

# Abit **MEHR ERFAHREN**

Englisch  
Abi Niedersachsen

*Das musst du wissen*

**STARK**

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Kerncurriculum und verbindliche Materialien

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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 2023** 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 sowohl im **grundlegenden** als auch im **erhöhten Anforderungsniveau** verbindlich sind, welche nur für das erhöhte Niveau vorausgesetzt werden und welche nur an **Beruflichen** bzw. nur an **Allgemeinbildenden Gymnasien** zu behandeln 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 Niedersächsischen Kultusministerium festgelegten „verbindlichen Unterrichtsaspekten“ 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.

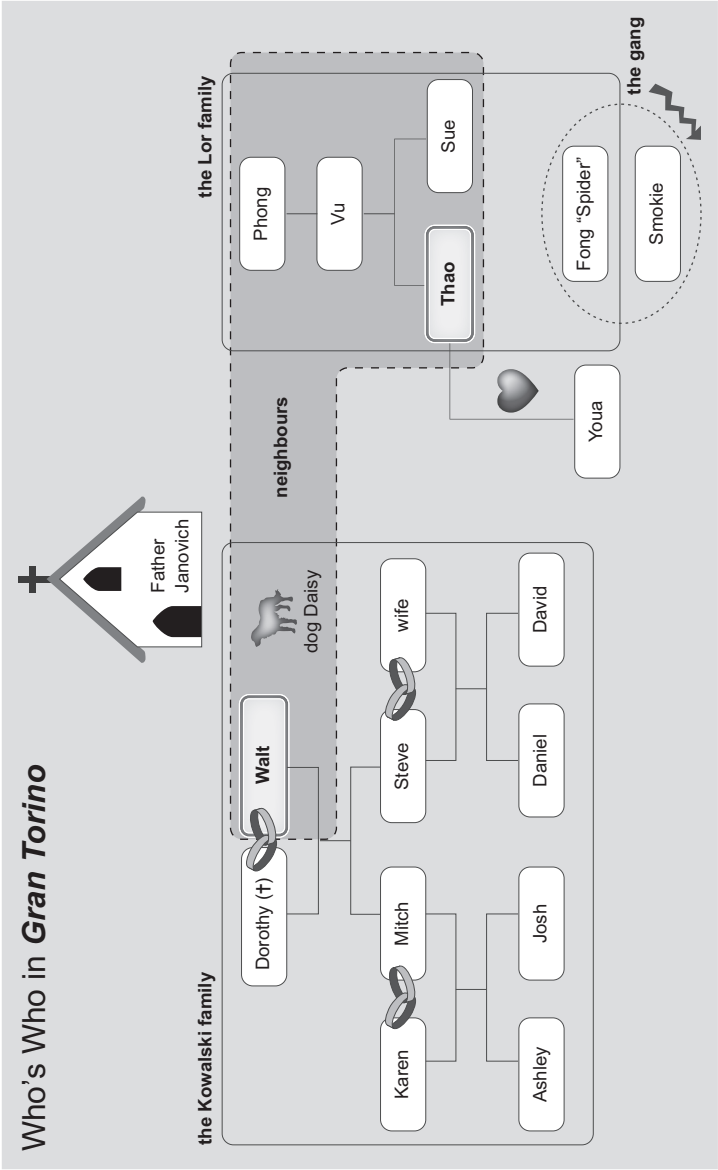
Viel Erfolg beim Lernen mit diesem Skript und im Abitur!



# Gran Torino

## 1 Key facts about the film

- **screenplay:** written by Nick Schenk
- **director and producer:** Clint Eastwood (also stars as main character)
- **release date:** 2008/2009
- **genre:** **modern-day Western** (plot centring on “lone Cowboy”/hero Walt who takes the law into his own hands), **action movie** (scenes of violence and fighting), **psychological drama** (focus on psychological conflicts, fraught relationships, heartbreaking ending)
- **running time:** ca. 112 minutes
- **structure:** frame of two funerals (Dorothy and Walt Kowalski), development of Walt and Thao’s friendship, escalation of gang violence, Thao’s process of growing up
- **setting:** Detroit area, Michigan
- **content:** Thao, a young, insecure Hmong teenager, is supposed to steal his elderly neighbour Walt Kowalski’s Gran Torino as an initiation rite into gang life. Walt is a recently widowed, embittered and racist Korean War veteran. In the aftermath of the thwarted stealing attempt, Walt develops a close relationship to Thao and his family. Their friendship gives Thao a direction and Walt’s life a new meaning, which culminates in his self-sacrifice to free Thao and his sister from the threats of gang violence.



## 2 Plot

### Setting 1 > At the church (ca. 00:45–03:43)<sup>1</sup>

- Dorothy Kowalski's funeral service
- widower Walt is visibly upset about family's behaviour and Father Janovich's shallow sermon

### Setting 2 > In Walt's house/Outside Walt's house (ca. 03:44–09:44)

- Walt's grandsons find memorabilia of Korean War in Walt's cellar
- Walt's granddaughter Ashley bluntly asks him to inherit 1972 Gran Torino Sport
- traditional Hmong birth ceremony at Walt's neighbours' house
- Father Janovich wants Walt to go to confession, Walt rejects this

### Setting 3 > Inside the Lors' house (ca. 09:45–11:05)

- Thao's grandmother Phong complains about Thao not being "the man of the house"

### Setting 4 > On the porches (ca. 11:06–12:40)

- Walt and Phong suspiciously eye each other from their porches
- Walt refuses Father Janovich's offer for confession again

### Setting 5 > In the street (ca. 12:41–15:08)

- Hispanic gang bullies Thao
- cousin Spider and his gang help Thao, want him to join them

### Setting 6 > In the Lors' garden (ca. 15:09–17:22)

- gang pressures Thao into joining them and stealing Walt's Gran Torino

### Setting 7 > At a bar (ca. 17:23–20:04)

- Father Janovich's next attempt to talk to Walt
- Walt mentions experiences on the Korean battlefield, implying that he knows more about death than the young priest

<sup>1</sup> Times refer to the DVD version of *Gran Torino* and may vary slightly when played on different devices.

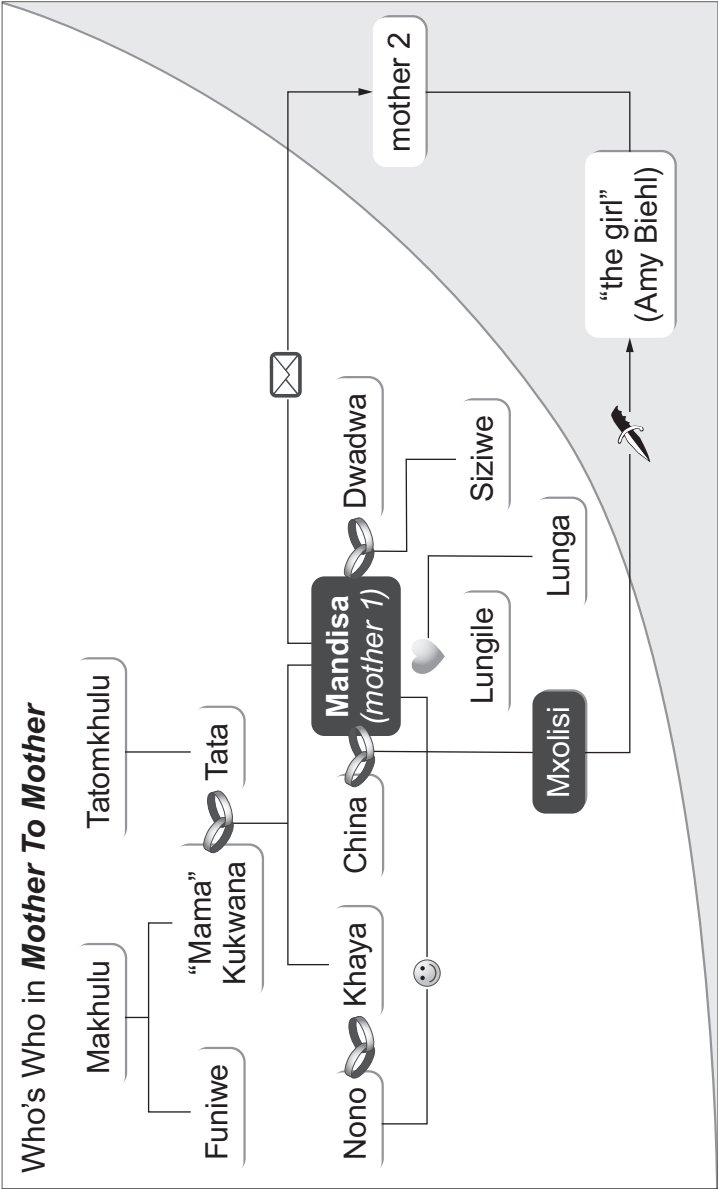




# *Mother to Mother*

## 1 Key facts about the novel

- **author:** Sindiwe Magona (\*1943 in Gungululu, South Africa), Master's Degree in Social Work at Columbia University (USA), worked for UN Department of Public Information for about 20 years, returned to South Africa in 2003, actress, author, playwright, poet, lecturer, motivational speaker, humanitarian activist
- **year of publication:** 1998
- **adaptations:** theatre play (2009), documentary film (2020)
- **genre:** epistolary novel, fictionalised account of real-life event (murder of White American student in South African township)
- **setting:** South Africa (mainly township Guguletu near Cape Town)
- **time:** 1993 with flashbacks to the 1960s and 1970s
- **narrative perspective:** first-person narration: extended letter from Mandisa to "the girl's" mother
- **structure:** author's preface, 12 chapters: "Mandisa's lament" in chapter 1 (= letter from Mandisa, mother of "the girl's" killer, to "the girl's" mother) and interspersed throughout the novel, other chapters delineate the events leading up to and directly following the murder in non-chronological order (partly extensive flashbacks to Mandisa's youth and her early adulthood)
- **content:** Mandisa remembers the direct aftermath of "the girl's" murder and recounts her own and her son Mxolisi's life story to try and explain how he could end up killing the American student. The story is based on the case of Amy Biehl, a White American student, who spent ten months at an African university to learn about the Xhosa culture and language and helped prepare the first democratic elections in South Africa. Biehl was attacked and killed by a group of Black youths in August 1993.
- **explanation of the title:** novel is a fictional letter from the killer's to the victim's mother



## 2 Plot

### Author's preface

- real-life background of the novel: Fulbright scholar Amy Biehl killed in township Guguletu in August 1993 by mob of Black youth
- novel as an attempt to gain understanding why such a cruel act could be committed and how the killers were shaped by apartheid

### Chapter 1

#### Mandisa's lament

- Mandisa's letter to "the girl's" mother: she tries to explain her son Mxolisi's murder of "the girl"
- Mandisa asks for forgiveness both for Mxolisi's deed and her own potential responsibility
- also reproaches "the girl" for visiting the Black township
- admits that she is not surprised by Mxolisi's deed and connects it to their general life circumstances
- feels like the murdered girl's mother and she herself should find common ground in their sorrow

### Chapter 2

#### Mowbray – Wednesday 25 August 1993

- juxtaposition: how Mandisa imagines "the girl's" morning on the day of her killing (her last day in South Africa) and her own morning
- Mandisa's worries about neglecting her children due to having to work and her guilty conscience for having lost control over them
- Mxolisi and his friends, who play truant as a sign of their political protest, spend their day hanging about the township, witnessing the common lootings and violence
- "the girl's" offer to drive four of her university friends home to Guguletu
- another juxtaposition of "the girl" and her friends driving into Guguletu and Mxolisi and his friends approaching her car and the commotion it causes

### Chapter 3

#### 5.15 p.m. – Wednesday 25 August 1993

- Mandisa is sent home earlier than usual by her White employer, because of trouble in Guguletu





## 4 Themes and interpretation

Background information	
<i>Paradise Lost</i> (1667)	<b>author:</b> John Milton (1608–1674) <b>form:</b> epic poem in 12 books <b>theme:</b> the rebellion of Satan and his followers against God, the rebellion of Adam and Eve against divine law in the Garden of Eden <b>connection with novel <i>Frankenstein</i>:</b> Frankenstein as ambitious as Satan, Monster identifies both with Adam (suffering from loneliness) and Satan (“the fallen angel”)
<i>Plutarch’s Lives</i> (ca. 100)	<b>author:</b> Plutarch (ca. 45–125) <b>form:</b> 48 biographies of famous men <b>theme:</b> Greek and Roman men’s lives juxtaposed to reveal their virtues and vices <b>connection with novel <i>Frankenstein</i>:</b> the Monster’s source to learn about good and bad
<i>Sorrows of Werther</i> (1774)	<b>author:</b> Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749–1832) <b>form:</b> epistolary novel <b>theme:</b> young Werther falls in love with engaged Charlotte and commits suicide out of despair <b>connection with novel <i>Frankenstein</i>:</b> Monster learns about deep emotions from the novel, can identify with Werther’s experience of unrequited love and also plans to commit suicide at the end

### Ethics of science

Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is regarded as one of the forerunners of what became known as “**dystopian science fiction**” – a view of a potentially intimidating future development. In her story she explores the **limits of science and technology** and illustrates how scientists can go wrong and too far. Today these ethical issues are more relevant than ever. In connection with advanced methods of genetic engineering, in particular, there have been controversial discussions as to whether everything that is possible should also be allowed or whether there might be **unintended and uncontrollable detrimental repercussions** of all the scientific and/or technological potential being unleashed.

### depiction in the novel

- the erroneous concept of unrestricted freedom of science:
  - as a student Victor follows Professor Waldman's misguided conviction that there is **no limit to scientific research** and science will almost always turn out for the best: "The labours of men of genius, however erroneously directed, scarcely ever fail in ultimately turning to the solid advantage of mankind." (Chapter 3)
  - after his first successful experiments, Victor feels satisfaction and expects gratitude and ultimately a way to conquer death (**God complex**) ("A new species would bless me as its creator and source [...]. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs. [...] I might in process of time [...] renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption.", Chapter 4)
  - Victor's work is seen as "**playing God**" and his **secrecy** throughout the process shows that he ultimately knows that what he does is wrong
- the repercussions of unrestricted science:
  - the Monster is more or less **uncontrollable** because he is stronger than human beings
  - Victor is **responsible for the misery of his creature**, whom he abandons, and the **deaths of innocent people**
  - he has also **destroyed his own life**: "Cursed (although I curse myself) be the hands that formed you! You have made me wretched beyond expression." (Chapter 10)
  - he admits he was **blind to the consequences** of his actions: "my eyes were shut to the horror of my proceedings." (Chapter 19)
- the responsibility of scientists:
  - Victor **shunning the responsibility** for his creature
  - Victor does **not divulge his knowledge** towards Walton because he knows of its catastrophic results and wants to **prevent him from repeating his mistakes**
  - he destroys his second project (companion for the Monster) for fears of his creation completely **spiralling out of control**
  - the explorer Robert Walton represents the **responsible scientist** who gives up his quest to save the lives of his men





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