

Brick Lane

Mögliche Schülerleistungen

1. Describe the situation in which we find the protagonists.

Schüler sollten Basissatz (*umbrella sentence*) mit Angabe zu Textsorte, Titel, Autor, Erscheinungsort / -jahr und Thema formulieren.

Example:

In the extract of Monica Ali's novel *Brick Lane* published by Doubleday, London in 2003 the Bangladeshi immigrants Chanu and Nazneen are confronted with the westernized lifestyle of the Azad family during a visit at their home.

Situation:

- First visit of Chanu and Nazneen at the Bangladeshi doctor's family
- Witness the teenage daughter of Azad, dressed in western style, leaving for the pub
- Speaking English, demanding money and showing little respect, the girl causes discomfiture among the guests and the doctor
- Triggers a discussion between the taxi driver Chanu and the doctor's wife about living as an immigrant in an alien culture
- While Chanu rather focuses on the conflicts and drawbacks, the hostess shows a more pragmatic point of view towards their situation
- By reproaching the traditional lifestyle of the immigrant community in a torrent of words, she finally silences the guests and her husband

2. Compare Mrs Azad's attitudes towards being an immigrant in Britain to Chanu's.

- The two protagonists demonstrate two contrasting positions towards living in the western society.
- Chanu is representative of traditional Bangladeshi / Muslim values whereas Mrs Azad is an example of the fully assimilated immigrant.
- Chanu: although being well read he lives in modest conditions, works in a typical immigrant job (taxi driver)
- Mrs Azad: "from rags to riches", very poor when they came to Britain, now well-to-do family, Mrs Azad works together with natives (atypical immigrant job)
- The taxi driver feels to be surrounded by a threatening, hostile western world, which is particularly dangerous for the immigrants' children, who are torn and lost between two cultures:
 - generates feelings of distress as he struggles to succeed in this society while preserving his own identity
 - regards British society as racist
- Mrs Azad contradicts and even ridicules his convictions:
 - points out that as part of a western world immigrants have to come to terms with changes
 - claims that she even envies the freedom her daughter enjoys
 - considers herself a fully accepted part of "white" British society
 - criticizes those women who lock themselves away to avoid contact to western world
 - blames racism and resentment on the immigrants' unwillingness to embrace new concepts

3. "Listen, when I'm in Bangladesh I put on a sari and cover my head and all that. But here I go out to work. I work with white girls and I'm just one of them."
 Discuss in how far Mrs Azad has a realistic approach towards fitting into both worlds.
 Use examples from texts read in class to underline your position.

Die Schüler sollten einen ausgewogenen Kommentar formulieren, in dem Probleme aber auch Fortschritte bei der Integration von Immigranten in westliche Gesellschaften aufgezeigt werden.

Introduction:

Die Einleitung sollte das Zitat aufgreifen, die Problematik herausarbeiten und zu einer zentralen Fragestellung gelangen, die über den Textansatz hinausgeht.

Example:

Assimilation and integration of immigrants from diverse cultural background into our society versus preserving one's cultural roots has been a hotly debated issue for years. The Bangladeshi immigrant Mrs Azad from Monica Ali's novel *Brick Lane* believes that one only has to dress and act like the natives in Britain and Bangladesh respectively to be readily accepted by both societies. But is this a realistic approach? Does it only take so little to fit into two contrasting worlds?

Main Part:

Mögliche Ideen und Schwerpunkte:

- Diverse measures to ease integration by state
- Second generation often fully integrated through similar school career, friendship with natives, sports
- Globalization of cultures and economy etc. promotes adoption of new values
- Numerous success stories of immigrants in culture, politics, sports and economy
- But: xenophobia in the aftermath of 9/11
- Feeling of superiority among Westerners
- Radical preservation of values, customs and heritage as reaction to western supremacy
- Feeling of second generation as a lost one: no full acceptance here, neither in their home countries
- On average: worse performance in school / career chances for migrant kids

Mögliche Bezugstexte: *Bend it like Beckham; Tortilla Curtain; The Buddha of Suburbia; East is East* etc.

Conclusion:

Der Schüler sollte zu einer eigenen Position zur zentralen Frage gelangen, die er logisch nachvollziehbar begründet.