

3 Worksheet on Visual Literacy: Describing People

Pictures in Peter Freese, *New York, Viewfinder Topics* (München: Langenscheidt, 2011), pp. 6, 13, 20, 37, 43.

In the Bavarian Abitur examinations (and in some other Bundesländer, too), you have to take an oral exam. Among other things, you might have to describe people. These exercises will help you get prepared.

Daughter (looking at a photo album): Mum, who is the tall, handsome, dark-haired man?

Mother: That's your father.

Daughter: Then who's that fat, bald guy living with us?

A VOCABULARY TO DESCRIBE PEOPLE

1 DESCRIBING PEOPLE - PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

When describing people, think about the following categories:

Age	old (e.g. senior citizen), middle-aged, young, teenager, baby, toddler, elderly, in her 40s, in his 50s etc.
Build	fat, overweight, obese, stocky, slim, muscular, athletic, well-proportioned, thin, plump, fat, skinny, well-built, underweight etc.
Colouring	pale, Caucasian, black, Asian, Mediterranean, blonde, dark, red-haired, dark-skinned etc.
Face	oval, heart-shaped, square, round; forehead, chin, skin, eyebrows, (broad or narrow) nose, (regular) teeth, (hooked) nose, cheekbones, with scars, wrinkles, freckles; sun-tanned, pale etc.

Hair long, short, curly, straight, thick, wavy, bald, spiky (or spikey), dark, blonde, dark-haired etc.

Clothes casual, slovenly dressed, shabby, smart, tidy, messy, business style

2 DESCRIBING PEOPLE – CHARACTER

Many people have put together lists with words to describe people's character, here's an example:

http://pgu.nw.lo-net2.de/spaenhoff/.ws_gen/2/Character%20Traits_german.pdf

(Please copy and paste this hyperlink into your browser.)

Make sure you've worked on your thematic vocabulary before you do the tasks below.

(Learn at least 20 new words.)

B PEOPLE'S PORTRAITS

- + English words for *Porträt / Konterfei*: portrait, image, likeness
- + English words for *Brustbild*: half length portrait, portrait
- + spelling of the verb: to portray

1. Describing people's looks

Alone (or with a partner) go to pages 6, 13, 20, 37, and 43. Then describe the portraits.

2. Analysing people's portraits

Now analyse the people's portraits. (Ask yourself for example these questions: What might he/she do for a living? What was the mood he/she was in when the picture was taken?

When was the photo taken, why? ...)

3. Compare your findings to the short overviews on the people in the introductions to the text.

(Daniela Pröls)