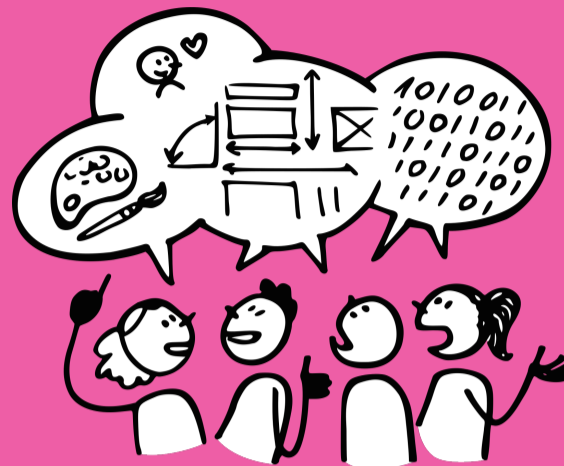


# Expanding Options for Action

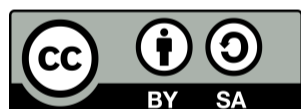
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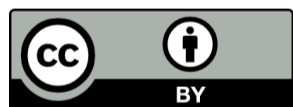
These materials were developed as part of the "OERLe BNE" project. The aim of the project is to promote the participatory design of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Educational Practices (OEP) in the second phase of teacher training.

The focus is on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which is being established as an integral part of modern teacher training in Saxony-Anhalt. The materials are the result of close cooperation between the Geography Education Department at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (MLU) and the State Institute for School Quality and Teacher Training Saxony-Anhalt (LISA).

The materials were developed in cooperation with the seminar locations in Halle and Magdeburg and are based on practical, participatory approaches. These materials are intended as dynamic resources that are openly available for further use, adaptation and dissemination in line with the OER movement. When using them, please note the following licence information:



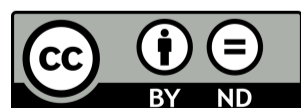
The comics are taken from an application exercise in the OER learning unit "Beutelsbacher Konsens | Dazu stehe ich! Wo und wie ich in Schule und Unterricht meine Meinung sage und auf die Meinung anderer reagiere" by Miriam Kuckuck, Stefan Padberg and Sven Hanes, published under the CC-BY-SA license at <https://bne-oer.de/>



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"Further exploration: Disinformation, measures against discrimination and own case studies" by Paula Jäger and Anne-Kathrin Lindau, published under the CC-BY 4.0 license at <https://geo.uni-halle.de/project/oerle/>



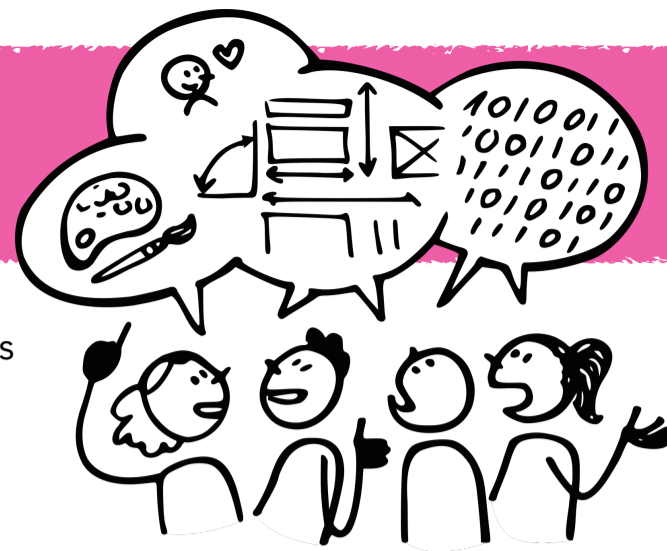
Material: Overview of disinformation strategies from klimafakten.de "F-L-I-C-C: The most common disinformation tricks of science deniers" published under the CC BY-ND 4.0 license at <https://www.klimafakten.de/kommunikation/f-l-i-c-c-most-common-disinformation-tricks-science-deniers>



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# Expanding Options for Action

...a discussion using comics and flashcards



Objective: Participants will be able to develop options for action, taking into account the Beutelsbach Consensus.



Contents: School life and the Beutelsbach Consensus



Materials needed:

- Pens and paper for participants; 4 comics (1 set per group);
- For further exploration of "Neutrality?": task sheet and flashcards;
- For further exploration of "Disinformation": task sheet, disinformation poster, disinformation flashcards, blank cards and pens;
- For further exploration of "Discrimination": task sheet, flashcards on dealing with discrimination, levels of action, blank cards and pens;
- For further exploration of "Personal Case Studies": task sheet, paper



Time: 55 min

## In summary

This exercise helps participants develop options for action in challenging situations in everyday school life by using the Beutelsbach Consensus as a framework. In a silent discussion using comics, they first reflect individually on possible reactions to specific scenarios. They then discuss their approaches in the group to compare different perspectives and develop practical strategies. This fosters confidence in dealing with controversial topics and strengthens their ability to act in a values-driven and evidence-based manner.

1

### And how do you react? - A silent discussion (individual work with comics)

Participants develop possible courses of action for situations in everyday school life.



2

### Discussing possible courses of action (group discussion)

The participants discuss their possible courses of action.



3

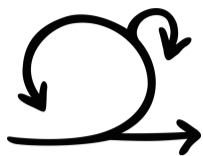
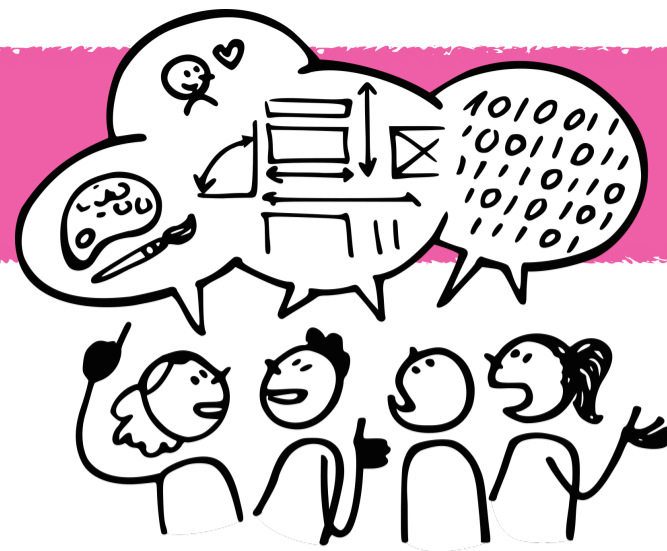
### Exploring options for action (group work)

Participants will develop background knowledge and strategies for action on the topics of fake news, "neutrality" and discrimination, or discuss their own case studies.



# Expanding Options for Action

...a discussion using comics and flashcards



## Suggested procedure

1

### And how do you react? - A silent discussion (individual work with comics)

Participants receive comics depicting situations from everyday school life. At the end of each comic is the question, "And how do you react?". This question is answered in writing, then the answer sheet is folded back and passed clockwise along with the comic. This is repeated until everyone has worked with each comic.



2

### Discussing possible courses of action (group discussion)

Participants discuss their possible courses of action.



Reflection questions could include:

- To what extent does the Beutelsbach Consensus provide you with guidance?
- What experiences have you already had with similar situations in your everyday school life, and which strategies have proven helpful?

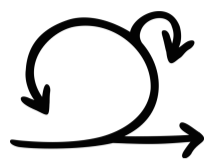
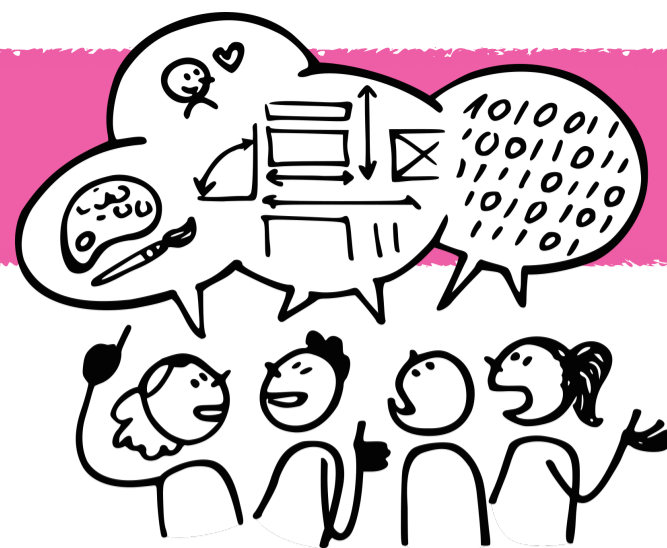
## In summary

Teachers regularly face challenging situations in their daily school life, confronting them with controversial topics. Particularly in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), societal debates—for example, on climate change, social justice, or economic responsibility—are often characterised by emotional and political tensions.

It is important not to equate controversy with a requirement of neutrality. Apparent neutrality can lead to scientifically untenable or anti-democratic positions being given equal weight alongside well-founded findings—a problem known as false balance. Instead, teachers should take a clear, science- and values-based position to facilitate objective discussions without uncritically reproducing unfounded or discriminatory views.

# Expanding Options for Action

...a discussion using comics and flashcards



## Suggested procedure

3

### Expanding action options – A group activity for further exploration of different focus areas



Focus area 1: Neutrality?

1. Participants take turns drawing flashcards with questions ("May I...?") and answer them together before revealing the back.
2. Participants write questions they encounter in their everyday school life on blank flashcards and then discuss these questions.

Focus area 2: Dealing with disinformation

1. Participants match examples to disinformation strategies.
2. Participants develop their own examples from their everyday school life and assign them to the appropriate strategies.
3. Participants discuss: Which strategies do you encounter most frequently in your everyday school life? How can you respond to them in class or with colleagues without stifling the discussion? Which methods help to refute disinformation while simultaneously strengthening a culture of open dialogue?

Focus area 3: Dealing with discrimination

1. Participants assign the strategies to the levels of action (identifying and uncovering discrimination, prevention, intervention, institutionalising measures against discrimination).
2. Participants add strategies they know from their professional experience.
3. Participants discuss which levels they will incorporate more strongly in the future.

Focus area 4: Discussing personal case studies

1. Participants think of situations from their lessons or everyday school life in which they didn't know how to react spontaneously. These examples are written down – similar to comics, each example ends with the question: "And how do you react?"
2. The flashcards are exchanged, and possible reactions are described on the back.
3. The examples and reactions are then discussed together in the group.

## Materials needed

Focus area 1: Neutrality?	Focus area 2: Dealing with disinformation	Focus area 3: Dealing with discrimination	Focus area 4: Own case studies
task sheet flashcards: Am I allowed to do this? blank cards and pens	task sheet disinformation poster disinformation flashcards blank cards and pens	task sheet flashcards: Dealing with discrimination levels of action blank cards and pens	task sheet blank cards and pens

COMIC: Obligated to neutrality?

In the teachers' lounge before the upcoming state elections

For me, the measures against climate change are crucial. Only one party can score points there!

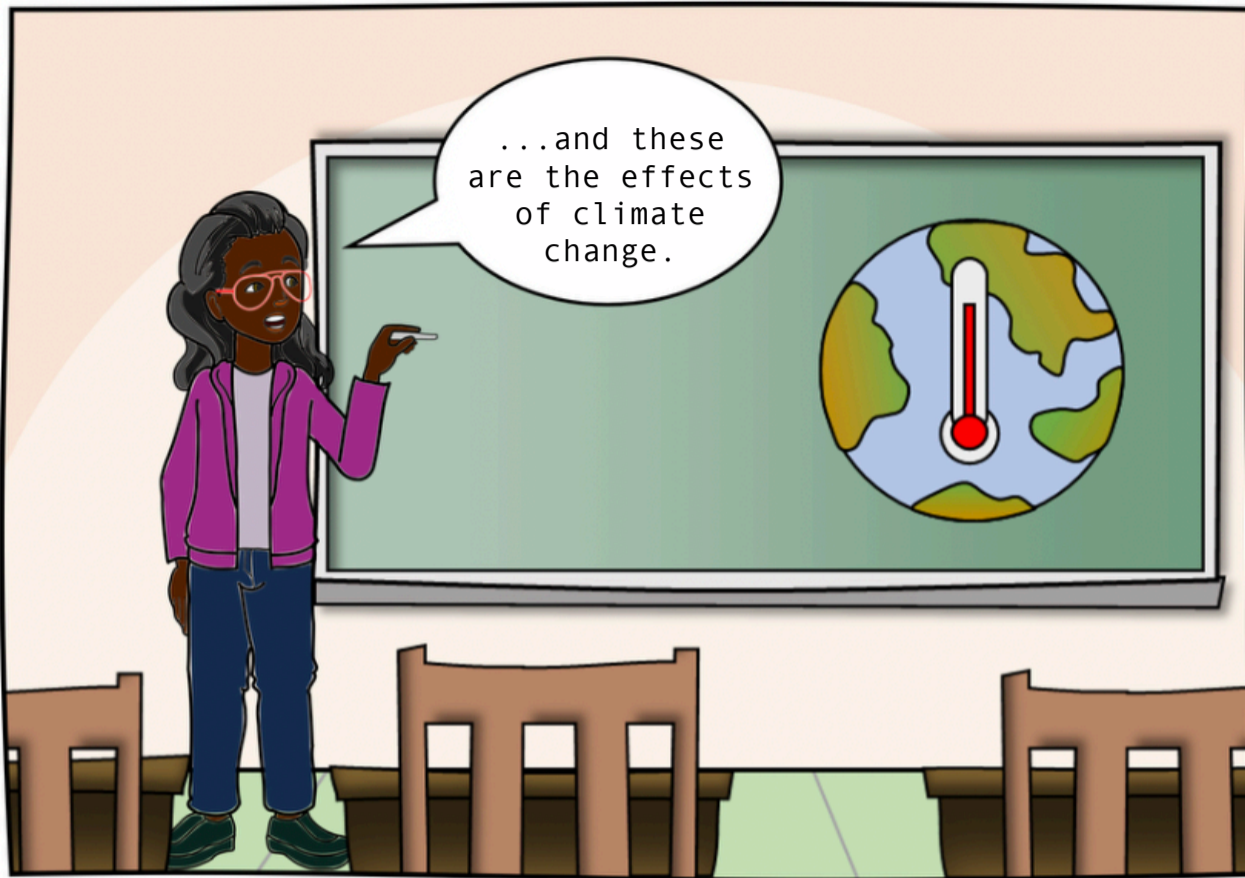
You can't say something like that! I hope the children don't hear it!

We teachers are obligated to be NEUTRAL!

How do you react?



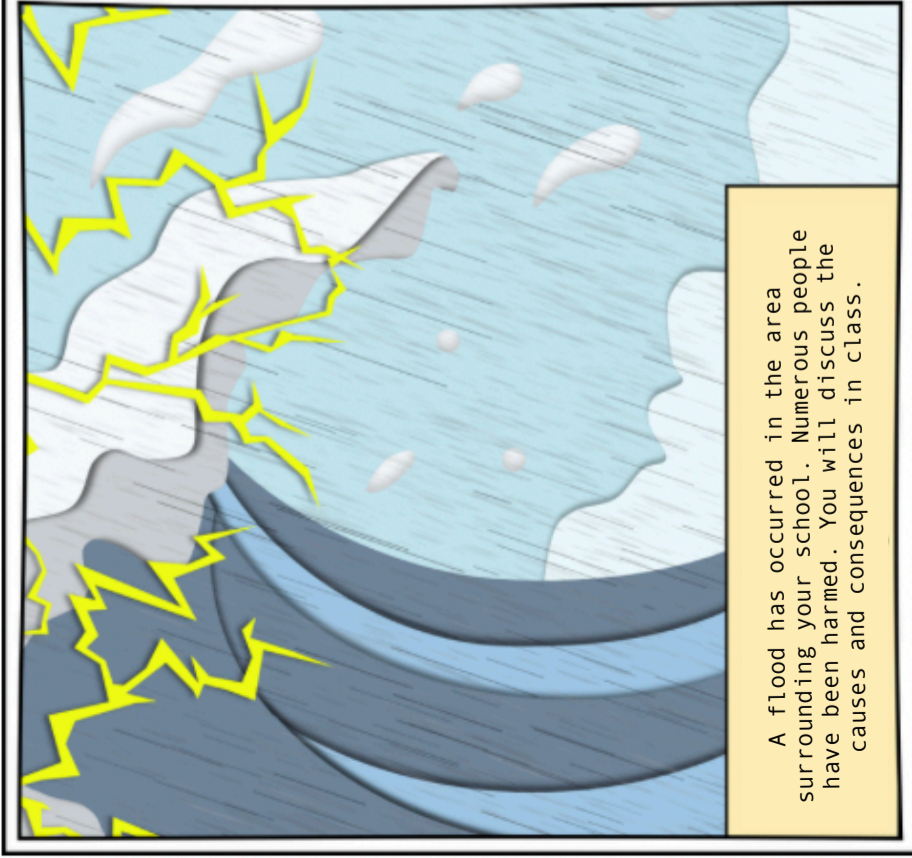
COMIC: Climate change doesn't exist



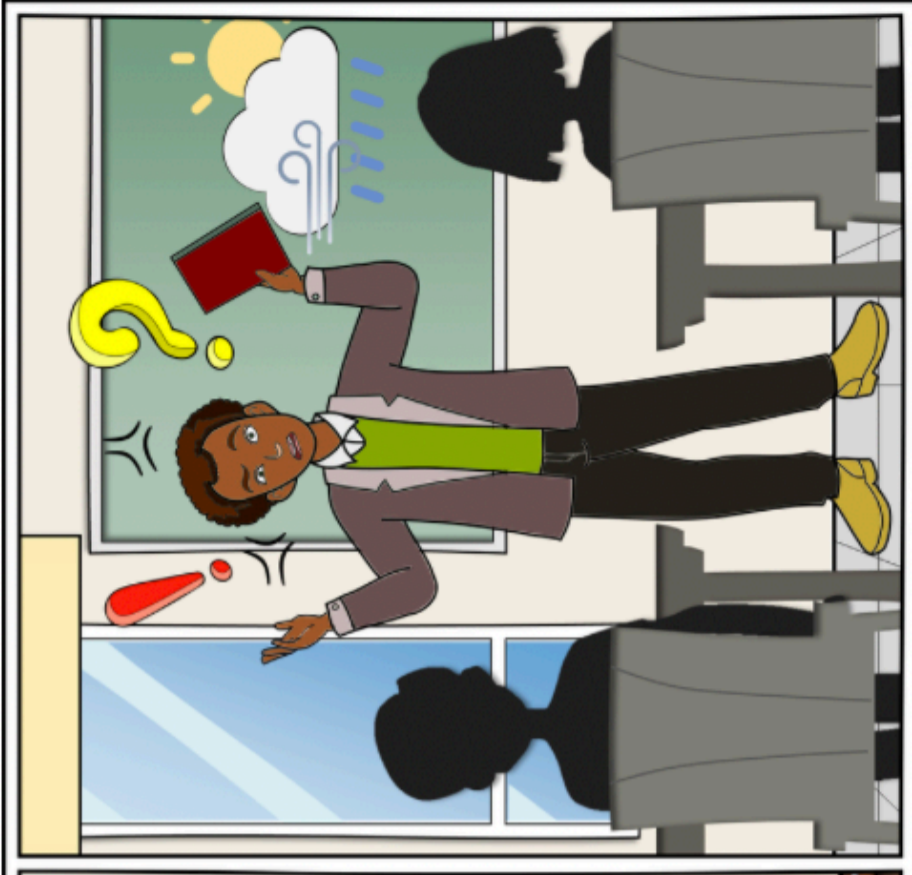
COMIC: He just wouldn't stop



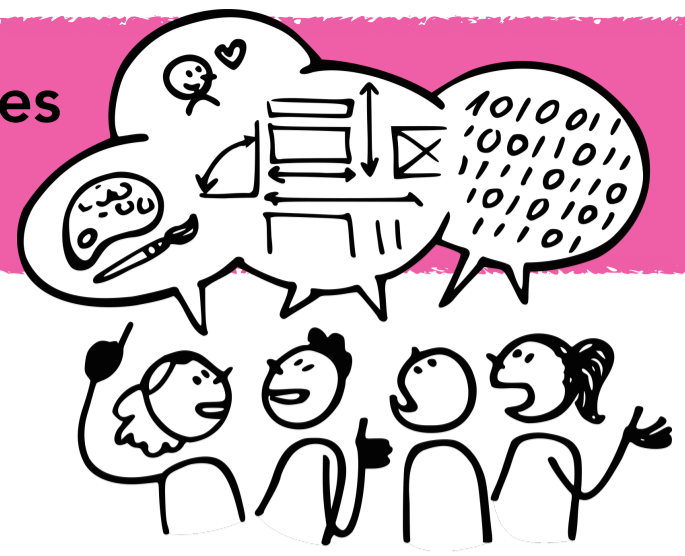
COMIC: Floods have always existed



A flood has occurred in the area surrounding your school. Numerous people have been harmed. You will discuss the causes and consequences in class.



# Solution hints: Comics with possible courses of action



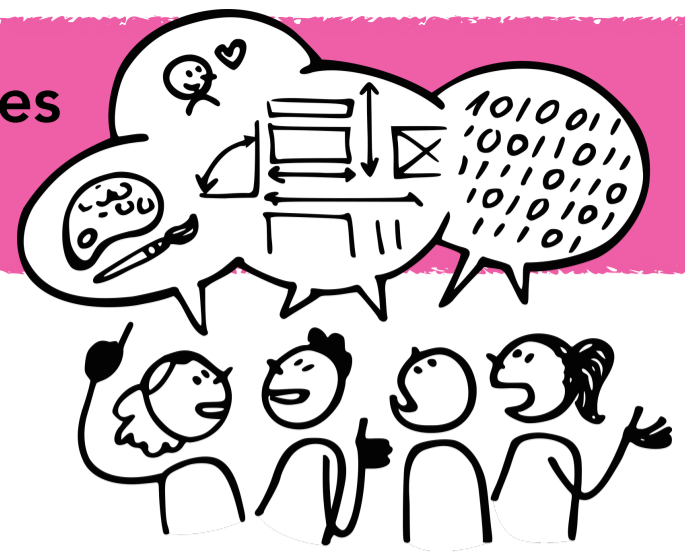
## COMIC: Obligated to neutrality?



### Possible course of action

"Dear colleague: When it comes to scientific facts, there is no neutrality, only verifiable evidence or its absence. In this sense, I am convinced that our students are capable of forming their own political opinions. It is my job as a teacher to support them in this process. Of course, I will not encourage them to vote for or support a particular party. However, it goes without saying that we compare climate facts, for example from the IPCC, with party platforms in class. And when clear results emerge, results that are what they are, it doesn't matter what I personally think or say about it. I am very aware of my responsibility as a teacher and role model, you can be sure of that. However, this does not mean that I become, or have to become, politically neutral the moment I enter the school grounds."

# Solution hints: Comics with possible courses of action



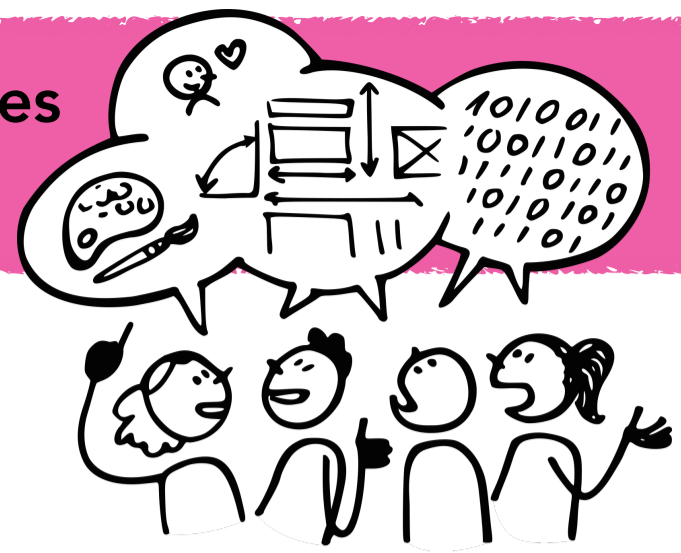
COMIC: Climate change doesn't exist



## Possible course of action

"Yes, I've seen videos like that too, and there are many of them. However, the fact is that climate change has been clearly proven by numerous scientists. This evidence has been obtained using various methods and always leads to the same result. There is no justifiable doubt about climate change, although there are interest groups that nevertheless sow doubt because they pursue other goals. Would you like us to examine the evidence for climate change more closely in class?"

# Solution hints: Comics with possible courses of action



COMIC: He just wouldn't stop

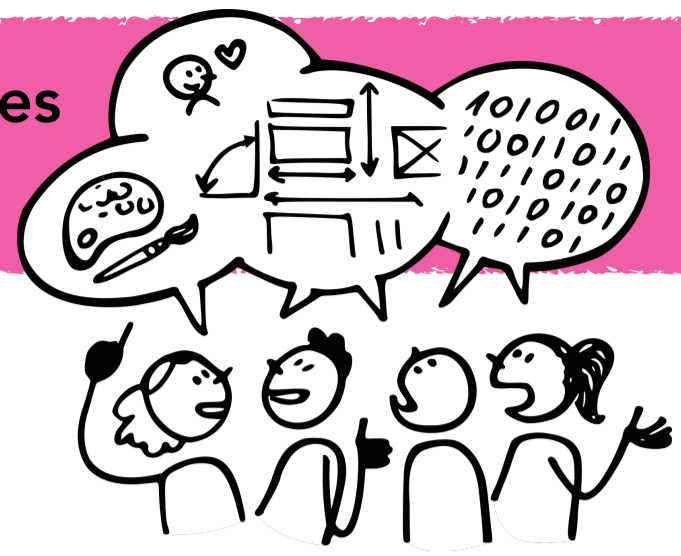


## Possible course of action

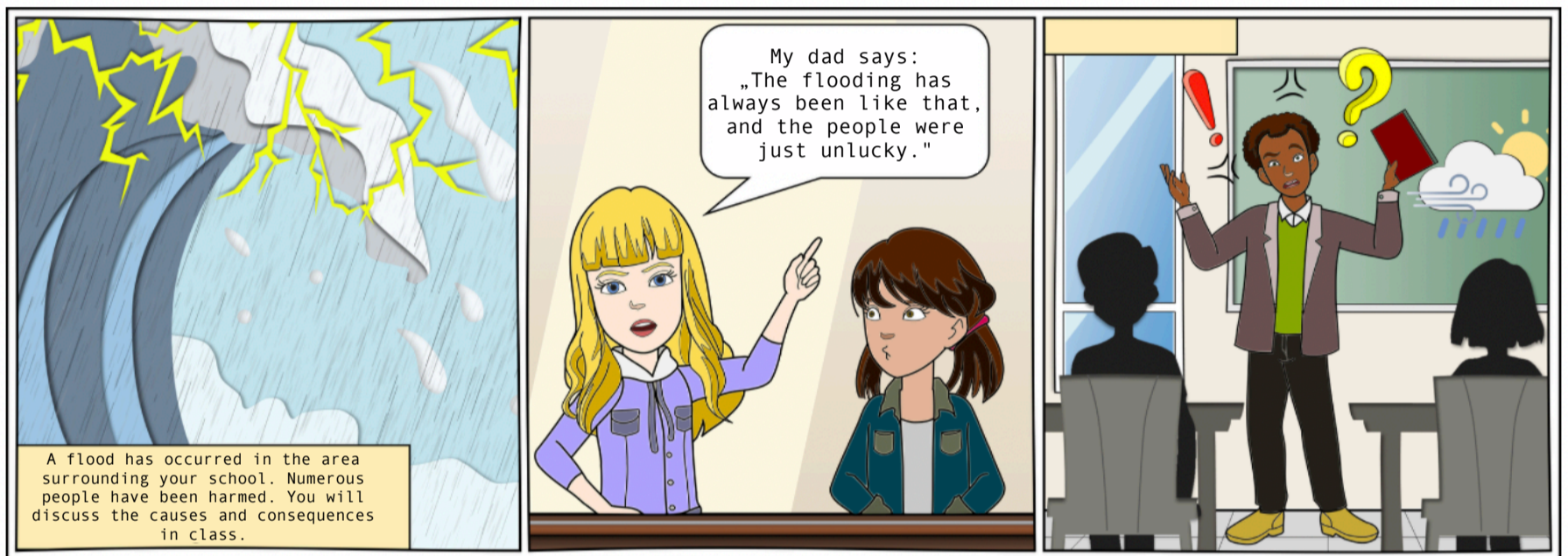
First, I speak with the student alone and make it clear that she has the right not to answer questions about her clothing. I also explain that I am glad she contacted me and that I will not tolerate the discrimination she has experienced.

Then, I speak with the student alone and try to make him understand that he is asking this question from a privileged position and that, given the potential and actual discrimination faced by Muslim girls, this can trigger a great deal of justified anger. It is important to understand that the definition of discrimination is determined by those affected (and, if necessary, by courts), not by privileged individuals who cite their curiosity as justification. Since this may not be easily achieved in a conversation, I may involve trusted colleagues or anti-discrimination counselling services and develop a lesson plan that addresses privilege and discrimination in an age-appropriate and suitable way within the classroom.

# Solution hints: Comics with possible courses of action



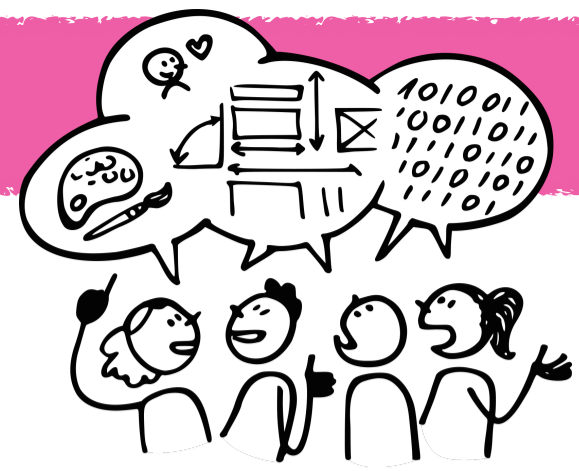
## COMIC: Floods have always existed



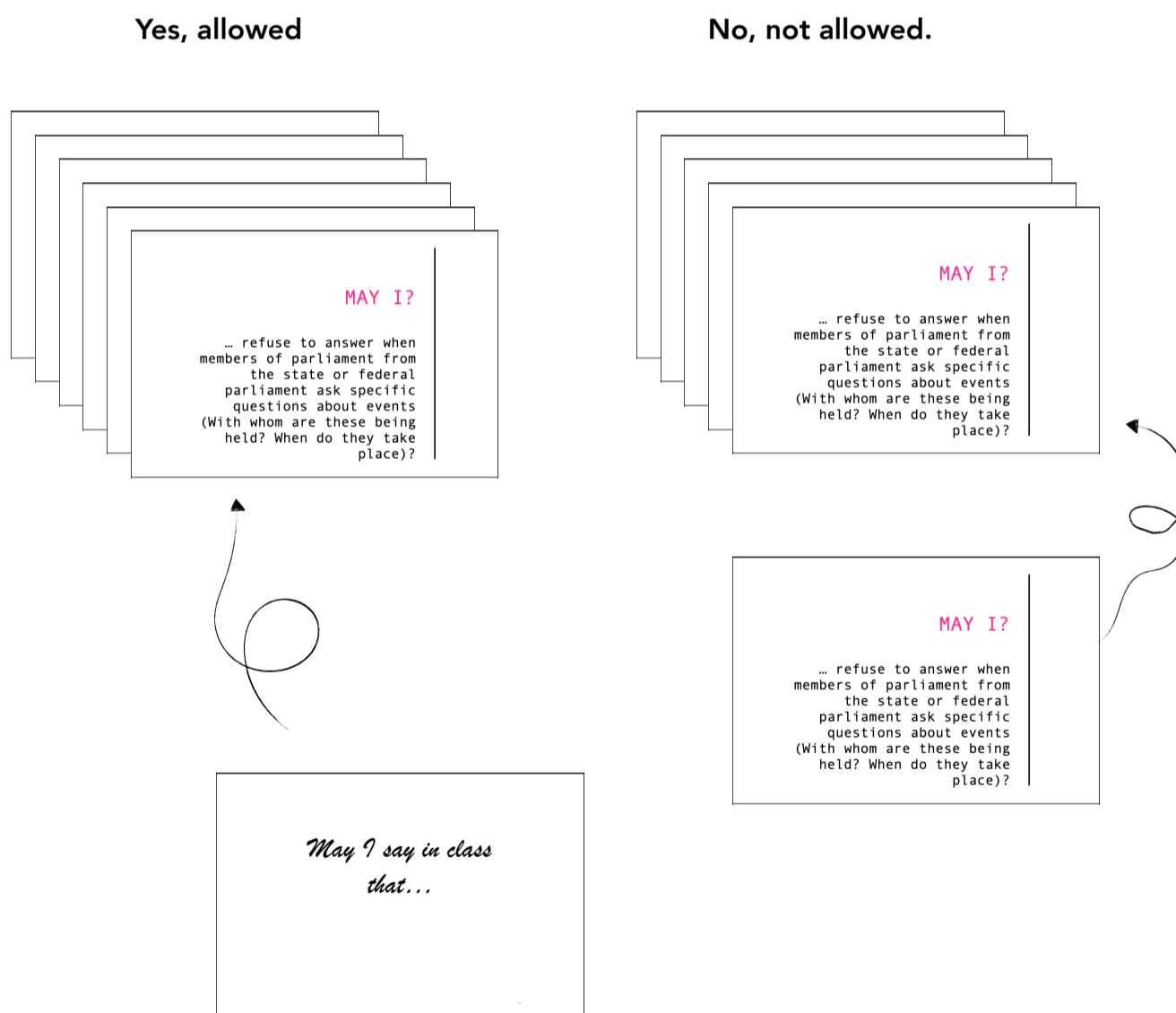
## Possible course of action

"We can certainly look at how frequently flooding has occurred at this location over the past centuries and how high the water rose each time. Unfortunately, scientific methods clearly demonstrate that the danger has increased significantly today. If you'd like, we can examine in detail why this is the case, who is responsible, and what can be done in the future to counteract it."

# Further exploration: Neutrality?!



1. Take turns drawing the flashcards with the questions ("Am I allowed to...?") and answer them together before revealing the backs. Then sort the cards into two groups: "Yes, allowed" and "No, not allowed."
2. Write questions you might encounter in everyday school life on blank flashcards. Then discuss whether the answers would be "Yes" or "No" and explain your reasoning.
3. Discuss in your group:
  - Where is the line between critical engagement and taking a political stance in the classroom?
  - What responsibility do teachers have when they express criticism?



Mitnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

MAY I?

... refuse to answer when members of parliament from the state or federal parliament ask specific questions about events (With whom are these being held? When do they take place)?

MAY I?

... in accordance with the principle of equal opportunity for political parties (Article 21 of the Basic Law), should political parties not be criticised in the classroom?

MAY I?

... react to racist comments from students that reproduce the political positions of political parties?

MAY I?

... as a teacher to take a stand in a political conflict?

MAY I?

... criticising students for their political opinions?

MAY I?

... address political topics that could lead to complaints from parents?

MAY I?

...motivating students to become politically active?

MAY I?

...invite representatives of political parties to the school?

Yes, you are allowed to criticise political parties.

The right of political parties to equal opportunities does not mean that their positions must be presented uncritically or neutrally in the classroom. Party political positions—especially those that convey racist or far-right content—do not have to be treated as equally valid political opinions. Such positions call into question human dignity and the equality of all people and thus violate fundamental principles of the Basic Law (German Constitution).

Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

Yes. You are not required to disclose this information, neither as a teacher nor in a leadership position.

Courage - Werkstatt für demokratische Bildungsarbeit e. V.

Yes. Teachers are permitted to take a stance in political conflicts, as long as this does not appear as undue influence or advertising. Political education is not value-neutral, and representing the values of the democratic order is part of their professional mandate. Where fundamental and human rights are affected, a clear position is necessary, as long as students retain the opportunity to form their own opinions.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes. Teachers are obligated to clearly oppose racist or far-right positions – regardless of whether they originate from political parties or are expressed by students. Racist statements violate human dignity and contradict fundamental human rights that define the educational mandate. Silence would not be a neutral stance, but would instead give space to misanthropic attitudes. Therefore, a clear and objective counter-position is necessary to protect learners and strengthen democratic values.

Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

Yes. The selection of political topics is the pedagogical responsibility of the teacher, not the parents. Parents' views can be considered in class, for example, as a starting point for discussions, but they do not determine the content. Political education should address real social issues – even if these are controversial or provoke resistance. What is crucial is that the topics are presented objectively, in a balanced way, and in an age-appropriate manner.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes. Criticism is a central component of political education and necessary for the development of critical thinking skills. It does not restrict freedom of expression, but rather is a prerequisite for it. The goal of criticism should never be to adopt the teacher's opinion, but to foster students' critical thinking abilities. This includes factually accurate criticism, criticism in defence of the democratic order, or criticism directed against misanthropic prejudices. Criticism should always be expressed in an acceptable manner.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes. Lessons may and should facilitate encounters with political actors. Party representatives may therefore be invited, provided the event is pedagogically prepared and does not constitute one-sided advertising. It is important that different positions are considered and that students can critically reflect on the encounter. This supports political judgment without exerting partisan influence.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes. Political education should not only impart knowledge but also empower students to actively participate in democratic processes. Teachers may therefore encourage students to represent their interests and engage in political activities—as long as this occurs without partisan influence and the students' decisions remain voluntary. The goal is to promote participation and democratic competence.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

MAY I?

... visit a demonstration  
with students?

MAY I?

... addressing politically  
controversial topics, even  
if they are emotionally  
charged?

MAY I?

... clearly identify when  
political positions  
violate human rights?

MAY I?

...disclose that I myself am  
politically active?

MAY I?

... addressing racist and  
far-right positions of a  
party in the classroom?

MAY I?

... discuss current  
political events such as  
elections or scandals in  
class?

MAY I?

... pointing out to students  
that some parties endanger  
fundamental democratic  
values?

MAY I?

... to clarify in class that  
not all political  
positions are equally  
legitimate?

Yes. Political education requires addressing social conflicts and controversial issues. This is necessary so that students can become familiar with different perspectives and form their own opinions. Controversy is one of the fundamental principles of political education.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes, under certain conditions. Attending a demonstration is possible if participation is voluntary, integrated into an educational context, and does not involve partisan political advertising. Crucially, the focus must remain on political education: students should learn about and reflect on forms of democratic participation. Such activities must be well-prepared and followed up with a debriefing to ensure they contribute to the development of political competence and do not appear as partisan influence.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes, under clear conditions.

Teachers are allowed to make their political activities transparent, as long as this does not result in indoctrination or advertising. Transparency can even prevent manipulation, as long as the prohibition against indoctrination is observed.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes. Teachers are obligated to identify content that is hostile to human rights. The principle of neutrality does not mean that such positions can be presented as equally valid alongside democratic values.

Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

Yes.

Current political events offer important learning opportunities and support real-world-oriented political education. Crucially, they must be presented objectively and include diverse perspectives.

Mittnik, P.; Lauss, G. & Schmid-Heher, S. (2018). Was darf politische Bildung? Eine Handreichung für LehrerInnen für den Unterricht in politischer Bildung. [https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was\\_darf\\_politische\\_Bildung\\_A4.pdf](https://zpb.phwien.ac.at/wp-content/uploads/Was_darf_politische_Bildung_A4.pdf)

Yes.

Such content must even be addressed because racist positions violate human dignity. A critical examination of this topic is part of the mandate of human rights education and does not violate the principle of neutrality.

Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

Yes. Political education must and should make it clear that positions that violate human dignity or equality rights cannot be considered legitimate political opinions. The principle of neutrality does not oblige teachers to treat anti-human rights positions like any other viewpoint. Such content must be clearly categorised as incompatible with fundamental democratic values so that students learn to distinguish between legitimate political diversity and anti-democratic ideologies.

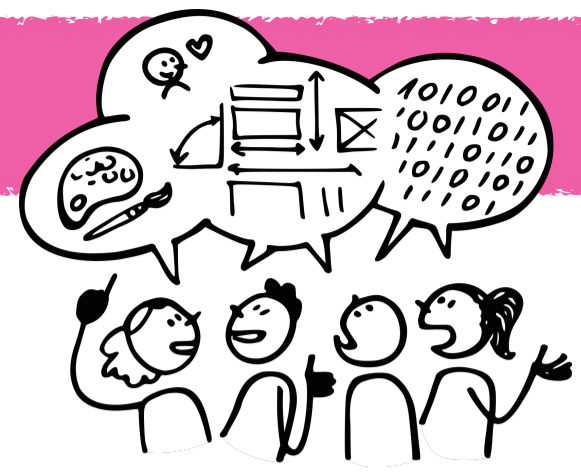
Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

Yes.

When political parties take positions that attack human rights or democratic principles, teachers must contextualise these positions and point out the dangers. The duty to educate about democracy and human rights takes precedence over political neutrality in this context.

Cremer, H. (2019). Das Neutralitätsgebot in der Bildung. Neutral gegenüber rassistischen und rechtsextremen Positionen von Parteien? [https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse\\_Das\\_Neutralitaetsgebot\\_in\\_der\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Publikationen/ANALYSE/Analyse_Das_Neutralitaetsgebot_in_der_Bildung.pdf)

# Further exploration: Disinformation



1. Read the examples on the back of the flashcards carefully. Assign each example to one of the disinformation strategies:
  - Fake experts
  - Logical fallacies
  - Impossible expectations
  - Cherry picking
  - Conspiracy theories
2. Provide examples from your own teaching or from conversations with colleagues (also on other topics). Pay attention to how arguments sometimes rely on disinformation strategies. Write these examples on blank flashcards and match them to the corresponding strategies.
3. Discuss in your group:
  - Which strategies do you encounter most frequently in your everyday school life?
  - How can you respond to them in class or with colleagues without stifling the discussion?
  - Which methods (e.g., critical questioning, fact-checking, changing perspectives) help you to refute disinformation while simultaneously strengthening a culture of open dialogue?

**DISINFORMATION 101**

**FAKE EXPERTS**  
 Presenting unqualified individuals or institutions as sources of credible information.

**LOGICAL FALLACIES**  
 Using arguments where the conclusion doesn't logically follow from the premises. Also known as a non sequitur.

**IMPOSSIBLE EXPECTATIONS**  
 Demanding unrealistic standards of certainty before acting on the science.

**CHERRY PICKING**  
 Skillfully selecting data that appear to confirm one position while ignoring other data that contradict that position.

**CONSPIRACY THEORIES**  
 Proposing that a secret plan is being carried out by a group of people.

**AGAINST!**  
 Bulk fake experts → Citing large numbers of seeming experts to argue that there is no scientific consensus on a topic.

**FAKE DEBATE**  
 Presenting science and pseudoscience in an adversarial format to give the false impression of an ongoing scientific debate.

**Magnified Minority**  
 Magnifying the significance of a handful of dissenting scientists to cast doubt on an overwhelming scientific consensus.

**Jumping to conclusions**  
 To make a wrong claim look logical by omitting key information.

**False Analogy**  
 Assuming that because two things are alike in some ways, they are alike in some other respect.

**Ad hominem**  
 Attacking a person/group instead of addressing their arguments.

**Red Herring**  
 Intentionally diverting attention to an irrelevant point to distract from a more important point.

**False Choice**  
 Presenting two options as the only possibilities, when in fact other possibilities exist.

**Single Cause**  
 Assuming a single cause or reason when there might be multiple causes or reasons.

**Moving goalposts**  
 Demanding higher levels of evidence after receiving requested evidence.

**Morepresentation**  
 Misrepresenting a situation or an opponent's position in such a way as to distort understanding.

**Strawman**  
 Misrepresenting or exaggerating an opponent's position to make it easier to attack.

**Slutful**  
 Ignoring evidence to one's advantage.

**Anecdotes**  
 Using personal experience or isolated examples instead of sound arguments or compelling evidence.

**Quality of global warming, effectiveness of vaccinations, health risks of car exhausts**  
 One thing in common: the scientific facts get regularly distorted in political discussions.

**Examples on Facebook, Twitter & Co., as well as on internet blogs, in parliamentary speeches or in personal discussions.**  
 For lay people the rhetorical tricks used to manipulate public opinion are often difficult to detect.

**This graphic explains the often-used strategies employed by the fog machine of disinformation.**

**Skeptical Science** klimafakten.de

# FAKE EXPERTS

→ Presenting unqualified individuals or institutions as sources of credible information.



**Bulk fake experts**  
→ Citing large numbers of seeming experts to argue that there is no scientific consensus on a topic.



**Magnified Minority**  
→ Magnifying the significance of a handful of dissenting scientists to cast doubt on an overwhelming scientific consensus.

**Fake Debate**  
→ Presenting science and pseudoscience in an adversarial format to give the false impression of an ongoing scientific debate.



# LOGICAL FALLACIES

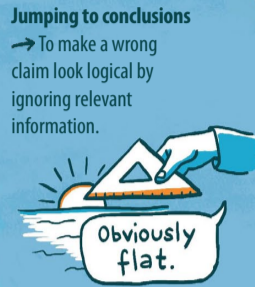
Using arguments where the conclusion doesn't logically follow from the premises. Also known as a non sequitur.



**False analogy**  
→ Assuming that because two things are alike in some ways, they are alike in some other respect.



**Ambiguity**  
→ Using ambiguous language in order to lead to a misleading conclusion.



**Jumping to conclusions**  
→ To make a wrong claim look logical by ignoring relevant information.

**False Choice**  
→ **False dichotomy**  
Presenting two options as the only possibilities, when in fact other possibilities exist.

→ **Single cause**  
Assuming a single cause or reason when there might be multiple causes or reasons.



**Ad hominem**  
→ Attacking a person/group instead of addressing their arguments.



**Red Herring**  
→ Deliberately diverting attention to an irrelevant point to distract from a more important point.

# ANGER!

**Misrepresentation**  
→ Misrepresenting a situation or an opponent's position in such a way as to distort understanding.



**Strawman**  
→ Misrepresenting or exaggerating an opponent's position to make it easier to attack.

# IMPOSSIBLE EXPECTATIONS

Demanding unrealistic standards of certainty before acting on the science.



**Moving goalposts**  
→ Demanding higher levels of evidence after receiving requested evidence.

# DISINFORMATION 101

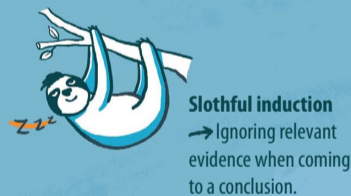
The reality of global warming, the effectiveness of vaccinations or the health risks of car exhausts have one thing in common: the scientific basics get regularly distorted in political discussions.

It happens on Facebook, Twitter & Co., as well as on internet blogs, in parliamentary speeches or in personal discussions. For lay people the rhetorical tricks used to manipulate public opinion are often difficult to detect.

This graphic explains the often-used strategies employed by the fog machine of disinformation.

# CHERRY PICKING

Skillfully selecting data that appear to confirm one position while ignoring other data that contradict that position.



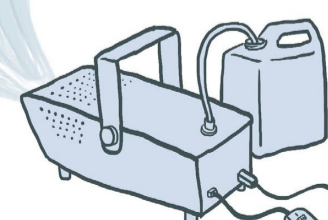
**Slothful induction**  
→ Ignoring relevant evidence when coming to a conclusion.

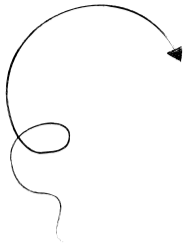


**Anecdote**  
→ Using personal experience or isolated examples instead of sound arguments or compelling evidence.

# CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Proposing that a secret plan exists to implement a nefarious scheme such as hiding a truth.

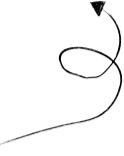




### FAKE EXPERTS - Fake debate

False balance calls into question the scientific consensus on climate change (99.9% Lynas et al., 2021).

### FAKE EXPERTS - Magnified minority



Engineer ≠ Climate researcher



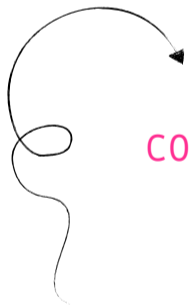
### FAKE EXPERTS - Bulk fake experts

The group is constructed as experts.

### LOGICAL FALLACIES - Misrepresentation



The statement is distorted to make it easier to attack.



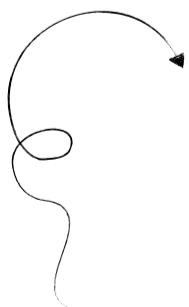
### CONSPIRACY THEORIES

The group is accused of nefarious activities.

### CONSPIRACY THEORIES



The group is accused of nefarious activities.



### CHERRY PICKING - Anecdote

Subjective example

### CHERRY PICKING - Slothful induction



Ignore inconvenient information, e.g. from other locations

"An engineer once wrote that climate data has been manipulated. For me, that's the final proof that you can't trust researchers. If even someone with a technical background claims something like that, then the whole climate crisis must be made up."

"Two climate scientists sat next to each other on the talk show and discussed the topic. One of them kept emphasising how terrible climate change is having, while the other argued that it's not yet clear whether humans are contributing to climate change. To me, this shows that the scientific community is divided. If experts contradict each other, how can you possibly know what's true?"

"Climate researchers say that the Earth will soon become uninhabitable and we will all die in a few years. That's just fear-mongering - it's not that bad. So you can't take the whole climate crisis seriously."

"We are over 100 people in our Facebook group, and everyone agrees: Climate change is nothing but scaremongering. If so many people say the same thing, then there must be something to it. After all, we have all had our own experiences with the weather - that's proof enough."

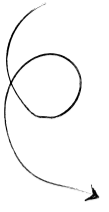
"The climate scientists have long since colluded. I've read that they manipulate their data to make it look more dramatic. That way they get more funding and attention. For me, that's a clear indication that you can't trust the official figures."

"The whole climate crisis is just a project of politicians and the media. They want to scare us so that we accept new taxes. If you look closely, you can see that the alleged global warming is just a pretext to gain control over people."

"In my city, it didn't seem much warmer than usual this year. The summers were normal, and the winters were too. If there's no change here, then global warming can't really be true."

"Last winter it was so cold here that even the lake froze over. I still remember when we went ice skating - it was like old times. If the earth really did get warmer, something like that shouldn't happen anymore."

Weather ≠ Climate



LOGICAL FALLACIES - False analogy

LOGICAL FALLACIES - Ad hominem



The person is being attacked, not the argument.



LOGICAL FALLACIES - Ambiguity

Scientific term is mixed with everyday meaning.

LOGICAL FALLACIES - Red herring



Distraction from the actual topic

LOGICAL FALLACIES - Single cause



A general conclusion is drawn from a single fact.

LOGICAL FALLACIES - False dichotomy



artificial "either-or logic"

LOGICAL FALLACIES - Jumping to conclusions



The main cause is omitted.

LOGICAL FALLACIES - Strawman



An exaggerated demand is being made that does not exist in that form.

"You only have to look at who these climate scientists are - they all sit in their ivory towers and have no idea about real life. They want to give us orders, even though they never work outside themselves. When such people talk about the climate, you can't take it seriously."

"Climate change is just like normal weather fluctuations - sometimes it's hot, sometimes it's cold. Just as you sweat in the summer and freeze in the winter, the climate also fluctuates. If we've always lived with such fluctuations, why should it suddenly be a problem now?"

"Instead of talking about climate change, we should focus on how expensive the energy transition will be. Rising electricity prices are the real problem for people. When we talk about costs, it quickly becomes clear that the whole climate debate is just a distraction from what really matters: our wallets."

"The climate has always changed - it's a completely natural process. When researchers talk about 'climate change' now, they're just referring to these normal fluctuations. When you say there's 'climate change', it sounds like it's something completely new. But actually, change just means alteration, and alterations are perfectly normal."

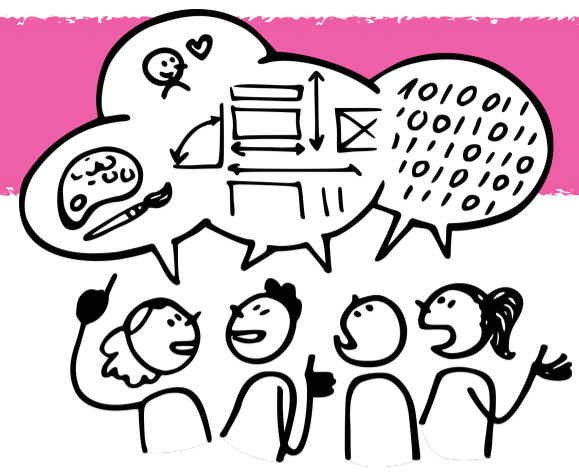
"Climate scientists make many predictions about the future. For me, there are only two possibilities: Either every one of these predictions comes true, or the whole fuss about the climate crisis is exaggerated. If even one prediction is wrong, then that shows that you can't trust the concept as a whole."

"Yesterday I read an article that said a glacier in the Alps has grown again. For me, that's proof that the whole climate crisis doesn't exist. If a glacier is getting bigger, then there can't be global warming - that just shows that science is exaggerating."

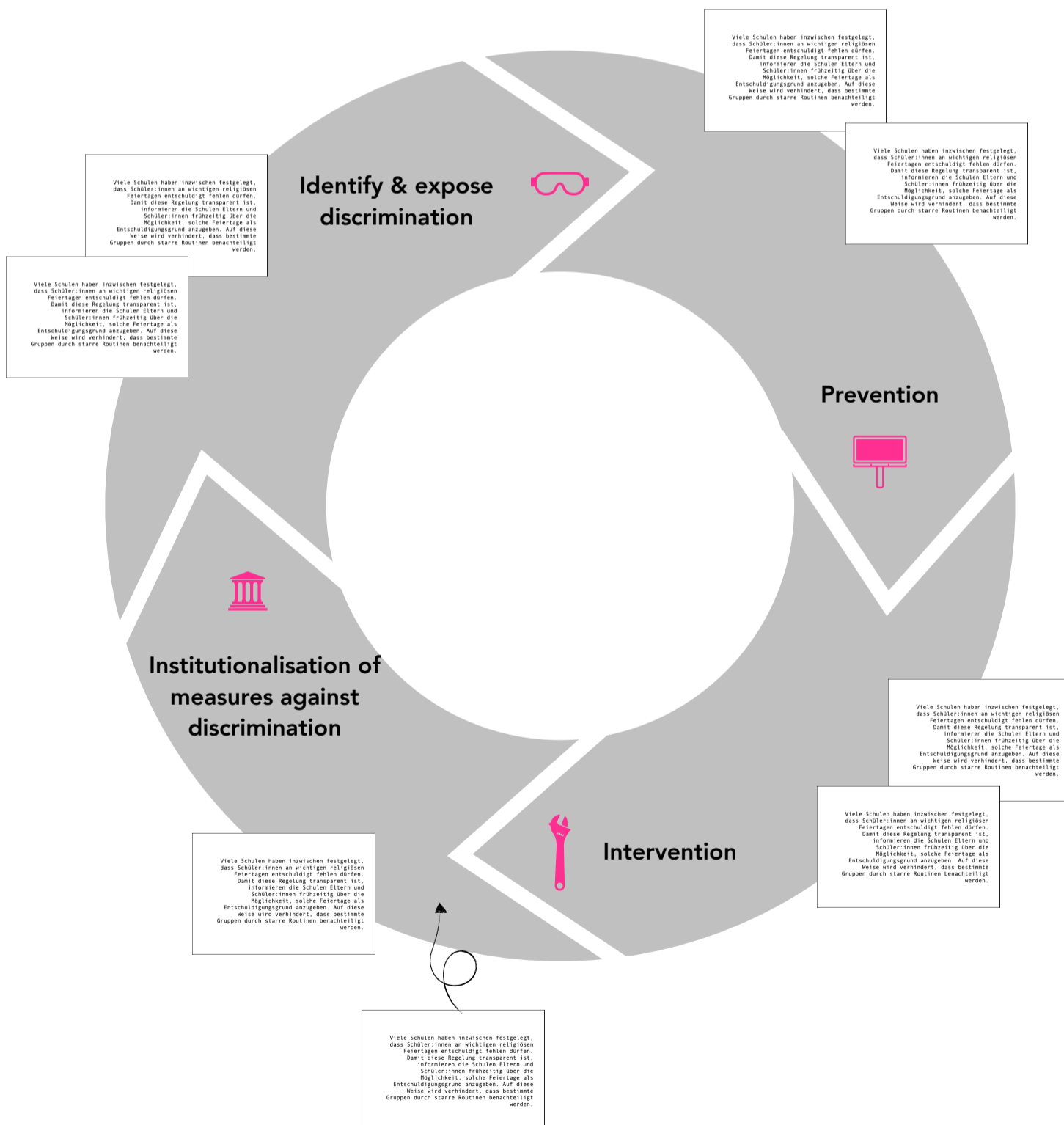
"Climate scientists supposedly want us to abolish all cars immediately. But how are we supposed to commute to work then? Nobody thinks about that. And who is supposed to pay for all these climate measures if not us with our tax money? To me, this shows that the demands are completely unrealistic."

"Temperatures are only rising because there have been more sunny days in recent years. This is a completely natural cycle - more sun, more warmth."

# Further exploration: Measures against discrimination



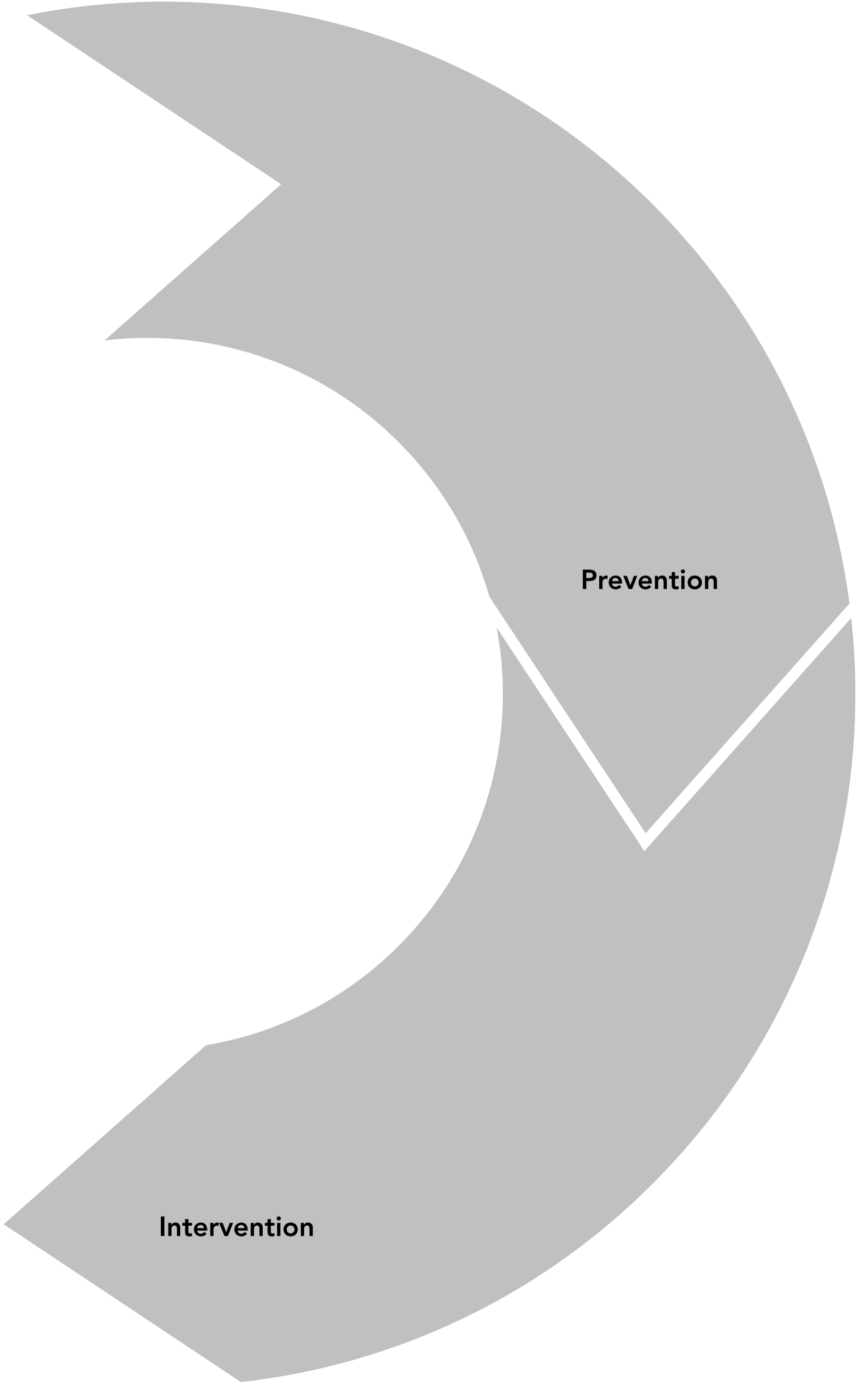
- Carefully read the strategies on the back of the flashcards. Assign each strategy to one of the four levels of action:
  - Identifying and uncovering discrimination
  - Prevention
  - Intervention
  - Institutionalising measures against discrimination
- List strategies you encounter in your everyday school life. Write them down on blank flashcards and assign them to the relevant levels of action.
- Discuss together which levels of action are particularly important at your school. Consider together which levels you want to focus on more in the future to effectively combat discrimination.





**Identify & expose  
discrimination**

**Institutionalisation of  
measures against  
discrimination**



**Prevention**

**Intervention**

IDENTIFYING AND  
EXPOSING  
DISCRIMINATION

Surveys

IDENTIFYING AND  
EXPOSING  
DISCRIMINATION

Analysis of teaching materials

IDENTIFYING AND  
EXPOSING  
DISCRIMINATION

Examination of rules and  
routines

IDENTIFYING AND  
EXPOSING  
DISCRIMINATION

Survey of statistical  
inequalities

INSTITUTIONALISATION  
OF MEASURES AGAINST  
DISCRIMINATION

School organisational  
obligations

INSTITUTIONALISATION  
OF MEASURES AGAINST  
DISCRIMINATION

Prohibitions of discrimination  
and their consequences

INSTITUTIONALISATION  
OF MEASURES AGAINST  
DISCRIMINATION

Anti-discrimination officers  
and committees

INSTITUTIONALISATION  
OF MEASURES AGAINST  
DISCRIMINATION

Guidelines for non-  
discriminatory assessment and  
teaching materials

A team of teachers reviews the history textbooks used and discovers that certain groups are barely represented or are portrayed stereotypically. They document these findings and suggest alternative materials.

The student council is organising an anonymous online survey in which students can indicate whether they have ever felt disadvantaged or excluded in class or on the school grounds. The results will be collected, analysed, and discussed in the school council.

The school administration evaluates participation in voluntary extracurricular activities and notes that girls are significantly less likely to be represented in technology clubs. This statistical inequality is documented and used as a starting point for further measures.

A review of the school rules reveals that certain religious holidays are not taken into account. Students absent on these days are automatically considered "unexcused." This procedure is documented.

Schools enshrine a clear prohibition of discriminatory language, actions, and structures in their school rules. This prohibition is not merely symbolic but carries binding consequences: teachers are obligated to document and address discriminatory incidents pedagogically, parents are involved, and in cases of repeated violations, graduated measures such as meetings with the school administration or school sanctions are implemented. This creates a transparent framework that signals to all involved that discrimination is taken seriously and has concrete consequences.

Many schools have now established a policy allowing students to be excused from school on important religious holidays. To ensure transparency, schools inform parents and students well in advance about the possibility of citing such holidays as a reason for absence. This prevents certain groups from being disadvantaged by rigid procedures.

Schools develop binding guidelines to ensure that both assessment and teaching materials are free from discriminatory structures. This means that teachers may not use criteria in grading that disadvantage certain groups (e.g., linguistic background, gender, social status). At the same time, the school commits to regularly and critically reviewing all materials - from textbooks and worksheets to digital resources. These guidelines are part of the school's program and are binding for all teachers.

Schools should establish firm structures that guarantee students and parents the right to information and advice in cases of discrimination. This could include an anti-discrimination officer, a counselling room, or an anonymous reporting system. It is crucial that those affected know where to turn and that their concerns are addressed seriously and confidentially. These rights not only address discrimination on an individual level but also provide institutional safeguards - no one is left alone with their experiences, and the school assumes responsibility for providing support and raising awareness.

## PREVENTION

Training of teaching staff

## PREVENTION

Strengthening those affected

## PREVENTION

Training for students

## PREVENTION

Promoting participation

## INTERVENTION

Development of a complaints procedure

## INTERVENTION

Rules for dealing  
with affected individuals

## INTERVENTION

Mediation/arbitration

## INTERVENTION

Appointment of mediators and  
contact persons

Schools create structures that specifically strengthen students who experience discrimination. These include empowerment workshops, peer support groups, and opportunities to share personal experiences in a safe environment. The goal is not only to protect those affected but also to give them the skills and self-confidence to actively identify discrimination and seek support.

Teachers receive regular professional development to recognise discriminatory structures and take preventative action. The training includes knowledge of legal frameworks, raising awareness of language and materials, and methods for designing lessons that are critical of discrimination. This prevents discrimination from being unconsciously reproduced. A key focus is on reflective language use, enabling teachers to learn how subtle formulations or assessments can have a discriminatory effect.

Students and parents are actively involved in decision-making processes. This includes student parliaments with voting rights, working groups on diversity and discrimination, and mandatory participation in rule changes. Mentoring programs and easily accessible participation formats are also available. This ensures effective participation in everyday school life and prevents certain students from being excluded again.

Students receive training that raises their awareness of discrimination and equips them with strategies for action. This training focuses on civic courage, respectful communication, and conflict resolution. The goal is to foster a culture of mutual support. Promoting nonviolent communication is particularly important, enabling students to learn how to resolve conflicts constructively and without judgment.

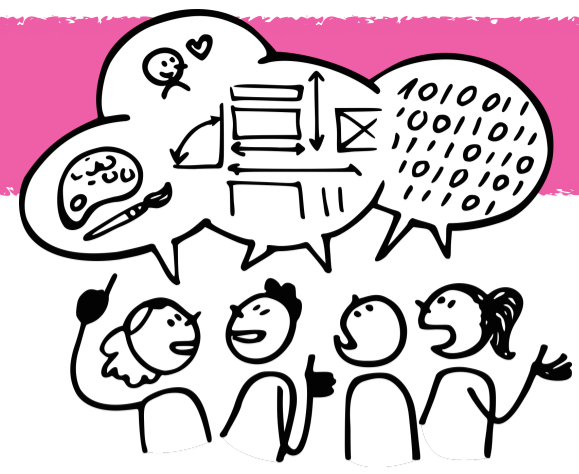
Schools establish binding rules for how to deal with students who have experienced discrimination. This includes taking those affected seriously, protecting them, and not forcing them to justify themselves. Teachers are obligated to listen, offer support, and clearly communicate further steps. After a discriminatory incident, the affected person is immediately removed from the stressful situation, has a confidential conversation with a teacher, and is informed about their rights and possible next steps.

Schools develop a clear procedure for receiving, processing, and documenting complaints. Every incident is recorded in writing, and there are fixed deadlines for processing. For example: A student reports discrimination. The school uses a standardised form, documents the incident, informs the parents, and initiates action within five days.

Schools train students to become peer mediators who can help resolve conflicts between their peers. These mediators are specially trained to recognise discrimination and address it respectfully. There are designated, clearly identified contact persons within the school staff responsible for cases of discrimination. Students know who to contact, and the designated contact person is obligated to document and forward cases confidentially.

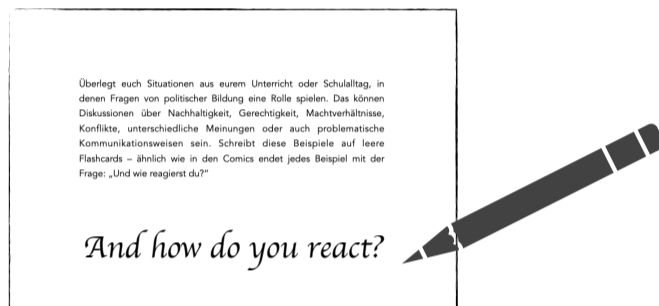
Mediation is offered in cases of conflict. The goal is to clarify the situation, take responsibility, and reach agreements. Since teachers can become involved in conflicts, independent mediators can be invited. At the same time, it is important to consider how those affected can be protected during mediation: for example, by ensuring they do not have to recount the incident multiple times, by establishing clear rules for discussion, and by providing the option to seek support at any time. This prevents the mediation itself from becoming a burden or a further experience of discrimination.

# Further exploration: Own case studies



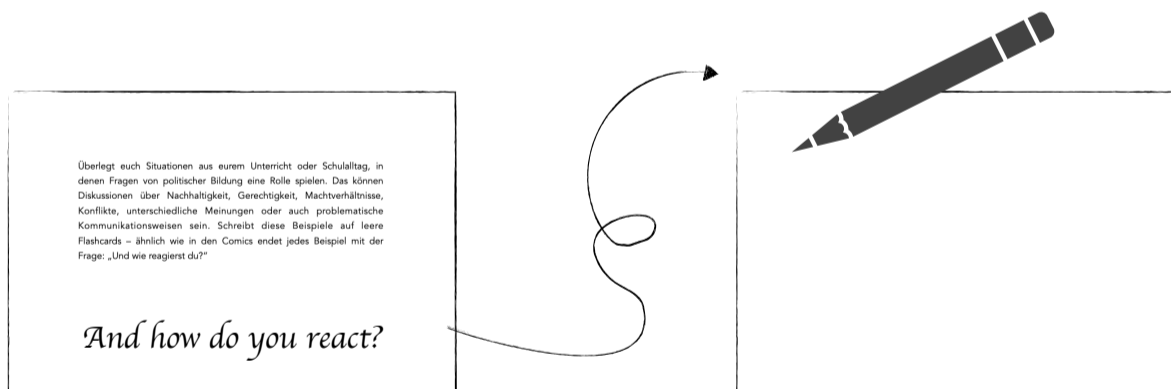
1

Think about situations from your lessons or everyday school life where political education issues come into play. These could be discussions about sustainability, justice, power dynamics, conflicts, differing opinions, or even problematic communication styles. Write these examples on blank flashcards – similar to the comics, each example ends with the question: "And how do you react?"



2

Exchange the flashcards with each other. On the back of someone else's example, write a possible reaction: What could one do or say in this situation? What courses of action are there?



3

Bring the flashcards back together and discuss the examples and reactions as a group. Discuss:

- Which reactions could you imagine implementing?
- For which situations is it particularly difficult to find courses of action, and why?
- What commonalities exist between the situations? To what extent can courses of action be transferred?