

The changing workplace

Possible answers and solutions

1. Describe the cartoon and interpret its possible meaning.
 - The cartoon shows two men who are astonished / surprised about a fired robot/a robot that is being fired. Both are dressed in suits which could be an evidence that both are executives.
 - One of the executives comments this scenery with the words: “The Trade Unions are insisting on “last in, first out”.”
 - In this context “last in, first out” means that those people who have been most recently employed will be the first to be dismissed/fired if such action becomes necessary.
 - The word “insist” underlines the great power of trade unions.
 - Despite the technical progress/technological advance trade union’s interest still lies on the security of employment. Otherwise companies are unable to save jobs without the employment of the newest technology. So both sides are controversial to each other.

2. Name the reasons Mr. Butler mentions against trade unions. Explain them.
 - Mr. Butler presents several reasons against the need of trade unions.
 - The industrial world has changed (l. 6). In today’s small businesses workers don’t do the same task, the variety is too big to demand the same conditions for all. Between the workers there is “less mass production solidarity” (l. 11) so that even the workers are not interested in fighting for their rights.
 - “People are more mobile” (l. 13). Because of this they have more influence on their employer and don’t need the strength of unions.
 - The situation of broken down state monopolies (l. 19). As a result companies are a lot smaller and thus more flexible, even towards their employees.
 - The working conditions are already good (minimum wage (l. 26)), no necessity exists to fight for these rights. A lot has already been achieved in the past.
 - The influence of education. Not only the working conditions have been improved but also the way how companies are run. Better qualified managers treat their workers better than in the past (ll. 29–31). Therefore another necessity has disappeared.

3. Analyse in which way Mr. Butler presents his point of view to make it more convincing.
 - Mr Butler provides many examples from different areas. This lets him appear to be an expert.
 - He presents his information in a logical order by using linkers like “so” (l. 10), “As a result” (l. 11), “These are all reasons” (l. 16). His conclusion is presented in a convincing way.
 - The choice of words is factual, short sentences can easily be understood.
 - He employs pronouns like “you”, “we” to establish a close connection and to convince the readership that these arguments/facts apply to them as well.
 - At the end of the text he presents his personal opinion clearly: “I think” (l. 29), “Quite frankly” (l. 32).
 - He finishes the text by referring to his opening statement about the past and thus leaves no space for doubt.
 - All this makes his speech convincing.

Task 1 asks you to describe and interpret a cartoon and aims at *Anforderungsbereich 1* but also at *Anforderungsbereich 2*. **Describe** means you are to give an accurate account of – in this case – the cartoon. Start with naming the source. The source could be helpful for the interpretation of the picture, e.g. is it out of a conservative or liberal newspaper. Say who or what the cartoon is about. Describe important details (e.g. symbols, clothes ...) and examine the words printed in the cartoon. **Interpret** means to explain the meaning or message of sth and to give your own views on it.

Task 2 aims as Task 1 at *Anforderungsbereich 1* and *Anforderungsbereich 2*.

Name means to state briefly the main points Mr. Butler mentions against the need of trade unions. **Explain** means to describe his arguments in detail and to find reasons for this development.

Analyse means you are to describe and explain in detail. So **task 3** clearly aims at *Anforderungsbereich 2*.

What kind of language, words and phrases does Butler use and what does he try to achieve with that? Give examples and explain them in detail.

4. Comment on Mr. Butler's statement and compare his arguments with the situation at *KwikWorld*.

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:

Introduction

On the one hand: (against)

- Name the counter-arguments of Task 2 and give your own view on these arguments.
- ...

On the other hand: (for)

- Trade unions are very important – even today. They are the spokesmen for the workers. (social imbalance between employers and workers; the employers would have even more control). / Elaine's behaviour towards her employees. She is hard and unjust. The payment of most of the workers at *KwikWorld* is too low.
- Achievements of the past have to be kept: minimum wage, working hours, improvement of social conditions/security, holidays etc. / Working conditions at *KwikWorld* are "inhuman". Boring, monotonous work, working shifts are unjust. Job circumstances of Joe are very bad (full time/part time job).
- If trade unions were abolished, the consequence would be that the "hire and fire" mentality of the employers increases. / Like at *KwikWorld* the firing of Maria.
- The changed working conditions (globalization, production in foreign countries ...) demand trade unions more than before.
- If you think of the changed working conditions (as Mr. Butler describes them) a global/European trade union could be a possibility to solve global/European problems.
- "I would like to conclude by saying that ..."

Conclusion

OR

5. Imagine you are a member of a trade union and prepare a speech.

- Start with e.g. "My dear fellow workers".
- Get attention, e.g. by some rhetorical questions or statements about the present situation and arouse interest to listen to the speech like "I am going to show you why we have to work together."
- Name reasons for a trade union like: "Maintain our standards", "Power of the employers", name global aspects of working conditions etc.
- Finish the speech with words like: "We need you", "Join us!"

With **task 4** you are in *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

Comment means you have to give reasons for and against, in this case, the issues of the need of trade unions. The text already offers you a lot of arguments against the need of trade unions which you already worked out in Task 2. In addition to that you have to compare these arguments with the situation at *KwikWorld* of the play "Flippin'In".

Remember that in a comment you have to state your opinion and personal view on something. State first whether you are for or against sth. Then give reasons or arguments for your view. 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. Finish with a conclusion based on the evidence you have given.

Task 5 aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

Imagine means to form a picture in your mind of what sth might be like. In this case you should write a speech as a member of a trade union.

Remember that in a speech you have to address your audience personally to build a bridge between you and your listeners. A speech should be well structured. Get attention by some e.g. rhetorical questions or statements about the present situation, arouse interest by using slogans, key symbols, exaggerations, metaphors etc. Use pronouns like "we" or "us" to make the audience identify itself with the spoken words. Give good reasons for the need of trade unions. Aim of the speech is to win your listeners for your opinion.