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Lesson Plan: Bullying and 'To This Day'

School type: Gymnasium, Vienna

Class: 7th form/11. Schulstufe

Level according to CEFR: B1-B2

Number of students: 17

Date & time of lesson: Dec. 2025

RATIONALE

Contextualization

1 *How does this lesson fit into the broader teaching module (preceding & subsequent lessons)?*

This lesson is part of a larger literature and media module exploring how personal stories are communicated through different forms of expression. In the preceding lessons, students analyzed short written texts focusing on descriptive language, imagery, and tone. They also discussed how personal experiences can be conveyed through narrative or poetic structures. This lesson introduces *spoken word* as a multimodal genre, allowing students to apply their knowledge of literary devices while also developing listening, viewing, and interpretive skills. The subsequent lessons will build on this lesson by guiding students toward creating a short spoken-word text of their own, integrating imagery, emotion, and performance techniques explored today.

2 *Which language skills and systems previously acquired are necessary to participate successfully in the lesson?*

- Students can understand the main ideas of short spoken texts (e.g., videos, poems, or personal stories).
- Students can recognise and interpret changes in voice, speed, or emphasis in spoken performances.
- Students can express opinions and reactions using appropriate vocabulary (e.g., I think..., This part feels..., In my opinion...).
- Students can talk about emotions and personal experiences in simple but meaningful ways.
- Students can annotate a text, marking important words, stylistic features, or structural elements.

Topic appropriateness and relevance

The topic of spoken-word poetry, particularly Shane Koyczan's *To This Day*, is highly appropriate and relevant for a 7th-grade AHS class. Adolescents at this age are developing a stronger sense of identity and emotional awareness, which makes themes such as self-perception, bullying, resilience, and belonging both accessible and meaningful. Many students have either experienced or witnessed similar social dynamics, so the content naturally connects to their lived realities and encourages empathy, reflection, and open discussion.

In addition, spoken word as a genre is engaging for this age group because it is multimodal: it combines visual, auditory, and linguistic elements, aligning well with the media habits and preferences of today's learners. The performance aspect adds emotional depth and supports comprehension, especially for B1–B2 learners who benefit from contextual cues such as intonation, facial expressions, pacing, and emphasis. This makes the text more approachable than traditional written poetry, which can sometimes feel abstract or distant to learners.

Reference to curriculum

Pragmatische Kompetenzen:

Begleitend zu den sprachlichen Mitteln ist ein Bewusstsein für grundlegende Formen der non-verbalen Kommunikation zu schaffen (zB kulturelle Konventionen bezüglich Gestik, Mimik, Körpersprache). (Lehrplan AHS, 2025, p. 142).

Vielfältige Themenbereiche:

Zur Erlangung eines möglichst umfassenden lexikalischen Repertoires (Handlungsfähigkeit/Kommunikationsfähigkeit) sind verschiedenste Themenbereiche zu bearbeiten, wobei sowohl das Thema als auch der Komplexitätsgrad, mit dem es behandelt wird, dem sprachlichen Niveau der Schülerinnen und Schüler entsprechen soll (mögliche Themenbereiche sind zB Ich und mein Umfeld; Arbeit und Freizeit; Erziehung; Rolle der Medien; Lebensplanung; Einstellungen und Werte; Zusammenleben; aktuelle soziale, wirtschaftliche, technische und politische Entwicklungen; kulturelle und interkulturelle Aspekte; Umwelt; Kunst in ihren Ausdrucksformen Literatur, Musik, bildende Künste). Spezielle thematische Schwerpunkte sind jeweils im Einklang mit individuellen Interessenslagen und Bedürfnissen der Schülerinnen und Schüler sowie mit aktuellen Ereignissen zu setzen. (Lehrplan AHS, 2025, p. 143).

Hören:

– längeren Redebeiträgen und komplexer Argumentation folgen können, sofern die Thematik einigermaßen vertraut und der Rede- oder Gesprächsverlauf durch explizite Signale gekennzeichnet ist (Lehrplan AHS, 2025, p. 146).

Sprechen:

An Gesprächen teilnehmen und zusammenhängendes Sprechen

– ein Gespräch oder eine Diskussion aufrechterhalten und dabei kurz zu den Standpunkten anderer Stellung nehmen, Vergleiche anstellen und verschiedene Möglichkeiten angeben können. (Lehrplan AHS, 2025, p. 146).

– eine Argumentation, auch in Form einer Präsentation, gut genug ausführen können, um die meiste Zeit ohne Schwierigkeiten verstanden zu werden. (Lehrplan AHS, 2025, p. 146).

Focus on the following competences

- Can maintain a conversation or discussion but may sometimes be difficult to follow when trying to express exactly what they would like to. (*CEFR Comp. Vol, 2020, conversation, B1*).
- Can account for and sustain their opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments. (*CEFR Comp. Vol, 2020, informal discussion (with friends), B2*).
- Can follow what is said, though they may occasionally have to ask for repetition or clarification if the discussion is rapid or extended. (*CEFR Comp. Vol, 2020, goal-oriented co-operation, B1*).
- Can give brief comments on the views of others. (*CEFR Comp. Vol, 2020, goal-oriented co-operation, B1*).

Precise learning outcomes formulated as *can-do* statements

- Students can identify key moments in a spoken-word performance by noting changes in tone, pace, or emphasis during a short video excerpt.
- Students can present one selected line from the poem in a short whole-class exchange and describe why it resonated with them using appropriate emotional vocabulary.
- Students can explain a chosen “power moment” to their peers using short, clear sentences that describe the technique used (e.g., metaphor, direct address) and its effect.
- Students can compare their annotations in a small-group discussion by asking and answering simple interpretive questions (e.g., Why did you mark this part? / What do you think this means?).

Relevant *EPOSTL* descriptors

“I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.” (*EPOSTL, 2007, Speaking/Spoken Interaction, no. 1*).

“I can vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners’ motivation and interest.” (*EPOSTL, 2007, Lesson content, no. 9*).

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE

rough time frame	procedure	interaction format	skills / systems	materials	notes
5 min.	Warm-up discussion: What is spoken word? Students brainstorm characteristics (performance, rhythm, emotion) or associations.	T-S	Speaking , activating prior knowledge; sharing associations; justifying ideas	Board	Teacher should inquire more about answers like: “It’s emotional” → <i>What makes spoken word emotional?</i> or “It’s like rap” → <i>In what way? Rhythm? Performance? Message?</i> These answers reveal misconceptions or deeper insights worth exploring.
5 min.	Teacher introduces topic: bullying, identity, and self-expression. Briefly prepares students for sensitive content.	T-S	Listening for gist; Listening for topic framing		Teacher should establish safe, comfortable environment.
3 min.	Explain listening procedure: Students will watch the poem twice . 1st viewing → <i>just enjoy & listen for tone/pace changes</i> . 2nd viewing → <i>mark imagery/metaphor & direct address using the written text</i> .	T-S, S	Listening: global meaning; listening for tone/pace	Poem → text can be found online from various sources; video, projector	Teacher can instruct students to use different color pens for the different annotation categories.
7 min.	1st viewing: Watch without marking text. Students only note (mentally or with small symbols): changes in tone, pace, emphasis .	T-S	Listening for performance features: tone, pace, emphasis; recognising emotional shifts	Video, projector	Teacher briefly explains the terms before watching: <i>tone = emotional quality; pace = speed; emphasis = stress on important words</i> .

8 min.	2nd viewing: Students now annotate the text. They mark (1) imagery/metaphor, (2) direct address (“you/we”).	T-S, S	Reading/Annotation: identifying stylistic devices; locating metaphors; noticing pronoun shifts	Poem text, video	These features are easier to identify visually , so they are saved for post-first-viewing.
5 min.	Small-group comparison: Students compare tone/pace notes & what imagery/direct address they found. Then they choose one “power moment”: the most effective moment (emotionally, memorably, or in terms of impact/performance).	S-S	Speaking: comparing interpretations; agreeing in groups; giving short explanations	Poem text	Teacher circulates. Clarify that all answers are valid if justified.
15 min.	Whole-class analysis using Mentimeter: Students submit their chosen lines. Teacher selects 2–3 to analyse: <i>What technique is used? What is the effect on the listener? Why does this line “hit” you personally?</i>	T-S	Listening: listening for detail in peers’ explanations	Mentimeter	-

LIST OF SOURCES INCL. TEACHING MATERIALS

Bundesministerium für Bildung. (2025). *Lehrplan der Allgemeinbildenden höheren Schulen. Lebende Fremdsprache (erste, zweite)*. https://www.bmb.gv.at/Themen/schule/schulpraxis/lp/lp_ahs.html

Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume*. <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>

Koyczan, S. (2013, March 22). *To This Day – A Spoken Word Poem*. [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/LMyl_nmZxD4?si=4-a_iAMYKD6d65UW.

Mentimeter. (n.d.). Word cloud: Interactive and engaging word clouds. *Mentimeter*. <https://www.mentimeter.com/de-DE/features/word-cloud>

Newby, D., Allan, R., Fenner, A.-B., Jones, B., Komorowska, H., & Soghikyan, K. (2007). *European portfolio for student teachers of languages. A reflection tool for language teacher education*. European Centre for Modern Languages. <https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/ECML-resources/EPOSTLEN.pdf?ver=2018-03-22-164301-45>