

Zweier ohne

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>This activity focuses on one of the main characters of the book – Vera, who is Ludwig’s younger sister. Her blossoming relationship with Johann, though seemingly secret, endangers the boys’ friendship and seems to cause Ludwig’s increasingly erratic behaviour.</p> <p>On the first screen there are four boxes with the names of people/aspects of the book which Vera influenced. For each there is a set of three alternative sentences detailing the effect she had. Students read and click on the correct alternative. There is a check button so students can assess their answers. Afterwards students have an opportunity to go into greater depth. If they click on individual boxes, a screen appears on which students can write in more detail about Vera’s effect in their own words.</p>	<p>Students develop their reading and analytical skills, as they decide, which option is the best fit. Naturally, they also develop their knowledge of vocabulary relevant to discussing this book.</p>
Activity 2	<p>This activity focuses on the most defining moments in the friendship between Ludwig and Johann, as they decide to become like twins. Ludwig comes up with this idea – initially in order to be able to beat their main rivals in rowing competitions, but it defines the nature of their friendship and Ludwig’s influence on Johann.</p> <p>This activity lends itself to pair or group work, especially when using the printable resource. Students need to consider the different effects that this promise has on different characters and the plot of the book. A help sheet is available that suggests possible answers for each section.</p> <p>This activity could also lead to a follow-up writing task, such as a practice essay on the role of this promise and the boys’ friendship.</p> <p>A similar activity could be compiled for different characters or events in the book.</p>	<p>Students use their analytical skills, as they assess the role of the promise and its effects in the book. They have to use and expand their topic-specific vocabulary in order to write down their ideas, which in turn develops their writing skills and application of grammar.</p> <p>If this activity is being developed into a discussion, students also develop their speaking skills.</p>

Zweier ohne**Activity 3**

This activity focuses again on the character Vera. This time, students consider her importance in the novel by imagining the plot without her. A help box is available that suggests ideas to students, as to who she is and what she does and to provide them with vocabulary to complete this task.

Students can work on this task individually, although it would probably be beneficial to have a pair or group discussion about the character, before students complete the writing task.

As far as grammar is concerned, this is a good activity to practise conditional sentences.

This activity could also be extended into a practice essay. And it could easily be adapted to other characters in the book.

Students develop their vocabulary and reading skills, especially when using the help box.

For the completion of the task, they need to develop their writing skills by applying lexis and grammar, in order to express increasingly sophisticated ideas.