

## METHODS FOR ALL SUBJECTS

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BRENNER, G., BRENNER, K. *Methoden für alle Fächer. Sekundarstufe I und II.* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: Cornelsen, 2011, 320 pp. ISBN 978-3-589-23299-4.

One of impulses for the authors<sup>1</sup> to write the above mentioned book was the characteristics of the world we live in, which is connected to a wealth of information as well as a multitude of ways how to obtain it. One of the current trends is life-long learning, a process demanding the need of an intensive as well as long-term acquisition of abilities. The aim of the book is to describe and didactically sort the traditional methods which can be used in the learning process under the new conditions demanded by the world of today, but the book also presents new methods within the field.

The term method is understood in two ways. The first one is as a teaching method, the latter as a learning method. According to the authors the border between the above mentioned meanings is very thin, it is also viewed that generally a method should be used as a means of learning and acquiring knowledge, competence etc. This is required in today's world which is – as we have mentioned above – characterized by life-long learning. Therefore the techniques introduced in the book are aimed at being useful for teachers as well for learners.

The authors think that those teachers who know a wide variety of teaching and learning methods can hinder from using monotonous methods that often make learners unwilling to study. We can apply this not only to the educational situation at German schools, but also to the others in Europe. There is a certain connection with Czech schools too, since Czech teachers have also been required to use various methods in their lessons, especially in association with the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education.

The book is divided into the following chapters: *Lernen organisieren* (To organize learning); *Gruppen gestalten und begleiten* (To build up and facilitate

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<sup>1</sup> Gerd Brenner and Kira Brenner have written together for example *80 Methoden für die Grundschule* (80 Methods for Basic School) or *Fundgrube Methoden I* (Fundgrube Methods I).

groups); *Recherchieren und erkunden* (To find out and to search); *Informationen strukturieren, verarbeiten, bewerten* (To structure, process, evaluate information); *Filme verarbeiten* (To work with films); *Gespräche führen* (To manage interviews); *Präsentieren* (To present); *Üben und einprägen* (To practise and remember); *Evaluieren* (To evaluate). The given groups of methods are further divided, e.g. the part To present contains chapters focusing on independent oral presentation, on writing points for a presentation, on creation of a visual support of a presentation etc.

We can say that the book works as a sort of a catalogue where we find the description of individual methods which is either one or two pages long. At the head of the page there is the name of the method. If there is extra material on the attached CD, there is a graphical sign for a CD in front of the name of the method. At the top of the page there is also basic information about the social form of the method (group work, individual work etc.), time necessary for realizing the method, tools and age group of learners for whom the method is suitable. All above mentioned is followed by the didactic potential of the method, its preparation and course. The authors also describe didactic instructions, alternatives for particular methods, or suggestions for the method's other applications. At the bottom of the page there are footnotes referring to other literature or websites connected to the certain topic.

The book presents more than 200 methods which can be used when teaching at primary and secondary schools. Therefore readers can use this book as a wide methodology material from which they can get new ideas for lessons. The modern character of the book is also supported by the attached CD which contains extra material for individual methods, mainly recommendations connected with the application of methods and other copyable material.

The stated methods have all been tested in practice for example in the school environment, in the further education of teachers, in study groups at universities or in after-school education. This practical character is definitely one of the book's strongest sides.

We are of the opinion that the publication deals with the given topic in an excellent way. It would probably be well received among the Czech teachers and pedagogues, as it offers many ideas how to vary not only the work with pupils, but also their learning process. It is almost impossible to find any negatives about this book since it combines theory and practice in a persuading way, promising to be useful for most active teachers. Finally, we would like

to point out that *Methoden für alle Fächer. Sekundarstufe I und II* would be exactly what is absent on the Czech book market and that it hopefully will be translated soon.

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