

Brief synopsis of the book 'Zweier ohne' by Dirk Kurbjuweit

This book was first published in 2001. It is set in the 1990s and is about the unusual friendship between Johann and Ludwig, narrated by Ludwig when he is in his 20s. Their friendship starts at the age of 11 and ends with Ludwig's death on his 18th birthday – a day after they had lost an important rowing race to their main rivals. The plot focuses on the months leading up to that race, the nature of the boy's friendship, which becomes increasingly fragile despite their promise to each other to be like twins. As Johann embarks on a secret relationship with Ludwig's sister Vera, Ludwig's behaviour becomes more and more erratic and bizarre, which ultimately ends in tragedy.

	Description of activity and suggested uses	Skills covered
Activity 1	<p>The text in this activity is a reader review of the book. The activity is a gap fill task that lends itself to individual work, as students drag and drop words into the gaps of the text.</p> <p>As a possible extension task, students could translate the review into English and do some vocab work in preparation for writing their own review in Activity 3.</p>	<p>This task mainly develops students' reading skills, helps them expand their vocabulary for discussing the book, and in particular for book reviews.</p>
Activity 2	<p>This is a translation task of an extract from the book. It is taken from the conversation between Ludwig and Johann that leads to their promise to become like twins. This idea is central to the book and the main characters. And as such, this passage would also lend itself to further discussion of this theme in the group. Students could find further examples in the book that show how the boys aim to achieve their goal. Furthermore, this could lead to a practice essay, where students can use the passages that they have found to provide evidence for their arguments and to analyse the theme.</p>	<p>Students practise their reading and translation skills (into English) and expand their vocabulary and apply their grammatical knowledge in the process.</p> <p>The extension task would also help them to develop their analytical and writing skills.</p>
Activity 3	<p>For this activity students have to read two reviews of the novel, with a view to writing their own. These reviews are designed to complement the previous review in activity one.</p> <p>Before writing their own review, students should read and thoroughly understand the two model reviews. Thereafter students could discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of the reviews. They could also discuss language (phrases/ words) that they might use in their own reviews.</p>	<p>This activity involves reading and writing skills. Depending on how the teacher approaches this, collaborative skills and reviewing skills could also be developed.</p>