

Liebe Schülerinnen und Schüler,

das folgende Material ist aufgrund der besonderen Situation für die häusliche Arbeit (*home schooling*) gedacht. Ihr benötigt dafür lediglich die Schülerbuchausgabe des *Bigger Picture Nigeria (print oder digital)* sowie einen Internetzugang. Mithilfe des folgenden Materials werdet ihr mehr über die Grundlagen der nigerianischen Kultur, Geschichte und Literatur erfahren. Anhand verschiedener Arbeitsschritte (**steps**) und einiger Arbeitsmaterialien (**worksheets**) werden ihr auf diese Weise durch die Auszüge von Chris Abanis berühmten Roman *GraceLand* geführt.

Step 0: Checklist

Am Ende der vorliegenden Lernaufgabe sollst Du über neue **Kompetenzen**, neues themenspezifisches **Fachwissen** sowie **methodisches Geschick** verfügen. Verwende die Checkliste um deinen persönlichen Lernprozess zu kontrollieren, indem du Schritt für Schritt die abgeschlossenen Arbeitsschritte markierst und Dir Notizen machst.

Step	topic	Here you can write down what you have learned!	✓
Step 1:	Getting to know the author		<input type="checkbox"/>
Step 2:	The two sides of Lagos/Nigeria		<input type="checkbox"/>
Step 3:	Focus on reading I		<input type="checkbox"/>
Step 4:	Elvis – the protagonist		<input type="checkbox"/>
Step 5:	Focus on reading II – postcolonial elements		<input type="checkbox"/>

Step 1: Getting to know the author – Chris Abani

Chris Abani – short biography

Chris Abani was born on 27 December 1966 in Afikpo, Nigeria. His mother was English and his father belonged to the Nigerian Igbo people. In 1968 Chris and his family had to go to England for three years due to the Nigerian Biafran War (1967-1970). They returned to Nigeria in 1971 and Chris Abani would later recreate this important episode of his family history in *Daphne's Lot* (2003). Abani started writing stories when he was six, had his first piece of short fiction published when he was ten, and wrote his first novel, a thriller entitled *Masters of the Board* (1984), at the age of sixteen. In late 1985 he was sent to prison due to some of his political writings. He stayed in Nigeria for a few more years and finally went to the USA where he used to be a Professor of creative writing. In the last few decades Chris Abani published various novels, short stories and poems.

Source: <http://www.cerep.ulg.ac.be/abani/caintro.html> (shortened and adapted by D.Beyer)

Assignments

- 1.1 **Read** the text and **highlight** important background information on Chris Abani and his career as a professional writer.
- 1.2 **Use worksheet I** (listening comprehension) and read the worksheet BEFORE you start watching the video.
- 1.3 **Watch** the TED-TALK video by Chris Abani. You can use the *Klett Augmented App*, Link or the QR-Code. **Choose** the correct answers.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrbilWD_CxI

KV 1.2.1

Chris Abani TED Talk – *Telling stories from Africa*

“If you want to know about Africa, read our literature – and not just ‘Things Fall Apart’, because that would be like saying, ‘I’ve read ‘Gone with the Wind’ and so I know everything about America.”

Chris Abani



Watch the TED Talk given by Chris Abani and choose the correct answer. There is always ONE correct answer to every question.

1. What does Chris Abani say about narrative in Africa?	
a) Most people confuse it with what they hear or read in the news.	b) It is like narrative in America.
c) There is no African narrative.	d) He doesn't know anything about it.
2. Americans come to know about being American by ...	
a) watching the news.	b) consuming American literature, films etc.
c) talking to friends.	d) going abroad.
3. Abani recommends reading African literature because ...	
a) it is better than going there.	b) it includes "Things fall apart".
c) it paints a broader, truer picture of Africa.	d) it is quite entertaining.
4. On the subject of language Abani claims that ...	
a) all African languages are tonal.	b) African languages have been heavily influenced by English.
c) it can only be understood in the context of stories.	d) language is a bridge between cultures.
5. Nigerian children were not taught about the Biafran War because ...	
a) it is too cruel.	b) people were afraid of encouraging a new generation of fighters.
c) teachers were not interested in the topic.	d) Muslim and Jewish history was more important.
6. Chris Abani went to prison because ...	
a) he had worked against the regime.	b) he was accused of planning a political coup.
c) he had published a book on Nazi Germany.	d) he stole a book from the library.
7. According to Abani it is very difficult for an African writer to ...	
a) write about his/her privacy.	b) write politically correct novels.
c) find a balance between the good and bad.	d) to write for a young audience.
8. Abani's aim as a young middle-class Nigerian activist was to ...	
a) become famous.	b) fight for human rights.
c) finish another novel.	d) stop the government.

Step 2: The two sides of Lagos (the setting of Chris Abani's**GraceLand**

Chris Abani's novel takes place in the famous city of Lagos which is not only Nigeria's fastest growing city, but also a major financial centre in Africa. The city consists of different part including the famous Lagos Lagoon, Bar Beach, Mainland or Banana Island. In the 19th century Lagos was very famous in the British-American slave trade union sending thousands of slaves from Africa to work on the cotton fields in colonial America. The connection between Nigeria and the USA has changed quite a lot since then. The protagonist of the novel GraceLand, called Elvis, lives in Lagos – a city of contrasts.

These background information on Lagos are also important for the following texts in your Bigger Picture student book:

No place does me like Lagos by T. Fatunla (pp. 15ff.)

American Dream by N. Ekwempu (pp. 165ff.)



Lagos State generates around 10% of Nigeria's GDP. If Lagos were a country, it would be the fifth largest economy in Africa. It hosts 65% of Nigeria's businesses as well as the headquarters of multinational corporations. Most of Nigeria's financial transactions are conducted here. It is home to the elite and expanding upper class of western Africa and more and more expats are moving to Lagos too, drawn by the promise of a well-paying job. The cost of living is high: Victoria Island and Ikoyi are some of the most expensive areas to live in Lagos and renting a 3-bedroom apartment here can cost anywhere between \$13,000 to a staggering \$550,000 per year. Lagos is a city of opportunities and Lagosians are creative and expert entrepreneurs: it is one of the largest tech hubs on the continent and the fashion and arts capital of West Africa.

Lagos has experienced rapid population growth. Of its 21 million inhabitants roughly two thirds live in slums – earning it the nickname the “megacity of slums”. Rapid growth creates immense problems and Lagosians are used to frequent power outages, appalling road conditions and overcrowded schools. The floating slum Makoko has been a nightmare for the Lagos government for a very long time. People live in ramshackle wooden shacks surrounded by the grey sludge of dirty oily water. Sanitation is rudimentary, power intermittent and the water is contaminated with rubbish and human waste – and still it is used as drinking water. Barely a quarter of the slum's children go to school and there is little access to hospitals or medical supplies. Malaria, respiratory diseases and malnutrition are common.



1. Visuals: Choose one of the two pictures and describe it to your partner. Add a suitable heading for each picture. (Scan the QR code to see the pictures in colour.)

2. Language: Which of the following adjectives can be assigned to picture 1 / picture 2?



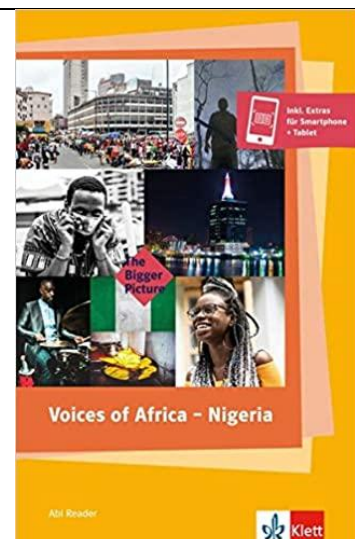
vibrant – barren – polluted – scary – welcoming – nightmarish – violent – gloomy – busy – hopeful – attractive – deprived – claustrophobic – modern – bustling – commercial – desolate – depressing

3. Evaluation: Discuss the following statement: “There are two sides to globalization.”

4. Research: Find more examples of Nigeria's contrasts and diversity. You can use novels, short stories, newspaper articles and reports.

Assignments:

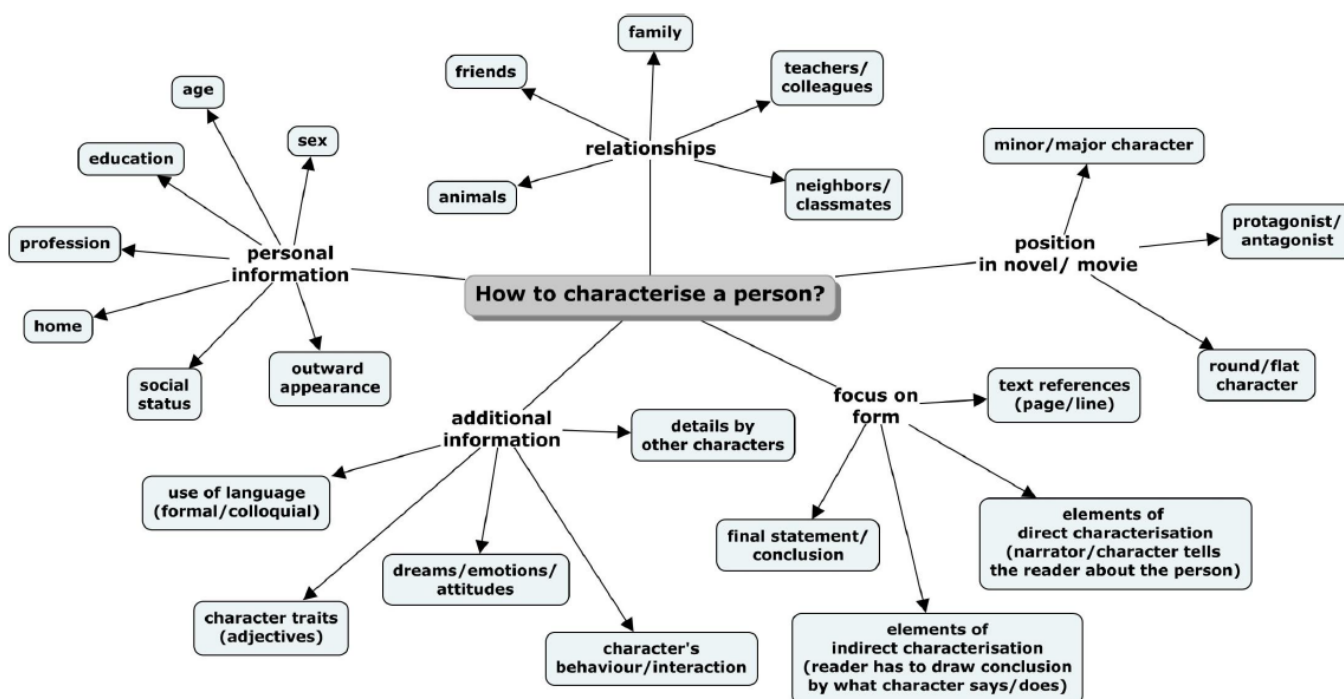
- 3.1 **Read** the first pages of Chris Abani's *GraceLand* (pp. 28 –38) in your Bigger Picture Book.
- 3.2 **Highlight** all the information you can find with different colours:
- information on Elvis – *yellow*
 - information on the setting – *red*
 - information on the influence of Western-American culture – *orange*
- 3.3 **Have a closer look** at the following mind map. Do you remember how to characterize a person? Which information you need? **Read through** the mind map and try to understand all the different features.
- 3.4 **Use your notes** from 3.2 and fill in the mind map on *Elvis – the protagonist*. Don't forget to give text references.



You can also use this mind map to characterize the protagonist of

C.N. Adichie's *The thing around your neck* (pp. 151ff.) and
N. Ekwempu *American Dream* (pp. 165ff.)

Step 4: Elvis – the protagonist



Step 5: Focus on reading II - postcolonial elements***GraceLand* and postcolonial Nigerian literature**

Chris Abani's novel belongs to the canon of postcolonial Nigerian literature. Postcolonial literature is the literature (e.g. novels, poetry, short stories, etc.) by people from formerly colonized countries. Nigeria was granted full independence on 1 October 1960. These circumstances have influenced many postcolonial writers like Chris Abani.

Assignments:

5.1 Have a closer look at the following table of typical elements of postcolonial Nigerian literature and **read** their definitions.

5.2 Read the second part of Chris Abani's *GraceLand* (pp. 39 – 45) and **find examples** of the postcolonial elements presented in the table. You can use examples of the first novel extract, too.

postcolonial element	definition	example (<i>GraceLand</i>)	page/line reference
influence of Western society and identity	<i>The influence of Western cultures (literature, music, products, trade, etc.) has had a strong influence on people in Nigeria since 1960.</i>		
capitalism/corruption	<i>Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power and bribery for private gain like personal enrichment (→ capitalism)</i>		
issues of identity	<i>Many young Nigerians face the problem to find their personal identity due to different (traditional vs. modern) cultural influences.</i>		

Postcolonial elements in Nigerian literature do also play an important role in

C. Achebe's memoir *There was a country* (pp. 77)

C.N. Adichie's *The thing around your neck* (pp. 151ff.)

N. Ekwempu *American Dream* (pp. 165ff.)

N. Osundare's poem *My Lord, Tell Me Where To Keep Your Bribe* (pp. 144ff.)