

Name(s): Amélie Noichl

Lesson Plan: Climate Change and ‘Homesick: A Plea for Our Planet’

School type: AHS, Vienna

Class: 8th form/12. Schulstufe

Level according to CEFR: B2

Number of students: 26

Date & time of lesson: Nov. 2025

RATIONALE

Contextualization

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

This lesson is a stand-alone lesson for the university course of “Literature and Language Education – Poetry off the Page”. However, previously in the school year, the class has already discussed poetry due to its appearance in the schoolbook (English in Context 8, 2024, pp. 42-45). In this context, the class has listened to Rupi Kaur’s reading of her poetry (triple j, 2017) and to Maya Angelous’ reading/performance of “Still I Rise” (Fail Wise, 2021). Though not directly preceding these lessons, the current lesson plan builds on students’ acquired knowledge and skill to critically evaluate poems.

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

- Learners can listen for gist and identify the overall mood, key themes and topic of a listening.
- Learners can listen for detailed examples and their relevance to the message of the listening.
- Learners can respond to input with creative writing.
- Learners can orally express dis/agreement, summarize ideas and explain their opinions.
- Learners can guess context in a reading based on limited input.

Topic appropriateness and relevance

Andrea Gibson’s poem addresses climate change, a topic of both global and personal relevance, particularly given its impacts on current policies and public debate in Austria (and other global contexts). The poem presents this issue in a personal, emotional and accessible way that explores the topic beyond the conventional formats in which learners typically encounter it. Engaging with a (spoken word) poem invites creative responses, giving the learners an opportunity to use poetry as a medium for self-expression.

Reference to curriculum

„Natur und Technik. Auch im Fremdsprachenunterricht sind gelegentlich fachsprachliche Texte zu bearbeiten, die eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit human-, sozial-, naturwissenschaftlichen, technologischen und wirtschaftsbezogenen Entwicklungen ermöglichen“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2025, p. 175*).

„Kreativität und Gestaltung. In Fortsetzung zur Unterstufe ist im Fremdsprachenunterricht der Oberstufe methodisch und inhaltlich die Möglichkeit zu kreativen Aktivitäten in der Fremdsprache anzubieten (zB [...] Schreiben als kreative Ausdrucksform)“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2025, p. 175*).

„Vertrautheit mit Lehr- und Lernmaterialien. [...]Für die Aktualität und angemessene Authentizität der Lehr- und Lernmaterialien ist laufend zu sorgen. Außerdem ist auf den Einsatz von authentischem Textmaterial zu achten“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2025, p. 176*).

„Vielfältige Themenbereiche. Zur Erlangung eines möglichst umfassenden lexikalischen Repertoires [...] 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; [...] Umwelt; Kunst in ihren Ausdrucksformen Literatur, Musik, bildende Künste). [...] Die verschiedenen Themenbereiche sind durch möglichst vielfältige Quellen zu erschließen, wobei bei der thematischen Auswahl fremdsprachiger Texte auch literarischen Werken ein angemessener Stellenwert einzuräumen ist“ (*Lehrplan der AHS, 2025, p. 177*).

Focus on the following competences

- Learners “can understand most documentaries and most other recorded or broadcast material delivered in the standard form of the language and can identify mood, attitude, etc.” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, Understanding audio (or signed) media recordings, B2*).
- Learners “can account for and sustain their opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, Informal discussion, B2*).
- Learners “can produce clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts in an assured, personal, natural style appropriate to the reader in mind” (*CEFR Comp. Vol., 2020, Creative writing, C1*).

Precise learning outcomes formulated as *can-do* statements

Students can identify the key themes in the poem “Homesick: A Plea for Our Planet” by Andrea Gibson and talk about them.

Students can express their personal opinion about the poem “Homesick: A Plea for Our Planet” by Andrea Gibson.

Students can express their feelings or personal relationship to nature and earth in a brief creative writing task.

Relevant *EPOSTL* descriptors

“I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing (authentic materials, visual aids etc.)” (*EPOSTL, 2007, Writing, no. 4*).

“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
3 min.	Introduction: → Introducing myself and the context in which I am holding the lesson	T → S	Listening		Keep it brief, reference their experience with poetry, address the difference between spoken word poetry and poetry readings in 1-2 sentences.
7 min.	Lead-in: → In pairs or small groups, students get a snippet with a line from the poem. → They should guess what the poem is about or in which context the line(s) appear. → In case the discussion dies down early, students can be asked to make a guess about the topic in plenum.	S ↔ S	Speaking: expressing agreement/disagreement, explaining opinions Reading: inferencing, guessing context based on one to two lines	cut-out lines provided on worksheet M1	Instruction: “Each group will get a slip of paper with one line from the poem we’ll listen to today. There are five different lines in total. Discuss the line you get and try to guess what the poem might be about. You’ll have about 5 minutes for this.”
5 min.	First listen: → The poem “Homesick – A plea for our planet” is played via the projector.	-	Listening: listening for gist	PC, projector	Instruction: “We’re going to listen to the poem now. Try to listen for the line you discussed and recognize in which context it appears.”
10 min.	Post-listen discussion: → Discussion of first impressions & identification of key themes of the poem → Further: allude to the title, Gibson’s performance, feelings evoked	T ↔ S	Speaking: expressing agreement/disagreement, summarizing ideas, explaining opinions		possible questions: “What is meant with the title ‘homesick’?” “What is the poem about?” “How did Gibson present the poem,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ask about “their line”, did it appear in the context they expected? Did they guess the topic of the poem correctly? 				what impression did they give you? Which feelings did they try to evoke?”
7 min.	<p>Second listen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The poem is played via the projector again, this time, learners have a specific listening focus. → Students should listen for the examples Gibson gives in the poem, specifically to the content of the examples. → Students get a worksheet with the full poem on it. While listening, they should mark examples they find striking, important or beautiful. 	-	Listening: listening for details	PC, projector, worksheet M2 with full poem	<p>Instruction:</p> <p>“As you listen, focus on the examples Gibson gives, especially around the line “None of this is poetry. It’s just the earth being who she is in spite of us...” They describe things in nature that are inspiring, and later they mention ways in which nature/earth has contributed to human creation. While listening, highlight/underline those examples in the text. You don’t have to mark every example, just the ones you find special or meaningful.”</p>
13 min.	<p>Post-listening transfer task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Students respond to the poem, specifically to the examples they have just highlighted, by writing their own lines. The lines are posted on Mentimeter. → individual work but students can ask their neighbour for feedback or input if they want → inspiration is offered on a PowerPoint slide → response can be in prose, poetry or any style/register that students want to use 	S (←→S)	Writing: responding to input with creative writing	PC, projector, Power Point Slide M3, Mentimeter	<p>Alternative: give students slip of paper to write their response on, slip of paper has to be pinned to blackboard → ensures that everyone contributes</p>

LIST OF SOURCES INCL. TEACHING MATERIALS

- Abram, J., & Williams, S. (2024). *English in Context 8*. Veritas.
- 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
- Button Poetry. (21.04.2022). *Andrea Gibson – Homesick: A Plea for Our Planet*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/4M-0QFtVauk?si=5XG-dHmU9h3V582X>
- 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>
- Fail Wise. (12.03.2021). *Still I rise | A Very Inspirational Poem by Maya Angelou | FailWise*. YouTube.
<https://youtu.be/RrjNdYdbiwk?si=smRzmHM3h8rXE-Kk>
- Gibson, A. (n.d.) *Homesick: A Plea for Our Planet (Official Lyrics)*. andragibson.org <https://andragibson.org/homesick-a-plea-for-our-planet>
- 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*. European Centre for Modern Languages. <https://www.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/ECML-resources/EPOSTL-EN.pdf?ver=2018-03-22-164301-450>
- triple j. (25.05.2017). *Rupi Kaur reads poetry from her collection 'Milk and Honey'*. [Video]. YouTube.
https://youtu.be/rVo4q6xsWnc?si=HmyDdMz5F2yHyF_b