

Kaitlyn Greenidge
Libertie

Reclam Fremdsprachentexte

Kostenlose
Arbeitsvorschläge
für den Unterricht

Reclams Arbeitsvorschläge für den Unterricht

Reclam Fremdsprachentexte

Kaitlyn Greenidge

Libertie (UB 14131)

Didaktische Anregungen für die Behandlung des Textes im Unterricht

Von Johannes Röhrig

Zugrunde liegende Ausgabe:



Kaitlyn Greenidge
LIBERTIE
Herausgegeben von
Johannes Röhrig

Niveau B2 (GER)
397 Seiten

UB 14131 · € 9,00
978-3-15-014131-1

Lehrerservice

Reclams Lehrerservice bietet ausgewählte Titel zum Lehrerprüfpreis und weitere exklusive Sonderangebote für Lehrerinnen und Lehrer an allgemeinbildenden Schulen. Weitere Informationen und das Anmeldeformular für die Registrierung unter: www.reclam.de/hilfe/lehrerservice

Ein Entwicklungsroman vor dem Hintergrund der frühen afro-amerikanischen Emanzipation

Kaitlyn Greenidge ist eine US-amerikanische Autorin mit afro-amerikanischen Wurzeln. 2017 debütierte sie mit dem Roman *We Love You, Charlie Freeman*. 2021 veröffentlichte sie den vorliegenden Roman.

Die Handlung beginnt kurz vor dem amerikanischen Bürgerkrieg (1861–1865) in Brooklyn und endet etwa 15 Jahre später in Haiti. Rassismus in seinen vielfältigen Facetten ist eines der Hauptthemen dieses Werks. Vor diesem Hintergrund entwirft die Autorin einen Entwicklungsroman. Hauptfigur ist eine junge Afro-Amerikanerin, die ihre eigene Identität finden und festigen möchte. Der Weg dorthin ist zunächst durch eine dominante Mutter geprägt, die als eine der ersten afro-amerikanischen Ärztinnen praktiziert. Zudem engagiert diese sich in der Befreiung von Sklaven und der medizinischen Versorgung Schwarzer Gewaltopfer. Ihre Tochter weigert sich jedoch, in ihre Fußstapfen zu treten. Als junge Frau bindet sie sich stattdessen an einen charismatischen Arzt aus Haiti und folgt ihm in seine Heimat. Nachdem sie sich von ihrer Mutter gelöst hat, entdeckt sie in der Auseinandersetzung mit ihrer Ehe, der Familie ihres Mannes und der haitianischen Kultur, wie sich in Zukunft ein selbstbestimmtes Leben als junge Mutter gestalten könnte. Sie wird keine Heldin. Sie entwickelt sich vielmehr zu einer Frau, die sich vor dem Hintergrund von Rassismus, Kolonialismus und Frauenfeindlichkeit ein Leben in Freiheit und Würde erkämpft. Im Kontext der Romanhandlung stehen die beiden Handlungsorte, die USA nach dem Bürgerkrieg und Haiti, für zwei gesellschaftliche Zukunftsideen: hier der Kampf um tatsächliche Gleichheit und Partizipation der Afro-Amerikaner, dort die vermeintlich postkoloniale, freie Republik der ehemaligen Sklaven in der Karibik.

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 activity

Why might a female Black US-American author choose the period between 1860 and 1880s as the subject of a current novel? Discuss this question in the classroom. In arguing, you may take the historical background, the current racial issue in the USA and the gender question into account.

While-reading activities

Chapter 1

1. Point out why the protagonist was given the name Libertie. (AFB I)
2. Point out what the first chapter reveals about the different status(es) of Black people in the USA before the Civil War (1861–1865). (AFB I)
3. The novel starts with the sentences: »I saw my mother raise a man from the dead. It still didn't help much, my love, she told me.« Explain to what extent both statements turn out to be true. (AFB II)
4. Characterize the protagonist's mother, Dr. Catherine Sampson. (AFB II)
5. Explain how the relationship between the protagonist and her mother develops and why. (AFB II)
6. The first chapter is called *Not all wounds heal*. In the light of this chapter's plot, discuss whether the statement summarizes the essence of the events. (AFB III)

7. The final sentences of the chapter read: »I would not be a doctor, no matter what Mama wished. I could not deceive others, and I could not deceive myself, as she did.« Of course, Libertie's mother is not aware of her daughter's decision. If she were, she would probably try to convince her to change her mind. Write their dialogue. (AFB III)

Chapter 2

1. Write an editorial for a New York newspaper about the pogroms against Black people in the wake of the Civil War such as they are presented in the novel. The author should be a white abolitionist (= s.o. opposing slavery) that witnessed the events at that period. (AFB III)
2. Point out why Mrs. Sampson founds a hospital and what she wants it to be like. (AFB I)
3. Explain to what extent the emotional distance between Libertie and her mother deepens and why. (AFB II)
4. Explain why Libertie writes a book of her own. (AFB II)
5. If her mother had a book of her own (a diary), what might she write in the book about her relationship with her daughter? (AFB III)

Chapter 3

1. In the light of what Cunningham College is like, explain why Libertie's mother sends her daughter to this institute. (AFB II)
2. Point out how even at a college for Black students hierarchy plays an essential role. (AFB I)
3. Describe Libertie's state of mind at Cunningham College before she meets the Graces. (AFB I)
4. Point out what impact meeting the Graces has on Libertie's life at Cunningham College. (AFB I)
5. When Alma Curtis, the women's dean at Cunningham College, informs the young woman she cannot return the following year, Libertie states: »I searched her face to see if she might regret it, if she might leave me an opening to argue.« (p. 181) If she had left her an opening, how might Libertie have argued? Write her monologue. (AFB III)

Chapter 4

1. Explain to what extent Lucien's and Emmanuel's opinions on the future of Black people in the USA and in Haiti are at opposite extremes. (AFB II)
2. Explain Emmanuel's position against the background of his own biography. (AFB II)
3. Explain why Libertie falls in love with Emmanuel. (AFB II)
4. The night before her wedding, Mrs. Sampson warns Libertie not to embrace her. Libertie states: »I realized that she would never forgive me, and I went up to bed cold.« (p. 238). As Mrs. Sampson won't listen to what her daughter might tell her, Libertie might write her a letter. Write her letter in which she describes her state of mind. (AFB III)

Chapter 5

1. Libertie comments on the farewell scene: »I had promised myself I would not cry about saying goodbye to that world, Mama's world; I had promised myself I would celebrate.« (p. 245). Explain why, on arriving in her new home, she does not feel like celebrating her new life. (AFB II)
2. Describe Bishop Chase's ideas of building up a Christian society in Haiti and his political agenda. (AFB I)
3. Characterize Emmanuel's sister Ella. (AFB II)
4. The fact that people pay a lot of attention to other people's skin colours is a constant topic in the novel. Point out to what extent it also plays an important role in Haiti and how Libertie is affected by it. (AFB II)
5. Mrs. Sampson writes her daughter two letters (cf. p. 287–291 and p. 301–302). Explain what these letters reveal about her ambivalent attitude toward Libertie. (AFB II)
6. Explain why Libertie starts having doubts about her husband's ideas. (AFB II)

Chapter 6

1. Point out what role Ti Me, the housemaid, plays in the relationship between Libertie and her husband. (AFB I und AFB II)
2. Point out the growing conflict between Libertie and Emmanuel as a result of her increasing awareness of who she is. (AFB II)
3. In the last letter to her mother, Libertie states: »I know the loneliness of love«. (p. 374) Explain what she means by this sentence. (AFB II)
4. The novel ends with Libertie's letter to Emmanuel. Write his letter in response to hers. (AFB III)

Post-reading activities

1. **Analysis:** In their dispute about marriage, Dr. Sampson tells her daughter that being a wife is not the same as being a free woman (cf. p. 233). Explain to what extent this statement turns out to be true for Libertie. (AFB II)
2. **Analysis:** The novel has a first-person narrator. In addition, it is partly an epistolary novel (*Briefroman*). Explain why this additional narrative technique is important for understanding the development of the two female protagonists. (AFB II)
3. **Role play:** Two or three students interview Kaitlyn Greenidge on her novel *Libertie*. The student taking on Greenidge's role should not only be familiar with the novel, he or she should also have read interviews the author has given to journalists. (AFB III)
4. **Hot Seat Technique:** A student takes on the role of one of the main characters and responds to all the impulses his classmates give him/her. (AFB III)
5. **Write an entry for a blog** on racism such as it is presented in *Libertie*. (AFB III)
6. **Essay-writing:** One might argue that *Libertie* primarily addresses a female readership. Write an essay discussing this view. (AFB III)
7. **Essay-writing:** Mrs. Sampson and Emmanuel Chase are two strong and ambivalent characters. Write an essay on the question how both of them help Libertie find her own identity without planning to do so. (AFB III)
8. **Essay-writing:** *Libertie*, a novel about liberty? Discuss this question in an argumentative essay. (AFB III)
9. **Essay-writing:** *Libertie*, a feminist novel? Discuss this question in an argumentative essay. (AFB III)
10. **Writing a letter:** In an interview, Kaitlyn Greenidge points out:

»It was important to me that the character of Libertie got to make big, potentially life-altering mistakes, and she didn't die from it. I wanted her character to be an exploration of that. While her mother is this consummate Black achiever, Libertie is definitely not that, and I wanted her not being that to really mean something. But I also wanted her to still be able to have a full life with joy, interests and friends, longing and desire and all those other things that make her human.«

(Source: <https://therumpus.net/2021/04/12/the-rumpus-interview-with-kaitlyn-greenidge-2/>)

Write a letter to the editor in which you comment on Greenidge's views. (AFB III)

11. **Discussion:** In the argument with Lucien (cf. p. 199–203), Emmanuel describes Haiti as the promised land for Black Americans in the late 19th century. After reading the novel, discuss in class if you share this view. (AFB III)

2022 Philipp Reclam jun. Verlag GmbH,
Siemensstraße 32, 71254 Ditzingen
Made in Germany 2019
RECLAM ist eine eingetragene Marke
der Philipp Reclam jun. GmbH & Co. KG, Stuttgart
www.reclam.de