

C2 House of cards



1. Watch the two trailers of the political thriller series "House of Cards" and describe Francis Underwood. To do this, please use the following link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvSkxBYuoQY
www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXIDQKjEsNQ
2. Select two different parts from the video and analyze them in terms of the camera angle. How does the main character, Francis Underwood, affect you in these scenarios?
3. Discuss your analyses with some of your classmates, and explain how they help shape the image of the up and coming politician.
4. Watch the following clip: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryrzLPbKIPA (Link rot und fett)
How do the interviewed German politicians comment on the reality of the content of „House of Cards“ regarding the voting processes in the German Bundestag?
5. Discuss whether the image of Francis Underwood matches your personal ideas and your opinion on people who are active in politics

Six seasons of the series "House of Cards" were broadcast between 2013 and 2018. The focus of the action is on the politician Francis Underwood, who is shown in the picture below (played by Kevin Spacey) and his wife Claire (played by Robin Wright). Not shying away from intrigues, corruption and even murder, the congressman tries to get more and more power. Hardly believable, Underwood first becomes vice-president during the

course of the series and even president at the end of the second season. During the last season his wife, Claire Underwood, becomes president. The main actor Kevin Spacey, was not part of the sixth and final season. This was due to allegations of sexual harassment against the actor. So, the series had to finish without him.



Foto: picture alliance/AP Photo/David Giesbrecht

C4 The Handmaid's Tale



1. Describe the picture, which shows a scene from the series "The Handmaid's Tale". Comment on the camera angles, the setting, the clothes, the lighting and the colors of the image.
2. Interpret how this portrayal characterizes the main character and which atmosphere it creates.
3. Discuss in your class which role this character could play in the series and how it will develop in the course of the story in your opinion.
4. Watch the trailer of the first season of "The Handmaid's Tale" online.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVLIDETfx1c>. Answer the following questions in written form.
 Describe who the main character Offred is and how she is characterized.
 Name the rights that have been taken from Offred.
5. Explain from the film how the political system (institutions, processes) was altered and which factors allowed this change to happen.



The series "The Handmaid's Tale" has been broadcast since 2017 and is set in the fictional country Gilead, which geographically corresponds to a part of the USA. In 2021, the fourth season has been released. The country is led by a male-dominated, Christian-fundamentalist, military dictatorship. Women barely have rights and only serve as Handmaids. Many women cannot have children anymore. Fertile women are being forced to have intercourse with the men of the ruling group, to bear them a successor.

The main character named June (played by Elisabeth Moss) is such a handmaid. She is named Offred in the beginning of the series, because she is the maid of Fred Waterford, one of the male oppressors and main antagonists of the story and therefore "belongs" to him.

Tips for analyzing an image:

Camera setting	camera angle	size of the setting
Image composition	Center of the image	fore- and background
Arrangement of the characters	distance vs. proximity between people	line of sight
	arrangement of the characters in the center vs. periphery	
Setting	surroundings/location	equipment, furnishing, decoration and state rooms
Brightness and color	dominance of specific colors	level of brightness
	illumination of certain elements	

C6 Power and violence



1. Read the information in the presented sequence and become familiar with Offred's situation. Then look at the four pictures that show different scenes from the series.
2. Using the material, describe the social climate in Gilead.
3. In the portrayed sequence, Offred and the other Maids take part in a participation. This expression means the participation in an execution. Explain why the maids do not have a choice other than participating in this action. It is not clear from the scene whether the man is guilty.



Transcript for the sequence

Aunt Lydia	Kneel. Well. Good morning, girls.
<i>Handmaids in unison</i>	Good morning, Aunt Lydia.
Aunt Lydia	I am sure we are all aware of the unfortunate circumstances that bring us together on this beautiful morning, when I am certain we would all rather be doing something else. But duty is a hard taskmistress, and it is in the name of duty that we are here today. This man has been convicted of rape. As you know, the penalty of rape is death. This disgusting creature has given us no choice. Am I correct, girls?
<i>Handmaids in unison</i>	Yes, Aunt Lydia.
Ofglen	<i>(A tear is running down Offreds face)</i> <i>(whispers)</i> Offred.
Aunt Lydia	But that is not the worst of it. Now, you know that I do my very best to protect you. The world can be quite an ugly place. But we cannot wish that ugliness away. We cannot hide from that ugliness. This man raped a handmaid. She was pregnant. And the baby died. <i>(expression of agitation and indignation among the girls)</i> Quiet, please. Now, girls, up. Wings. <i>(The girls take off their big white headgear)</i> You may come forward and form a circle. You all know the rules for a particicution. When I blow the whistle, what you do is up to you. Until I blow it again.