

„Brits abroad feel no shame!“ – Eine Kurzeinheit zum interkulturellen Lernen am Beispiel des Urlaubsverhaltens von Briten und Deutschen (Klasse 9–11)

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M 1 What *the British* are like ...: Pre-reading activity

How do your classmates consider the British? Which characteristics do they ascribe to them? And what is their opinion on British people on holiday? Find out!

Tasks

1. Finish the sentence:

Typical British people ...

2. Read the list below with stereotypes about British people.

- Which stereotypes surprised you? Explain.
- Which stereotypes didn't surprise you? Explain.

- The British are proud to be British.
- The British are disciplined and fair.
- The British are slightly eccentric.
- The British are mad about cats and dogs.
- The British are very keen sportsmen.
- The British love nature.
- The British queue for almost anything.
- The British are always ironic and turn everything into a joke, e.g. "Lovely weather, isn't it?" (while the rain is pouring down).
- The British are very friendly and helpful.
- The British always say thank you, please and sorry.
- The British are very proud of their monarchy.
- The British like sunny holiday destinations to escape the rainy English weather.

3. In groups of three, write a list with stereotypes about German people.

4. Share your list with other groups. Compare the stereotypes about the British with the stereotypes about the Germans.

5. Finish the sentence: Typical British holidaymakers ...

6. Work with a partner: What are your personal holiday experiences with German people or/and British people abroad?

Extra task: Draw a picture of a typical British person and a typical German person on holiday.

V

M 2 Brits abroad, feel no shame! Reading a newspaper comment

The German Bild-Zeitung published an article about how British people allegedly act when on holiday. Find out how the British journalist Holly Baxter reacted to the article in the newspaper The Guardian.

Task

Read the following newspaper comment carefully. While reading, underline important information.

Brits abroad, feel no shame! We can't let the Germans spoil our summer

by Holly Baxter, 31 July 2014

There are few phrases that strike as much fear into the heart of the international community as “Brits abroad”. Really, it’s with good reason; as someone who personally suffered through a number of Thomas Cook package holidays in my youth and once visited Mallorca out of choice as a fledgling adult, I can attest to the fact that even British people feel the fear. My own stand-out memories include licking a Mancunian teenager’s neck while dressed in a miniskirt in a sunbather’s hut at Fishbowl in Greece; and leaning over the balcony at nine years old as my usually sedentary father sprinted down a concrete staircase at 5 am en route to the coveted sun loungers by the pool with slick towels, shouting, with a complete lack of irony, “We have to beat the Germans, or it’s all over.” So not exactly delicate sunsets over white sandy beaches on Instagram.



Brit on the beach

Considering that the Germans and Brits have never quite seen eye to eye when sharing holiday destinations, it should come as little surprise that the German newspaper Bild this week ran an article “explaining” the British tourists of Mallorca to its readership. With stereotypical efficiency, they slagged off Brits on tour through a list of invented diseases: “Welsh wandering hands”, for instance, as well as “vodka cough”, “underwear amnesia”, and my personal favourite “Anglo-Saxon rash” (the German euphemism for British tattoos). Then there was Prince Harry syndrome – “the pathological need to constantly undress” – which as a Tinder user I can reveal is not a quirk the British leave safely behind on the shores of Marbella when they return home.

The Telegraph, in all its patriotism, responded to this national insult defensively. The charge that the Brit on vacation is always getting his or her kit off is “a touch hypocritical”, it reminds us, for “anyone who has encountered the German love of naturism”. The paper says that Bild “gloats” about our tendency to turn beetroot red in the sun and “adds insult to injury” by cruelly stating that too much beer on the beach makes us weigh down the plane on the way home. All in all, the impression is that a German tabloid poking fun at our tan lines (or lack thereof) is one step too far.

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There is a German word for this sort of mockery, and it's *fremdschämen*. This roughly translates as “feeling embarrassed for someone you don't know” or, more simply, “secondhand shame”, and it's one of those linguistic innovations, like *scheiternfreude*, that the Germans do so well. But just because the Bild journalists see our “vodka cough” and “balcony legs” (the injury someone sustains when jumping from the hotel balcony into the pool – yes, really) as cause for *fremdschämen*, is it necessary to react as though we've been hit where it hurts and hang our heads at our lewd transgression? Shouldn't we rather be flying the flag for Prince Harry syndrome and undergarment amnesty, proud of the tramp stamps and dolphin tattoos adorning our sunburnt bodies, happy to chug down discount cocktails and increase the load of the plane returning us to our rainy urban lives?

Just weeks ago, the tabloid press tried to provoke moral outrage over Magaluf, which Bild references when it mentions that young British women are apparently wont to trade sexual favours for holidays. I think it's fair to say that the public weren't as receptive to this outrage as expected, rightly choosing to round on the journalists who attacked a young girl for giving a few blowjobs rather than the girl herself. Nowadays, in this regard, the moral outrage brigade is genuinely difficult to rally. Try to encourage them to bring out their torches and pitchforks and pitch against British lack of holiday decorum and you'll find most have wandered off to the pub, or set themselves up topless on the nearest Spanish beach while cheerfully admonishing others to live and let live.

Personally, I'd much rather see a couple soaking in the sun with their beer bellies on full display and a couple of piña colodas parked in front of them than two people shamefully hiding their flab and picking miserably at a salad in the shade. Let them eat stale cake from the buffet for breakfast! Celebrate the healthy breeze on their uncovered genitals! Rub aftersun on their red backs with compassion and bring them chips without judgment! We of the British persuasion only get about seven days of guaranteed sunshine a year, and I'll be damned if a fear of German laughing my vodka cough is going to stop me getting my Gangnam Style tattoo put in Mallorca this summer. Let's be proud of our ridiculous British heritage and respond with classic self-deprecating laughter. See you on the beach.

Holly Baxter: Brits abroad feel no shame. I can't let the Germans spoil our summer. In: The Guardian, 31st of July 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jul/31/brits-abroad-feel-no-shame-germans-summer>.

Vocabulary words

1 **to strike fear:** to make so. afraid – 4/5 **(Thomas Cooke) package holiday:** a holiday planned by the (Thomas Cooke) travel agency – 5 **Malia:** a village in southern Cyprus – 6 **fledgling:** inexperienced – 6 **to attest to sth.:** to show that sth. is true – 8 **Mancunian:** inhabitant of Manchester – 11 **sedentary:** involving little physical activity – 20 **to slag so. off:** (slang) to criticise so. – 21 **wandering hands:** a person who has wandering hands tries to touch people for sexual excitement – 21 **Hautausschlag:** – 24 **Tinder:** a mobile phone dating app – 24 **quirk:** unusual habit – 26 **The Daily Telegraph:** a British newspaper – 27 **charge:** here: accusation – 27 **kit:** clothes – 28 **hypocritical:** *scheinheilig* – 28 **to encounter sth.:** to experience sth. (unpleasant) – 29 **naturism:** *Freikörperkultur (FKK)* – 29 **to gloat:** *sich hämisch freuen* – 29 **beetroot:** *Rote Bete* – 29 **tabloid:** *Boulevardzeitung* – 35 **linguistic:** *sprachlich* – 39 **lewd:** obviously sexual and rude – 39 **transgression:** action that goes beyond acceptable limits – 41 **tramp stamp:** (*ugs.*) *ein Tattoo oberhalb des Hinterns* – 41 **to adorn:** to decorate – 41/42 **to chug down cocktails:** (*ugs.*) *Cocktails hinunterschütten* – 44 **Magaluf:** a major holiday resort on Mallorca – 45 **wont:** to often do sth. – 47 **to round on so./sth.:** to suddenly attack so./sth. – 49 **to rally:** to cause to come together to make a shared effort – 50 **pitchfork:** *Mistgabel* – 51 **decorum:** controlled and polite behaviour – 52 **to admonish:** to advise so. to do sth. – 55 **flab:** soft fat on so.'s body – 55 **stale:** not fresh – 61 **heritage:** *Erbe* – 61 **self-deprecating:** *selbstironisch*

M 5 Brits abroad, feel no shame! Summarising the text

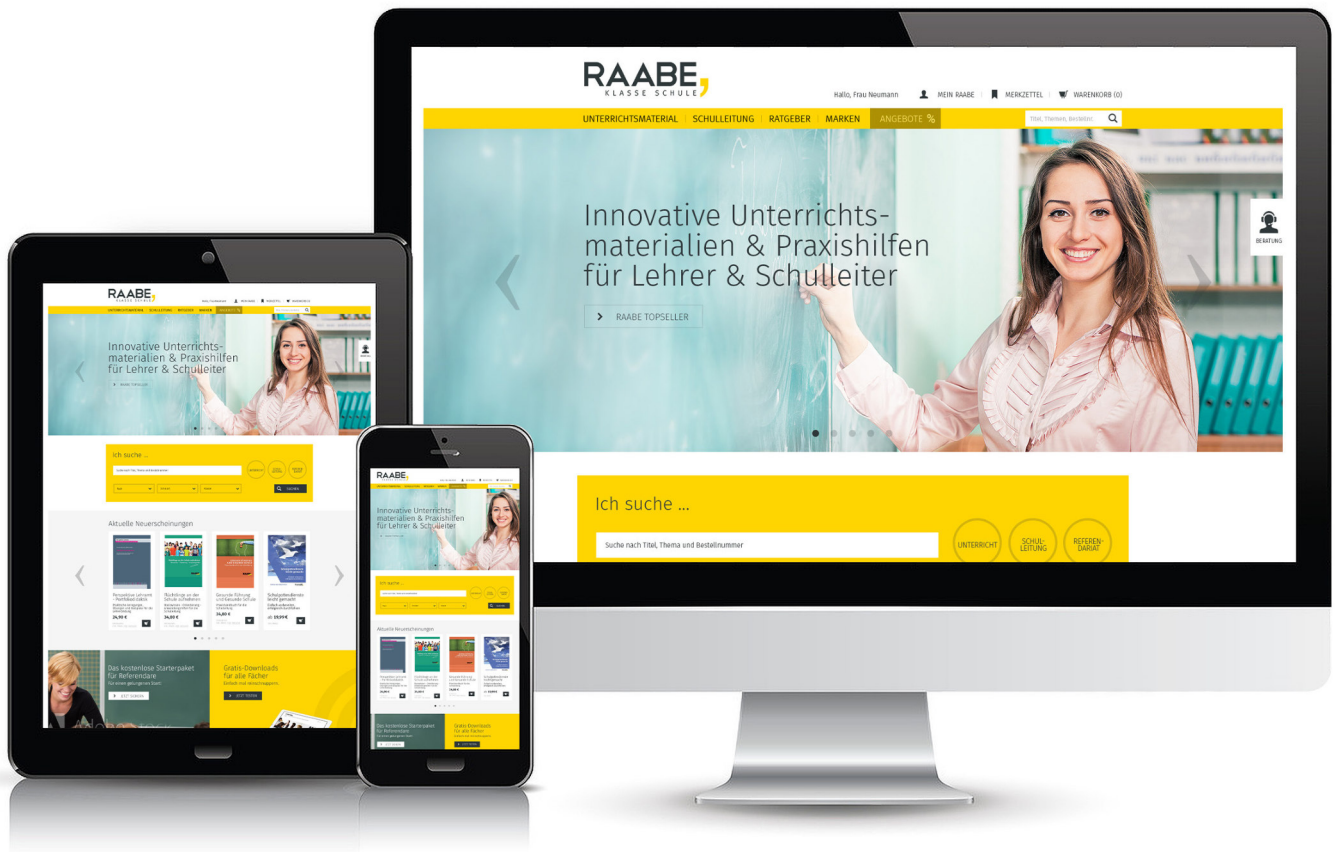
Writing a summary means briefly stating the most important information of a text in your own words. This worksheet gives you an overview of the different parts of a summary and helps you to sum up the main points of the article.

Task

Summarise the article with the help of the table.

Introduction	The article <i>Brits abroad, feel no shame!</i> We can't let the Germans spoil our summer, which was published in ...
Lines 1–16	First, the author ...
Lines 17–25	Second, she introduces ...
Lines 26–32	Furthermore ...
Lines 33–43	Baxter herself is of the opinion that ...
Lines 44–52	Another point mentioned by the author is that ...
Lines 53–end	Finally, the author finishes the article by ...

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