

Paola Mendoza  
Abby Sher  
Sanctuary



Reclam Fremdsprachentexte

Kostenlose  
Arbeitsvorschläge  
für den Unterricht

## Reclams Arbeitsvorschläge für den Unterricht

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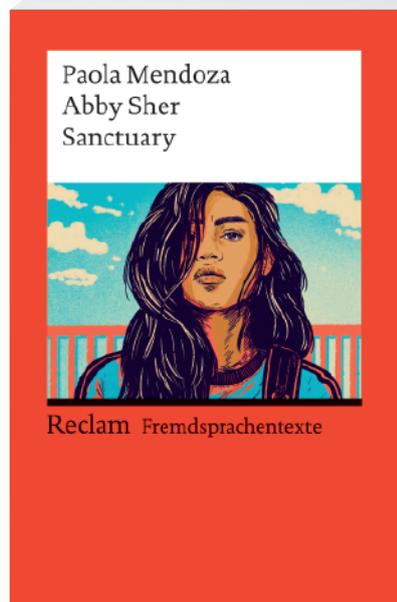
**Paola Mendoza / Abby Sher**

**Sanctuary** (UB 14500)

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

Von Ulrike Zanatta

Zugrundeliegende Ausgabe:



**Paola Mendoza / Abby Sher**

**SANCTUARY**

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## Paola Mendozas und Abby Shers Roman »Sanctuary« (2020)

### Ein dystopisch anmutender Roman über Migrationspolitik in den USA

Dystopische Literatur erfreut sich gerade bei Jugendlichen großer Beliebtheit. Da liegt es nahe, diese Vorliebe im Unterricht zu nutzen und ein Werk dieses Genres zu behandeln, insbesondere wenn derart gesellschaftsrelevante Themen angesprochen werden wie in *Sanctuary*.

Der Roman führt uns in die USA des Jahres 2032. Das Land hat sich in einen totalitären Überwachungsstaat verwandelt, in dem die Mauer eine tödliche Realität geworden ist. Dies wird direkt im ersten Kapitel des Buchs deutlich, in dem die Protagonistin Vali mit ihrer Familie eine Live-Übertragung verfolgt, bei der ein junges Mädchen beim Versuch, die Mauer zu überqueren, von einer Landmine getötet wird.

Vali und ihre Familie, die aus Kolumbien in die USA eingewandert sind, müssen ein Leben in einem Überwachungsstaat und unter permanenter Anspannung und Angst, den illegalen Aufenthaltsstatus preiszugeben, fristen. Nur der kleine Bruder Ernie ist in den USA geboren und damit vor Zugriffen sicher. Um am alltäglichen Leben teilnehmen zu können, haben sich Vali und ihre Mutter einen gefälschten Chip ins Handgelenk implantieren lassen, ohne den der Zutritt zu Schulen und anderen öffentlichen Gebäuden unmöglich geworden ist.

Nachdem erst der Vater, dann die Mutter erwischt und festgenommen worden sind, machen sich die beiden Kinder allein auf eine gefährliche Reise durch das Land, in der Hoffnung, Zuflucht bei ihrer Tante im unabhängigen Kalifornien zu finden. Eindringlich beschreibt das Buch die Gefahren, denen Einwanderer in diesem düsteren Zukunftsszenario ausgesetzt sind, und wie eine jugendliche Protagonistin diesen ihren Einfallsreichtum und ihr Durchhaltevermögen entgegensetzt.

### Pre-reading activities

#### Dystopia vs. Utopia

1. What problems is society facing nowadays? Discuss the question in the classroom.
2. A society that has eliminated all these problems is a UTOPIA, an ideal society where people live happily together. The opposite of a UTOPIA is a DYSTOPIA, »... a very bad or unfair society in which there is a lot of suffering, especially an imaginary society in the future ...«<sup>1</sup>  
Can you give some examples of utopian and dystopian fiction?
3. If you could get into a time machine and travel into the future, what do you think would our society look like? Would things be better or worse than they are now?

### While-reading activities

#### Chapter 1

1. Does the book's setting feel familiar to you? Explain why or why not?
2. State which elements in the first chapter show us that *Sanctuary* is a dystopian novel.
3. Words with a similar meaning can often evoke a different feeling or idea. Similar words might have a neutral, positive or negative connotation. (e.g. different/unique/peculiar; old/vintage/decrepit)
  - a) Give examples from the first chapter.
  - b) Explain the use of these words.

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

## Chapter 2–6

### 1. Point of view

- a) From which point of view is the plot told? (First/Second/Third Person Point of View? Inside or outside view? Neutral, personal, or auctorial narration?)
- b) Explain how this point of view affects the reader.

### 2. Vali's family and friends

- a) Summarize what we learn about Vali and her family in Chapter 2–6.
- b) Explain what Vali and Kenna have in common. Do they feel like they belong to Morrow Magnet High School?

## Chapter 7–8

### 1. »To leave is to die a little. To arrive is never to arrive.« – Immigrants' Prayer

Comment on how the first part of the immigrants' prayer is true for Vali and her family as they are forced to flee.

2. Explain how tension is built up in these two chapters.

## Chapter 9–11

Describe how Vali is trying to motivate Ernie to continue on their way to Sister Lottie's.

## Chapter 12–13

**Characterization.** A narrator can reveal a character's personality in several ways:

- through the description of his/her outward appearance.
- through direct comments on his/her character.
- by what he/she does, says or thinks.
- by showing what other people think or say about him/her.

Find examples in the text how the narrator uses these techniques to describe Sister Lottie.

## Chapter 14–16

1. »We were all just pieces of meat, really. Some of us with loss and shame weighing us down. The rest dismembered and frozen. All of us, beasts of prey.« (p. 171)

Explain this quote from Chapter 14.

2. Explain why Vali calls one of the characters »Volcanoman« in the beginning. Is her first impression accurate?

## Chapter 17–19

1. Discuss if Volcanoman's killing of the two villains Ronny and BJ is a heroic act.

2. »They tried to bury us, but they didn't know that we were seeds.« (p. 221)

Explain the song's line in the light of what happens to the protagonists in Ronny's and BJ's hiding place.

## Chapter 20–22

Examine how actions of the protagonists are often motivated by hope in these three chapters.

## Chapter 23–24

»When they are coming for you, run. Run faster than them. Run smarter than them. Just run.« (p. 41)

1. Explain this quote in the light of what happens to Volcanoman.
2. Justify why Vali and Malaka do not act as suggested in this quote but stay with Ernie (cf. p. 259). Find more than one reason.

## Chapter 25–26

1. In these two chapters Vali, Malaka and Ernie encounter two DF officers. Explain how that affects the course of their escape.
2. Discuss why the young DF officer lets them continue with their journey?

## Chapter 27–30

1. Examine how the fact that the story is told from Vali's point of view adds to the tension in Chapter 27.
2. The interview Vali has to do with Kelly seems rather meaningless to her. Imagine which questions Vali would have expected and rewrite the interview.
3. Discuss if the ending of the book gives any hints concerning a potential sequel of the novel.

## After-reading activities

1. **Discussion:** Surveillance technology plays a huge role in this story (microchips for humans, find-and-capture drones) Discuss if this kind of technology will be widely used in the future.
2. **Essay-writing:** Write a book review for a platform that sells books or talks about literature.

A good book review should include:

- a topic sentence (name of the author, text type, title, topic)
- a short summary of the content
- what you liked or disliked about the novel
- which target group might like the novel
- your personal rating

3. **Discussion:**

»Nearly all Americans have ancestors who braved the oceans – liberty-loving risk takers in search of an ideal ... Immigration is not just a link to America's past; it's also a bridge to America's future.«

(George W. Bush)

**ancestor:** Vorfahre/-in. | **to brave s.th.:** etwas trotzen / die Stirn bieten. | **liberty-loving:** freiheitsliebend.

What do you think about this quote? Share your point of view with your classmates.

4. **Essay-writing:** Vali, the protagonist of *Sanctuary*, is a young Latina girl. Discuss if it is important to have diverse protagonists in books.

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