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COMMUNICATION & DIVERSITY



Communication: More than Words

What Shapes Understanding?

Analysing an Image Step by Step

Same Message - Different Associations

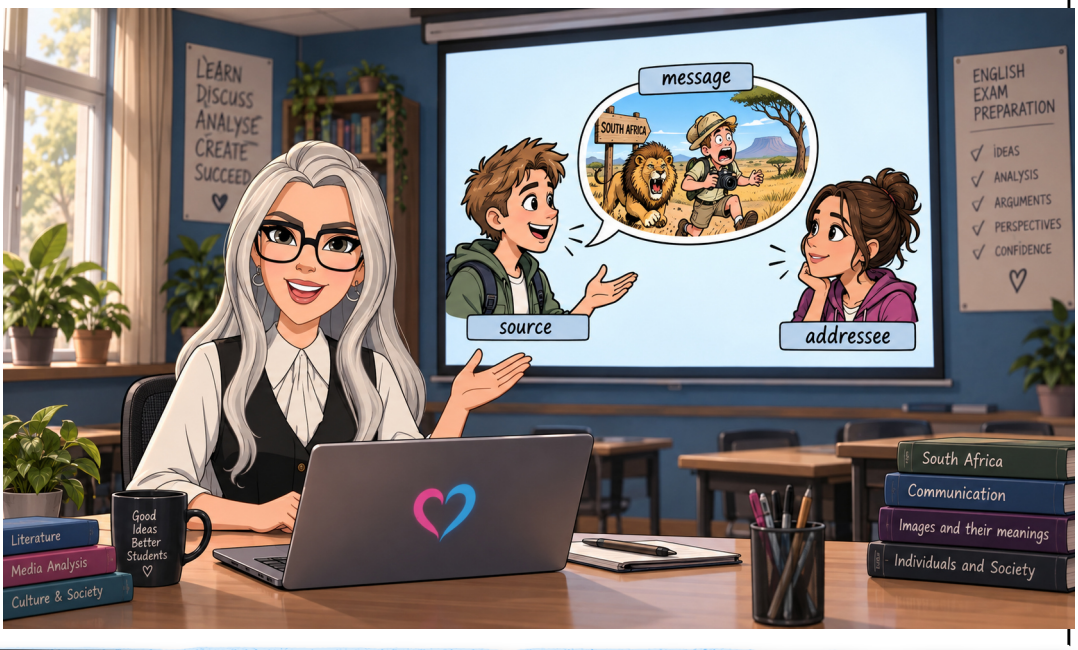
Where Do Our Ideas Come From?

One Place - Different Perspectives

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COMMUNICATION: MORE THAN WORDS

How messages, experiences and perspectives shape understanding



vocabulary

source	quelle
receiver	Empfänger
addressee	Adressat

1 What is communication?

When we communicate, a sender (or source) wants to communicate something to another person, the receiver (or addressee). What the sender communicates is called the message.

Task 1 - What can a message contain?

Collect different things that people can communicate. Think of everyday life, school, online communication and special situations.

Ideas to get you started: a warning - a secret - congratulations - bad news - a promise - ...

Think further: Can the same message be understood differently by two people? Give a first idea and explain it.

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WHAT SHAPES UNDERSTANDING?

A message is not received by an 'empty' mind.

Communication is more complicated than simply sending and receiving a message. Both the sender and the receiver bring their own knowledge, experiences, feelings, beliefs, expectations and assumptions into a conversation.

Some of what we think we know comes from personal experience. Other ideas come from people around us, school, society, media or other sources. This knowledge can be incomplete or biased. As a result, two people can talk about the same topic but connect it with very different ideas.

Task 2 Analyse the cartoons.



Source: AI-generated illustration, © Adriana Leidenberger with ChatGPT (OpenAI), 2026.

Step 1 - Source and topic

Name the source and the main topic.

The illustration was generated by ... / The illustration deals with ... / The main topic is ...

vocabulary

knowledge	Wissen / Kenntnisse
experiences	Erfahrungen
feelings	Gefühle
beliefs	Überzeugungen / Vorstellungen
expectations	Erwartungen
assumptions	Annahmen / Vermutungen
incomplete	unvollständig / lückenhaft
biased	einseitig / voreingenommen

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ANALYSING AN IMAGE STEP BY STEP

Continue your analysis of Illustration 2.

vocabulary

Step 2 - Composition

Describe how the illustration is organised. What can you see on the left, in the centre, on the right and above the people?

On the left/right ... / In the centre ... / Above ... / The thought bubbles

Step 3 - Details

Look closely at the thought bubbles. Which objects, activities, places and situations are shown?

Which topics or ideas are they connected to?

Step 4 - Analysis

The sender: Which ideas about school come to his mind? How are they shown?

The receiver: Which ideas about school come to her mind? How are they shown?

This may represent ... / This suggests that ... / Whereas the sender ..., the receiver ...

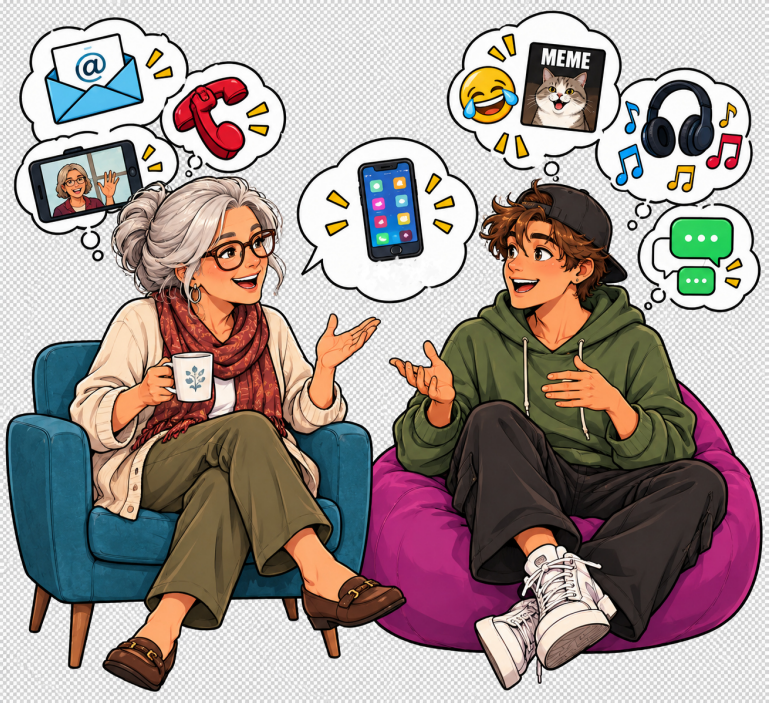
Step 5 - Conclusion

Why can the word school have a different meaning for these two people? What communication problems could result if each person assumes that the other thinks about school in the same way?

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SAME MESSAGE - DIFFERENT ASSOCIATIONS

Now compare another communication situation.



Source: Adriana Leidenberger 2026 mit ChatGPT(OpenAI), 2026.

Task 3 Compare Illustrations 2 and 3

a) What does the topic mobile phone make each person in Illustration 3 think of? Name the visual details that show these ideas. What could be the reason?

b) Compare Illustration 2 (school) and Illustration 3 (mobile phone). What do they have in common? How are they different?

Both illustrations ... / In both cases ... / Whereas ... / In contrast ... / One important difference is ...

c) Does having different associations mean that one person must be right and the other wrong?

Explain.

vocabulary

visual	visuell / gestalterische
whereas	wohingegen

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WHERE DO OUR IDEAS COME FROM?

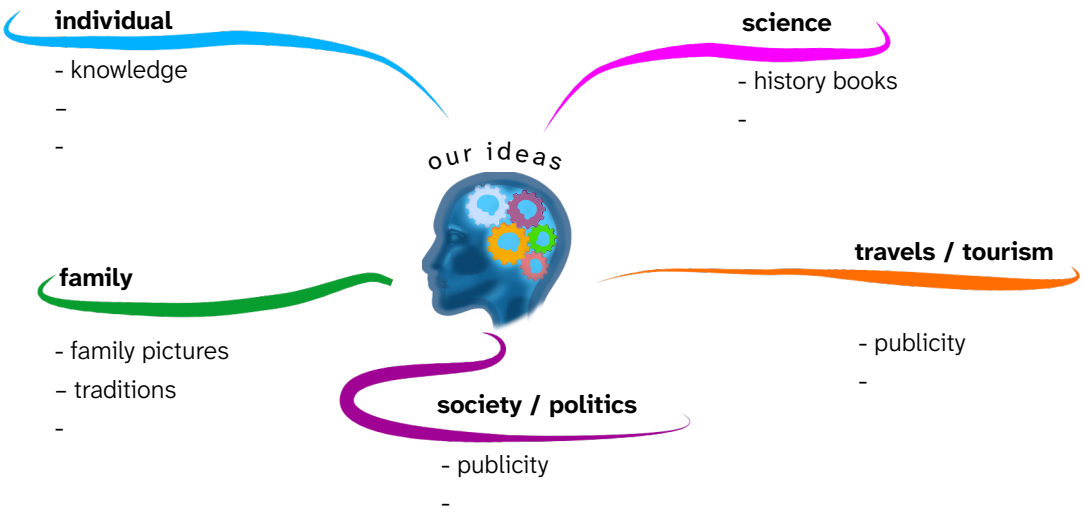
Our perspective is influenced by many different sources.

vocabulary

precon-ception	vorgefasste Meinung
miscon-ception	falsche Vorstellung
source	quelle

Task 4 - Build a mind map

Add examples to each mind map. Think about what can shape our knowledge, expectations, assumptions, opinions, stereotypes and preconceptions. You may add the same idea to more than one category.



Task 5 -Discuss with a partner

1. Which influences can be useful sources of knowledge?
2. Which influences can also create stereotypes, prejudices or misconceptions?
3. Which sources should we check carefully before we believe them?

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ONE PLACE - DIFFERENT HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Communication is also shaped by history, culture and power.



Source: Adriana Leidenberger with ChatGPT(OpenAI), 2026. The image is a simplified visual interpretation and not a historical source.

Taks 5 - Describe and analyse Illustration 4

1. Source and topic: Introduce the illustration and identify its main topic.

2. Composition: Explain how the illustration is organised.

3. Details: Which objects, people, places and events are shown in the thought bubbles? What ideas are they connected to?

4. Perspectives: What does the Dutch figure associate with South Africa and colonisation? What does the South African figure associate with it? Use details from the image as evidence.

5. Comparison: Explain why the same historical period can be viewed very differently.

vocabulary

shape	formen
identify	identifi-zieren
evidence	Beweis

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FROM MESSAGE TO MEANING

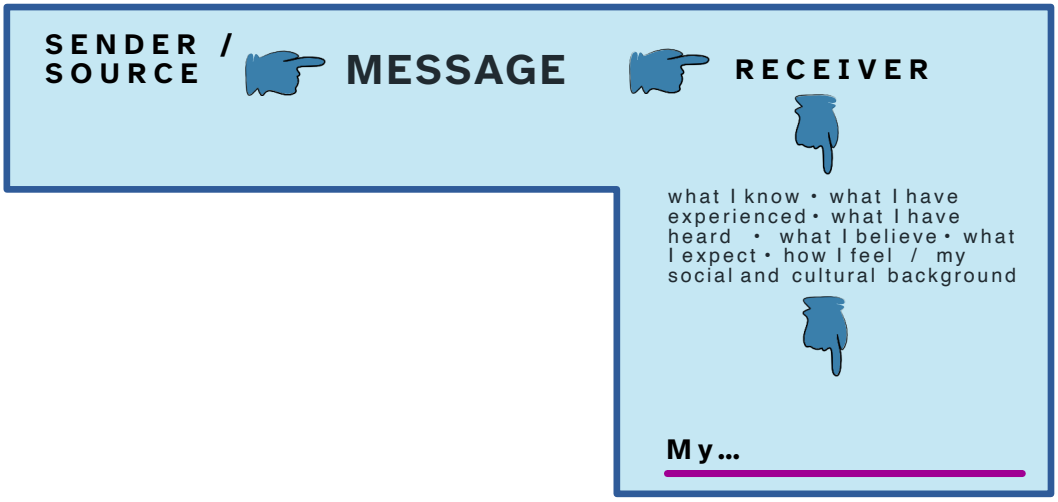
Different perspectives matter - but images and stories also need to be checked.

Task 6 - Question the image

Illustration 4 is not a historical photograph or a neutral record of the past. It may contain simplifications or stereotypes. Which details are biased? Which aspects would you want to fact-check before using the image to learn about South African history? Explain why.

The representation of both people is biased. Not all Dutch people were captains or conquerors, and not all of them enjoyed the wealth created by colonisation. Not all African people were warriors. Information that should be checked includes: Where did the Dutch settle in Africa? What kind of goods did they trade in South Africa? Did the Dutch enslave South African people? Did they destroy forests? Are the clothes accurately represented?

Task 7 - Complete the communication chain



Think: Does a sender simply 'send meaning', or does the receiver build meaning from a message?

Task 8 - Why does this matter today?

How can different interpretations of the past influence communication and society today? Why might people from different cultural or historical backgrounds tell different stories about the same historical event?

vocabulary

record	Bericht
contain	beinhalten
simplifi-cation	Verein-fachung
chain	Kette
build meaning	Bedeutung aufbauen

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EMPATHETIC COMMUNICATION

Understanding another perspective does not mean that you have to agree with it.

Empathetic communication means trying to understand not only what another person says, but also why they may see, understand or feel something differently.

Useful strategies
- listen carefully
- ask questions instead of making assumptions
- be aware of your own perspective
- consider another person's experiences and background
- recognise stereotypes and prejudices
- check information instead of simply believing what you have heard
- accept that people can interpret the same topic differently

vocabulary

assump-tion	Annahme

Taks 9 - Agree or disagree?

Choose two statements. Say whether you agree or disagree and give reasons.

A. “If my message is clear to me, it should also be clear to everyone else.”

B. “Different interpretations are always a problem.”

C. “To understand another person, I need to know something about their perspective.”

D. “Understanding another perspective does not mean that I have to agree with it.”

Task 10 - Final task

Explain why being aware of different experiences, identities and cultural backgrounds can improve communication.

Refer to at least two illustrations from the worksheets. Use details from the images to support your ideas.

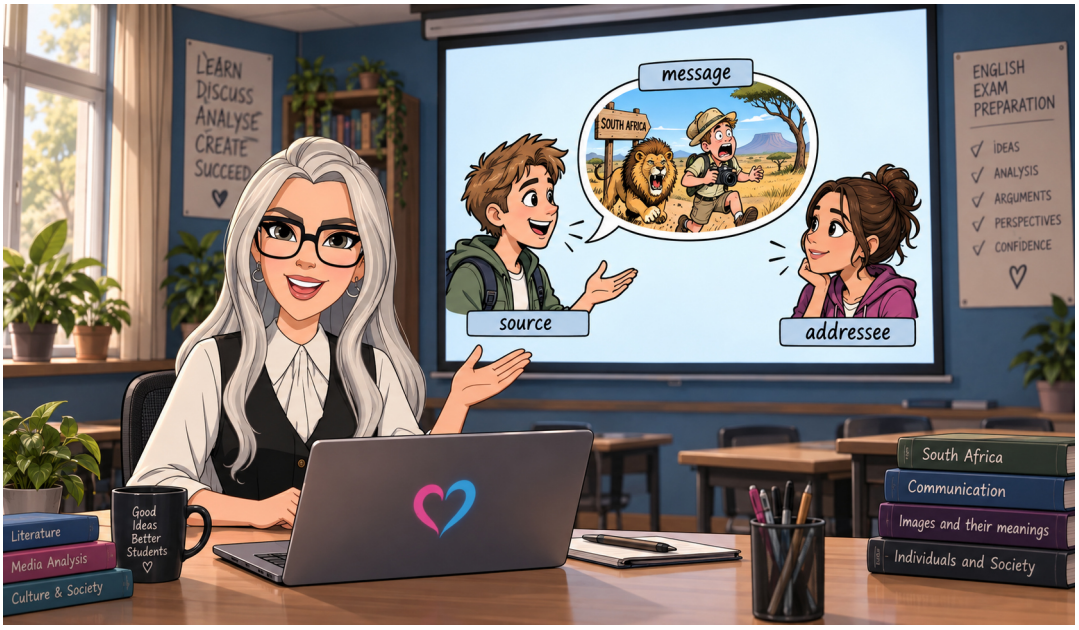
Useful phrases: The illustration shows ... / This suggests ... / The two people see ... differently because ... / This can lead to ... / Empathetic communication can help because ...

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Mögliche Antworten

COMMUNICATION: MORE THAN WORDS

How messages, experiences and perspectives shape understanding



1 What is communication?

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vocabulary

source	quelle
receiver	Empfänger
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Task 1 - What can a message contain?

Collect different things that people can communicate. Think of everyday life, school, online communication and special situations.

Ideas to get you started: a warning - a secret - congratulations - bad news - a promise - ...

request, instruction, question, statement, quote, information

Think further: Can the same message be understood differently by two people? Give a first idea and explain it.

Yes, there can be misunderstandings because: of language
competence or even audio disturbance , because of different experiences with the topic,
different age, knowledge, in everyday life there are a lot of mis-
understandings about dates/chores/roles....

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WHAT SHAPES UNDERSTANDING?

A message is not received by an 'empty' mind.

Communication is more complicated than simply sending and receiving a message. Both the sender and the receiver bring their own knowledge, experiences, feelings, beliefs, expectations and assumptions into a conversation.

Some of what we think we know comes from personal experience. Other ideas come from people around us, school, society, media or other sources. This knowledge can be incomplete or biased. As a result, two people can talk about the same topic but connect it with very different ideas.

Task 2 Analyse the cartoons.

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incomplete	unvollständig / lückenhaft
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Source: AI-generated illustration, © Adriana Leidenberger with ChatGPT (OpenAI), 2026.

Step 1 - Source and topic

Name the source and the main topic.

The illustration was generated by ... / The illustration deals with ... / The main topic is ...

source: The illustration was generated by Adriana Leidenberger with ChatGPT in 2026. The main topic is communication between people from different cultures.

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ANALYSING AN IMAGE STEP BY STEP

Continue your analysis of Illustration 2.

vocabulary

Step 2 - Composition

Describe how the illustration is organised. What can you see on the left, in the centre, on the right and above the people?

On the left/right ... / In the centre ... / Above ... / The thought bubbles

The illustration shows two young people from different cultures, sitting on the ground, facing each other. In the centre there is a thought bubble showing a school building. Around each person's head there are thought bubbles. The person on the left is a boy who has rather light skin and brown hair and looks European, Canadian, American, or Australian. The person on the right is a girl with darker skin and long braids. She could be from Africa, Jamaica, India, etc. They seem to be talking about school.

Step 3 - Details

Look closely at the thought bubbles. Which objects, activities, places and situations are shown?

Which topics or ideas are they connected to?

The thought bubbles around the boy's head show a PlayStation controller, a dance floor with people and a disco ball, and a basketball hoop. The thought bubbles around the girl's head show a landscape with a long dirt road, a village in the background and a girl walking towards it, an old-fashioned classroom, and a girl sitting at a desk with a lot of books beside her and a clock showing two o'clock.

Step 4 - Analysis

The sender: Which ideas about school come to his mind? How are they shown?

The receiver: Which ideas about school come to her mind? How are they shown?

This may represent ... / This suggests that ... / Whereas the sender ..., the receiver ...

The topics the boy's thoughts address are gaming, partying and doing sports, represented by the game controller, the dance floor and the basketball hoop. He is focussing on his free time. The girl's thoughts are about a long and hard way to school, uncomfortable and old-fashioned classrooms and studying hard, represented by the landscape, the classroom and the desk.

Step 5 - Conclusion

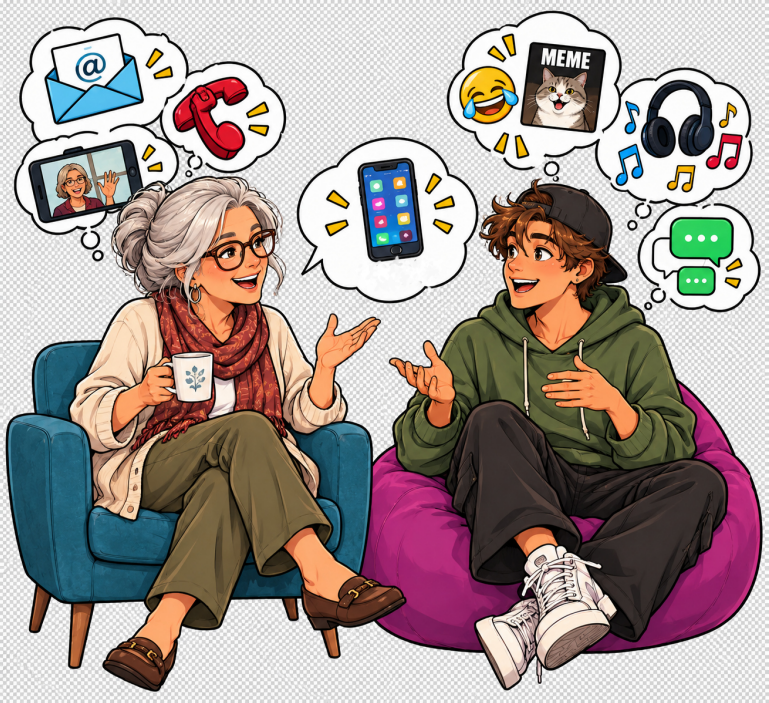
Why can the word school have a different meaning for these two people? What communication problems could result if each person assumes that the other thinks about school in the same way?

The illustration shows that people from different cultures and backgrounds have different perspectives on a topic. It shows that school and school life do not mean the same thing to everyone, even if they are the same age. The friendly faces show that they can still talk about it without fighting, but misunderstandings could still arise.

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SAME MESSAGE - DIFFERENT ASSOCIATIONS

Now compare another communication situation.



Source: Adriana Leidenberger 2026 mit ChatGPT(OpenAI), 2026.

Task 3 Compare Illustrations 2 and 3

a) What does the topic mobile phone make each person in Illustration 3 think of? Name the visual details that show these ideas. What could be the reason?

What the two people in the picture think of when they hear "mobile phone" is quite different, maybe because of their age or gender (the woman on the left seems older than the boy on the right). The older woman thinks of emails, photos, video calls and phone calls, represented by a smartphone with her waving into the camera, an email icon and two old-fashioned telephone receivers. The younger boy thinks of messaging, memes, music and emojis, represented by a laughing smiley, a picture of a cat titled "meme", earphones, musical notes and symbols representing text messages.

b) Compare Illustration 2 (school) and Illustration 3 (mobile phone). What do they have in common? How are they different?

Both illustrations ... / In both cases ... / Whereas ... / In contrast ... / One important difference is ...

Both illustrations represent a conversation between different people. In both cases, a female and a male person are talking. They are talking about the same topic, but they have different ideas about it. In picture one, they seem to be the same age but from different cultures, whereas in the second picture, they could be from the same culture, but they are not the same age or from the same generation. One important difference is the topic.

c) Does having different associations mean that one person must be right and the other wrong?

Explain.

Having different associations doesn't mean one person is right and the other wrong. Often it's because of different perspectives, tastes, experiences and so on.

vocabulary

visual	visuell / gestalterische
whereas	wohingegen

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WHERE DO OUR IDEAS COME FROM?

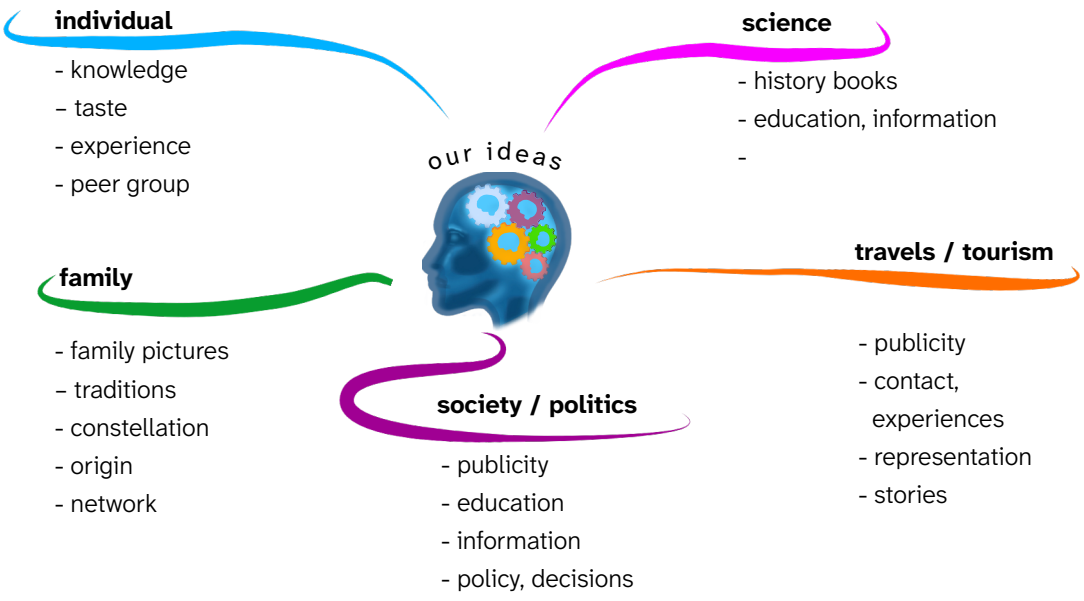
Our perspective is influenced by many different sources.

vocabulary

precon-ception	vorgefasste Meinung
miscon-ception	**falsche Vorstellung**
source	quelle

Task 4 - Build a mind map

Add examples to each mind map. Think about what can shape our knowledge, expectations, assumptions, opinions, stereotypes and preconceptions. You may add the same idea to more than one category.



Task 5 -Discuss with a partner

1. **Which influences can be useful sources of knowledge?**
2. **Which influences can also create stereotypes, prejudices or misconceptions?**
3. **Which sources should we check carefully before we believe them?**

Useful influences can come from friendships, intercultural contacts, travelling, volunteering, the news and the internet. But prejudiced friends and family members can transmit prejudices, and so can propaganda, fake news and alternative facts.

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ONE PLACE - DIFFERENT HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Source: Adriana Leidenberger with ChatGPT(OpenAI), 2026. The image is a simplified visual interpretation and not a historical source.

Taks 5 - Describe and analyse Illustration 4

1. Source and topic: Introduce the illustration and identify its main topic.

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5. Comparison: Explain why the same historical period can be viewed very differently.

vocabulary

shape	formen
identify	identifi-zieren
evidence	Beweis

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1. The picture was created by Adriana Leidenberger in 2026 using ChatGPT.

In the foreground of the illustration, there are two people sitting on a sort of chair facing each other. In the centre there is a thought bubble representing a mountain. Around there heads there are different speech bubbles.

The person on the left is wearing an old fashioned uniform, he is sitting on a wooden chair and there is an African Map leaning on his chair. He looks like a Dutch captain from colonial times,

The man on the right is wearing a fur cloak, sandals, and there is a spear and wooden African looking shield leaning at his chair. He looks like an African chief.

The thought bubbles around the Dutch person are showing wooden boxes and bags full of gold and something like coffee, a big sailing ship, a picture with African animals, an African map with the Dutch flag and flashes spreading across the African continent.

The thought bubbles around the African person are representing slaves with chains, a soldier and a ship in the background, a representation of African culture with a drum. an ornament and paintings, a picture of cut down forests and a village with people in the foreground and an explosion in the background.

The topics the Dutch man's thoughts address are wealth and trade represented by the boxes and bags full of gold and ware, expeditions and journeys represented by the sailing ship, interest in the wildlife as represented by the animals and expansion as represented by the map with the flag and the arrows.

The issues the African man's thoughts address are slavery as represented by the chained men and the ship, destruction of their land as represented by the cut down woods, their culture as represented by their traditional instrument and decorations and war as represented by the village and the explosion.

They view this period of history differently, because they experience it differently. The Dutch made wealth and expanded their trade while the African people were, threatened, exploited and killed.

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FROM MESSAGE TO MEANING

Different perspectives matter - but images and stories also need to be checked.

vocabulary

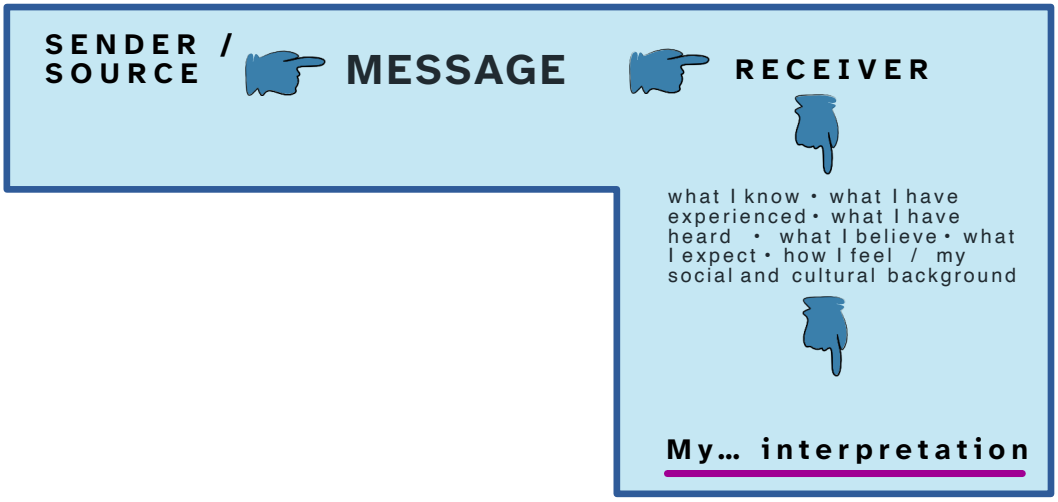
record	Bericht
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simplifi-cation	Verein-fachung
chain	Kette
build meaning	Bedeutung aufbauen

Task 6 - Question the image

Illustration 4 is not a historical photograph or a neutral record of the past. It may contain simplifications or stereotypes. Which details are biased? Which aspects would you want to fact-check before using the image to learn about South African history? Explain why.

The representation of both people is biased. Not all Dutch people were captains or conquerors, and not all of them enjoyed the wealth created by colonisation. Not all African people were warriors. Information that should be checked includes: Where did the Dutch settle in Africa? What kind of goods did they trade in South Africa? Did the Dutch enslave South African people? Did they destroy forests? Are the clothes accurately represented?

Task 7 - Complete the communication chain



Think: Does a sender simply 'send meaning', or does the receiver build meaning from a message?

Task 8 - Why does this matter today?

How can different interpretations of the past influence communication and society today? Why might people from different cultural or historical backgrounds tell different stories about the same historical event?

Different interpretations of the past can lead to conflicts. They can make countries and people distrust each other. How people see history depends on their perspectives. It is different for the winners and the losers, the conquerors and the conquered, and the wealthy and the poor, for example.

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D. “Understanding another perspective does not mean that I have to agree with it.”

individual answers

Task 10 - Final task

Explain why being aware of different experiences, identities and cultural backgrounds can improve communication.
Refer to at least two illustrations from the worksheets. Use details from the images to support your ideas.

Useful phrases: The illustration shows ... / This suggests ... / The two people see ... differently because ... / This can lead to ... / Empathetic communication can help because ...

individual answers

vocabulary

assump-tion	Annahme

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