

## II.B.3.12

### Literatur – Plays

# Lynn Nottage: *Sweat* – Anhand des Dramas aktuelle gesellschaftliche Probleme der USA diskutieren (S II)

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Foto: Johan Persson

Dramentexte sind ein wichtiger Bestandteil des Englischunterrichts: Lynn Nottes „*Sweat*“ wurde 2017 mit dem renommierten Pulitzer Prize for Drama ausgezeichnet und gibt Aufschluss über den Effekt wirtschaftlicher Krisen auf die mittelständische Bevölkerung der USA. Im Fokus stehen der Rust Belt der USA und dessen Bewohner mit ihren Sorgen und Krisen. Gleichzeitig wirft das Drama Fragen zum *American Dream* und *American Nightmare* auf und liefert Erklärungsansätze zu sozial-wirtschaftlichen Problemen, Nachteilen der Globalisierung und der Wahl Donald Trumps. Die vorliegende Unterrichtsreihe bietet einen schülerorientierten Zugang zu den Themen des Dramas.

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#### KOMPETENZPROFIL

**Klassenstufe:** 11/12 (G8) bzw. 12/13 (G9)

**Dauer:** 22 Unterrichtsstunden bzw. 11 Doppelstunden

**Kompetenzen:** 1. Leseverstehen und Analysekompetenz: Lektüre einer Ganzschrift, Dramenanalyse; 2. Interkulturelle Kompetenz: gesellschaftliche Herausforderungen der USA erfassen

**Thematische Bereiche:** Dramenanalyse, *American Dream* und Globalisierung

**Material:** Bilder, Cartoons, Zeitungsartikel, Kurzvideos

**Zusatzmedien:** Dramentext

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## Auf einen Blick

### 1./2. Stunde

**Thema:** Getting to know the play and the playwright

**M 1** **Lynn Nottage's *Sweat* – lesson plans and reading assignments** / erste Sichtung des Dramas, Vorstellen des *Advance Reading Organisers*

**M 2** **Lynn Nottage – one of America's most famous modern playwrights** / Vorbereitung des Einstiegs in das Drama anhand von biografischen Informationen zur Autorin und Hintergründen zur Entstehung von „*Sweat*“

**Homework:**

1. Use Lynn Nottage's webpage as well as worksheet M 2 to find more information on the author and on the American Rust Belt.
2. Read Act I, Scenes 1–3 (pp. 17–45) and underline important information on the characters (behaviour, social interaction, character traits etc.).

**Benötigt:**  OH-Projektor bzw. Beamer/Whiteboard

### 3./4. Stunde

**Thema:** *Sweat* – focus on background information

**M 3** ***Sweat* – important background information** / Erarbeiten von Hintergründen zur wirtschaftlichen Situation der Arbeiter im Drama des Dramensettings

**Homework:** Read Act I, Scenes 1–3 (pp. 17–45) again and highlight information on possible racial tensions. Make a list of the characters / problems and difficulties presented.

**Benötigt:**  Beamer/Whiteboard

### 5./6. Stunde

**Thema:** Theme of race and racial tensions, Act I, Scenes 1 and 2

**M 4** **Act I, Scenes 1 and 2 – racial tensions in the USA today** / Textarbeit anhand von Zitaten aus Akt I und Hintergrundinformationen zu Radikalisierungsprozessen: Diskutieren der Gründe und Ursachen für rassistische Verhaltensweisen

**Homework:** Read Act I, Scenes 4–6 (pp. 45–71) + Use your notes from today's lesson to write a detailed analysis on one of the scene stills.

**Benötigt:**  Dramentext

### 7./8. Stunde

**Thema:** Creating *Sweat* – Lynn Nottage's writing process

**M 5** **Lynn Nottage's writing process – audio-visual comprehension** / Erarbeiten und Trainieren von Hörsehverstehensstrategien, Aufbereiten von Hintergrundwissen zum Dramentext und Führen einer Gruppendiskussion

**Homework:** Read Act I, Scene 7 (pp. 71–74).

**Benötigt:**  PC/Tablet und Beamer/Whiteboard sowie Lautsprecher  
 Dramentext

### 9./10. Stunde

**Thema:** *Sweat*: Production of the play

**M 6** ***Sweat on stage: effects of staging*** / Erarbeiten von Aufbau und Konzeption einer Drameninszenierung, Verstehen der Funktionalität von Bühnen- und Setting und Verknüpfen von themenspezifischem Wortschatz anhand von M 13

**M 13** **Focus on drama – language support** / Nutzen des thematischen Wortschatzes zur Beschreibung und Analyse der Szenenbilder

**Homework:** Read Act I completely.

**Benötigt:**  OH-Projektor bzw. Beamer/Whiteboard  
 (ggf.) Farbfolie von M 6, Bildersuche (Internet) weiterer „*Sweat*“-Inszenierungen  
 Dramentext

### 11./12. Stunde

**Thema:** Focus on characters and their development

**M 7** **Act I, Scenes 1, 3, 5–7 – focus on characters I (Jason/Chris)** / Erstellen zweier Charakterprofile der Protagonisten auf der Basis verschiedener Szenen; Beschreiben und Analysieren von Veränderungs- und Entwicklungsprozessen

**M 14** **Focus on drama – language support** / Nutzen des thematischen Wortschatzes zur Beschreibung und Analyse der Charaktere Jason und Chris

**Homework:** Read Act II, scenes 1–4 (pp. 75–98).

**Benötigt:**  OH-Projektor bzw. Beamer/Whiteboard  
 Dramentext

### 13./14. Stunde

**Thema:** *Sweat* – portraying current problems of the USA

**M 8** **Lynn Nottage’s motivation to write *Sweat* – focus on current problems?** / Lesen und Verstehen einer Produktionsrezension, Vertiefen von Hintergrundwissen, Analysieren und Nachvollziehen von Sorgen, Ängsten und Verhaltensweisen der Charaktere

**Homework:** Read Act II, Scenes 5–8 (pp. 98–119). How are the American Dream and the American Nightmare presented by Lynn Nottage? Take notes in your drama text.

**Benötigt:**  Dramentext

**15./16. Stunde**

**Thema:** Economic problems and their effect on America's middle class

**M 9** ***Sweat* background information II – Act I/II: economic problems and their effects on America's middle class** / Erstellen eines *Circle Organizer* zur Visualisierung historisch-wirtschaftlicher Entwicklungen der USA und Kontrastieren der Settings 2000–2008 Reading

**Homework:** Read Act II, Scenes 1 and 2 in detail (pp. 75–85).

**Benötigt:**  Wiedergabemedium für Kurzvideo/Webseite sowie ggf. OH-Projektor  
 ggf. OHP-Folien bzw. Wandplakate des *Graphic Organizer* aus M 9

**17./18. Stunde**

**Thema:** Act II – an introduction through dramatic reading

**M 10** **Act II – How to stage a dramatic reading** / Fördern von Textverstehen und Sprechkompetenz durch „dramatic reading“ an ausgewählten Dramenstellen

**Homework:** Finish reading Act II.

**Benötigt:**  Dramentext; ggf. Smartphones/Tablets für Webbrowser-/Aussprache-Software  
 OH-Projektor bzw. Beamer/Whiteboard sowie M 10 auf OHP-Folie oder digital

**19./20. Stunde**

**Thema:** Act II – analysing drama and working with quotations

**M 11** **Act II – analysing scenes from the drama and working with quotations** / Auszüge des zweiten Aktes kontextualisieren und Informationen zu den Charakteren und ihren Entwicklungen vertiefen

**M 14** **Focus on *Sweat* – language support** / Nutzen des thematischen Wortschatzes zur Beschreibung und Analyse von Charakteren und Textstellen

**Benötigt:**  Dramentext

**21./22. Stunde**

**Thema:** Cartoon analysis and focus on the political background of the play

**M 12** **Cartoon analysis – changing politics** / Beschreiben, Analysieren und Kommentieren eines Bildimpulses; Nachvollziehen der Gründe zur Wahl Donald Trumps zum US-Präsidenten

**Benötigt:**  Abbildung in Farbe auf OHP-Folie oder digital

**LEK**

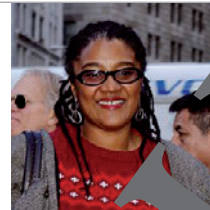
**Thema:** A view from the Rust Belt (March 19<sup>th</sup> 2016)

## Lynn Nottage – one of America’s most famous modern playwrights

M 2

### Lynn Nottage – a short biography

Lynn Nottage (\*1964) is one of America’s most famous playwrights. She was awarded the Pulitzer Prize two times (*Ruined* 2009, *Sweat* 2017) and her plays have been produced throughout the world. Born in New York, Nottage had attended *Saint Ann’s* elementary school – an arts-oriented private school located in Brooklyn – before she graduated from *Fiorello H. LaGuardia* High School, which is also well known for its focus on performing arts. The playwright then attended *Brown University* (Bachelor of Arts) and the famous *Yale School of Drama* (Master of Arts) with additional degrees from *Juilliard School*. Lynn Nottage’s large varieties of plays quite often focus on America’s middle class as well as social and economic issues. (Text: D. Beyer)



By Shankbone - Own work  
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### Lynn Nottage on *Sweat*

[...] One evening I got an email from a friend sharing the news that for a period of time she had been completely and absolutely broke. She was someone I knew quite well and saw regularly. I felt horrible that I had no idea she was struggling. The next morning, we had a long conversation that coincided with the beginning of the first week of the Occupy Wall Street protest against economic inequality. For these two middle-aged women went down there and chanted. Nothing changed, but at least she knew she was not alone. To me, Occupy Wall Street raised a lot of questions that were not answered. That put me out on the street to figure out how economic stagnation was changing the American narrative and how so many people who had so thoroughly invested in the American dream found themselves broadsided. [...] We ended up with the poorest city in America of its size – but which was three hours away. One of the first questions we asked was, how do you describe your city? People would respond by saying: “Reading was ...” They were incredibly nostalgic for this glorious imagined past. It nearly broke my heart. I thought this is a city that cannot conceive of itself in the present or future tense. It is a microcosm of what is happening in America today. We are a country that has lost our narrative. We can’t project our future because we don’t know where we are going. After about a year and a half of research, I met the steelworkers who would become the inspiration for the play – middle-aged white men who shared stories that absolutely broke my heart. I hadn’t anticipated I would be moved the way I was. I hadn’t anticipated that, sitting with them in a circle, I would feel we had shared narrative – one of struggle, disillusionment and frustration with our government and our society. [...]

Source: Clampton, Sarah: Playwright Lynn Nottage: ‘We are a country that has lost our narrative’. *The Guardian*, 02/12/2018, found at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/dec/02/lynn-nottage-interview-play-sweat-america> (Access 16/01/2020)

### Tasks

1. Watch the following interview (QR-Code/Link) and take notes. Then **summarise** important data and information on the play. **Link:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06w7pp5>
2. **Read** the texts above and **outline** Lynn Nottage’s motivation to write *Sweat*.
3. **Comment on** the major reasons to choose one of America’s poorest cities as the major setting of *Sweat*.





## Sweat on stage: effects of staging

M 6



Photos: Johan Persson

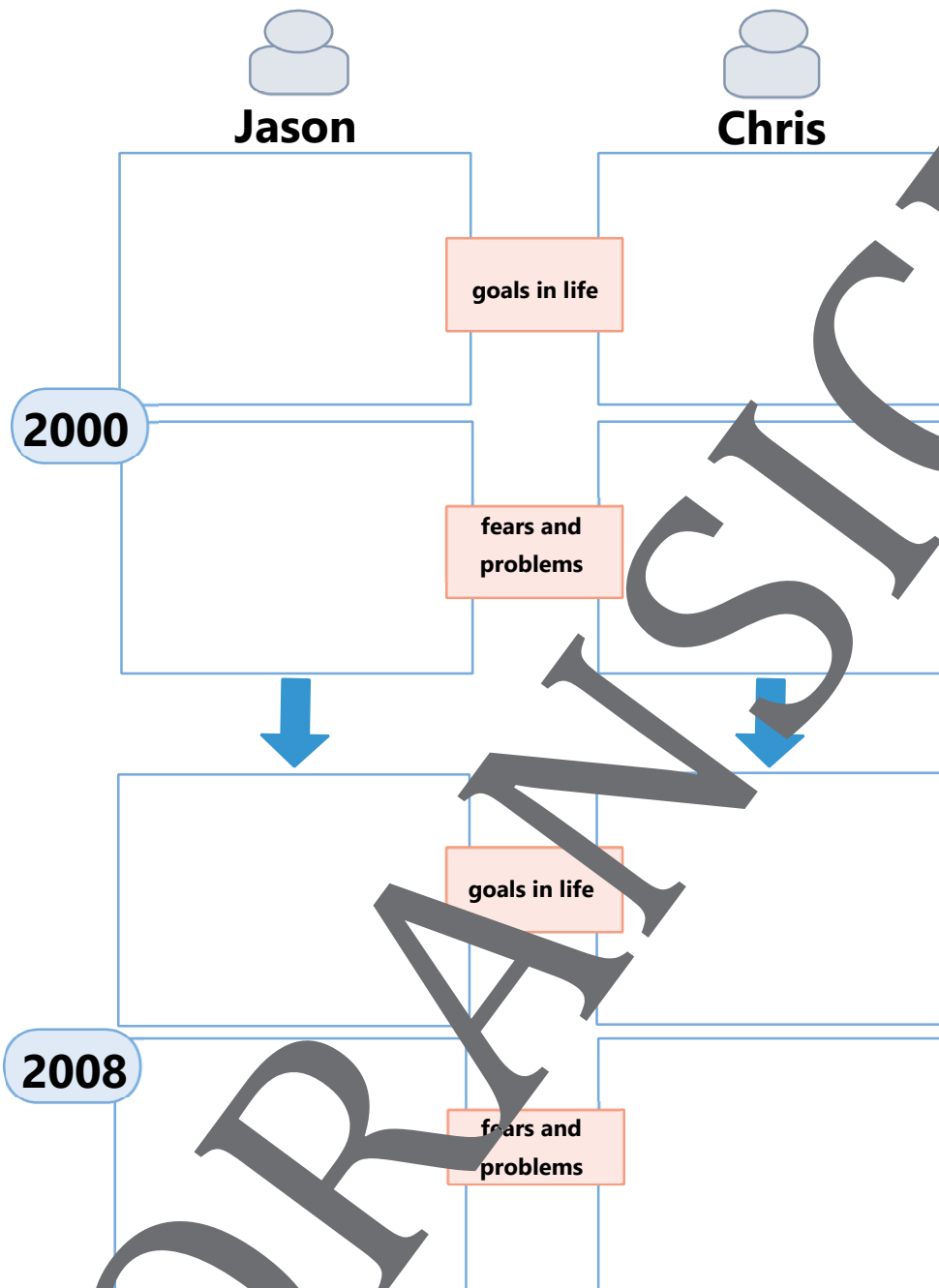
### Tasks

1. Look at the two scene stills. How is the stage designed and how does it affect the viewers' attention?
2. Have a close look at the first act of the play. Which two scenes are shown in the pictures? Why was the "P... .." an important setting of the drama?
3. Imagine you are a professional director and it is your job to work on a new production of Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*. How would you design the stage? Explain.

language support I (useful phrases)	language support II (vocabulary)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scene clearly shows ...</li> <li>• The effect of staging is ...</li> <li>• In the foreground/background ...</li> <li>• On the left/right side ...</li> <li>• The scene is dominated by ...</li> </ul>	<p>stage – stage directions – props – cast                      – centre stage – eye contact – facial expressions – lighting – gestures – body posture – movement – players – actor – actress – director – act – scene</p>

Act I, Scenes 1, 3, 5–7 – focus on characters I  
(Jason/Chris)

M 7



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Task 1

Work together in groups of 4 or 5 students and **read** the text passages assigned to you by your teacher. **Focus on** the text and the characters (2000/2008 – Jason/Chris). **Take notes** and include text references!

Task 2

**Share your results** with students of other groups and **fill in** the complete worksheet.

Task 3

What could help to **explain** Chris and Jason's development and attitudes?

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