

Die Verwandlung (novel)

This short novel is about the sales representative Gregor Samsa who wakes up as a massive bug one morning. The novel describes how Gregor's family reacts to his metamorphosis and to what extent they change as well. As Gregor was the main breadwinner of the family father has to take up work again and the family takes in boarders. Initially Grete, Gregor's sister, cares about the unfortunate Gregor, but after a while, she together with her parents despise Gregor. Grete even states that they will have to get rid of Gregor. Gregor feels the resentment and decides to die so that he would no longer be a burden to his family.

Activity	Skills covered	Ideas for use
<p>Activity 1</p>	<p>This "true" or "false" activity requires close reading of an important event in the novel.</p>	<p>This exercise could be used after the extract was read together in class. As the system creates the 10 statements at random order each time the activity is done, students who faced difficulties the first time round could improve their knowledge of the text by repeating the activity until they get it right.</p>
<p>Activity 2</p>	<p>This activity aims to improve students' grammatical knowledge. They will have to rearrange sentence parts to produce a sentence which follows correct German word order.</p>	<p>Students first read a short extract from "Die Verwandlung" to give them info they will need for re-arranging the sentence parts. The idea is to combine the teaching of grammar with the teaching of literature. The activity can be used for classroom teaching but also for individual language work since the system will give instant feedback to the learner.</p>
<p>Activity 3</p>	<p>This activity is a combined reading and writing activity as the students will have to read an extract from the novel which shows his relationship to his family and then write a summary with the help of five pointers.</p>	<p>Students could tackle this on their own or in a pair work activity. Afterwards they could compare their summaries with those of other members of the class.</p>

<p>Activity 4</p>	<p>This “true” or “false” exercise is similar to activity one and therefore tests comprehension skills, but the extract on which the activity is based is longer and more complex and shows how much Gregor cares about his family even in his adverse situation.</p>	<p>As the extract reflects important characteristics of Gregor, it could be analysed in class. The “true – false” activity will help students to gain an in depth knowledge of this important part of the novel.</p>
<p>Activity 5</p>	<p>As activity two, this is also a word order exercise based on an extract from the book, containing important characteristics of Gregor’s parents. It shows the brutality of the father and the helplessness of the mother.</p>	<p>The sentences to be re-arranged are more complex than the ones in the previous activity and require the knowledge of subordinate sentences. As with the previous activity the grammatical exercise can be used as a classroom activity or an individual activity.</p>
<p>Activity 6</p>	<p>For this activity students have to read the end of the novel which demonstrates how heartless the family are and how little they mourn for Gregor. They are all relieved about Gregor’s death and plan their future in an unperturbed way. Students will have to write a summary of this concluding paragraph in the novel.</p>	<p>In contrast to activity three the students will have to write this summary without any scaffolding. It is assumed that students will have been carefully prepared to write summaries. These summaries could be homework activities or could form the basis of a class discussion about the family’s reaction to Gregor’s death.</p>