

**Abit** **MEHR**  
**ERFAHREN**

Englisch

Abi Niedersachsen –

*Das musst du können.*

**STARK**

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# Vorwort

Liebe Schülerinnen und Schüler,

dieses handliche Skript bietet Ihnen umfassende Informationen zu allen **verbindlichen Materialien** (Pflichtlektüren und -film), die Sie für die **Abiturprüfung 2026** im Fach Englisch kennen müssen.

Dank der knappen, übersichtlichen Darstellung eignet es sich besonders zur Auffrischung und Wiederholung des Prüfungsstoffs kurz vor dem Abitur:

- Anhand der Kennzeichnung im Inhaltsverzeichnis können Sie ersehen, welche Materialien für das **grundlegende** oder **erhöhte Anforderungsniveau** verbindlich sind.
- Zu jedem Werk finden Sie die wichtigsten **Fakten**, eine **Zusammenfassung der Handlung** und eine Übersicht über die zentralen **Figuren**.
- Unter „Themes and interpretation“ können Sie **Interpretationsansätze** zu den Werken nachlesen, die Ihnen bei der Bearbeitung von möglichen Abituraufgaben helfen können. In der Textaufgabe wird unter Umständen von Ihnen verlangt, inhaltliche Aspekte aus dem Prüfungstext (den Sie im Abitur erstmals zu Gesicht bekommen) zu den verpflichtenden Materialien (die Sie aus dem Unterricht kennen) in Bezug zu setzen. Die in diesem Skript behandelten Themen orientieren sich an den vom Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung im Bildungssystem (IQB) veröffentlichten Themenfeldern und sind so für die Abiturprüfung besonders relevant (siehe Übersicht auf der folgenden Seite).
- Zahlreiche **Schaubilder** und **Beispiele** helfen Ihnen, sich das Gelernte besser einzuprägen.

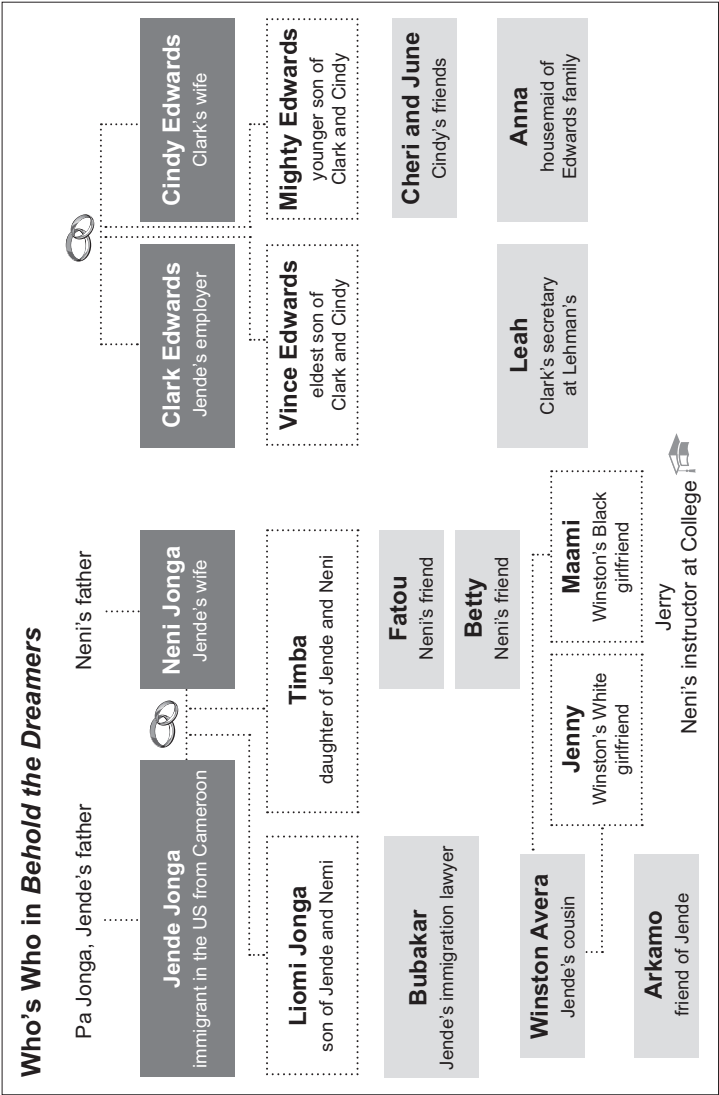
Viel Erfolg beim Lernen mit diesem Skript und im Abitur!

# *Behold the Dreamers*

## 1 Key facts

- **author:** Imbolo Mbue (b. 1981) immigrated from Cameroon to the US in the late 1990s; after losing her job in market research in 2008, she started writing the novel; her book won the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction
- **year of publication:** 2016
- **genre:** novel
- **setting:** New York City and Limbe, Cameroon
- **time:** 2008/09 and flashbacks to 1990s
- **narrative perspective:** third-person narration (two main perspectives: Jende and Neni)
- **content:** Jende Jonga, an immigrant from Cameroon, tries to obtain legal status in the US. He earns his living working as a chauffeur for the rich family of Mr. Edwards, a manager at Lehman Brothers. Jende's wife Neni and son Liomi join Jende in the US and Neni has another baby. The economic situation in the country worsens after the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the ensuing financial crisis. After five years of working and building a home in the US, Jende still has not got his papers and is likely to face deportation. Disillusioned, he decides to return to Cameroon with his family.
- **explanation of title:** The “dreamers” in the title refer, above all, to the Cameroonian immigrants Jende and Neni Jonga and their belief in the American Dream, but possibly also to other characters and their respective hopes and aspirations (e. g. Clark and Cindy Edwards).

3 Characters



### Josephine, Louise Mallard's sister

- **considerate, caring, thoughtful:** knows about her sister Louise's weak condition, tries to minimise the shock of sad news
- **concerned:** worries when Louise stays in her room alone for a long time without answering

## 4 Themes and interpretation

### Background information

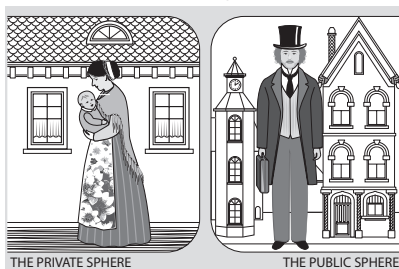
#### Gender roles in the 19th century:

#### Biologistic ideas of gender:

- In the 19th century, men were believed to be by nature stronger, more rational and active.
- Women were believed to be the “weaker sex”, passive, emotional and docile.

#### The ideology of “separate spheres”:

- A man's place was supposed to be in the **public sphere** (economy, politics, etc.), while a woman's place was believed to be in the **private sphere** of the home (role of the “**Angel in the House**”).
- Women did not have the right to vote.



#### The institution of marriage cementing gender inequality:

- During the wedding ceremony, the woman is literally “handed over” from one man to another (before, she was her father's property; with marriage, she becomes her **husband's property**).
- Women were expected to stay in the confines of the home and not earn money; as a result, most women in the 19th century were **financially dependent** on their husbands.
- Women were **not allowed to own property** and or **have control over their own bodies** (e.g. marital rape was declared illegal in all US states as late as 1993).

### depiction in the story

- Being a man, Brently Mallard can move freely in the **public sphere**, travel and go to work; he is presented as a loving husband, and Louise also "loved him – sometimes".
- As a married woman, Louise is confined to the **private sphere** of the home and not allowed to take her own decisions; she feels unhappy and hopeless about her future.
- When she learns of her husband's supposed death, she suddenly realises that the "sad news" of being a widow means a future life of **self-determination**:  
 "There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime [...]"
- Louise's **feeling of liberation** ("free, free, free") is mirrored by the nature outside her house ("trees [...] all aquiver with the new spring life", "patches of blue sky") and the open window, all of which can be seen as symbols of a **new beginning, hope and possibility**.
- Her **regained joy and vitality** also shows in her bodily reactions (heart beating faster, rising temperature, upright/self-confident posture).
- There is **dramatic irony** at the end of the story, when Louise's husband returns alive: The reader knows that Louise dies of shock and sadness to see her newfound freedom gone, while the other characters falsely assume that "she had died of heart disease – of the joy that kills".
- In the end, the prospect of independence and self-determination turns out as no more than a **fleeting vision**; the protagonist dies without ever experiencing a life of freedom.
- All in all, the story can be seen as a **criticism of patriarchal norms and the repressive institution of marriage**, both of which subjugate women.



things...”) and criticises her for her self-righteousness (“you’ve fucked up too Cleo”)

- **caring:** worries about Cleo’s safety when she keeps on posting provocative tweets, tries to protect her and bring her to her senses

## 4 Themes and interpretation

### Ethnic diversity

The play addresses various forms of racism – both by means of INCOGNegro’s tweets about the “seven methods of killing Kylie Jenner” and through the discussions and experiences of the two characters Cleo and Kara in real life.

The “seven methods” and their reference to racial oppression	
<b>#1 Death by poison</b>	
Kylie admired for her full lips (thanks to lip fillers; possibly Botox, a poison)	<b>vs.</b> unequal beauty standards: Black people being called “ugly” for their full lips
<b>#2 Death by shooting</b>	
Kylie’s photo shootings	<b>vs.</b> police shootings of Black people
<b>#3 Death by drowning</b>	
Kylie swimming in wealth	<b>vs.</b> refugees drowning in the sea
<b>#4 Death by skinning</b>	
Cleo’s wish to wear Kylie’s White skin as a costume for a day	<b>vs.</b> racist tradition of “Blackfacing”
<b>#5 Death by immolation</b>	
Kylie being “lit” while taking selfies; use of fire emojis	<b>vs.</b> Black people literally being lit (burned alive during lynchings)
<b>#6 Death by disgrace</b>	
Kylie admired for her looks	<b>vs.</b> Black people historically being put on display as exotic “freaks”; Black children made to feel ugly
<b>#7 Death by displacement</b>	
Kylie known and admired all over the world, gaining fame, recognition and wealth	<b>vs.</b> Saartjie dragged from her home and put on display in Europe; died penniless; largely forgotten

In particular, the following topics are taken up repeatedly in the play:

- **dehumanisation and exploitation of the Black female body:** Black women were often bullied and discriminated against (and still are); the Black South African woman Saartjie, for example, was exhibited as a “freak” and sexually exploited.
- **cultural appropriation:** Blackness and Black aesthetics are being appropriated by White models and social media influencers (e.g. the Kardashian-Jenner family) for commercial reasons; Kylie Jenner’s full lips (due to lip fillers), for instance, are considered fashionable, but on a Black woman they are considered “ugly”.
- **colourism:** Cleo thinks that light-skinned Black people like Kara are considered more beautiful and are less affected by racism than darker-skinned Black people; she accuses Kara of “suffering from lightie-itis” (not seeing her alleged privilege as a light-skinned Black person).
- **intersectionality of identity categories** (i.e. the concept that multiple categories, such as race, gender and sexual identity, interact to create unique forms of oppression and/or privilege), for example:
  - Kara is discriminated against for being Black, a woman and queer (e.g. keeps her sexual identity secret for a long time).
  - Cleo is affected by both racism and sexism (e.g. sexual harassment and racial discrimination during “#wiggate”).

### **The influence of social media on personal life and public opinion**

Social media play an essential role in *seven methods of killing kylie jenner*, particularly Twitter. Today, millions of people from all walks of life have accounts on social media platforms to post about whatever they are interested in and whatever they are thinking or doing. Varying numbers of followers read the shared news and voice their reactions/opinions with retweets, likes, emojis, GIFs and the like. Many influencers and celebrities like Kylie Jenner boast of millions of followers.

On the one hand, social media are a great way for people to communicate with each other, share experiences, network and engage in social activism. When they first appeared, social media were hailed as promoting democracy by providing a platform for the **free exchange of opinions**. However, over time, the undisputed advantages of social



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