

Post-colonialism and migration

Possible answers and solutions

1. Summarise the situation presented in the extract. (*Comprehension*)

The situation:

- Chanu and his wife Nazneen are sitting in the Azads' living room with the doctor and his wife.
- Chanu seems to enjoy being with the doctor, whereas Nazneen seems to feel uneasy and wants to leave.
- The doctor's daughter, who is wearing a short skirt, chews gum and speaks English, comes into the room and asks her parents for money to go to the pub.
- Dr Azad seems to be unwilling to give her money, so his wife does, and the girl leaves.
- An argument develops between Chanu, who considers the immigrant's life a tragic one, and Mrs Azad, who thinks integration is necessary.

Task 1 clearly aims at *Anforderungsbereich 1*.

For the first part of the task ("Summarise the situation ..."), keep your summary short and focus on the main points. Use the simple present and leave out your own opinion and interpretation.

2. Compare Chanu's and Mrs Azad's views of the immigrant's life. (*Analysis*)

Chanu's statement "This is the tragedy of our lives. To be an immigrant is to live out a tragedy." (ll.11-12) sums up Chanu's view and might be taken as a starting point:

- Chanu makes his remark after the daughter has left the room to go to the pub; he has probably noticed the girl's appearance and Dr Azad's bad feelings about her behaviour.
- To him the girl becomes an example of alienation from one's cultural and religious origins; she is one of the children "who don't know what their identity is" (l.37).
- To Chanu the tragedy of the immigrant's life is "the struggle to assimilate and the need to preserve one's identity and heritage" (l.36); these two are conflicting demands, which are impossible to meet for the individual; this conflict cannot be resolved and determines the whole life of the immigrant.
- Even Mrs Azad contradicts him, Chanu insists on his view and states that this tragedy is something highly individual. Even if not every immigrant is aware of it all the time and to the same extent, it is there as the determining factor of his or her existence.

Compare means you are to point out similarities and differences. So **task 2** clearly aims at *Anforderungsbereich 2*.

Mrs Azad has a very different opinion. She refuses to accept Chanu's view:

- She is still conscious of her cultural roots in Bangladesh, but thinks that assimilation is necessary.
- The reasons for her view are that she sees her own and her husband's progress from poverty to relative wealth as a success story and that she clearly appreciates the freedom Western society offers her as a woman: "But here I go out to work. [...] I work with white girls and I'm just one of them" (ll.52–53).
- She sees no problem in her daughter's appearance and lifestyle. On the contrary, she would like to have had the same opportunities when she was young: "Do I wish I had enjoyed myself like her when I was young? Yes!" (ll.46-47).
- In her opinion, people like Chanu are not only to be blamed for self-pity but also stand in the way of successful integration. They are responsible for their own alienation and the racism which they encounter in society.

3. a) Write a comment: To what extent does an immigrant "success story", like Dr. Azad's, bring benefits to a country's economy? (*Comment*)

Depending on what you want to focus on and what conclusion you want to draw, your answer may take different forms. Here are some ideas:

On the one hand:

- Working with people from different countries will broaden your mind with regard to language and culture. As companies nowadays operate more and more at an international level, this can lead to more economic efficiency.
- A country's economy can benefit from another country's experience in areas such as technology. A mutual exchange of experiences is possible.
- In case of labour shortage, workers from foreign countries can fill vacancies.

On the other hand:

- Recruitment of foreign workers is not necessary, because skilled workers should be educated in the home country.
- Unemployment could rise.
- Sometimes foreign workers send their money back to their families in their home countries. Consequently, there is no benefit for the economy.

3. b) Imagine you are Nazneen. Write a letter to a friend in Bangladesh expressing your feelings and thoughts about your conversation with the Azad family. (*Re-creation of text*).

Stick to the conventions for writing a personal letter:

- **decide** Nazneen's point of view you want to present in the letter (take notes!)
(Either a) you are shocked by Mrs. Azad's opinion on immigration or b) you admire and begin to understand her position.)
- **structure** your personal letter according to guidelines on page 74f in your exercise book
- inform your friend about the content of the conversation with the Azads in one or two sentences
- express your feelings and thoughts based on your personal position on the matter, for example:
 - a) as a conservative woman you cannot understand Mrs Azad's modern position
as a respectful wife you are irritated by Mrs Azad's jokes about her husband
you are afraid of losing your cultural identity on integrating into Western society
 - b) on second thoughts you begin to be interested in British life and society
you begin to see the benefits it offers, e.g. independence from your husband, personal freedom, easier process of integration

Task 3 a) aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

Writing a comment means you have to write down positive and negative consequences of an immigrant success story for a country's economy. A structure working along the lines of "on the one hand/on the other hand" may be helpful. Then try to support your view with evidence and arguments in such a way that you can make your point most effectively. Do not forget to write a proper conclusion.

Task 3 b) clearly aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

Nazneen looks back on the situation presented in the extract and expresses her feelings and thoughts. Nazneen's opinion is quite open.