, *Becoming Readers* 149) and are for that reason the most useful for deconstructing heteronormative thinking. Most novels selected for the reading project fit this category. The last type of stories mentioned by Cart and Jenkins is "queer consciousness/community" texts, which depict LGBTQ-characters in supportive communities or families. When in fact most of the novels read in preparation to the development of the reading project fell into the first category, only a handful of publications of the past five years belonging to the second or third type of LGBT-themed texts were found.

8.1.) *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* by Benjamin Alire Sáenz

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe was published in 2012 and received various awards, among them the Stonewall Book Award from the American Library Association for LGBT literature and an award from the School Library Journal for the best book of the year. It is a coming-of-age story about two boys, Aristotle and Dante, that spans over two summers and depicts the development of the two protagonists. Whereas both of them discover their homosexuality and affection for each other towards the end of the novel, this development is not the only prominent theme in the novel. Other themes are emotional ties towards friends and family and how they are changed and reestablished throughout the period of emerging adulthood, the loss of relatives, the life and hassles of Mexican-Americans, guilt, and the different interpretations of manliness, masculinity, male power and violence the two boys adopt. Dante Quintana has an intellectual family of considerable wealth, nevertheless, he constantly struggles with his Mexican descent. Aristotle, short Ari, comes from a working-class background and has more severe family troubles to cope with. His father is a Vietnam veteran who refuses to talk most of the time, and Ari's brother is in prison for murdering a prostitute he believed to be female, but who turned out to be a transgender person, as the reader learns towards the end of the novel. The story of Ari's brother is merely a side plot but nevertheless, it is important to both the character of Aristotle and reader of the novel, because a negative experience of a LGBTQ-person is mentioned but not highlighted. There is also another scene of negative LGBT-experience, i.e. when Dante is physically attacked for kissing another boy and Ari protects him. Apart from that, LGBT-reality is positively depicted. Dante realizes his own sexual identity earlier than Ari, but the two boys continue their friendship nonetheless. After their coming-outs both are accepted by their parents, who behave generally supportively throughout the novel. Actually, in Ari's case his outing happens during a family meeting because his parents realize even before he does that their son might be in love with Dante. Hence, no genuinely negative picture of LGBTQ-adolescents that could reinforce negative views of LGBTQ-people or daunt LGBTQ-readers is conveyed.

The novel can be regarded as a moderately easy read with short chapters and tersely sentence structures. It is fast-paced, entertaining and full of dialogue and thoughtfulness, students of all genders and sexual orientations are very likely to be able to identify with the

characters and take something with them from the novel. On account of the number of different themes and side plots that do not center around homosexuality and also the way homosexual characters are treated, it can be regarded as a GA (gay assimilation) story. *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* is indeed suitable as a class reader too, it does not contain too open description of sexual acts, too many swear words or shallow passages. It is a book that has certainly deserved its awards and has a very high potential to stick with the reader for some time after the final page.

8.2.) *Brooklyn, Burning* by Steve Brezenoff

Brooklyn, Burning was written in 2011 and is with 195 pages the smallest volume of the assortment of books for the reading project. Nevertheless, it might be a bit more challenging than the other ones. The themes addressed by this novel are adolescents living on the street, life in a metropolis like New York, alcohol, drugs and addiction, juvenile crime, and, remarkably subtly, transgenderism or gender dysphoria. The specialty of this novel is that the gender of the protagonists Kid and Scout is never revealed, as the author avoided the use of any pronouns concerning these two characters. Kid is the narrator of the story. Apart from one scene in which Kid's father complains about the fact that his child does not seem to be sure of their gender, transgenderism is never directly addressed, it is only a small aftertaste to the other problems the teenagers in this novel have. It becomes clear that Kid's sexual partners have been the reason for Kid living on the streets of Brooklyn over the summer together with a handful of people of different age groups. In the previous summer, Kid fell in love with Felix who then died of heroine, and in this summer, Kid falls for Scout who is also a musician. Together they are allowed to play in a bar sometimes, which's owner Fish takes care of homeless street kids. Descriptions of Fish hint at her possibly being a butch-type, that is, fairly masculine-looking lesbian, but this one hint is never confirmed. The reason for this book to be part of the reading project is that it shows that factors like gender and sexual orientation are, in fact, relatively irrelevant for a decent teenage love story. Students will probably not realize that their mental picture of Scout and Kid, might not be truly verified by the novel before they have to produce drawings of the couple as an obligatory task in their reading logs. In broader terms, *Brooklyn, Burning* shows that it does not matter between whom romantic love and affection takes place as these reactions are grounded in the same emotions. It is definitely not a story of homosexual visibility (HV), but it cannot be fully regarded as a gay assimilation or gay community story following Cart and

Jenkin's taxonomy either. On the one hand, *Brooklyn, Burning* represents questioning characters in their communities, but on the other hand, it is never clearly pronounced whether it is an LGBT-community or not. If anything the novel fits into the gay assimilation category, as all characters are treated the same way and no struggles concerning the characters' gender or sexual orientation are especially foregrounded. The whole book, or even only passages from it, can also be used to provide an example of how to treat gender-fluidity, which is the assumption that gender is more like a fluid continuum than a binary concept, and give room to discuss the varieties of (trans-)genderism also in connection to Steve Killerman's *Genderbread Person* (Appendix p.98ff).

8.3.) *Every Day* by David Levithan

Every Day also highlights gender but also addresses some aspects of sexual orientation. The novel was written in 2012 by David Levithan, the original part has 322 pages and is accompanied by six additional chapters which took place before the official story. Whereas *Boy Meets Boy* is often regarded as the most influential LGBT-novel by Levithan, as it is also mentioned in booklists compiled by scholars and often positively reviewed, *Every Day* delves deeper into the matter as it is more thought-provoking and thus, also more suitable for an upper-secondary classroom. The novel could be regarded as a fantasy novel, because the protagonist A wakes up in a different body every day, borrowing the life from strangers of his age group but still staying A in mind. It is never completely revealed what the reason for A inhabiting other bodies and the ability to read some parts of their minds is. The rest of the story is written like a usual young adult novel; funny, witty, partially fairly profound, and wonderfully fast-paced. On account of A's ever-changing bodies, also A's gender and sexual orientation change from day to day. In some chapters, A is a girl with a boyfriend, in another a gay boy, then again a transgender male teenager who identifies as female. Furthermore, he falls for Rhiannon, whose boyfriend's body was inhabited by A for one day. They even try to build a relationship, which is problematic because A cannot meet Rhiannon as a boy every time but Rhiannon is not attracted to girls. Instances of LGBT-themes are carefully embedded into the story, never presented as the central theme, but heterosexism is not reinforced either due to the sensitive implementation of LGBTQ-characters. A does never express insecurity or even disgust when being in a non-heterosexual body and having to perform acts of love and affection with the partner. Readers of *Every Day* catch glimpses of numerous lives and therefore, the novel also addresses an abundance of themes that reach

from the daily hassle of average teenagers to Catholicism and extreme religiousness, from child labor to suicide attempts, to the effect that one does not have time to brood over explanations for A's existence and wonder about A's genderless status. This novel can be used as impetus sparking discussions about being a-gender, bi-gender or generally gender-fluid and it puts the importance of gender and the complications tied to a binary gender conception into perspective. *Every Day* can be regarded as a GA (gay assimilation) story which can be best derived from scenes in which A inhabits the body of non-heterosexual teenagers and does not feel disturbed about this fact at all, but immediately accepts it as one circumstance amongst many others.

Due to the short chapters - some are only one page long - and Levithan's engaging, modern writing style, it can be seen as a moderately easy read, however, as LGBT-themes are not that openly present, the tasks in the Reading Log might demand a higher level of concentration and reading comprehension. Furthermore, some imaginativeness is sought after, as there never appears a real reason for A's existence and several questions stay left open at the end.

8.4) *Far From You* by Tess Sharpe

The following novel is called *Far From You* and was written by Tess Sharpe in 2014. It is the author's debut novel but it is a brilliantly structured story with multidimensional, accessible characters and an exciting storyline nonetheless. The latter is regularly interrupted by flashbacks of various length, so that not only the main story is told from the perspective of Sophie as an I-as-a-narrator voice, but the past and the events that led up to the present are covered as well. The novel tells a criminal story starting with Mina, Sophie's best friend, being murdered in front of Sophie's eyes. Sophie survives but has to go to rehab, because her family is convinced that she had relapsed into the drug addiction which she had actually beaten the year before. When she returns from rehab she is determined to find Mina's murderer. In the course of her investigations she does not only put herself in danger, but some secrets about the friendship between bisexual Sophie and closeted lesbian Mina are revealed as well. Apart from the girls' sexuality, the novel addresses the themes loss and grief, coming of age with unsupportive parents, struggle with addiction, and crime. Whereas Sophie is generally the more quiet, thoughtful girl, Mina is outgoing and also more feminine. Caused by her Catholic upbringing and the early death of her father, Mina does not want to

inflict more pain on her mother and keeps her sexuality hidden. She goes as far as to engage with boys as pretense. Sophie is bisexual, she knows that she is attracted to both sexes, but is most in love with Mina. She does not see any reasons to hide their affair but never pressures Mina into something she would not want. Although the novel broaches issues of hidden sexuality and probably problematic coming out experiences, these themes are dealt with in such a short, casual way, so that they are overshadowed by the more prominent topic of finding Mina's murderer. *Far From You* might belong to the category "Gay Visibility", but also fits the "Gay Assimilation" story type because sexual orientation is by far not the main theme. The story rather addresses friendship and, as already stated, the solving of a murder mystery. Sharpe's writing style is intense and on point, it is easy to associate with the characters and in the end of the novel one is likely to wish for a sequel just because this great set of characters could then appear again. Further, the slightly haunting atmosphere accompanying the story is intensified by details of a modern lifestyle. The characters have smart phones, they travel to different states and even think about living there, for instance. The topic addiction centers in a rather unusual fashion around pain medication in Sophie's case, and crystal meth in the case of a side-character, and Sophie finds cure for the chronic pain she had since an accident in doing yoga. All in all it can be said that this novel wins over in density of topics and it's amazing authenticity.

8.5.) *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green and David Levithan

John Green's and David Levithan's collaborative novel *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*, written in 2010 and spanning 308 pages, basically tells the story of two boys named Will Grayson and how they get to know each other. The chapters are alternating between the perspective of the two Will Graysons, each author wrote one character. Contrary to the first impression, one Will Grayson will not fall for the other one. Rather, one of them is straight and struggling with girls, the other one is gay and slightly luckier in his love affairs. However, the novel is much, much more than the story about a gay boy. To begin with, there are several homosexual characters in this novel, all of them are very different characters, which perfectly shows that non-heterosexual people are equally diverse as straight ones, and that stereotypes concerning LGBTQ-people mostly prove to be nonsensical. On the one hand, there is Tiny, a fairly huge, openly gay, pretty loud drama queen with ever-changing partners, on the other hand there is the gay Will Grayson who is more quiet and introvert. He falls in love with a boy over an internet chat, who later turns out to be his best female

friend. Throughout the whole novel, neither homo- nor heterosexual relationships are foregrounded, also the problems concerning the love affairs of homo- and heterosexual characters are basically similar. That is to say, stereotypical LGBT-themes like coming out, being bullied for one's sexual orientation, losing friends of the same sex because they believe one could be interested in them, etc. are in large part left out and replaced by 'ordinary' lovesickness. *Will Grayson, Will Grayson* depicts a world generally open to LGBTQ-people without too much exaggeration and can thus be regarded as a "Gay Community" novel. Will Grayson's school even has a Gay-Straight-Alliance club and the homosexual characters are generally very well embedded in their communities.

9.) The Materials

9.1.) The Lesson Plans

To begin with, most information and details concerning the teaching procedures can be found above each lesson plan (Appendix p.1ff), along with a precise description of each lesson's aims and objectives. Nevertheless, it might be useful to contextualize the procedure in greater detail and give additional information. The reading project basically spans over roughly one semester, as there is a break between the two pre-reading lessons, the while-reading session, and the post-reading activities respectively. During these periods students are supposed to read their novels and work on their reading logs at home. Ideally, one lesson per week, except for during the breaks, is dedicated to the project to not fall behind in the regular syllabus.

The procedure of this extensive reading project is designed according to the idea of the "reading syndicate" presented by Tricia Hedge (219) in adaptation of Parrot in her teachers' handbook, but the original idea was modified in some ways. Hedge outlines the following:

A reading syndicate can follow a five-step procedure (Parrot 1987) [...]. 1 The teacher divides the class into small groups or 'syndicates'. 2 The class discusses a range of books to be chosen, browsing among the books and selecting those to be distributed among the syndicates. The teacher can facilitate the process by having a list of genres and titles within each genre which are available. 3 Students each read their choice of book to a two-week deadline, using periods of class-time and reading at home. (220)

These steps were modified in that students browse through the blurbs of the books available, which they receive in form of a handout (Appendix p.104f) and then choose the

one they want to read. Their choice then determines their reading syndicate, because these groups will be homogenous as all students of one syndicate read the same novel. The third step is done like Hedge suggests, only that class-time will not be dedicated to silent reading and the deadline for finishing the novels could also be extended according to students' level if necessary. Hedge further explains: "4 The teacher organizes tutorials on each book with the group of three readers who have read it. 5 The syndicates meet and members recount their reading experiences to others in the group. (adapted from Parrott 1987: 412-14)" (221)

Instead of organizing a tutorial with three readers of each book, the teacher is present during the group discussions and activities done in class, always available for help and guidance. Moreover, there should be the possibility to engage in a counseling session with the teacher outside of the regular lessons in order to prepare the presentations that have to be done by each syndicate. Step 5, the meeting of the syndicates takes place in the while-reading lesson as well as in various situations during the post-reading part. Concerning the usefulness of, but also the effort necessary for such a reading project, Hedge states that "Clearly the logistics of this procedure require careful management, but reading syndicates usefully combine the motivation of self-chosen books, genuine classroom interaction among changing groups of learners, and potential student recommendation of books to their peers." (221).

Hedge can also be agreed upon the notion that self-chosen books motivate students so that genuine spoken interaction in the target language is possible. Whereas fluency training in class mostly depends on artificial speaking situations prompted by course books, when talking about a book that is of genuine interest for the students, their willingness and engagement in spoken interaction with their peers is likely to increase.

Concerning the book reports written by the students as an obligatory task of the reading logs, the corrected texts should be distributed among the whole class as possible recommendations and motivation to read another LGBT-book in one's free time.

With regard to the initial teaching aim of deconstructing heteronormativity and stereotypes about LGBTQ-people, the three debriefing lessons after the presentations (prompt: e.g. Appendix p.37) might be most profitable and useful. First, the *Genderbread Person* handout (Appendix p.107ff) is dealt with in form of a group activity followed by a guided debriefing. Next, students connect their newly learnt insights from this handout with the characters of

the novels they have read. In the second part of the lesson, the topic attraction is introduced and students also receive a handout with various reflection tasks. The final lesson of this project is dedicated to a so-called *Pyramid Discussion* (Appendix p.106), a speaking activity in which statements about LGBT-themes appearing in the novels have to be ranked according to agreement. The aforementioned handouts will be explained in greater detail in section 10.3..

As a final comment on the project procedure, it has to be said that depending on the students' level, as well as the number of distractions that possibly disturb one's teaching plan, an additional debriefing lesson could be necessary. Moreover, the whole project has the potential to be extended to a greater venture, as for example a school-wide presentation of the project's outcomes on a special day like open house, or a LGBTQ-awareness week in which the reading syndicates do workshops with other students. Also the creation of posters or the founding of a kind of Gay-Straight-Alliance is possible according to students' wishes and ideas.

9.2.) The Reading Logs

The reading logs are each student's personal guidance and tutorial accompanying their reading; they are similar to a portfolio. One of their greatest advantages is that they enable a deeply personal access to the novels and steer the reader's thoughts in the 'right' direction. Various forms of expression are required also including the use of new media, as students are often asked to research a song, a painting, or any other kind of background knowledge on the internet and include print-outs of the findings in the reading log. Moreover, the writing tasks comprise the production of various text types, such as a diary entry, a descriptive characterization, or a letter. All of them can be unhurriedly done at home suitable to students' individual work pace. In the end, a fondly designed piece of art should have been created.

The activities prompted in the reading logs are partly based on the ideas and suggestions found in Greenwood's resource book *Class Readers*, in the method guide *Kreative Methoden für den Literaturunterricht in den Klassen 7-12* by Thaler, and in lecture materials from a seminar at the University of Vienna, held by Mag.Holzmann.

9.2.1.) Assessment

The complete assessment scale along with some explanations can be found on the first page of each reading log. Nevertheless, the following section is dedicated to adding some details and justifying the procedure. First of all, in connection to the project's nature and aim, it is essential that students are able to freely express and share their thoughts. Unfortunately, weaker students often do not dare to express themselves openly, because they lack sufficient command of the language and fear bad marks. Therefore, apart from the writing tasks, only content, coverage, and effort put into the reading logs are assessed. Through that, all students are encouraged to also take risks in expressing themselves in the target language, which also provides opportunities for genuine learning processes concerning the language itself. Students who fear bad marks are likely to only use structures and vocabulary of which they are totally sure to be correct and appropriate, but this also hinders honest and concise expression of one's thoughts and through that, the success of the reading project as such. Still, spelling and grammar mistakes should be at least marked in some way, even if they do not influence the grade.

However, the texts for *Write What Wasn't Written*, the characterization, the letters for *Dear Agony Aunt, ...!* and the book report are graded in the same way as the other texts produced for class. A conventional assessment scale was chosen for this purpose in which a student can gain a maximum of ten points for each parameter: task achievement, organization and layout, lexical and structural range, and lexical and structural accuracy.

For all other tasks it is possible to gain five points each, the maximum of points for the eighteen obligatory questions is three each. Students can gain bonus points for answering more than eighteen questions, which would probably never happen without the prospect of an incentive. Each reading log contains far more than eighteen questions because they are partially quite personal and no student should feel coerced to share something that makes them feel uncomfortable. Moreover, the relative freedom of choice students are given in this project in a way resembles the tolerance, acceptance, and freedom of choice that is at core of the teaching aim.

For the group activities in the post-reading part and the presentations, collective grades are given to the reading syndicate as a whole, but these are nevertheless also counted among the individual grades. Through that, students should feel motivated to engage meaningfully

with the team and build a genuine cooperative network. However, to keep the collective grading as fair as possible, the teacher should monitor the reading syndicate groups carefully and remind them to work together instead of against each other, if necessary. The presentation, which will also be held by each group as a whole, is marked with regards to content, presentation skills, and materials. The latter concerning the use of PowerPoint or other media support, as well as the production of poster, handouts, and interactive presentation elements. Here, five points for each parameter can be gained.

All in all, due to its length and relatively high expenditure of time, the overall grade for the reading log can be of equal importance as a test's grade or it can account for the larger part of the participation grade.

9.2.2.) The Individual Tasks

Apart from the comprehension questions, the Readings Logs also contain six longer tasks which have to be done individually, five of them being text writing prompts. Students in year six or seven are expected to be familiar with the required task types. However, additional revision might be useful depending on students' demands.

To begin with, the idea for Activity 5 *Write what was not written!* is taken from Class Readers by Jeaneither focuses on references to written texts found in the novels, or cues for texts that could appear in the novels are given when there were not any references found. To provide an example, quite at the beginning of the novel *Will Grayson*, *Will Grayson* a letter to the school newspaper written by Will Grayson in order to defend his friend's Tiny's right to use the male locker room even though he is gay is mentioned, but the letter itself is not included, so the students have to write it themselves. In the case of the book *Every Day*, where no references to written texts outside the novel can be found, students are, for instance, asked to write a love letter from protagonist A to his beloved Rhiannon.

Next, students have to write a diary entry from the perspective of a character whom they are free to choose. Some suggestions are given but it is also acceptable if students select a scene that is meaningful to them. In order to follow the aim of deconstructing heteronormativity, not all of these suggestions point at a scene of interest for LGBTQ-people, but also on other crucial scenes of the novels, such as the thoughts of Sophie of *Far From You* right after her car accident when she has to come to terms with chronic pain and

being handicapped. The aim of this task is to foster a deeper empathic understanding of literary characters and to create a space to grapple with their inner conflicts, which might indeed be related to LGBT-issues.

The seventh task addresses characterization in the conventional sense as it asks students to choose one character and write either a direct characterization, or an indirect characterization adopting the point of view of another character. The third option is to create a mind-map of one person's character traits and justify each item with quotations of the novel that are telling of the respective characteristic. Even though this option does not require the production of a coherent text, it might still be fairly demanding and is aimed at students who truly enjoy both creativity in task fulfillment and close engagement with literature.

Lastly, students also have to create a mind-map of all the novel's characters and their relations to each other as an obligatory task that should be done during the reading process. This primarily serves as an aid to keep an overview and facilitate discussions.

Activity eight, *The Message*, does not require the production of a full coherent text, but it can be seen as the core of the reading log nonetheless. Here, students have to genuinely reflect on the novel as a whole and its broader didactic meaning. The prompt reads as following: "Think about the message of the book, what the author intended to tell the readers. Take notes and be prepared to discuss this question in your groups and with the whole class!" (e.g.: Appendix p.34). That is to say, students are asked to think about the meaning of the story, what they can take away from it and how what the novel has taught them can be integrated in real life. It is predictable that not all answers to this question are satisfactory for the broader teaching aim of deconstructing heteronormativity and LGBT-related stereotypes, some might not even have a single thing to do with LGBT-issues. Still, these contributions are to be seen as equally valuable as they could show a sign of non-heteronormativity in that a student did not care about a character's sexual orientation to such an extent that this is believed to be the message of the novel. This case is, in effect, the goal of the whole teaching endeavor: to reach a certain state in which students do not feel disturbed by LGBTQ-characters in their readings and regard their sexual orientation as 'normal' to such an extent as that it is not worth special notification. However, the task as a

whole is likely to provide fruitful ground for discussion and has the potential to be the most informative activity of the whole reading project.

For activity nine students have to do a cooperative task requiring the production of two letters. For the first one, students have to occupy the role of one of the novel's characters and write a letter to the 'Agony Aunt' concerning an important issue that arose in the story. This text type is already used in lower secondary, so it should be familiar to the students. For the second part of the task, the letters are exchanged among the members of a reading syndicate group. Then, each student has to play the role of the 'Agony Aunt' and write a suitable answer. The advantage of this task's two-part structure is that students do not tackle the problem they have chosen themselves, but need to look into a maybe completely different situation. This creates a possibility for genuine deconstruction of heteronormativity and LGBT-related stereotypes. For example, if one letter to the Agony Aunt contains the struggle of Ari from *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe* to stay friends with Dante after Dante's coming out, an elaborate answer could be to advise him not to be repelled by Dante's sexual orientation because this does in no way change who is, etc.. It allows students to think about and express their opinion concerning such problems from an objective and distant standpoint. After all, they have to occupy a role, which also means that they do not have to fear judgment because even if their own opinion is expressed it is still masked by the role of the Agony Aunt. What is more, taking up the role of an responsible adult who is asked for advice requires a certain degree of reassessment of one's individual opinion, students are meant to feel the need to present only thoughts also an official or authority would express in public. However, similar to all other tasks, it is possible that students abstain from dealing with an LGBT-theme at all and focus on a different matter, which is a natural condition of a non-heteronormatively designed LGBT-project.

The last individual task is the production of a traditional book report that serves as recommendation for the other reading syndicates. The texts are distributed in class during or after the presentations as a substitute for a handout. Again, students should already be familiar with the text type, but are nevertheless reminded of what the report should include. It is also pointed out in the prompt that not too much information on the plot should be given away in order to uphold suspense for other readers. It is unlikely that all students of

one group have a similar opinion of the novel, therefore all book reports should be handed out so that the students receive diverse evaluations.

9.2.3.) The Group Tasks

In their Reading Logs, bullet point 11, students find four different post-reading tasks which are group work activities. The first task *Act it out!* is the most complex one that demands the highest level of creativity as it asks the students to rewrite a scene of their novels and turn it into a screenplay, which is then used for a dramatic presentation of the respective scene. It is not obligatory and it is specifically designed for those students who love to engage in theater play and genuinely enjoy creating stage adaptations. It might not be regarded as the most popular task, but those who like doing activities of these kind will certainly profit from it. The selection of a suitable and meaningful scene can be aided by the teacher.

The second task is a shorter characterization activity, very suitable to fill time or work on when finished first with other tasks. Here, the protagonists' names are written horizontally and for each letter a characteristic or a short descriptive phrase starting with or containing this letter has to be found. If time allows, colorful posters or artfully designed entries for the reading logs can be created out of the results.

Task c) the *Character Poster* or *Wanted Poster* also requires artistic skills. For readers of *Every Day* and *Brooklyn, Burning* this task is obligatory because of the expected interesting results. Readers of *Brooklyn, Burning* have to draw the couple Scout and Kid, whose gender is actually not revealed throughout the story. If the students do not enjoy drawing or fear they would lack the skills, it is also possible to hand them catalogues and glossy magazines to create a collage out of. However, the results are likely to provide a basis for discussion, as it is exciting to see whether students draw a conventional boy and girl couple or diverge from this heteronormative conditioning. Concerning the novel *Every Day*, readers each have to draw an individual sketch of the main character A, who can actually not be drawn accurately because he changes appearance every day. However, the differences of the individual drawings are to be discussed so that various conceptions of this character can be compared.

The last group work activity *Zodiac Signs* (Appendix p.38) asks students to assign a sign of the zodiac from the list in their reading logs to the main characters of their novels. It is a fairly communicative task because students have to negotiate various character traits. It has

to be said that the list of zodiac sign descriptions is taken from *Class Readers* by Greenwood and thus, cannot claim absolute correctness. It might as well be replaced by descriptions from another source. This task can also be done as a time filler when the longer and more complex tasks are already done.

All in all, one full lesson of the reading project shall be dedicated to the group activities. If students are not able to finish their tasks during the lesson, they best complete them at home or during the breaks. The results of these tasks are not compared in plenary discussion, but should be included in the presentation each reading syndicate group has to hold.

9.2.3.1.) The Presentations

To secure learning outcomes and make insights of each reading available to the whole class, each reading syndicate has to hold a presentation to complete the project. One lesson is dedicated to each group, the presentations are meant to last for about twenty to thirty minutes. The rest of the lesson is filled with plenary discussions guided by the presentation group and, if necessary, the teacher. Apart from bibliographical data and a plot synopsis, the main part of each talk should center around the characters, especially the LGBTQ ones. In addition to that, selected findings of the reading logs, such as remarkable comprehension questions and outcomes of the individual and group tasks are to be presented. All students who are not presenting receive copies of the book reports created by the presenter group as well as an evaluation sheet (Appendix p.102), on which the basic facts of the novel along with evaluative comments concerning the presenters are noted. It is important to emphasize the value of this handout with regards to the *Pyramid Discussion* (Appendix p.106) that will follow in the final lesson of the project.

Regarding the style of the presentation, it does not have to be too formal and should be rather designed as an interactive talk aimed at the students who have not read the respective book. Moreover, it is useful to provide the opportunity to meet the teacher outside class prior to the presentations in order to discuss the presentation's content and material. These meetings can take place during the breaks or in the afternoon on a voluntary basis. If the meeting is not administered, the teacher should at least have a close look at the material before the presentation and provide input for improvement. In order to assure the

audience's attention, the *Basic Facts* (Appendix p.102) handouts can be collected and marked afterwards.

9.2.4.) Comprehension Questions concerning LGBT-topics

First of all, by far not all comprehension questions in the reading logs are about LGBT-topics. Quite the contrary, most questions focus on the development of the characters and their relations with each other, on the progress of the story, and on background knowledge. LGBT-related questions are casually interspersed similar to the design of the whole project and the necessity that when combating heteronormativity, LGBT-related content should never be over-emphasized or expounded to such an extent that it would make LGBTQ nonnormative again. Nevertheless, some examples of LGBT-related questions and their value in contributing to the deconstruction of heteronormativity are outlined in this section. To begin with the material package for *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, students are for instance asked: "Chapter 30: 28) Why is Dante so afraid that he and Ari would not be friends when he returns to El Paso? 29) How might Ari think about that matter?" (Appendix p.30). These two questions touch to issue of friendship between gay and heterosexual people of the same gender, which is often perceived as problematic especially by heterosexuals. It has to be said that at this point of the novel the reader does not know that Ari will also come out as homosexual. Most LGBT-related questions in this Reading Log contain the development of the relationship between Ari and Dante, as well as the personal development of the characters. In order to treat all sexual orientations as normative, the reading log also contains the following question considering the possibility of a heterosexual relationship between Ari and Ileana, a girl from his school: "How do you think did Ari feel after he had found out about Ileana? Do you think their story will continue in any way?". Through this question, the possibility of heterosexuality is not neglected. If all instances of heterosexuality were ignored, a dichotomy between heterosexual and non-heterosexual would be created. For that reason, all side plots and heterosexual relationships appearing in the novels receive equal consideration.

LGBT-related questions in the reading log for *Far From You* also address, among other topics, heterosexual people's reaction to LGBTQ-people and especially bisexuality, as it can be seen from the following question: "Chapter 29: 16.) Would Kyle be more or less or in the same way angry if Mina had betrayed him with a boy?" (Appendix p.77). This example also calls a

common stereotype into question, which implies that, from a male perspective, being betrayed by one's wife or girlfriend with another female person cannot be counted as betrayal, which again entails a devaluation of sexuality between women. Another question concerns the limits Christian upbringing can set on LGBTQ-people's personal development: "17.) Which beliefs must have Mina been raised with so that she felt ashamed for who she was?" (Appendix p.77). When answering these questions, students have to look into the details of Christian faith and how certain interpretations of it hinder a healthy development of LGBTQ-individuals.

Questions concerning the various instances of LGBT-reality are also present in the Reading Log for *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*. To provide an example, the question: "Do you think it is obvious that will does *not* fall in love with Maura, who is actually Isaac, instead?" (Appendix p.93) reflects upon the notion that being homosexual is not a choice and that gay people cannot simply stop being attracted by the same gender in favor of a person of the opposite gender. In the novel the girl Maura is secretly in love with homosexual will (whose name is always written in lowercase letters) and pretends to be Isaac in an online chat. will falls in love with this Isaac and must realize later that the boy had always been his schoolmate Maura. Another question in this reading log addresses homophobic bullying and unintentional homophobia in language as it asks: "Why does Alton call will a "faggot"? What does the term mean? Have you ever heard a similar insult in your first language?" (Appendix p.94).

Lastly, also the reading log for *Every Day* contains a LGBT-related question worth particular notification. With regards to the chapter in which protagonist A inhabits the body of a gay teen visiting a gay pride parade, students are asked: "Is there a gay pride event where you live? If yes, have you ever taken part? Share your experience! If not, look up when, where and why these events are usually held." (Appendix p.60) This question is a perfect example of how to position students as either LGBTQ themselves or a supportive ally, because it acts on the assumption that it is perfectly normal and acceptable for an average upper secondary student to take part in a gay pride event, be it because they belong to the community or just because they are allies and interested in such an event.

Whereas there are more questions to be found in the reading logs which either directly address LGBT-themes or indirectly hint at them, the ones presented in this section are

probably the most significant ones in terms of the broader teaching aim of combating heteronormativity. When peer discussions about the reading log appear rather flat or confused, these are also the questions the teacher should point at to stimulate the conversations.

9.3.) Post-Reading Activities and Handouts

All handouts can be found in the Appendix from p.102 to p.109. The *Basic Facts* handout (Appendix p.102) as well as the two *Overview* pages (Appendix p.104f) do not belong to the post-reading phase. The first one serves as an aid for the audience of the presentations to note the basic bibliographic facts, some details from the novel, and evaluative comments concerning the presenters. The latter provides the introduction to the whole project, it is the first handout students receive prior to selecting their reading. The other three handouts, namely *The Genderbread Person* (Appendix p.107ff), *Attraction* (Appendix p.103), and *Pyramid Discussion* (Appendix p.106) compose the post-reading phase that starts after the presentation, that is, at the approximately 10th or 11th lesson.

To begin with *The Genderbread Person*, the design of the handout relies heavily on Sam Killermann's ideas and illustrations which were published in his book *The Social Justice Advocate's Handbook: A Guide to Gender* in 2013. Whereas Sam Killermann is not an academic writer, which reflects in his writing style and general structure of the book alongside the numerous illustrations, he labels himself as a social-justice comedian. Killermann is a heterosexual man from Austin, Texas who travels around the USA performing comedy shows to educate people on various matters concerning gender and sexual orientation. Through his humor, jokes, and entertaining illustrations, the *Guide to Gender* provides a summary of the queer theoretical perspective on gender and sexuality that is easily accessible for young adults and non-academics in general. Therefore, the whole handbook can be recommended to students who want to know more about gender, privilege, and also oppression. The graphical representation of *The Genderbread Person* and the graphics for the scales and descriptors are taken from Killermann's book, as well as the basic idea for the *Attraction* worksheet (Appendix p.103) .

The Genderbread Person handout students consists of an illustration closely resembling a gingerbread figure with little arrows pointing at its heart, brain, genitals, and outward appearance. The first activity asks students to connect these body parts with four

parameters: gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation. This is meant to show that more body parts than only the genitals are involved in one's gender, and that the parameters responsible for someone's gender are independent of each other. As a second step, students have to assign descriptors to the various instances of gender; e.g.: "Biological Sex" and "... refers to the objectively measureable organs, hormones, and chromosomes you possess" (Killermann 64 / Appendix p.108) belong together. It has to be noted that these descriptors are taken from Killermann's second version of *The Genderbread Person*. The first model showed male and female as two opposite poles on one scale, which implies that being more female automatically also means being less male. Killermann (70) refers to this as creating and reinforcing "a fallacy central to gender misunderstanding: to be more of one, you need to be less of the other. That's incorrect. You can have both" and further states that "[i]dentifying with aspects of femininity doesn't make you less masculine; it makes you more feminine. To understand gender, and in turn create a safer space for people of all genders, we need to realize that feminine and masculine aren't in a tug of war - they're in separate areas altogether". In order to spare students even more confusion, only the descriptors from the second version are used. This subtle but groundbreaking difference is important not only for people who do not confine to one gender, but also for so-called cis-gendered persons, that are people who generally feel content with the gender assigned to them at birth. As one developmental task of adolescence is coming to terms with one's gender role, many boys identifying with conventionally female attributes, such as being sensitive and kind or interested fashionable clothes, are perceived and also bullied by their peers as not manly enough or even gay. The same applies to girls who rather enjoy ballgames than make-up, to only name one example of behavior that diverges from conventional gender perceptions. Showing students that there is a significant difference between one's biological sex, gender, and how this gender is expressed by each person, has the potential to open their minds and spark more tolerance towards people in general, regardless of their sex, gender identity, or outward appearance.

To come back to *The Genderbread Person* worksheet, the third task on this handout establishes ties to the novels again, as students are asked to go together in their reading syndicates again and mark the scales concerning gender expression, gender identity, etc. according to the personality of their novel's protagonist(s). Whereas it would certainly be interesting to individually fill out the *Genderbread Person* according to their own personality,

this would demand a degree of openness and honesty among the students that is unlikely to be established with such a diverse group of adolescents. Moreover, it would probably force students to come out or reveal other sensitive details of their identity. Taking such steps should definitely stay an individual decision regardless of the project's success.

After working on the tasks of *The Genderbread Person* handout and thoroughly discussing and debriefing it, students receive the *Attraction* worksheet (Appendix p.103) which again consists of three tasks. Questions concerning attraction in general could already occur when assigning two descriptive scales to *The Genderbread Person's* parameter of sexual orientation. Killermann, in line with a modern, queer theoretical gender conception, differentiates between romantic and sexual attraction. It is, for instance, possible that a bisexual person feels sexually attracted by both men and women but is more likely to fall in love and develop close emotional bounds with women. However, to clarify what attraction means in its core, the *Attraction* worksheet was designed. Firstly, students have to list character traits, attitudes, and behaviors they generally like or feel drawn to. Secondly, they are asked to categorize their findings into male and female, that is to say, they should find out which of the things they noted in the first part apply more to women or more to men. The bottom line is that this task should actually not be feasible, as it is unlikely that certain characteristic qualities are appreciated in only men or women. Therefore, the third task of the handout asks to reflect upon which of the two tasks was easier, whether there are some elements that fit into both categories, and if the list would be different if they were a person of another gender for one day. In the end, students are meant to understand that attraction is not essentially tied to gender, or, as Sam Killermann (103) outlines, that "[s]exual orientation and gender aren't dependent on one another like that. If you suddenly became a different gender, you would still be attracted to the same type of people, or you would no longer be you". In the end, gender and biological sex are just two elements of many when it comes to attraction; no (heterosexual) person loves another (heterosexual) person only due to their sexuality and gender; quite the contrary, people love each other for certain character traits, attitudes, and behaviors, and this does not change for LGBTQ-people either.

Finally, the whole project is completed by a *Pyramid Discussion* (Appendix p.106). First, students receive the handout with a list of five rather controversial statements which they should read through and form an opinion on. Then, they go together with a partner or the

desk buddy and discuss the statements in order to rank them according to agreement. The procedure is repeated in the next steps, only the number of people discussing the statements doubles with each round. In the last round, eight students try to find a consensus concerning the most and least agreeable statement. This activity is done at the end of the whole project because by then, students are expected to know the intricacies of heteronormative practices as well as the content of all novels from the presentations and hence, are prepared to engage meaningfully in such discussions. The statements revolve around some problematic situations of the novels' characters, for instance: "Rhiannon ("Every Day") is slightly homophobic in that she is only affectionate with A when A is in a boy's body" (Appendix p.106). An elaborate opinion on this issue could be that Rhiannon can actually not be called homophobic, because she simply is heterosexual and therefore only attracted by boys. The scenes from the novels foundational to the statements all address problematic, but fairly conventional opinions that are perpetuated in a heteronormative society. Another example is the first statement: "It is understandable that Tiny ("Will Grayson, Will Grayson") was not allowed to use the boys' locker room of his school because the other, straight boys felt uncomfortable. Gay people should be considerate of such situations". This proposition touches the issue of heterosexual people who fear the presence of homosexuals because they are afraid that these people will do something uncomfortable to them. The *Pyramid Discussion* is also useful to detect stereotypes that still exist in the students' minds at this stage of the project and to disclose instances of the gender discussion the class might not have understood correctly. This activity also has the potential to spark further discussions about the treatment of LGBTQ-people in society and what can be done against discrimination and oppression. It generally has to be said that in the last phase of the project, which is less structured and not that closely tied to the readings, everything can spin out of control. Students might want to know more, they could possibly feel an urge to get active. Maybe they react completely overwhelmed and need to be more consciously guided towards an understanding of gender and LGBTQ-sexuality. In any case, it depends on each individual teacher, as well as the schools' leadership and policies, to either expand or lessen the complexity of the whole project.

10.) Conclusion

To conclude the theoretical framework to the classroom materials at hand, it has to be emphasized again that a singular implementation of LGBT-themes in the curriculum is likely to miss the point as there are further intricacies to consider in order to make classroom instruction less heteronormative. Whereas lesbian, gay, bisexual, and even transgender people are more widely represented in popular media today than they were a decade ago, their existence still seems to be ignored by schools and curricula. If LGBT-themes receive consideration in educational settings, most of the time the whole class is assumed to be either heterosexual or homophobic or both. Although a body of research concerning this problem has been established, hardly any practical advice or definite teaching strategies were developed so far, which constitutes the foundational research gap of this paper.

In order to abstain from reinforcing heteronormativity in one's classroom, a teacher is advised to reflect on their daily classroom practices and modify them if necessary. The guidelines concerning LGBT-inclusive language provided by Michael Weinberg and analyzed in section 6.1. of this paper are meant to aid this process, alongside with the details of successful implementation of an LGBT-related reading project given in chapter 5.3.. In summary, LGBT-themes and texts should be carefully positioned in the curriculum, that is, not as a singular, nonnormative event. Moreover, it is important not to position the students as heterosexual and homophobic people who have to learn what it might be like to be homosexual, but rather to assume them to be either LGBTQ themselves or a supportive ally. The texts should also be carefully selected, because there is an abundance of LGBT-novels for young adults on the market that focus primarily on the negative experiences LGBTQ-youth might have and the problems they face. Whereas such novels can also be an interesting source of information, for a reading project aiming at the deconstruction of heteronormativity and negative stereotypes of LGBTQ-people, it is recommendable to use books that provide a thoroughly positive representation of LGBTQ-adolescents and their environments. The novels for this reading project were carefully selected with the aim of representing a diverse picture of LGBTQ-people in mind. That is to say, two novels address gender, as this is a topic inseparable of sexual orientation, and the three other novels depict gay, lesbian, and bisexual characters respectively. Of course, as the representation of LGBTQ-people in popular media currently enjoys an upturn, more and more novels like this will be published which then could also be suitable for educational contexts. Society is moving

fast nowadays, and teachers have to keep up with this pace in order to maintain holding interesting, contemporary and thought-provoking lessons, and to 'pick them up where they are', as it is often a credo among educators.

11.) Personal Statement

Finally, in the last lines of a thesis that has been produced and written out of a desire to make a change, should belong to the author. Therefore, I allow myself to raise my personal voice, just as bell hooks would have done, to emphasize the reasons for this project.

I hold the opinion that we as teachers are much more than transmitters of knowledge set by national curricula; we are educators and guides; we can be milestones on the path of our students' lives when we give them just a little more than what the law requires. When we use themes of interest to adolescents, the learning necessary for the subject, in this case, the English language, effortlessly takes place along the way. So why not teach and prepare them for life while transmitting the subject knowledge? Deconstructing heteronormativity and bringing LGBT-themes into classrooms without departing from the assumption that everybody is heterosexual, has the potential to spark tolerance concerning the love affairs of all students regardless of their sexual orientation. Heteronormativity does not only entail a devaluation and under-representation of same-sex desire, in my opinion it devalues people's ability and also bravery to love. I am shocked that many countries seem to put more effort into the prosecution of love between people of the same sex, than into the abolishment of war, corruption, and injustice. Our ability to love and desire another person is a central quality of human nature. Love opens our hearts to a raw and fairly unreasonable part of ourselves, one that is not always governed by reason. Love also makes us vulnerable, it tears down the protective barriers we have built around our soft cores. Love is the impetus to all things bright and precious. I cannot and will not accept policies of society which value some people's love is more than other's. This is why I want to teach LGBT-themes non-heteronormatively to my future students. I want to show them that love is love, whether between man and woman, or people of the same sex and gender. I also wish to give LGBTQ-students something to hold on to, role-models who represent them, fictional characters they can fully identify with in order to show that they are not outside any norm, because these norms are actually fairly obsolete. With regards to gender, students need to know that

firstly, gender is not what primarily defines a person; and secondly, how somebody outwardly expresses themselves is not necessarily connected to their gender or sexual orientation. I do not want a single girl wearing baggy pants to school getting 'accused of' being a lesbian. I hope that through teaching tolerance for all kinds of love, as well as the details of gender and LGBTQ-identity, all students receive a certain kind of self-affirmation in that they are love- and acceptable the way they are. The experience of being fully accepted regardless of one's confinement to perceived norms and expectations can be a very liberatory moment, especially during puberty and crucial periods of identity-formation. In my opinion, self-acceptance also leads to an increased ability to accept otherness in general. Eventually, this paper shall be concluded by one of the most inspirational quotes by bell hooks, which is perfectly summarizing the urge behind this project:

Urging all of us to open our minds and hearts so that we can know beyond the boundaries of what is acceptable, so that we can think and rethink, so that we can create new visions, I celebrate teaching that enables transgression. A movement against and beyond boundaries. It is that movement which makes education the practice of freedom. (*Transgress* 12)

Bibliography:

Primary Sources:

Brezenoff, Steve. *Brooklyn, Burning*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Lab, 2011.

Green, John, and David Levithan. *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*. 2010. London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2013.

Levithan, David. *Every Day*. New York: Ember, 2012.

Sáenz, Benjamin Alire. *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*. 2012. New York: Simon & Schuster BFYR, 2014.

Sharpe, Tess. *Far From You*. New York: Hyperion, 2014.

Secondary Sources:

Greenwood, Jean. *Class Readers*. 1988. Oxford: Oxford Univ.Press.

Thaler, Engelbert. *Kreative Methoden für den Literaturunterricht in den Klassen 7-12*. 2009. Paderborn: Schöningh.

Curricula:

Lehrpläne der AHS-Oberstufe Allgemeiner Teil. 2000. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen. 19 February 2016
<https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/11668_11668.pdf?4dzgm2>

Lehrplan der AHS-Oberstufe Lebende Fremdsprache (Erste, Zweite). 2004. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Frauen. 19 February 2016
<https://www.bmbf.gv.at/schulen/unterricht/lp/lp_ahs_os_lebende_fs_11854.pdf?4dzgm2>

Works cited:

Allen, Katherine R.. "Opening the Classroom Closet: Sexual Orientation and Self-Disclosure." *Family Relations* 44 (1995): 136 -141.

Blackburn, Mollie V., and Caroline T.Clark. "Becoming Readers of Literature with LGBT Themes: In and Out of Classrooms." *Handbook of Research on Children's and Young Adult Litarature*. Ed. Shelby A. Wolf, Karen Coats, Patricia Enciso, and Christine A. Jenkins. New York: Routledge, 2011. 148-163.

Bull, Kelly Byrne. "Connecting With Texts: Teacher Candidates Reading Young Adult Literature." *Theory Into Practice* 50 (2011): 223-230.

- Bushman, John H.. *Using Young Adult Literature in the English Classroom*. 3rd ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2001.
- Clark, Caroline T., and Mollie V. Blackburn. "Reading LGBT-Themed Literature with Young People: What's Possible?" *The English Journal* 98 (2009): 25-32.
- García, Ana María, and Graciela Slesaransky-Poe. "The Heteronormative Classroom: Questioning and Liberating Practices." *The Teacher Educator* 45 (2010): 244-256.
- Greenbaum, Vicky. "Literature Out of the Closet: Bringing Gay and Lesbian Texts and Subtexts Out in High School English." *English Journal* 93 (1994): 71-74.
- Guasp, April, Gavin Ellison, and Tasha Satara. *The Teachers' Report 2014: Homophobic Bullying in Britain's Schools*. Stonewall. 15 January 2016.
<<http://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/education-resources>>
- Hedge, Tricia. *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford: University Press, 2000.
- hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- hooks, bell. *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Killermann, Samuel. *The Social Justice Advocate's Handbook: A Guide to Gender*. Austin, TX: Impetus Books, 2013.
- Liddicoat, Anthony J.. "Sexual Identity as Linguistic Failure: Trajectories of Interaction in the Heteronormative Language Classroom." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 8 (2009): 191-202.
- Nelson, Cynthia D.. "Queer Inquiry in Language Education." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 5 (2006): 1-9.
- Rainbow Teaching. 1 April 2015. <<http://rainbowteaching.co.uk/index.php/29-2/>>
- Renzi, Laura A., Mark Letcher, and Kristen Miraglia. "Out of the Closet and Into the Open: LGBTQ Young Adult Literature in the Language Arts Classroom." *Teaching Young Adult Literature Today: Insights, Considerations, and Perspectives for the Classroom Teacher*. Ed. Judith A. Hayn and Jeffrey S. Kaplan. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012. 117-133.
- Sanders, April M., and Janelle B. Mathis Ph.D.. "Gay and Lesbian Literature in the Classroom: Can Gay Themes Overcome Heteronormativity?" *Journal of Praxis in Multicultural Education* 7 (2013): 1-18.
- Takaya, Keiichi. *Jerome Bruner: Developing a Sense of the Possible*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2013.
- Weinberg, Michael. "LGBT-Inclusive Language." *English Journal* 98.4 (2009): 50-51.

Appendix:

- Lesson Plans: p. 1
- Reading Diaries: p. 21
- Handouts: p. 102
- German Abstract p. 110
- Acknowledgements p. 111

Lesson Plan 1 [Pre-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: After whatever subject matter of this lesson is completed, the reading project is introduced. That is to say, students receive an overview-sheet on which the novels' blurbs, titles, authors and page numbers are found. From these, they should choose one novel each for which they receive an extract of the first chapter to read until the next lesson. They will then be given the possibility to choose another level if they are not content with their first choice after reading the extract. Should it be possible to have enough copies of the novels themselves at hand, this step can be left out as instead, the novels are distributed directly. However, due to financial reasons it might well be possible that students have to buy a copy themselves.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

- Introduction of the upcoming project.
- Enabling students to make informed choices concerning the novel they want to work on (by providing a long enough time frame and the option to discuss with a peer or neighbor).

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
5 min	Short explanation of the upcoming reading project	T - S	Listening		

1min	Handing out overview-sheets of the different books	T-S		A sheet for each student on which the books' titles, page numbers and blurb are found.	Accelerates the process in which students select a book.
15min	Students reading the overview sheet; option to discuss things with neighbor	S / S-S	Reading / Spoken interaction	Overview-Sheet	
5min	Eliciting and noting students' choices, handing out reading extracts	T-S	Listening, Speaking	Copies of extracts from the novels' first chapters	
5min	Explaining further procedure	T-S	Listening		The extracts are to be read until the next lesson, in which students still have the chance to choose a different novel if they are not content with their first choice

Lesson Plan 2 [Pre-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: In this lesson the process of the whole project is further outlined, students have finally decided on the novel they want to work with and receive their reading logs. In this step, the focus lies on careful management of the teacher to ensure that students know what to do during the following weeks of independent work at home. The time frame to read the novels is four weeks, which could be reduced to three weeks with a class of fairly advanced readers. During this time a weekly discussion session is held in which students discuss the readings with their peers and have the chance to pose questions concerning the content or the task to the teacher.

**These lesson plans are built on the assumption that students at the end of 6th or the beginning of 7th form already know how to write books reports, diary entries and letters to the agony aunt, in short, the text types they have to write to complete their reading logs. If this is not the case, sufficient explanation and training should take place as soon as possible during the lessons of the following week.*

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

The main objective of this lesson is to acquaint students with the task pack they will have to work on during the following weeks. In the pre-reading group discussion students are encouraged to orient themselves to the content, express attitudes about the themes and topics of the novels and activate existing background knowledge.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
		on			

		format			
2 min	Greeting students, checking attendance, etc. ...	T - S			
5min	Eliciting students' novel-choices, noting potential changes	T-S		.	
15min	Assigning students to "Reading Syndicates" (groups)	T-S	Listening		Students who decided to read the same book belong to one group; uneven number of group-members acceptable
5-10min	Group discussion - "Why did you choose this novel? What do you expect?"	SS	Spoken interaction	Books (at least one per group)	Afterwards: one student per group reports to whole class
10-15min	Handing out the reading log, explaining tasks, assessment, time frame, etc ..	T-S	Listening	Reading Logs for each student	Important to provide enough time for questions.
5min	Setting reading assignments				4 weeks to read the novel; once a week: group discussions

Lesson Plan 3 [While-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: This lesson is held two to three weeks after the students have received their novels and reading logs. The core of the lesson forms a group work activity for which four of the five groups are distributed to the four corners of a room, whereas the smallest group has to move around in a five minute cycle. During the five minutes of one-to-one or two-to-one student exchanges students are meant to talk about their reading experiences so far, sum up the novels' contents and characters, as well as report about the most interesting reading log tasks. The timeframe ought to be rather loosely stuck to, that is to say, any desire of students to dwell on their novels longer is to be accepted, as it shows their interest - which is indispensable for a project like this.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

The main aim of the lesson is giving students the chance to reflect on their reading progress and exchange their experiences with their peers. Moreover, the ability to summarize information is trained, as well as fluency in spoken interaction.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
2min	Greeting students, checking attendance, etc ...	T - S			
5min	Explaining the group task	T-S	Listening		Each group moves to one

					corner of the room, the smallest group is moving around.
20-25min	Group discussion with changing groups	S-S / T-S	Spoken interaction	Clock: groups switch every five minutes	One-to-one or two-to-one exchange between students of different groups about the novels (content, themes, characters, etc ...)
At least 5min	Debriefing	T-S	Spoken interaction		
2min	Clarifying any organizational matters	T-S			

Lesson Plan 4 [Post-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: This lesson initiates the post-reading phase. The whole lesson is dedicated to the discussion of the comprehension questions and individual tasks students had to work on in their reading logs. For this purpose students again move to their reading syndicate group and review their works. During this process, the teacher moves from desk to desk to join the discussions for a considerable amount of time (5 to 10 minutes at least) and to take a first look at the reading logs. The teacher's participation should be sparked by true interest and sympathy rather than by a will to control and assess. Cleverly set, provocative questions may aid the discovery learning process of the students.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

This lesson's primary objective is to finally lead students to the moment of discovery or realization of the true gist or message of their novels and to lay the foundation for the following extensive post-reading phase.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
2min	Greeting students, checking attendance, etc. ...	T - S			
5m	Outlining the course of the	T			In the reading syndicate

	lesson				groups students will discuss their finished reading logs and take notes about striking differences.
30 - 40min	Group discussions with interference of teacher	S-S / T-S	Spoken Interaction	Reading logs, novels	Teacher sits with each group for some minutes to look at reading logs and take part in discussions
5min	Explaining tasks for following lesson --> group tasks from reading logs	T			Students should be prepared to do one of the longer group tasks in the next lesson.

Lesson Plan 5 [Post-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: The lesson is dedicated to the group work activities assigned in the reading logs. Students can choose from four tasks of which one to two should be manageable in the given timeframe of 30 to 40 minutes. For those groups which decide to do the more creative tasks, paper, pens, glue and any other material should be provided. At the end of the lesson any questions concerning the upcoming presentation sessions are clarified.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

The aim of the activities in the reading log is to develop a deepened understanding of the novels' protagonists (Name Dropping, Character Poster, Zodiac Signs) or especially important key scenes (Act it out!).

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
2min	Greeting the students, checking attendance, etc. ...	T - S			
5min	Outlining the course of the lesson	T			Group tasks as stated in the reading logs
30-40min	Group activities	S-S	Spoken	Reading Logs, novels;	Depending on task and

			Interaction / Writing	flipcharts/posters, old fashion magazines, pens, glue, etc ...	tempo, students will finish one to two of the activities
5-10 min	Reminding students of presentations, assigning dates for each	T-S	Listening, Speaking		
5min	Room for questions	T / S	Listening, Speaking		

Lesson Plan 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 [Post-Reading; Presentations]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: The following five lessons contain the presentations of each book held by the reading syndicate groups. The presentations should be fairly interactive with the presentation group standing in front of the classroom and leading the discussion afterwards. The non-presenting students have to fill out a provided form concerning the novel's protagonists, themes, etc. .. As each novel has a fairly distinct teaching goal or message it should bring across to the students additional comments or questions by the teacher might be necessary. Another option would be a counseling session for each group with the teacher prior to the presentation in the afternoon or whenever time allows aside the regular lessons. In any way, some amount of time should be spent on the question "What is the novel's message?" which is found in the reading log and should have been worked on individually while/ post reading.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

The aim of the presentations is that all students finally come to a concise understanding of each novel and profit from the knowledge other students gained from different readings.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interacti on format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
2min	Greeting the students, checking attendance, etc ...	T			

5min	Introducing the presentation group, setting up any necessary materials	T / S / SS		Electronic devices, posters, etc. ...	Sitting arrangement: Presentation Group in front for the whole lesson
30min	Presentation	S	Speaking, Presenting	Selected material students provided for the presentation; "Basic Facts" sheet	Open presentation style: questions, annotations, etc. during the talks possible; non-presenting students should fill out their "Basic Facts"-sheets.
20min	Plenary discussion and debriefing	T-S / S-S	Listening / Speaking		Teacher needs to have learning goal of each novel in mind and fill in what is probably missing from student presentations; question of books "message" in the reading log!
2min	Closing the lesson	T			

Lesson Plan 11 [Post-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: This lesson departs from an initial classification of the novels' themes. At this step, it is important that students either find out themselves or are shown by the teacher that whereas three of all the novels address sexual orientation, two of them indeed address gender as a core subject. The lesson also provides room for an explanation of the abbreviation 'LGBT(Q)' and a short initial discussion about gender and transgenderism. After a concise introduction by the teacher which should be as sensitive and student-centered as possible, students work on 'The Genderbread Person', a worksheet based on ideas by Sam Killermann which aids students in acquiring a contemporary understanding of what the term 'gender' encompasses. The worksheet also contains a task that leads back to the novels and reading syndicate groups, which will most likely have to be postponed to the next lesson.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

This lesson approaches the broader teaching goal of the project, namely becoming acquainted with a modern understanding of gender and sexual orientation.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes

2min	Greeting the students, checking attendance, etc. ...	T - S			
10min	Transition from book-discussions to broader topic: gender and sexual orientation	T / T-S	Listening, Spoken interaction		Possible introduction: "What do all the novels have in common?" - aim at gender/sexual orientation distinction; explanation necessary if not mentioned by students!
10min	Working on the abbreviation LGBT(Q)	T / T-S	Listening, Spoken Interaction, Writing	Board, Reading Logs or any other kind of note-taking device	Explain individual terms, find synonyms, etc ...
5min	Transition to transsexuality & gender in general; introducing the 'Genderbread Person'	T / T-S	Listening	Worksheet: 'The Genderbread Person'	Mention that gender is far more than one's genitals.
2min	Explaining the tasks	T	Listening	Worksheet: 'The Genderbread Person'	Hand out page 1 and 2 first, hand out page 3 only when tasks are completed
10min	Task 1 and 2	S	Reading / Writing	Worksheet 'The Genderbread Person'	
5min	Debriefing of task 1 and 2	T-S / S-S	Speaking	Worksheet 'The	Provide time for questions!

				Genderbread Person'	
5min	Task 3	S	Reading / Writing	Worksheet 'The Genderbread Person'	

Lesson Plan 12 [Post-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: At the beginning of the lesson the teacher explains the scales and descriptors concerning the various elements of the 'Genderbread Person' as well as different forms of attraction. In their reading syndicate groups students then do task 3 of last lesson's worksheet, in which they have to connect what they have just learnt to characters of the book they have been working on. The second part of the lesson is dedicated to the topic attraction. Students are invited to think about characteristics and qualities of other people which they approve of. The second and third task, which consists of reflection questions, are meant to show that attraction is not mandatorily bound to one gender and not necessarily defined by one's own gender.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

The objective of this lesson is to relate newly learnt structures back to the individual readings. Moreover, the 'Attraction' worksheet aims at the development of a non-gendered concept of attraction.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
2min	Greeting the students, checking attendance, etc. ...	T - S			
5-10min	Debriefing of Task 3, further	T / S / T-	Listening, Spoken	Worksheet: 'The	Explain different forms of

	explanation of scales/descriptors	S	interaction	Genderbread Person'	attraction, agenderism, genderqueerness, etc. ...
15min	Group work activity: task 3 of worksheet	S-S	Spoken Interaction, Writing	Worksheet, probably novels	Reading syndicate groups as in the lessons before
5min	Debriefing of task 3	T-S	Listening, Speaking	Worksheet: 'The Genderbread Person'	
3min	Explaining next activity, introducing the topic 'attraction', handing out worksheets	T	Listening	Worksheet: 'Attraction'	
10min	Task 1	S	Writing	Worksheet: 'Attraction'	Set time frame for activity 1 (~10 minutes)
5min	Task 2	S	Reading / Writing	Worksheet: 'Attraction'	
5min	Pair work: reflection task (3)	S-S	Spoken interaction, Writing	Worksheet: 'Attraction'	
1min	Closing the lesson, announcing a continuation in the following lesson	T	Listening		

Lesson Plan 13[Post-Reading]

Class: 2nd term of 6th form / 1st term of 7th form

Level according to CEFR: B1+

Brief rationale: As there will most likely not have been enough time for a thorough debriefing of the 'Attraction' worksheet, this shall be done in the beginning of the lesson in a plenary discussion led by the teacher. Afterwards, the last in-class task of the project is introduced, which is a so-called pyramid discussion. Students receive the worksheet 'Pyramid Discussion' and have to decide by themselves which of the statements they agree or disagree upon. Then an agreement-ranking is developed through group-discussions, first in pairs, then in groups of fours and eights. The time frame of approximately 5 minutes per discussion is set by the teacher. As time will probably again not allow a proper debriefing of the tasks, this may be done in the next lesson. It is generally useful and recommended to provide one lesson to finish the project in which open discussions can be held and any last questions can be answered.

Precise definition of aims and objectives:

The aim of the pyramid discussions, which form the core of the lesson, is fluency training and practicing the structure of arguments. A broader objective is the deconstruction of typical stereotypes of LGBTQ people.

Time Frame	Procedure	Interaction format	Skills / language system	Materials	Notes
2min	Greeting the students, checking attendance, etc. ...	T - S			
10-15min	Debriefing of task (2 and) 3 of the 'Attraction' worksheet	T-S	Listening, Speaking	Handout: 'Attraction'	Aim: understanding how attraction is not directly related to gender
5min	Explaining next task: pyramid discussions	T	Listening	Worksheet: 'Pyramid Discussion'	
5min	Individual work on task	S	Reading	Worksheet: 'Pyramid Discussion'	Each student reads arguments and decides upon (dis)agreement
5min	Pair work	S-S	Spoken interaction, Reading	Worksheet: 'Pyramid Discussion'	In pairs, students decide upon their first ranking
5min	Group work: groups of 4	S-S	Spoken interaction, reading	Worksheet: 'Pyramid Discussion'	Fast change of sitting arrangement: e.g. pairs turn around to form fours
5min	Group work: groups of 8	S-S	Spoken interaction	Worksheet: 'Pyramid Discussion'	Provide time for questions!

2min	Closing the lesson	T	Listening		Debriefing --> most likely to be postponed to next lesson
------	--------------------	---	-----------	--	---

Benjamin Alire Sáenz

Aristotle and Dante discover the Secrets of the Universe

Reading Log

Name:

Class:

1.) Assessment

- For the Vocabulary Log (2), the Collection of Quotes (3) , the Message (9.) and the Character Relations Map (7) you can receive 5 points each for content, coverage and effort. Spelling and grammar will not be marked.
- For each of the 18 obligatory comprehension questions you can receive 3 points for content, coverage and effort. Again, spelling and grammar will not be marked. For each extra question you gain 1 bonus point.
- The texts for Write What Wasn't Written (5), Characterization (7), Dear Agony Aunt, ...! (10) and the Book Report (11) will be graded in the same way you are used to, just like all the other writing assignments for class.
- For the group tasks including the presentation your reading syndicate group will receive a collective grade - so work together and do your best! For each task except for the presentation you can gain up to 5 points. Again, content, coverage and effort counts. For the presentation you can receive 5 points each for content, presentation skills and material.

Task	Points / Grade
Vocabulary Log	/5
Collection of Quotes	/5
Comprehension Questions	/54 + extra points
Character-Relations Map	/5
The Message	/5
Group Tasks:	
Act it out!	/5
Name Dropping	/5
Character Poster	/5
Zodiac Signs	/5
PRESENTATION	/15
Content	/5
Presentation Skills	/5
Material	/5

	Task Achievement	Organization/Layout	Lexical & Structural Range	Lexical & Structural Accuracy	Total
Write What Wasn't Written	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Diary Entry	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Characterization	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Dear Agony Aunt, ...!	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Book Report	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40

2.) Vocabulary Log

Find a creative way to note (and remember) those unfamiliar words of the novel which you had to look up to comprehend the story. Please put any swear words, as well as extremely casual terms in an extra column or mark them else wise.

3.) Collection of Quotes

Here is some space to collect remarkable quotes from the novel.

4.) Comprehension Questions

From this set of 38 comprehension questions you have to answer at least **18**. Try to write a short paragraph per answer! Simple yes/no answers do not count!

Tip: Use page markers before starting the novel to mark the passages the questions belong to!

Part 1

Chapter 1:

1.) Note the basic facts about the story: where and when it is set, Ari's main character traits, details about his family, etc.

Chapter 4:

2.) Who are the two boys named after? Google their names' background and take notes.

3.) Do you know any of the literary works mentioned in this chapter? If not, look them up and note the most important facts.

Chapter 5:

4.) Note the basic facts about Dante, his life, interests, family, etc.

5.) What do you think about the poem by William Carlos Williams? Look up another poem of this author and put it in your Reading Log!

Chapter 7:

6.) "Do you think it is bad - to doubt? - No, I think it's smart." (p. 35)

What is your opinion on this quote? Is it smart to doubt in general? Why/ why not?

Chapter 12:

7.) Reflect on the incident with the shot bird. Do you sympathize more with Dante's or Ari's reaction? Which details about Dante and Ari, and the kind of relationship they have does it reveal? How would you have reacted if you had witnessed those boys shooting the bird?

8.) In how far do you think this incident could be significant for Dante and Ari's future?

Part 2

Chapter 1/2:

9.) What do Ari's illness and his dreams reveal about what is going on in his mind?

Chapter 3:

10.) Look up some basics about Reagan's presidency and take notes.

Chapter 4:

11.) Why do you think Dante does not want to show Ari his sketches?

12.) Why does Ari not want to tell Dante about his dreams?

Chapter 7:

13.) In how far is the picture of the chair a portrait of Ari? Why does he feel that way about himself?

Chapter 9:

14.) Do you have to understand the people you love? is this even always possible?

Chapter 10:

15.) What do you think could have happened to Ari's brother? Think of (a) reason(s) why he could be in prison?

Chapter 12:

16.) p.102: In your opinion, is it a sign of bravery to let others see one's kindness?

17.) Why do you think Ari is afraid of letting his kindness show?

18.) How could the next part of the story continue? Think of some options and take notes!

Part 3:

Chapter 2:

19.) Comment on how Ari is convinced he had not saved Dante's life 'on purpose'. Is this even possible?

Chapter 5:

20.) p.136: What do you think Dante wanted to say to Ari?

Part 4

Chapter 1:

21.) Have you also come in a situation in which you have told the truth and nobody believed you? Share your experiences or thoughts!

Chapter 7:

22.) What do you think about Ari's parents, not just from this chapter, but in general?

Chapter 9:

23.) Look up some information about Sigmund Freud's dream analysis (from your school books, psychology materials, or the internet). Put your findings in your Reading Log.

Chapter 10:

24.) Do a little dream analysis about Ari's dreams yourself. It does not necessarily need to be connected to Freud, but think about Ari's dreams and what they could mean.

Chapter 13:

25.) Look up the paintings mentioned in Dante's letter, print out a copy and put it in your Reading Log

Chapter 19:

26.) In how far is Ari like Dante "on the inside"?

Chapter 29:

27.) How do you think did Ari feel after he had found out about Ileana? Do you think their story will continue in any way?

Chapter 30:

28.) Why is Dante so afraid that he and Ari would not be friends when he returns to El Paso?

29.) How might Ari think about that matter? Write a short reply to Dante's letter.

Part 5Chapter 2:

30.) What does Ari mean when he states that "love" is "something [he] had to carry"? (p.244)

Chapter 8:

31.) Why is Ari mad at Dante after he finds out that Dante told Gina and Suzie about the accident?

Part 6Chapter 3:

32.) Try to predict what Ari might be going to do now.

Chapter 5:

33.) Evaluate Ari's reaction. Do you think it was appropriate? Would you have acted differently?

Chapter 7:

34.) What kind of war is Ari's father referring to at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 10:

35.) What is meant by the last line of this chapter: "They cracked more than his ribs." (p.325)?

Chapter 13:

36.) How do you think Dante's and Ari's friendship can continue at this point?

Chapter 16:

37.) Do you think Ari was too hard on Daniel? How would you have reacted?

Chapter 18:

38.) What do you think about Ari's parents' theory about their son loving Dante in a more-than-just-friends way? Have you thought of this before or while you were reading the novel?

5.) Write what was not written!

Choose one of the following options:

a) Part 2/ Chapter 10: Rewrite or continue Ari's journal (diary) entry. Either put some details to the existing bullet points or continue the entry about Dante and other recent events in Ari's life. (You do not have to keep the bullet-point style then.)

b) Part 3/ Chapter 2: Describe the accident from Dante's perspective.

c) Part 4/ Chapter 9: Write Ari's reply to Dante's letter.

6.) Diary Entry

Choose a character and a particularly interesting scene. Take up the role of the character and write their diary entry about the chosen event.

Suggestions (only a suggestion! Own ideas are appreciated!):

- Part 1 /Chapter 12: Write Dante's diary entry about the incident with the shot bird. Include a description of the scene, as well as Dante's emotions!

7.) Characterization

Write at least one characterization of one of the main characters.

You have several options to choose from:

- a) Write a direct characterization in which you take up the role of an omniscient narrator.

- b) Write an indirect characterization in which you take up the role of another character to describe the character in question.
- c) Give the Evidence: Create a mind-map of the character's traits together with quotations from the text that somehow illustrate this particular character trait.

Obligatory Task:

Character-Relations Map

Create a mind-map in which you put all the characters of the book and how they are related to each other!

8.) The Message

Think about the message of the book, what the authors intended to tell the readers. Take notes and be prepared to discuss this question in your groups and with the whole class.

9.) Dear Agony Aunt, ... !

Choose a scene in which one of the characters struggles with a particular problem. (There should be many scenes like that ...). Take up the role of the character and write a letter to the Agony Aunt.

Then, switch your text with the texts of your group mates, take up the role of the Agony Aunt and write a suitable, empathic answer to one of their letters. (The second letter should be significantly longer.)

10.) Book Report

As your classmates and you have to choose which book to take as a second reader this semester, provide them with an appropriate book report of the novel you have just read.

It should include:

- bibliographical data
- the topic in 1-2 sentences
- plot synopsis (do not give away too much here!)
- personal evaluation and, potentially, a recommendation

11.) Post-Reading Tasks - Group Work Activities

Choose one/two of the following group tasks and work on them in class together with the students who have read the same book like you.

a) Act it out!

Choose a scene from the book (it does not have to be, but it can be a scene from the musical), together with your group, write the screenplay and prepare to act it out in front of the class!

b) Name Dropping

Write out the names of the protagonists vertically, try to find an adjective or adjective phrase describing the character that starts with each letter of their name.

e.g.: Tolerant

i...

n...

y ..

c) Character Poster

In your group, choose one to two characters of the novel and draw a picture of them. You can also do a collage using pictures from glossy magazines.

d) Zodiac Signs

Look at the overview of the zodiac signs and their typical characteristics. Work in your group and try to allocate the signs to the main characters of your novel, justify your choice with scenes from the book!

12.) Presentation

Duration: 20-30 minutes in total (book presentation + showcase outcomes of Reading Log) + discussion

Contents:

- bibliographic data (author, publication date, title, etc....)
- plot synopsis
- characters (briefly describe the most important characters, their struggles, their role in the story, etc. ... This should be the core of your talk.)
- selected outcomes of your Reading Log (e.g.: remarkable comprehension questions, character posters and relation maps, Act it Out!, Name Dropping, Try to use the tasks of your reading log for a creative presentation!)

Instead of a handout, bring copies of the Book Report for all of your classmates.

Optional:

use of Powerpoint or posters; interactive elements (the presentation does not have to be formal, interactive elements to engage the audience are welcome)

After the presentation, your group will stay in front of the classroom to lead the discussion. Prepare questions or statements to discuss for the audience.

TAURUS

Quiet, peace-loving, neat and tidy in appearance, loves to laugh, good entertaining company, cheerful, not faithful in relations with the opposite sex, free with money, often jealous.

CANCER

Soft and tender, a lover of honesty, moves house frequently, easily frightened, lives only for the present, peaceful, rather lazy, careless.

VIRGO

Intelligent and clever in discussion, clever with words, a lover of travel and foreign places, enjoys secrets, can make money easily, dishonest, pretends to know more than he does.

SCORPIO

Brave and confident when in a fight, stubborn, proud of his reputation, likes to talk about himself, can be violent, does not make friends easily.

CAPRICORN

A deep thinker, does not like to talk much, does not like to attract attention, patient and hard-working, enjoys study, worries a lot, can be jealous, does not trust others easily, can be hypocritical.

PISCES

Always sees the best in others, tries to do his best in all things, religious, enjoys conversation, puts the family first, very generous to others, can judge others badly, not very thoughtful, tries to make others like him.

GEMINI

Intelligent and thoughtful, a good talker and communicator, ambitious, a quick learner, curious about everything, a tale-teller, boastful, changeable.

LEO

Faithful, needs to show power, wise, has good judgement, is hard-working, loves money, generous, affectionate, proud, restless, wasteful.

LIBRA

Quiet, does not enjoy quarrelling, pleasant, careful with his appearance, enjoys alcohol, often involved with romance, musical, not very hard-working, cheerful, does not take life very seriously.

SAGITTARIUS

Generous, shy, faithful, loves to be fair, thinks of others as well as himself, fond of children, hates all wickedness, wise, can try too hard to make others like him.

AQUARIUS

Prefers to listen rather than to speak, prepared to wait a long time for results to show, serious in argument, worries about others too much, rather serious in manner, a dreamer, lover of open spaces and freedom.

ARIES

Courageous, a risk-taker, quarrelsome, dislikes authority, likes to talk about himself, wise when making decisions about himself, can be violent, can be deceitful.

NOTE: You may make photocopies of this for classroom use (but please note that copyright law does not normally permit multiple copying of published material).

Steve Brezenoff

'Brooklyn, Burning'

Reading Log

Name:

Class:

1.) Assessment

- For the Vocabulary Log (2), the Collection of Quotes (3) , the Message (9.) and the Character Relations Map (7) you can receive 5 points each for content, coverage and effort. Spelling and grammar will not be marked.
- For each of the 18 obligatory comprehension questions you can receive 3 points for content, coverage and effort. Again, spelling and grammar will not be marked. For each extra question you gain 1 bonus point.
- The texts for Write What Wasn't Written (5), Characterization (7), Dear Agony Aunt, ...! (10) and the Book Report (11) will be graded in the same way you are used to, just like all the other writing assignments for class.
- For the group tasks including the presentation your reading syndicate group will receive a collective grade - so work together and do your best! For each task except for the presentation you can gain up to 5 points. Again, content, coverage and effort counts. For the presentation you can receive 5 points each for content, presentation skills and material.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Points / Grade</u>
Vocabulary Log	/5
Collection of Quotes	/5
Comprehension Questions	/54 + extra points
Character-Relations Map	/5
The Message	/5
Group Tasks:	
Act it out!	/5
Name Dropping	/5
Character Poster	/5
Zodiac Signs	/5
PRESENTATION	/15
Content	/5
Presentation Skills	/5
Material	/5

	Task Achievement	Organization/Layout	Lexical &Structural Range	Lexical & Structural Accuracy	Total
Write What Wasn't Written	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Diary Entry	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Characterization	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Dear Agony Aunt, ...!	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Book Report	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40

2.) Vocabulary Log

Find a creative way to note (and remember) those unfamiliar words of the novel which you had to look up in order to comprehend the story. Feel free to also add interesting words and phrases which are not necessary for the understanding of the plot. Please put any swear words as well as extremely casual terms in an extra column or mark them else wise.

3.) Quotes Collection

Here is some space to collect remarkable quotes from the novel.

4.) Comprehension Questions

From this set of 25 questions you have answer at least **18**. Try to write a short paragraph for each answer, simple yes/no answers do not count!

Tip: Use page markers before starting the novel to mark the passages the questions belong to!

"The Mural"

- 1) Guess the content! Make notes about where the story is set, the protagonists, etc. and make predictions what it could be about.

"Scout"

- 3.) What have you found out by now about the story's content, setting, etc. ...

- 4.) What could have happened to Kid and Scout before they met?

"School's out"

- 5.) Characterize the side characters appearing in this chapter (Fish, Jonny, Konny, ...) as far as you can; what could be their roles in the story?

"The Night of the Fire"

6.) This chapter introduces Felix, who could he have been? What could have been his role in Kid's life and the mysterious story around the warehouse fire?

"Greenpoint Terminal Warehouse"

7.) What could have been the reason for Kid to be thrown out of the family apartment?

"How I ended up on the Street"

8.) On p.55 there is a reference to the "Twin Towers" of New York, what more do you know about these buildings and the tragedy that made them famous?

9.) p.56: What is meant by the phrase "he was shooting up"?

10.) Do you think that alcohol consumption was the only reason for Kid to be kicked out or can you imagine some other reason(s)?

11.) What do you think does Jonny do for a living?

12.) What is Fish talking about on p.68?

13.) Do you think that there was a love story going on between Kid and Felix?

"We go up"

14.) Where could Scout be from? What does Scout hint at when saying "I wanted to know what it was like" (p.83)?

"After being in a Fire"

15.) Do you think Kid started the fire?

"Melody is what counted"

16.) What is a "Jazzmaster"? Look it up on the internet if you do not know the answer!

17.) Do you play a musical instrument yourself? If yes, have you ever experienced a really good jam session? Share you experience!

18.) Do you think Kid has already fallen in love with Scout?

"The end of it"

19.) Why does Fish not allow Kid, Scout or Konny near the bar anymore? Look up some information on the legal situation in America concerning this matter!

"Fish's studio"

20.) Do you think Scout and Kid will ever meet again after the end of summer? Will Scout stay in New York?

"More about the fire"

21.) Did Felix start the fire? What could be reasons for and against this theory?

22.) Why would the businessman want the warehouse to be burnt down?

"What about you"

23.) What could Scout's life have been like before the summer?

"How I found Felix and lost him"

24.) Share your first reaction to the end of this chapter. Have you thought before that Kid might have lost Felix in that way?

"Hurry"

25.) Where could Scout and Kid be? How could the next days, the next months, the next year be for them?

5.) Write what was not written!

Choose one of the following options:

- a) Chapter "Anyone you want to call?": This chapter reveals a few details about Kid's relationship with their parents. What might have been the ultimate cause for the parents to kick their kid out of the house? Write the scene in which they fight and Kid has to leave. Make up any details you need but try to make them fit to the original story.
- b) Chapter "Rot for something": Write a letter of apology from Kid's mother to kid after their reconciliation. Try to imagine her emotions, what she must have thought throughout the previous year, the sorrows she must have suffered from, etc. ...
- c) Write the final police report about the warehouse fire. Sum up all the steps of investigation that have been taken, include the police's talks with Kid and Konny and who the actual arsonist probably is. Invent any details needed but again, stick to the original storyline!
- d) Write an additional chapter to the end of the book that solves all the open questions. Leap a bit forward into Kid's and Scout's future, how their lives could be like after school has started again.

6.) Diary Entry

Choose a character and a particularly interesting scene. Take up the role of the character and write their diary entry about the chosen event.

Suggestions (only suggestions! Own ideas are appreciated!) :

- a) "Rot for something": Kid's mom's diary entry after the day of their reconciliation.
- b) "Saying Goodbye to Felix": Kid's diary entry about how to come to terms with such a situation.

7.) Characterization

Write at least one characterization of one of the main characters.

You have several options to choose from:

- a) Write a direct characterization in which you take up the role of an omniscient narrator.
- b) Write an indirect characterization in which you take up the role of another character (not Kid) to describe the character in question.
- c) Give the evidence: Create a mind-map of the character's traits together with quotations from the text that somehow illustrate this particular character trait.

Obligatory Task:

Character-Relations Map

Create a mind-map in which you put all the characters of the book and how they are related to each other!

8.) The Message

Think about the message of the book, what the author intended to tell the readers. Take notes and be prepared to discuss this question in your groups and with the whole class!

9.) Dear Agony Aunt, ... !

Choose a scene in which one of the characters struggles with a particular problem. (There should be many scenes like that, think of Kid becoming homeless, finding and

losing Felix, getting to know Scout, returning back home, ...). Take up the role of the character and write a letter to the Agony Aunt.

Then, switch your text with the texts of your group mates, take up the role of the Agony Aunt and write a suitable, empathic answer to one of their letters. (The second letter should be significantly longer.)

10.) Book Report

As your classmates and you might want to choose a second reader for this year, provide them with an appropriate book report of the novel you have just read.

It should include:

- bibliographical data
- the topic in 1-2 sentences
- plot synopsis (do not give away too much here!)
- personal evaluation and, potentially, recommendation

Be honest! You will not be graded on whether you liked the book or not.

11.) Post-Reading-Tasks, Group Work Activities

Task C is obligatory!

Apart from that, choose one to two of the following group tasks, and work on them in class together with the students who have read the same book like you.

a) Act it out!

Choose a scene from the book and together with your group, write the screenplay and prepare to act it out in front of the class. You can also think about a suitable soundtrack, scene props, etc. ...

b) Name Dropping

Write out the names of the protagonists vertically, try to find an adjective or adjective phrase describing the character that starts with each letter of their

name.

e.g.: K

I ndependant

D

c) Character Poster

In your group, draw a picture of Scout and Kid. You can also do a collage using pictures from glossy magazines or the internet.

d) Zodiac Signs

Look at the overview of the zodiac signs and their typical characteristics. Work in your group and try to allocate the signs to the main characters of your novel, justify your choice with scenes from the book!

12.) Presentation

Duration: 20-30 minutes in total (book presentation + showcase outcomes of Reading Log) + discussion

Contents:

- bibliographical data (author, publication date, title, etc....)
- plot synopsis
- characters (briefly describe the most important characters, their struggles, their role in the story, etc. ... This should be the core of your talk.)
- selected outcomes of your Reading Log (e.g.: remarkable comprehension questions, character posters and relation maps, Act it Out!, Name Dropping, Try to use the tasks of your reading log for a creative presentation!)

Instead of a handout, bring copies of the Book Report for all of your classmates.

Optional:

- use of Powerpoint or posters; interactive elements (the presentation does not have to be formal, interactive elements to engage the audience are welcome)

After the presentation, your group will stay in front of the classroom to lead the discussion. Prepare questions or statements to discuss for the audience.

TAURUS

Quiet, peace-loving, neat and tidy in appearance, loves to laugh, good entertaining company, cheerful, not faithful in relations with the opposite sex, free with money, often jealous.

CANCER

Soft and tender, a lover of honesty, moves house frequently, easily frightened, lives only for the present, peaceful, rather lazy, careless.

VIRGO

Intelligent and clever in discussion, clever with words, a lover of travel and foreign places, enjoys secrets, can make money easily, dishonest, pretends to know more than he does.

SCORPIO

Brave and confident when in a fight, stubborn, proud of his reputation, likes to talk about himself, can be violent, does not make friends easily.

CAPRICORN

A deep thinker, does not like to talk much, does not like to attract attention, patient and hard-working, enjoys study, worries a lot, can be jealous, does not trust others easily, can be hypocritical.

PISCES

Always sees the best in others, tries to do his best in all things, religious, enjoys conversation, puts the family first, very generous to others, can judge others badly, not very thoughtful, tries to make others like him.

GEMINI

Intelligent and thoughtful, a good talker and communicator, ambitious, a quick learner, curious about everything, a tale-teller, boastful, changeable.

LEO

Faithful, needs to show power, wise, has good judgement, is hard-working, loves money, generous, affectionate, proud, restless, wasteful.

LIBRA

Quiet, does not enjoy quarrelling, pleasant, careful with his appearance, enjoys alcohol, often involved with romance, musical, not very hard-working, cheerful, does not take life very seriously.

SAGITTARIUS

Generous, shy, faithful, loves to be fair, thinks of others as well as himself, fond of children, hates all wickedness, wise, can try too hard to make others like him.

AQUARIUS

Prefers to listen rather than to speak, prepared to wait a long time for results to show, serious in argument, worries about others too much, rather serious in manner, a dreamer, lover of open spaces and freedom.

ARIES

Courageous, a risk-taker, quarrelsome, dislikes authority, likes to talk about himself, wise when making decisions about himself, can be violent, can be deceitful.

NOTE: You may make photocopies of this for classroom use (but please note that copyright law does not normally permit multiple copying of published material).

David Levithan

Every Day

Reading Log

Name:

Class:

1.) Assessment

- For the Vocabulary Log (2), the Collection of Quotes (3) , the Message (9.) and the Character Relations Map (7) you can receive 5 points each for content, coverage and effort. Spelling and grammar will not be marked.
- For each of the 18 obligatory comprehension questions you can receive 3 points for content, coverage and effort. Again, spelling and grammar will not be marked. For each extra question you gain 1 bonus point.
- The texts for Write What Wasn't Written (5), Characterization (7), Dear Agony Aunt, ...! (10) and the Book Report (11) will be graded in the same way you are used to, just like all the other writing assignments for class.
- For the group tasks including the presentation your reading syndicate group will receive a collective grade - so work together and do your best! For each task except for the presentation you can gain up to 5 points. Again, content, coverage and effort counts. For the presentation you can receive 5 points each for content, presentation skills and material.

Task	Points / Grade
Vocabulary Log	/5
Collection of Quotes	/5
Comprehension Questions	/54 + extra points
Character-Relations Map	/5
The Message	/5
Group Tasks:	
Act it out!	/5
Name Dropping	/5
Character Poster	/5
Zodiac Signs	/5
PRESENTATION	/15
Content	/5
Presentation Skills	/5
Material	/5

	Task Achievement	Organization/Layout	Lexical & Structural Range	Lexical & Structural Accuracy	Total
Write What Wasn't Written	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Diary Entry	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Characterization	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Dear Agony Aunt, ...!	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Book Report	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40

2.) Vocabulary Log

Find a creative way to note (and remember) those unfamiliar words of the novel which you had to look up to comprehend the story. Please put any swear words, as well as extremely casual terms in an extra column or mark them else wise.

3.) Collection of Quotes

Here is some space to collect remarkable quotes from the novel.

4.) Comprehension Questions

From this set of 30 questions you have answer at least **18**. Try to write a short paragraph for each answer, simple yes/no answers do not count!

Tip: Use page markers before starting the novel to mark the passages the questions belong to!

Day 5994

- 1) Sum up what you have learnt about the narrator in the first chapter. Predict how the story might continue.

Day 5995

- 2.) Is a typical morning in your family similar to what the narrator has experienced often?

- 3.) Do you think the narrator will get into trouble for the day with Rhiannon spent in her boyfriend's body?

Day 5997:

- 4.) How would you react if a stranger confronted you like that in the hallways?

Day 5998:

5.) Do you think the narrator has done something good to the life of the boy in this chapter? What kind of addict might the body originally belong to?

Day 5999:

6.) Do you know the 'car-song': "If I only could, I'd make a deal with god"? Look up the lyrics and find out whether the rest of the song also fits the story and the narrator's situation.

7.) Which stereotypes of gay people are mentioned in this chapter? What is your opinion on them?

Day 6000:

8.) What do you think about the narrator's opinion on religion? Do you agree or disagree?

9.) Do you agree that all lives have 98% in common? What do the remaining 2% consist of so that they spark most conflicts?

10.) Reflect on the race and gender issue mentioned by the narrator on page 77.

Day 6001:

11.) Is Nathan's destiny the responsibility of the narrator now? What should the narrator do in your opinion?

Day 6002:

12.) If you were in Rhiannon's place how would you react in the bookshop?

Day 6003:

13.) Does A. (=the narrator) want too much too early? Is it fair to talk someone out of their partner like that?

14.) What do you think about A.'s life, do you rather pity or envy A.?

15.) Look up the town Laurel and try to make out where Rhiannon could live.

Day 6005:

16.) Interpret the following quote: "Part of growing up is making sure your sense of reality isn't entirely grounded in your mind;" (p.123). What does it mean to you?

17.) How do you evaluate A.'s actions to save Kelsea's life? Do you think it was the right thing to do?

Day 6006:

18.) Is there a gay pride event where you live? If yes, have you ever taken part? Share your experience! If not, look up when, where and why these events are usually held.

Day 6007:

19.) Do you think A. is exploiting the peculiar situation and takes it too far?

Day 6008:

20.) Do you think A. really is the devil or some kind of demon? Do you believe in the possibility to be possessed by a higher power? Can you recall any other cases of possession in history?

Day 6015:

21.) How will Rhiannon react on the next day and how could this day shape her relationship to A.?

22.) Would you also like to be in the body of a loved one for one day? Why or why not?

Day 6016:

23.) Can you imagine feeling gender-less? Is there a 'core-you' that is not directly related to your gender? (For reference, see p.205)

Day 6017:

24.) Do you think it would have been better if A. had just ignored Nathan?

Day 6023:

25.) On p.259 Rhiannon says: "But shouldn't her life come above yours?"
What is your opinion on that?

26.) What does A. have in common with Vic or other transsexual or genderqueer people?

Day 6026:

27.) Are you surprised by Rhiannon breaking up with A.? Do you see any way to make a relationship possible for them?

Day 6028:

28.) Could Reverend Poole be right? What is your explanation for A.'s life right now?

Day 6033:

29.) Is this a sad or a happy ending? Do you think it will work out for Rhiannon and Alexander?

Day 6034:

30.) What could happen on day 6035? Where might A. be going?

5.) Write what was not written!

Choose one of the following options.

- a) A love letter from A. to Rhiannon at any point in the story (please indicate which point!)
- b) Write an additional chapter from Rhiannon's perspective when she wakes up after day 6033.
- c) Write an additional chapter continuing A.'s story.

6.) Diary Entry

Choose a character and a particularly interesting scene. Take up the role of the character and write their diary entry about the chosen event.

Suggestions (only suggestions! Own ideas are appreciated!):

- a) Day 6002: Rhiannon about this day.
- b) Day 6007: Rhiannon about why she cannot be in a relationship with A.
- c) Day 6005: Kelsea on the following day.

7.) Characterization

Write at least one characterization of one of the main characters (e.g.: Rhiannon, A., Nathan, Justin,...).

You have several options to choose from:

- a) Write a direct characterization in which you take up the role of an omniscient narrator.

- b)** Write an indirect characterization in which you take up the role of another character to describe the character in question.
- c)** Give the evidence: Create a mind-map of the character's traits together with quotations from the text that somehow illustrate this particular character trait.

Obligatory Task:

Character-Relations Map

Create a mind-map in which you put the characters of the book and how they are related with each other! In the case of "Every Day" focus on the characters that show up more than once.

8.) The Message

Think about the message of the book, what the author intended to tell the readers. Take notes and be prepared to discuss this question in your groups and with the whole class!

9.) Dear Agony Aunt, ... !

Choose a scene in which one of the characters struggles with a particular problem. (There should be many scenes like that, think of Nathan, Rhiannon or any of the other characters) Take up the role of the character and write a letter to the Agony Aunt.

Then, switch your text with the texts of your group mates, take up the role of the Agony Aunt and write a suitable, empathic answer to one of their letters. (This second letter should be significantly longer.)

10.) Book Report

As your classmates and you might want to choose a second reader for this year, provide them with an appropriate book report of the novel you have just read.

It should include:

- bibliographical data
- the topic in 1-2 sentences
- plot synopsis (do not give away too much here!)
- personal evaluation and, potentially, recommendation

Be honest! You will not be graded on whether you liked the book or not.

11.) Post-Reading-Tasks, Group Work Activities

Task C is obligatory! Apart from that, choose one to two of the following group tasks, and work on them in class together with the students who have read the same book like you.

a) Act it out!

Choose a scene from the book and together with your group, write the screenplay and prepare to act it out in front of the class. You can also think about a suitable soundtrack, scene props, etc. ...

b) Name Dropping

Write out the names of the protagonists vertically, try to find an adjective or adjective phrase describing the character that starts with each letter of their name.

e.g.: N aive

A

T

H

A

N

c) Character Poster

First, each member of your group sketches A. on their own - just draw the first things that come into your mind when you think of A. Then, show your picture to the other group members. Put all pictures together to one poster and discuss the differences.

d) Zodiac Signs

Look at the overview of the zodiac signs and their typical characteristics. Work in your group and try to allocate the signs to the main characters of your novel, justify your choice with scenes from the book!

12.) Presentation

Duration: 20-30 minutes in total (book presentation + showcase outcomes of Reading Log) + discussion

Contents:

- bibliographical data (author, publication date, title, etc....)
- plot synopsis
- characters (briefly describe the most important characters, their struggles, their role in the story, etc. ... This should be the core of your talk.)
- selected outcomes of your Reading Log (e.g.: remarkable comprehension questions, character posters and relation maps, Act it Out!, Name Dropping, Try to use the tasks of your reading log for a creative presentation!)

Instead of a handout, bring copies of the Book Report for all of your classmates.

Optional:

use of Powerpoint or posters; interactive elements (the presentation does not have to be formal, interactive elements to engage the audience are welcome)

After the presentation, your group will stay in front of the classroom to lead the discussion. Prepare questions or statements to discuss for the audience.

TAURUS

Quiet, peace-loving, neat and tidy in appearance, loves to laugh, good entertaining company, cheerful, not faithful in relations with the opposite sex, free with money, often jealous.

CANCER

Soft and tender, a lover of honesty, moves house frequently, easily frightened, lives only for the present, peaceful, rather lazy, careless.

VIRGO

Intelligent and clever in discussion, clever with words, a lover of travel and foreign places, enjoys secrets, can make money easily, dishonest, pretends to know more than he does.

SCORPIO

Brave and confident when in a fight, stubborn, proud of his reputation, likes to talk about himself, can be violent, does not make friends easily.

CAPRICORN

A deep thinker, does not like to talk much, does not like to attract attention, patient and hard-working, enjoys study, worries a lot, can be jealous, does not trust others easily, can be hypocritical.

PISCES

Always sees the best in others, tries to do his best in all things, religious, enjoys conversation, puts the family first, very generous to others, can judge others badly, not very thoughtful, tries to make others like him.

GEMINI

Intelligent and thoughtful, a good talker and communicator, ambitious, a quick learner, curious about everything, a tale-teller, boastful, changeable.

LEO

Faithful, needs to show power, wise, has good judgement, is hard-working, loves money, generous, affectionate, proud, restless, wasteful.

LIBRA

Quiet, does not enjoy quarrelling, pleasant, careful with his appearance, enjoys alcohol, often involved with romance, musical, not very hard-working, cheerful, does not take life very seriously.

SAGITTARIUS

Generous, shy, faithful, loves to be fair, thinks of others as well as himself, fond of children, hates all wickedness, wise, can try too hard to make others like him.

AQUARIUS

Prefers to listen rather than to speak, prepared to wait a long time for results to show, serious in argument, worries about others too much, rather serious in manner, a dreamer, lover of open spaces and freedom.

ARIES

Courageous, a risk-taker, quarrelsome, dislikes authority, likes to talk about himself, wise when making decisions about himself, can be violent, can be deceitful.

NOTE: You may make photocopies of this for classroom use (but please note that copyright law does not normally permit multiple copying of published material).

Tess Sharpe

Far From You

Reading Log

Name:

Class:

1.) Assessment

- For the Vocabulary Log (2), the Collection of Quotes (3) , the Message (9.) and the Character Relations Map (7) you can receive 5 points each for content, coverage and effort. Spelling and grammar will not be marked.
- For each of the 18 obligatory comprehension questions you can receive 3 points for content, coverage and effort. Again, spelling and grammar will not be marked. For each extra question you gain 1 bonus point.
- The texts for Write What Wasn't Written (5), Characterization (7), Dear Agony Aunt, ...! (10) and the Book Report (11) will be graded in the same way you are used to, just like all the other writing assignments for class.
- For the group tasks including the presentation your reading syndicate group will receive a collective grade - so work together and do your best! For each task except for the presentation you can gain up to 5 points. Again, content, coverage and effort counts. For the presentation you can receive 5 points each for content, presentation skills and material.

Task	Points / Grade
Vocabulary Log	/5
Collection of Quotes	/5
Comprehension Questions	/54 + extra points
Character-Relations Map	/5
The Message	/5
Group Tasks:	
Act it out!	/5
Name Dropping	/5
Character Poster	/5
Zodiac Signs	/5
PRESENTATION	/15
Content	/5
Presentation Skills	/5
Material	/5

	Task Achievement	Organization/Layout	Lexical & Structural Range	Lexical & Structural Accuracy	Total
Write What Wasn't Written	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Diary Entry	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Characterization	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Dear Agony Aunt, ...!	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Book Report	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40

2.) Vocabulary Log

Find a creative way to note (and remember) those unfamiliar words of the novel which you had to look up to comprehend the story. Please put any swear words, as well as extremely casual terms in an extra column or mark them else wise.

3.) Collection of Quotes

Here is some space to collect remarkable quotes from the novel.

4.) Comprehension Questions

From this set of 29 comprehension questions you have to answer at least **18**. Try to write a short paragraph per answer! Simple yes/no answers do not count!

Tip: Use page markers before starting the novel to mark the passages the questions belong to!

Preface:

- 1.) What do we learn about the story in the preface? Make predictions about the plot - guess the novel's content!

Chapter 1:

- 2.) What kind of addiction does Sophie seem to be suffering from? (Tip: The word "Oxy" is mentioned on page 4) Look up more information on the internet if you need to and include your findings in the reading log!

Chapter 2:

- 3.) Do you think Macy will help Sophie?

Chapter 4:

4.) What do you think about Sophie's parents' decision to send their child away to become clean? What do you think about Macy's behavior, could it be effective or is it just cruel?

Chapter 5:

5.) Take notes about the story's setting, it's protagonists, their relationship with each other, etc. ...

Chapter 6:

6.) Does Sophie's mother have acceptable reasons not to believe her daughter?

Chapter 8:

7.) Whom does Trev believe, Sophie or the police and the 'official' version that Sophie and Mina wanted to buy drugs that night at Brooker's Point.

Chapter 16:

8.) In how far does yoga help Sophie? What positive effects does it have on her overall health and her daily life? Look up some information about yoga for traumatized and injured people on the internet and include your findings in the reading log.

Chapter 17:

9.) Will the new therapist Dr. Hughes be more successful in helping Sophie? Why do you/ don't you think so?

Chapter 19:

10.) What could have Kyle and Mina been fighting about?

Chapter 21:

11.) Is it easier for people to cope with loss when they know that whoever died, died fast and free of pain? Why is that?

Chapter 22:

12.) Is Trev in love with Sophie or is it just a way to cope with his guilt? Why do you think is it hard for him to be forgiven?

Chapter 23:

13.) What does Sophie mean when she says: "You want me to play the gimp card?" (p.115)?

Chapter 25:

14.) Did you learn something new about Sophie in this chapter or could you already sense it?

Chapter 27:

15.) Do you think Kyle has committed the murder? Sum up the evidence for and against it in a few sentences and add you personal opinion.

Chapter 29:

16.) Would Kyle be more or less or in the same way angry if Mina had betrayed him with a boy?

17.) Which beliefs must have Mina been raised with so that she felt ashamed for who she was?

Chapter 31:

18.) Do you think Sophie will ever be able to fully forgive her mother?

Chapter 34:

19.) Would have Mina's love really been gone if Sophie had told her the truth about her addiction?

Chapter 38:

20.) What do you think of Mina's behavior, of her trying to set up Sophie with her brother? What might have been her reasons for this move?

Chapter 40:

21.) Is Mina really in love with Sophie? What are her reasons to be afraid and to hide? Do you think that makes her truly happy?

Chapter 46:

22.) Do you think Sophie's opinion about what happens when we die changed after Mina's death? If you want to, you can share your personal beliefs concerning this matter.

Chapter 47:

23.) What is a 'tweaker' (p.232)?

24.) What might happen after the cliffhanger at the end of this chapter? Who is your primary suspect now?

Chapter 51:

25.) Is there really no chance for Sophie and Trev? What is your opinion on their kind of love, would you act differently if you were in Sophie's place?

Chapter 56:

26.) What do you think Mina had in mind when she wanted to talk to Sophie about choices?

Chapter 57:

27.) Have you ever suspected *this person* throughout the story?

Chapter 63:

28.) Sum up all the 'new' information of the last few chapters. Who killed whom and why? Also try to bring the events in a chronological order.

The End:

29.) As the end of the novel is fairly emotional, please just share your thoughts about how it has all come to an end.

5.) Write what was not written!

Choose one of the following options:

- a) Chapter 44: Write Mina's application for the internship at the Beacon newspaper agency. Remember: The assignment is to write a personal statement with the title: "What shaped me" and Mina wrote about her father's death. Take out any details from the chapter and make up your own, do not forget that Mina was only four years old when her father died.
- b) Write the police report of Mina's murder as it had been written before Sophie found out the whole truth. Do not forget to include findings from Detective James' interviews with Sophie and Kyle.
- c) Write an additional chapter either about Sophie's past when Mina was still alive or about Sophie's future in Oregon.

6.) Diary Entry

Choose one character and a particularly interesting scene. Take up the role of the character and write their diary entry about the chosen event.

Suggestions (only suggestions! Own ideas are appreciated!):

- a) Chapter 31: One girl's diary entry after she finds out that the other one has had her first time with a boy. (You could also write two [shorter] entries here, one from Mina and one from Sophie.)
- b) Chapter 63: Mina's thoughts after her last fight with Kyle before she decides to talk to Mina about 'choices'.
- c) Chapter 42: Sophie's thoughts right after the car accident, how she feels about her body now,

7.) Characterization

Write at least one characterization of one of the main characters.

You have several options to choose from:

- a) Write a direct characterization in which you take up the role of an omniscient narrator.
- b) Write an indirect characterization in which you take up the role of another character to describe the character in question.
- c) Give the Evidence: Create a mind-map of the character's traits together with quotations from the text that somehow illustrate this particular character trait.

Obligatory Task:

Character-Relations Map

Create a mind-map in which you put all the characters of the book and how they are related to each other!

8.) The Message

Think about the underlying message of the book, what the author intended to tell the readers. Take notes and be prepared to discuss this question in your groups and with the whole class.

9.) Dear Agony Aunt, ... !

Choose a scene in which one of the characters struggles with a particular problem. (There should be many scenes like that ...). Take up the role of the character and write a letter to the Agony Aunt.

Then, switch your text with the texts of your group mates, take up the role of the Agony Aunt and write a suitable, empathic answer to one of their letters. (The second letter should be significantly longer.)

10.) Book Report

As your classmates and you might want to choose a second reader for this year, provide them with an appropriate book report of the novel you have just read.

It should include:

- bibliographical data
- the topic in 1-2 sentences
- plot synopsis (do not give away too much here!)
- personal evaluation and, potentially, recommendation

Be honest! You will not be graded on whether you liked the book or not.

11.) Post-Reading Tasks, Group Work Activities

Choose one/two of the following group tasks and work on them in class together with the students who have read the same book like you.

e) Act it out!

Choose a scene from the book (it does not have to be, but it can be a scene from the musical), together with your group, write the screenplay and prepare to act it out in front of the class!

f) Name Dropping

Write out the names of the protagonists vertically, try to find an adjective or adjective phrase describing the character that starts with each letter of their name.

e.g.: Mindful
Intelligent
N...
A...

g) Character Poster OR Wanted Poster

In your group, choose one to two characters of the novel and draw a picture of them. You can also do a collage using pictures from glossy magazines.

Option 2: Create a "Wanted-Poster" of Mina's murderer (Think about what is usually written on such posters: photograph or drawing, what they were last seen wearing, where they were last seen, the reason for looking for this person, reward,)

h) Zodiac Signs

Look at the overview of the zodiac signs and their typical characteristics. Work in your group and try to allocate the signs to the main characters of your novel, justify your choice with scenes from the book!

12.) Presentation

Duration: 20-30 minutes in total (book presentation + showcase outcomes of Reading Log) + discussion

Contents:

- bibliographical data (author, publication date, title, etc....)
- plot synopsis
- characters (briefly describe the most important characters, their struggles, their role in the story, etc. ... This should be the core of your talk.)
- selected outcomes of your Reading Log (e.g.: remarkable comprehension questions, character posters and relation maps, Act it Out!, Name Dropping, Try to use the tasks of your reading log for a creative presentation!)

Instead of a handout, bring copies of the Book Report for all of your classmates.

Optional:

use of Powerpoint or posters; interactive elements (the presentation does not have to be formal, interactive elements to engage the audience are welcome)

After the presentation, your group will stay in front of the classroom to lead the discussion. Prepare questions or statements to discuss for the audience.

TAURUS

Quiet, peace-loving, neat and tidy in appearance, loves to laugh, good entertaining company, cheerful, not faithful in relations with the opposite sex, free with money, often jealous.

CANCER

Soft and tender, a lover of honesty, moves house frequently, easily frightened, lives only for the present, peaceful, rather lazy, careless.

VIRGO

Intelligent and clever in discussion, clever with words, a lover of travel and foreign places, enjoys secrets, can make money easily, dishonest, pretends to know more than he does.

SCORPIO

Brave and confident when in a fight, stubborn, proud of his reputation, likes to talk about himself, can be violent, does not make friends easily.

CAPRICORN

A deep thinker, does not like to talk much, does not like to attract attention, patient and hard-working, enjoys study, worries a lot, can be jealous, does not trust others easily, can be hypocritical.

PISCES

Always sees the best in others, tries to do his best in all things, religious, enjoys conversation, puts the family first, very generous to others, can judge others badly, not very thoughtful, tries to make others like him.

GEMINI

Intelligent and thoughtful, a good talker and communicator, ambitious, a quick learner, curious about everything, a tale-teller, boastful, changeable.

LEO

Faithful, needs to show power, wise, has good judgement, is hard-working, loves money, generous, affectionate, proud, restless, wasteful.

LIBRA

Quiet, does not enjoy quarrelling, pleasant, careful with his appearance, enjoys alcohol, often involved with romance, musical, not very hard-working, cheerful, does not take life very seriously.

SAGITTARIUS

Generous, shy, faithful, loves to be fair, thinks of others as well as himself, fond of children, hates all wickedness, wise, can try too hard to make others like him.

AQUARIUS

Prefers to listen rather than to speak, prepared to wait a long time for results to show, serious in argument, worries about others too much, rather serious in manner, a dreamer, lover of open spaces and freedom.

ARIES

Courageous, a risk-taker, quarrelsome, dislikes authority, likes to talk about himself, wise when making decisions about himself, can be violent, can be deceitful.

NOTE: You may make photocopies of this for classroom use (but please note that copyright law does not normally permit multiple copying of published material).

John Green , David Levithan

Will Grayson, Will Grayson

Reading Log

Name:

Class:

1.) Assessment

- For the Vocabulary Log (2), the Collection of Quotes (3) , the Message (9.) and the Character Relations Map (7) you can receive 5 points each for content, coverage and effort. Spelling and grammar will not be marked.
- For each of the 18 obligatory comprehension questions you can receive 3 points for content, coverage and effort. Again, spelling and grammar will not be marked. For each extra question you gain 1 bonus point.
- The texts for Write What Wasn't Written (5), Characterization (7), Dear Agony Aunt, ...! (10) and the Book Report (11) will be graded in the same way you are used to, just like all the other writing assignments for class.
- For the group tasks including the presentation your reading syndicate group will receive a collective grade - so work together and do your best! For each task except for the presentation you can gain up to 5 points. Again, content, coverage and effort counts. For the presentation you can receive 5 points each for content, presentation skills and material.

Task	Points / Grade
Vocabulary Log	/5
Collection of Quotes	/5
Comprehension Questions	/54 + extra points
Character-Relations Map	/5
The Message	/5
Group Tasks:	
Act it out!	/5
Name Dropping	/5
Character Poster	/5
Zodiac Signs	/5
PRESENTATION	/15
Content	/5
Presentation Skills	/5
Material	/5

	Task Achievement	Organization/Layout	Lexical & Structural Range	Lexical & Structural Accuracy	Total
Write What Wasn't Written	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Diary Entry	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Characterization	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Dear Agony Aunt, ...!	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40
Book Report	/10	/10	/10	/10	/40

2.) Vocabulary Log

Find a creative way to note (and remember) those unfamiliar words of the novel which you had to look up to comprehend the story. Please put any swear words, as well as extremely casual terms in an extra column or mark them else wise.

3.) Collection of Quotes

Here is some space to collect remarkable quotes from the novel.

4.) Comprehension Questions

From this set of 24 comprehension questions you have to answer at least **18**. Try to write a short paragraph per answer! Simple yes/no answers do not count!

Tip: Use page markers before starting the novel to mark the passages the questions belong to!

Chapter 1:

- a) Where is the story set?

- b) Google the band "Neutral Milk Hotel" to check whether they really exist. If yes, listen to some of their music and state if you liked it or not and why.

- c) Sum up the basic facts you have learnt from this first chapter (e.g. the characters, the setting, etc.)

- d) What do you think about breaking up with someone via a public Facebook status?

Chapter 2:

- a) What do you learn about the other will grayson in chapter 2, in how far is he different from Will Grayson of chapter 1?

- b) Can you already spot some similarities between the two Wills?

Chapter 3:

- a) Do you know exactly what a GSA is? Google it and note down your findings! Have you ever heard of a GSA in an Austrian school? Do you think it would be useful?

- b) Google the "Maybe Dead Cats" to see if the band and the songs mentioned in the novel really exist. If yes, give your opinion on their music.

Chapter 4:

- a) Why do you think Will does not want to talk about his sexual orientation with Maura?

- b) Do you think it is really possible to fall in love over inter-chatting only?

Chapter 5:

- a) Why does Will not want to star in Tiny's musical? If you were Will, would you also find it embarrassing? Give reasons!

- b) What do you think about Tiny and Jane leaving Will alone in Chicago because they are able to get into the concert venue? Would you be angry with them?

Chapter 6:

- a) How could the story continue at this point? How could the storylines of the two Will Graysons come together?

Chapter 10:

- a) Do you think will and Tiny will fall in love and become a couple?
Why/why not?

Chapter 11:

- a) (p.156) Why does Alton call will a "faggot"? What does the term mean?
Have you ever heard a similar insult in your first language? If yes, what do you think about it? Are you using similar insults yourself? If yes, in which situations?

Chapter 12:

- a) Compare will's coming-out experiences. Would you have expected any of them to be different after what you have read about will's mom, and Simon and Derek so far? Explain why/why not!

Chapter 16:

- a) Describe your reaction to will and Tiny's breakup! Do you understand both parties? Have you seen it coming?

- b) (p.247) Do you agree with will's mom when she says that "need is never a good basis for a relationship. It has to be much more than that."?
What does she mean with this advice?

Chapter 20:

- a) What was will's secret, crazy plan? What do you think did he have to do to gather all the Will Graysons at the show?

5.) Write what was not written!

Choose one of the following options:

- a) Chapter 1: p.2/6; Write Will's letter to the editor of the school newspaper defending Tiny's right to be in the football team and their locker room, even though he is gay.
Stick to the guidelines in your textbook for writing a letter to the editor.
- b) Chapter 10: p.149; Write Tiny's letter to the editor of *Seventeen* magazine.
Think about how a person like Tiny would write (probably exaggerating 'a bit') and try to imitate his writing style.
- c) Chapter 12: Write the story Tiny is telling with his song in 'proper prose'. Invent some details if necessary but try to stick to a storyline that would be appropriate for Tiny in the context of the novel. You can choose between omniscient narration and I-as-a-narrator narration.
- d) Write a 21st chapter (it does not need to be as long as the other chapters in the book) in which you describe how the story progresses.
Obligatory: Think about different situations that could happen after Tiny gets off stage. Take notes!

6.) Diary Entry

Choose a character and a particularly interesting scene. Take up the role of the character and write their diary entry about the chosen event.

Suggestions (only suggestions! Own ideas are appreciated!):

- a) Chapter 7 - a diary entry of Will Grayson about his night out in Chicago when he meets the other will grayson.
- b) Chapter 11 - a diary entry of quite the same event written by will grayson

7.) Characterization

Write at least one characterization of one of the main characters.

You have several options to choose from:

- d) Write a direct characterization in which you take up the role of an omniscient narrator.
- e) Write an indirect characterization in which you take up the role of another character to describe the character in question.
- f) Give the Evidence: Create a mind-map of the character's traits together with quotations from the text that somehow illustrate this particular character trait.

Obligatory Task:

Character-Relations Map

Create a mind-map in which you put all the characters of the book and how they are related to each other!

8.) The Message

Think about the message of the book, what the authors intended to tell the readers. Take notes and be prepared to discuss this question in your groups and with the whole class.

9.) Dear Agony Aunt, ... !

Choose a scene in which one of the characters struggles with a particular problem. (There should be many scenes like that ...). Take up the role of the character and write a letter to the Agony Aunt.

Then, switch your text with the texts of your group mates, take up the role of the Agony Aunt and write a suitable, empathic answer to one of their letters. (The second letter should be significantly longer.)

10.) Book Report

As your classmates and you have to choose which book to take as a second reader this semester, provide them with an appropriate book report of the novel you have just read.

It should include:

- bibliographical data
- the topic in 1-2 sentences
- plot synopsis (do not give away too much here!)
- personal evaluation and, potentially, a recommendation

11.) Post-Reading Tasks - Group Work Activities

Choose one/two of the following group tasks and work on them in class together with the students who have read the same book like you.

i) Act it out!

Choose a scene from the book (it does not have to be, but it can be a scene from the musical), together with your group, write the screenplay and prepare to act it out in front of the class!

j) Name Dropping

Write out the names of the protagonists vertically, try to find an adjective or adjective phrase describing the character that starts with each letter of their name.

e.g.: Tolerant

i...

n...

y ..

k) Character Poster

In your group, choose one to two characters of the novel and draw a picture of them. You can also do a collage using pictures from glossy magazines.

l) Zodiac Signs

Look at the overview of the zodiac signs and their typical characteristics. Work in your group and try to allocate the signs to the main characters of your novel, justify your choice with scenes from the book!

12.) Presentation

Duration: 20-30 minutes in total (book presentation + showcase outcomes of Reading Log) + discussion

Contents:

- bibliographical data (author, publication date, title, etc....)
- plot synopsis
- characters (briefly describe the most important characters, their struggles, their role in the story, etc. ... This should be the core of your talk.)
- selected outcomes of your Reading Log (e.g.: remarkable comprehension questions, character posters and relation maps, Act it Out!, Name Dropping, Try to use the tasks of your reading log for a creative presentation!)

Instead of a handout, bring copies of the Book Report for all of your classmates.

Optional:

use of Powerpoint or posters; interactive elements (the presentation does not have to be formal, interactive elements to engage the audience are welcome)

After the presentation, your group will stay in front of the classroom to lead the discussion. Prepare questions or statements to discuss for the audience.

TAURUS

Quiet, peace-loving, neat and tidy in appearance, loves to laugh, good entertaining company, cheerful, not faithful in relations with the opposite sex, free with money, often jealous.

CANCER

Soft and tender, a lover of honesty, moves house frequently, easily frightened, lives only for the present, peaceful, rather lazy, careless.

VIRGO

Intelligent and clever in discussion, clever with words, a lover of travel and foreign places, enjoys secrets, can make money easily, dishonest, pretends to know more than he does.

SCORPIO

Brave and confident when in a fight, stubborn, proud of his reputation, likes to talk about himself, can be violent, does not make friends easily.

CAPRICORN

A deep thinker, does not like to talk much, does not like to attract attention, patient and hard-working, enjoys study, worries a lot, can be jealous, does not trust others easily, can be hypocritical.

PISCES

Always sees the best in others, tries to do his best in all things, religious, enjoys conversation, puts the family first, very generous to others, can judge others badly, not very thoughtful, tries to make others like him.

GEMINI

Intelligent and thoughtful, a good talker and communicator, ambitious, a quick learner, curious about everything, a tale-teller, boastful, changeable.

LEO

Faithful, needs to show power, wise, has good judgement, is hard-working, loves money, generous, affectionate, proud, restless, wasteful.

LIBRA

Quiet, does not enjoy quarrelling, pleasant, careful with his appearance, enjoys alcohol, often involved with romance, musical, not very hard-working, cheerful, does not take life very seriously.

SAGITTARIUS

Generous, shy, faithful, loves to be fair, thinks of others as well as himself, fond of children, hates all wickedness, wise, can try too hard to make others like him.

AQUARIUS

Prefers to listen rather than to speak, prepared to wait a long time for results to show, serious in argument, worries about others too much, rather serious in manner, a dreamer, lover of open spaces and freedom.

ARIES

Courageous, a risk-taker, quarrelsome, dislikes authority, likes to talk about himself, wise when making decisions about himself, can be violent, can be deceitful.

NOTE: You may make photocopies of this for classroom use (but please note that copyright law does not normally permit multiple copying of published material).

Basic Facts:

Message:

Title:

Author(s):

Notes / Questiones:

Protagonists:

Characteristics:

Feedback for presenters:

Content:

Attraction

1.) Write down examples of character traits, attitudes, behaviors or very generally, types of people you feel drawn to; that is, a list of things you like in other people. Take your time to think about it!

2.) Now try to categorize these things into male/female, man/woman, feminine/masculine, the traditional gender categories. *(Tip: Just use markers in different colors!)*

3.) Reflection:

Which task was easier for you?

Concerning the second task, are there some elements that fit into both categories or none of them?

Do you think that your list in 1. would be different if you could be a person of another gender for one day.

OVERVIEW

Title:	Every Day
Author:	David Levithan
Publication Date:	2012
Page Numbers:	322
Genre:	Fantasy
Blurb:	I wake up. Immediately, I have to figure out who I am. It's not just the body - opening my eyes and discovering whether the skin on my arm is light or dark, whether my hair is long or short, whether I'm fat or thin, boy or girl, scarred or smooth. The body is the easiest thing to adjust to, if you're used to waking up in a new one each morning. It's the life, the context of the body, that can be hard to grasp. Every day I am someone else. I am myself - I know I am myself - but I am also someone else. It has always been like this.

Title:	Far From You
Author:	Tess Sharpe
Publication Date:	2014
Page Numbers:	341
Genre:	Thriller / Murder Mystery
Blurb:	Sophie Winters nearly died. Twice. The first time, she's fourteen, and escaped a near-fatal car accident with scars, a bum leg, and an addiction to Oxy that'll take years to kick. The second time, she's seventeen, and it's no accident. Sophie and her best friend Mina are confronted by a masked man in the woods. Sophie survives, but Mina is not so lucky. When the cops deem Mina's murder a drug deal gone wrong, casting partial blame on Sophie, no one will believe the truth: Sophie has been clean for months, and it was Mina who led her into the woods that night for a meeting shrouded in mystery. After a forced stint in rehab, Sophie returns home to a chilly new reality. Mina's brother won't speak to her, her parents fear she'll relapse, old friends have become enemies, and Sophie has to learn how to live without her other half. To make matters worse, no one is looking in the right places, so Sophie must search for Mina's murderer on her own. But with every step, Sophie comes closer to revealing all: about herself, about Mina ... and about the secret they shared.

Title:	Will Grayson, Will Grayson
Author:	John Green, David Levithan
Publication Date:	2010
Page Numbers:	308
Genre:	High school love story
Blurb:	One cold night, in a most unlikely corner of Chicago, two strangers cross paths. Two teens with the same name, running in two very different circles, suddenly find their lives going in new and unexpected directions, culminating the heroic turns-of-heart and the most epic musical ever to grace the high-school stage.

Title:	Brooklyn, Burning
Author:	Steve Brezenoff
Publication Date:	2011
Page Numbers:	195
Genre:	Drama
Blurb:	When life is too much to deal with and your bag is packed, Brooklyn will take you in. When no one knows what you are (and you're not even sure yourself), Brooklyn will take you in. When the final summer sun is setting and every moment together could be the last, Brooklyn will set you free. Brooklyn, Burning is the story of two summers in Brooklyn, two summers of fires, music, loss, and ultimately, love.

Title:	Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe
Author:	Benjamin Alire Sáenz
Publication Date:	2012
Page Numbers:	359
Genre:	Coming of Age
Blurb:	Dante can swim. Ari can't. Dante is articulate and self-assured. Ari has a hard time with words and suffers from self-doubt. Dante gets lost in poetry and art. Ari gets lost in thoughts of his older brother who is in prison. Dante is fair skinned. Ari's features are much darker. It seems that a boy like Dante, with his open and unique perspective on life, would be the last person to break down the walls that Ari has built around himself. But against all odds, when Ari and Dante meet, they develop a special bond that will teach them the most important truths of their lives, and help define the people they want to be. But there are big hurdles in their way, and only by believing in each other - and the power of their friendship - can Ari and Dante emerge stronger on the other side.

Pyramid Discussion

1.) Look at the list of statements and decide for yourself upon which of them you agree or disagree.

a) *It is understandable that Tiny ("Will Grayson, Will Grayson") was not ^allowed to use the boys' locker room of his school because the other, straight boys felt uncomfortable. Gay people should be considerate of such situations.*

b) *Rihannon ("Every Day") is slightly homophobic in that she is only affectionate with A when A is in a boy's body.*

c) *Kicking teenagers out of the house like Kid's parents did in "Brooklyn Burning" because they are not (yet) able to identify with one gender and one sexual orientation is cruel and should be legally chargeable.*

d) *It was best for Mina ("Far From You") to hide her sexual orientation because she would have disappointed her catholic mother too much if she came out.*

e) *It is harder for someone like Ari ("Aristotle and Dante discover the Secrets of the Universe") to recognize their own sexual orientation than it is for someone like Dante because Ari identifies with the 'hard, tough guy', someone who knows how to fight and is not afraid to do so, etc. whereas Dante is the 'softer' one.*

2.) With your partner / desk buddy rank the statements according to agreement. You might have to discuss where to place which statement.

3.) Go together in fours, do the same ranking activity. Some more discussing might be necessary. Take notes when your opinions diverge too far and you cannot reach a proper agreement.

4.) Last but not least, discuss your ranking in groups of eight. Again, discuss and take notes. Can you find a consensus concerning the most and least agreeable statement?

The Genderbread Person

*This is the Genderbread Person, a gingerbread character brought to you by social justice advocate **Sam Killermann** to help you understand the great gender conundrum.*



1.) Put the following terms beside the little arrows around your 'Genderbread Person' to the place you think they belong to.

Gender Identity
Gender Expression
Biological Sex
Sexual Orientation

2.) Now do the same with the following descriptions:

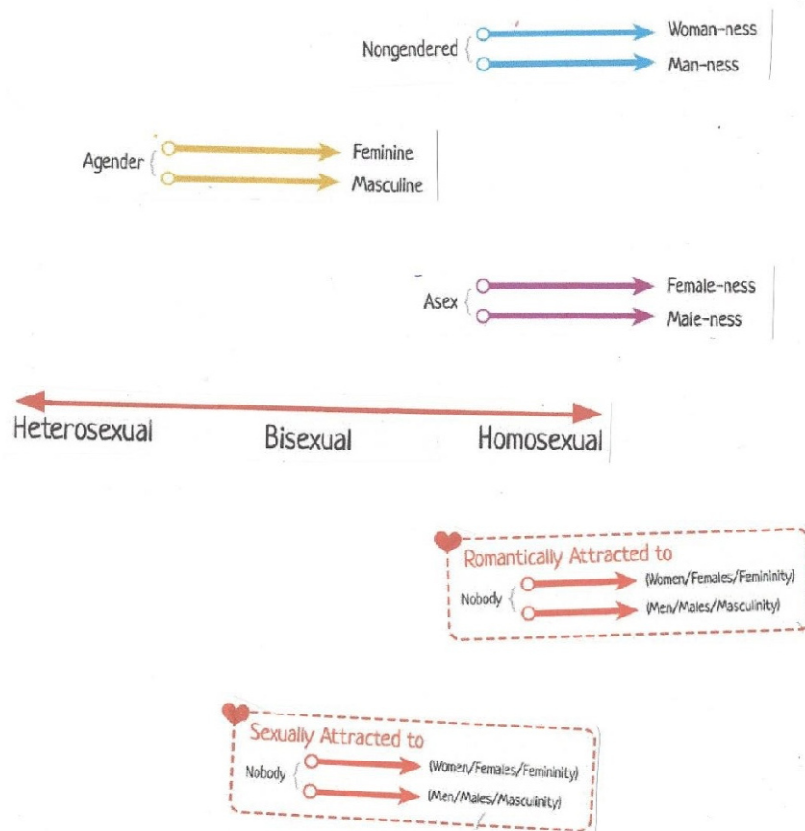
a) ... is how you think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g. hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means. This is also related to the socialization you experienced growing up. (p.60/62)

b) ... is who you are physically, spiritually and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own. (p.60)

c) ... is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact - whether that is intentional or unintended. (p.60/63)

d) ... refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes you possess. (p.64)

3.) Try to assign the following scales to the suitable category and description:



4.) Think of the protagonists of your novel, take up their role and complete the scales from above for them. How would their 'Genderbread Person' look like?

*Go together with your reading syndicate group and spend about 15-20 minutes on this task.
Be prepared for a whole-class discussion!*

Abstract / Zusammenfassung:

Die Arbeit hat das Ziel, mit Hilfe ausgewählter Werke der englischsprachigen Jugendliteratur, LGBT- (*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender*) Themen in einer modernen, offenen, nicht von heteronormativen Standpunkten ausgehenden Art in die Klassenzimmer, bzw. den Englischunterricht der Oberstufe, zu bringen. Der erste, theoretische Teil umfasst einen Überblick der bestehenden Forschung in den Bereichen Feminismus, Queer Theory, und Fachdidaktik. Die Eingliederung des Themenkreises in den österreichischen Lehrplan der AHS Oberstufe, sowie Strategien einer LGBT-inklusiven Unterrichtsgestaltung werden erarbeitet. Hinzu kommt ein praktischer Teil, der alle nötigen Materialien für ein Literaturprojekt zum Thema Gender und LGBT beinhaltet. Darunter befinden sich Stundenvorbereitungen, Lesetagebücher, und Handouts. In Anlehnung an Bruner's Discovery Approach sollen SchülerInnen mit Hilfe der Bücher und den Arbeitsmaterialien, d.h. auch durch geschickt gestellte, teils provokative Fragen, den Zugang zu LGBT- und Gender-Themen selbst erarbeiten.

Acknowledgements:

Thank You...

- ❖ **Univ.Prof.Mag.Dr. Eva Zettelmann**, for supervising my thesis, believing in my project from the beginning on, and giving me all the freedom I needed.
- ❖ **Mathias K.**, for being my most wonderful source of support, inspiration, and hope; for always listening and believing in me and my work.
- ❖ **Mom**, for your patience. I know how much all this means to you!
- ❖ **Julia F.**, for offering to proofread my paper, even though I hardly kept contact throughout the writing process.
- ❖ **ÖH Uni Wien**, for financially supporting my thesis.
- ❖ **Mag.Christian Holzmann**, for reawakening my passion for Young Adult Literature.
- ❖ **John Green, David Levithan, Tess Sharpe, Steve Brezenoff, and Benjamin Alire Sáenz**, for creating the amazing, magical Young Adult novels the whole project is based on.

*My gratefulness also goes out to each **teacher** who is willing to implement such a project and use my materials, who dares to spare some time to make a change. I do not know you yet, but still, I am extremely thankful and proud of you.*

W.E. A.R.E. L.O.V.E.

Let's start a revolution!