

Stories of Suspense – Exploring the Horror of *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *Sherlock Holmes* in Literature and Film (S II)

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II/B6



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Wie wird der Detektivklassiker *Sherlock Holmes* in der BBC-Neuverfilmung umgesetzt?

Der eine fragt den Leser „*but why will you say that I am mad?*“, der andere macht seiner Umwelt klar: „*I’m not a psychopath ... I’m a high-functioning sociopath*“. Zwei Figuren mit Außenseitercharakter, zwei spannungsgeladene Kurzgeschichten und zwei Autoren – „*The Tell-Tale Heart*“ von Edgar Allan Poe sowie „*A Scandal in Bohemia*“ von Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – beschleunigen den Puls in Ihrem Oberstufenunterricht!

In dieser Unterrichtsreihe erschließen Ihre Schüler die beiden Kriminalgeschichten. Die beliebte BBC-Neuverfilmung *Sherlock* ergänzt die analytisch-inhaltliche Arbeit am Originaltext um das Trainieren des Hör-Sehverstehens. Ihre Lernenden analysieren zum Beispiel die Darstellung Sherlock Holmes’ in der Serie anhand eines Blogbeitrags und vergleichen Text und filmische Umsetzung in Hinblick auf traditionelle und moderne Elemente.

Klassenstufe: 11/12 (G8); 12/13 (G9)

Dauer: ca. 13 Unterrichtsstunden (+ LEK)

Bereich: Kriminalgeschichten, *Beliefs, values and norms in Western societies: Tradition and change – the British way / Britishness; Individual and society; Meeting people online and offline – texting, blog entries, mobiles and the Internet in the series Sherlock*

Kompetenzen: 1. Lesekompetenz: authentische literarische Texte verstehen und deuten; 2. Hör-Sehverstehen: komplexere Äußerungen in authentischen Filmauszügen verstehen und Einzelinformationen entnehmen; 3. Mediation: wesentliche Inhalte eines authentischen Zeitungstextes sinngemäß, adressatengerecht und situationsangemessen wiedergeben

Reihe 7	Verlauf	Material S 1	LEK	Kontext	Mediothek
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Materialübersicht

1./2. Stunde: Crime stories – collecting vocabulary

M 1 (Ab) Talking about crime stories – a cartoon and a mind map

M 2 (Tx) *The Tell-Tale Heart* – reading the complete story

3./4. Stunde: Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart* – understanding the short story

M 3 (Ab) What is a short story? – Revising characteristics

M 4 (Ab) *The Tell-Tale Heart* – analysing the exposition

5./6. Stunde: Discussing *The Tell-Tale Heart* and reading *A Scandal in Bohemia*

M 5 (Im) Talking about *The Tell-Tale Heart* – speaking cards


M 6 (Tx) *A Scandal in Bohemia* – reading the original's exposition

7./8. Stunde: The BBC series *Sherlock* with *A Scandal in Belgravia* – analysing modern elements

M 7 (Ab) Meet Sherlock Holmes, the consulting detective – FAQs

M 8 (Ab) *Sherlock* – tradition meets the 21st century 

9./10. Stunde: *Sherlock* and Irene – comparing protagonist and antagonist in *A Scandal in Belgravia*

M 9 (Ab) Meet Irene Adler – *The Woman* 

M 10 (Ab) Irene and Sherlock – preparing their "battle" 

M 11 (Ab) Signs of genius – does the term "genius" fit Sherlock?

11./12. Stunde: Who's who? – Analysing characters in *A Scandal in Belgravia*

M 12 (Ab) Sherlock and the people he meets – analysing characters 

13. Stunde: A review of the series *Sherlock* – mediating a text

M 13 (Tx/Ab) Mediation – *Soziopath und Sehnsuchtsfigur*



Für den Einsatz dieser Materialien wird ein **DVD-Player** oder **Beamer** benötigt.

Reihe 7	Verlauf	Material S 9	LEK	Kontext	Mediothek
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M 3 What is a short story? – Revising characteristics



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Apart from being shorter than a novel, short stories share some general characteristics. Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) was often called the “father of the short story” by other writers. Investigate how Poe sees the basic features that short stories share.

A short story must have a single mood and every sentence must build towards it.

Edgar Allan Poe, American author, famous for his tales of mystery

II/B6

Tasks

1. The sentences 1.–10. either describe a short story or a novel. Match them to the short story or the novel by ticking the correct column.

Short Story		Novel
	1. The narrative deals with only one main event.	
	2. It shows a unique conflict of one character.	
	3. The narrative shows another world in many details.	
	4. The atmosphere changes dramatically in the course of the story.	
	5. To create suspense, there are subplots adding more themes to the action.	
	6. There is one dominant theme only.	
	7. It describes the events in the life of many complex characters.	
	8. It always starts immediately in the middle of the action without any longer descriptions.	
	9. The narrative contains up to 40 000 words.	
	10. You can always read it in one sitting.	

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2. Read the quotations. Discuss which aspects of a short story the two authors highlight.

① A short story is a love affair; a novel is a marriage. A short story is a photograph; a novel is a film.

Lorrie Moore (*1957), American fiction writer, famous for her humorous short stories

② A short story is a different thing all together – a short story is like a kiss in the dark from a stranger.

Stephen King (*1947), American author of horror, fantasy and science fiction

M 4 The Tell-Tale Heart – analysing the exposition

Find out more about The Tell-Tale Heart's protagonist, the first-person narrator, addressing the reader directly at the beginning of the short story.

II/B6**Tasks**

1. Re-read the first two paragraphs of the short story (II. 1–10).
2. Edgar Allan Poe claims that every short story should have its "single mood", referring to the dominating topic. Decide which of the phrases a)–d) best describes *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Write a short statement in which you give evidence for your choice.
 - a) a story of someone believing in ghosts
 - b) a story of mental illness
 - c) a story of someone who killed out of passion
 - d) a story of a father-son conflict

3. What do you get to know about the first-person narrator? Which words does he use to talk about himself? Highlight the correct words.

nervous - mad - healthy - calm - passionate - cold - full of desire -
a good listener - sensitive to noise - old

Reihe 7	Verlauf	Material S 11	LEK	Kontext	Mediothek
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4. Analyse the narrator's way of expressing himself. Fill in the chart and give evidence from the text. Match the corresponding effects a)–g). Can you add more effects?

Rhetorical figure	Line(s)	Quotation	What is the effect on the reader?
Repetition / parallelism	I. 1	"nervous – very, very dreadfully nervous"	c) To reflect the narrator's nervous state of mind
Antithesis			
Exclamation			
Rhetorical question			

II/B6

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<p>Effects</p> <p>a) To create suspense</p> <p>b) To confuse the reader with contradicting ideas</p> <p>c) To reflect the narrator's nervous state of mind</p> <p>d) To implore the reader to listen and believe in the tale</p> <p>e) To insist on the narrator's reliability</p> <p>f) To underline his claim</p> <p>g) To reveal the narrator's obsession with showing a good judgement and healthy mind</p> <p>h) _____</p> <p>i) _____</p>

5. Discuss with a partner whether the narrator is reliable or unreliable. Give reasons.

6. The narrator informs the reader of the paradox that he loved the old man but wanted to take his life. Discuss in how far the eye, a body part representing the old man, can be separated from the old man's "I" (= identity). What does the narrator fail to notice?



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Reihe 7	Verlauf	Material S 21	LEK	Kontext	Mediothek
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M 8 *Sherlock* – tradition meets the 21st century

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote his detective stories in the 19th century. The BBC series *Sherlock* transforms *A Scandal in Bohemia* into the modern world. Find elements of tradition and modern technology by watching an excerpt from the episode.

Traditional elements

1. Watch the following scene: *Sherlock*, Series 2, DVD 1, *A Scandal in Belgravia* 8:30–21:57 min. Analyse which traditional British values the BBC adaptation concentrates on.

a) In the original short story, the King of Bohemia comes to Sherlock's home in disguise.

⇒ In the BBC episode, ...



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b) In the original short story, Sherlock easily deduces the king's true identity.

⇒ In the BBC episode, ...

c) In the original short story, his friend Sir Watson is present as well.

⇒ In the BBC episode, ...

d) In the original short story, the king had a delicate affair with an opera singer.

⇒ In the BBC episode, ...

e) In the original short story, the king would like Holmes to retrieve a compromising photo.

⇒ In the BBC episode, ...

Modern elements

2. Name at least 3 devices of (modern) technology that did not exist in the 19th century.

3. Discuss why the BBC might have chosen to turn the opera singer of the original short story into a dominatrix in the 21st century. What does this show about the morals and values in the 21st century?