

# Silas House Lark Ascending



Reclam Fremdsprachentexte

Kostenlose  
Arbeitsvorschläge  
für den Unterricht

## Reclams Arbeitsvorschläge für den Unterricht

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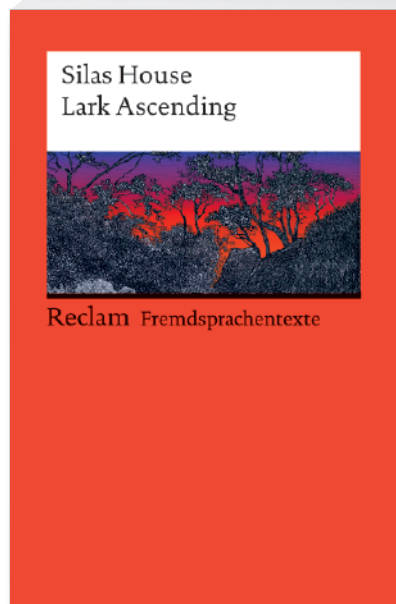
**Silas House**

**Lark Ascending** (UB 14509)

### Didaktische Anregungen für die Behandlung des Textes im Unterricht

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Zugrundeliegende Ausgabe:



**Silas House**  
**LARK ASCENDING**  
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## Silas Houses Roman »Lark Ascending« (2022)

### Eine glaubwürdige Verdichtung der Klimakrise

Eine Welt stürzt unaufhaltsam ins Chaos: Waldbrände machen die USA immer unwirtlicher und religiöse Fundamentalisten das Leben aller Andersdenkenden immer gefährlicher. Schließlich fällt für Lark und seine Familie die Entscheidung zur Flucht. Sie wagen die todbringende Überfahrt nach Irland, das friedliche Tal Glendalough ist ihr Ziel. Verzweiflung, Hoffnung, eine Frau und ein Hund werden zu Begleitern auf einem Weg ins Ungewisse. Silas Houses Verdichtung gegenwärtiger Ereignisse führt unmissverständlich vor Augen, wie der verheerende Klimawandel natürliche Lebensgrundlagen und liberale Gesellschaftsordnungen zerstört.

Die Unterrichts Anregungen greifen die gängigen Operatoren für textverstehende (Anforderungsbereich I, AFB), -analysierende (Anforderungsbereich II) sowie -kommentierende und produktionsorientierte (Anforderungsbereich III) Methoden des Leseverstehens im Englischunterricht auf. Die produktionsorientierten Aufgabenstellungen nutzen dabei unter anderem gezielt Leerstellen in der Erzählung. Sie umfassen verschiedene mündliche und schriftliche Zieltextformate.

### Pre-reading activities

1. Immigration from Africa and Asia is a much-disputed topic in Europe. There are people who argue that each person has a right to immigrate and, of course, others who are strongly opposed to »illegal« immigration. Have a discussion in the classroom. On the panel, you have two participants taking a very liberal stand on immigration and two who are definitely against »illegal« immigration. Both parties start with short statements summarizing their respective positions. The rest of the class should ask the participants questions and comment on their views. (AFB III)
2. Why might a US family take the risk of escaping from North America across the Atlantic on an overcrowded boat? Discuss this question in the classroom. In so doing, you may take the consequences of climate change and current political tendencies in the USA into account. (AFB III)

### While-reading activities

1. Point out what the narrator/protagonist reveals about himself in the first chapter. (AFB I)
2. Point out how the crossing of the Atlantic on the boat turns out to be a nightmare for the protagonist. (AFB I)
3. Compare the flight of the protagonist's family across the Atlantic to reports of refugees in the Mediterranean seeking a safe haven in Europe today. (AFB II)
4. Point out what mood the protagonist is in when arriving on Ireland's coast and why he finds a way out of it. (AFB I)
5. How does the novel describe the climatic, political, economic, social, and humanitarian situation in the USA? (AFB II)
6. »Those were holy years, our time in the Preserve« (p. 89), comments the narrator on the years spent in Maine. Illustrate in what ways they were. (AFB II)
7. Describe the social background and political attitudes of Lark's parents. (AFB I)
8. Characterize the relationships between Lark and Sera and Lark and Arlo respectively. (AFB II)
9. Point out why Lark's mother wants her family to escape to Glendalough in Ireland. (AFB I)
10. After Phoebe's children Sera and Arlo have both fallen victim to an attack at the US-Canadian border, and she has heavily injured Lark's father, she says only: »Leave us alone.« (p. 107) Against the background of her experiences in Bigelow (Maine), what else could she have said? Write her monologue. (AFB III)
11. Explain how the abilities learned in the Preserve in Maine help Lark to survive in Ireland. (AFB II)
12. During his adventurous walk through Ireland, Lark comes to know the horrors of climate change and the new

- political order. Point out the effects of the climate disaster and how that political order violates the most basic human rights. (AFB I und AFB II)
13. Phoebe attacks Lark's father (cf. p. 107) just like Ronan attacks Helen and Seamus (cf. p. 244–255). Point out what Lark's behavior after the violent acts (cf. p. 108 f., p. 246 f.) reveals about his character. (AFB II)
  14. Most of the time, Lark, as a first-person narrator, tells the story. Why do you think the author has chosen this narrative perspective? (AFB II)
  15. In a few cases, however (cf. p. 59–70, 169–171, 187–194), the author chooses an omniscient narrator who focuses on the dog Seamus. Explain why he does so. (AFB II)
  16. Explain to what extent Lark, Seamus the dog, and Helen have similar biographies. (AFB II)
  17. Illustrate in what ways Lark's mother and Helen are similar characters. (AFB II)
  18. Adventure novels such as *Lark Ascending* often have a happy ending. Would you say this novel has one? (AFB III)
  19. The final sentences of *Lark Ascending* concerning Seamus and Helen read: »They were my true friends. They were my family.« (p. 274) Explain to what extent these statements are true. (AFB II)
  20. Lark praises Helen as a friend and mourns over her loss (cf. p. 274 f.). If asked if she is a heroine, would you, as the reader, continue his praise? If so, how? (AFB III)
  21. When the narrator tells his story, he is ninety years old. Ireland seems to have recovered. But he stays at Glendalough and states:
 

»People creep closer these days, though, talking about us wild people who don't have any desire for things to go back to their idea of normal« (p. 272)

 Find out reasons what ›normal‹ might mean in this context and why he remains at Glendalough. (AFB III)

## Post-reading activities

1. Bearing in mind that the USA has always been a destination for immigrants looking for better lives, explain to what extent *Lark Ascending* destroys the view of this country as the promised land. (AFB II)
2. **Hot Seat Technique:** A student takes on the role of one of the main characters and responds to all the impulses his/her classmates give him/her. (AFB III)
3. The novel's title refers to a famous poem by George Meredith. In the case at hand, Lark is the protagonist's name. Taking the meaning of *to ascend* into account, explain to what extent the novel's title summarizes Lark's story. (AFB II)
4. **Essay writing:** *Lark Ascending*, a convincing novel about climate change and its consequences? Discuss this question in an argumentative essay. (AFB III)
5. **Essay writing:** *Lark Ascending*, a novel addressing especially the queer community? Discuss this question in an argumentative essay. (AFB III)
6. Silas House does not consider his book a dystopian one. Having read his novel, how do you view his opinion? In so doing, take the following definition of ›dystopia‹ into account (AFB III):
 

»a very bad or unfair society in which there is a lot of suffering, especially an imaginary society in the future, after something terrible has happened; a description of such a society.«<sup>1</sup>
7. In his essay at the end of this edition, Silas House writes:
 

»*Lark Ascending* homes in on the idea that almost always, hope survives until the very end, and if we have a little glimmer of hope, we can at least keep going for a little while longer.« (p. 280)

 Explain up to what extent you can subscribe to his view. (AFB II und III)

1 Cf. definition of ›dystopia‹ in: *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/dystopia>

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