

## **Appendix 1 – Teaching scheme for teaching Sherman Alexie and "This Is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" – Time: 4 weeks**

### **Session 1**

In class:

1. Reminder of how to write critically about literature – Appendix 2 (5 min).  
(This should be treated more thoroughly if the pupils have not been through the subject before.) Make the pupils aware of the fact that they are to read and write a critical analysis of the short story "This Is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" by Sherman Alexie. First draft due session 7.
2. Introductory PowerPoint presentation of Sherman Alexie and "This Is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" – Appendix 3 (25-30 min).
3. Pre-reading activity: Selection of 10-12 words on the blackboard. **(OBS find words)**  
Ask the pupils to reflect on how they perceive these words. First make sure everyone knows the meaning, ask them what the words mean and have some of the pupils translate them into Norwegian. Now ask again how they perceive the words, are they positive, negative or neutral? Discuss.  
  
From there, the teacher should lead a discussion on what emotions the words arise and whether they can predict what the short story is about. The purpose of this activity is to motivate, arouse curiosity and establish a pre-understanding of the text as well as expand the vocabulary (15-20 min).
4. Final question: Ask the pupils to reflect on how and why anyone may struggle to find his or her identity and discuss what they come up with.

Homework: Check the internet for information about Sherman Alexie. Write at least five sentences about him in your notebook and be prepared to present your sentences in class.

### **Session 2**

In class:

1. Ask for homework and let them present what they have written about Sherman Alexie. Also ask again to reflect on how and why anyone may struggle to find his or her identity and discuss what they come up with. Discuss. (10-15 min)
2. Present Appendix 4 – Organization of "This Is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona." Explain that sometimes stories may seem confusing when they are not presented as linear. Talk a little about framestories and how this only reflects how we tell our own stories when we talk. (10-15 min)
3. Present while-reading activity: Provide two charts. (10-15 min)
  1. Three columns for Victor and three for Thomas with the following headlines: Physical characteristics, personality traits, other information.
  2. Three columns with the following headlines: where, when, how does it look like or feel like. The purpose of this exercise is to train the pupils into closely trace the setting and character traits, to develop their reading proficiency and prepare for the post-reading activities. It will furthermore start a development of an understanding of how people relate to each other

through the stories we use to tell each other about ourselves and also how think about our selves.

4. Hand out copies of “This Is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” and start to read. (15-25 min)

Homework: Write in your notebook at least five words you don’t understand and find the meaning of it in a dictionary. Be prepared to explain the words in class, preferably in English. Fill in the two charts about characters and setting as you go along.

### Session 3

In class:

Reading session. Have study questions, Appendix 5 ready in case some of the faster readers finish reading.

Homework: Finish reading the short story. Fill in the two charts about characters and setting as you go along.

### Session 4

In class:

1. Start with easy questions about the content, opening up for a class discussion where the teacher carefully chooses who should be allowed to answer what question. The pupils who are less capable of reading between the lines should be given enough time and the opportunity to answer the more easy questions as: “What is the name of the main character or characters?” or “Who died in the story?” Other, more difficult thematic questions may be addressed to the whole class, allowing all of the pupils to have the opportunity to reflect. These may be questions where the teacher refers to places in the story and offers examples. For instance: “Victor hadn’t seen his father in a few years, only talked to him on the telephone once or twice, but there still was a genetic pain, which was soon to be pain as real and immediate as a broken bone” (59) or: “Thomas was a storyteller that nobody wanted to listen to. That’s like being a dentist in a town where everybody has false teeth” (61) and “Nobody talked to Thomas anymore because he told the same damn stories over and over again” (62). The pupils may be asked to reflect on what is meant by “a genetic pain” and what they believe the people in the short story think about Thomas or storytellers in general or what Native Americans themselves think about the traditional Native Americans. After such a short activity to bring the pupils into the universe of the story, the pupils should be given time to reflect on study questions preferably in pairs or individually. The questions should not be too many or too difficult, but yet encompass all the different narratological aspects and also spur the pupils to find the link between the text and the reality outside the text. (10-15 min)

2. Work with study questions, first individually then divide into groups. The teacher listens in and discuss with each of the groups at the time. (45-50 min)

Individually: First reflect on the questions without taking notes for about 5 minutes.

In groups of four: Exchange ideas and answer all the questions in your notebook.

It is important to mix the more difficult reflection questions with the identity questions and the more easy observation questions, for example to include the request for a plot summary. For many pupils, to be able to summarize a story in their own words is an overwhelming task even in Norwegian and therefore the teachers attention would concentrate on questions having to do mostly with the plot in the conversation with those pupils. For the very mature pupils, on the other side of the scale, even an extra challenge pointing out the difference in “seeing” and “telling” when it comes to narration and focalization or the connection between the Native Americans and the Sami people or different indigenous people and the similarities between them may be explored. This opens up for a series of ways to differentiate the teaching.

How long this session will take depends on how trained the pupils are in reading and discussing literature. It might be appropriate to end the session with a discussion and exchange of ideas between all the groups.

Homework: Start to write your analysis of “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona”. You may bring your laptops to class next session or a memory stick so that you can continue your writing in class. First draft due session 7.

### **Session 5**

In class:

1. Discuss evaluation criteria and what the criteria should be for this paper. Explain that the papers will be graded according to the content, the language and the structure. Ask what they think a good critical essay should be like and agree on criteria. The teacher will of course steer the discussion and will afterwards make a list which will probably conform to Appendix 6 – Evaluation criteria for written papers. (20-25 min)

2. Continue writing on their analysis. (35-40 min)

Homework: Continue to write your analysis of “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona”. First draft due session 7.

### **Session 6**

In class:

Film: Smoke Signals (1 h – 1h30min in total)

Homework: Continue to write your analysis of “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona”. First draft due session 7.

### **Session 7**

In class:

1. Film: Smoke Signals (last 30 min)
2. “Two stars and a wish”: Self-evaluation and “Each other evaluation.” Pair up the pupils (The teacher decides on pairs.) Each pupil reads another pupil’s essay and gives feedback, two good aspects of the other’s essay and one thing that can be improved. (20-30 min)

Homework: Finish the last draft of your essay.

### **Session 8**

In class:

1. Hand out the list of criteria for evaluation, based on the discussion in session 5, two for each pupil. The pupils are now to read their partner's essay and their own essay and grade them according to the criteria before they hand them in with their own and their partner's evaluations attached to them.

### **Session 8**

In class: Return the papers and go through things that appear in the essays that need to be commented on in class.