

Abiturprüfung 2005

ENGLISCH

als Leistungskursfach

– Textteil –

Arbeitszeit: 270 Minuten

Der Prüfling hat **e i n e** Textaufgabe seiner Wahl
nach den Arbeitsanweisungen des beiliegenden Aufgabenteils zu bearbeiten.

Textaufgabe I

Voting's too good for 'em

Politics is a curious business. Democracy is sacred and we go to war to bring its beneficence to benighted peoples. We celebrate as every decade it spreads further across a globe where now a majority of humans live under its benign glow.

5 How odd then that democracy's high priests and priestesses, the politicians, are treated with almost universal contempt. Democracy is holy, politics is lowly. 'The people' are noble, while those they elect are contemptible.

10 But sometimes when you go out there on the street to watch democracy in action, the nobility of 'the people' is a lot less striking than the patience and tolerance of their servants, the politicians. It is salutary to be reminded how much sheer pig-headed ignorance, nastiness, mean-spiritedness and rudeness politicians encounter every day. Trying to squeeze votes out of people who can't be bothered to inform themselves of the most basic facts is
15 wearying work. "Don't care, never vote, you're all the same, just in it for yourselves, what's in it for me and when are you going to fix my drainpipe?" Faced with some of that grudge, ordinary mortals might give 'the people' a stinging earful, but of course no politician dare.

20 Calling Labour HQ to find who (if anyone) was out pressing the flesh for next week's Euro elections¹, I was offered Jack Straw² on a swing³ around Canterbury, Deal, Broadstairs and Ramsgate. It was not a red-carpet outing – the train offering just one sandwich and no water for him and his hungry entourage.

25 Out there at one end of Deal high street a flotilla of Labour grandees was waiting; cheering them up is the main success of this otherwise fairly unfruitful expedition. In this constituency with a 5,000 Labour majority, working our way

down the main street, what do we find? It's an odd business, approaching total strangers with a jovial handshake, the sort of behaviour that marks out politicians as abnormal beings.

30 Outside Marks & Spencer⁴, Straw stands on a milk crate to give a rousing hymn of praise for all that Europe has done for Deal. Today he tells how, since D-day, the EU has brought peace and prosperity to all, how it is the engine of democracy from Spain to Estonia. See how its free trade delivers jobs? Remember how air travel cost an arm and a leg? Thank the EU for cheap
35 fares, freeing up competition. "Don't let the Tories throw it away!"

So what does he get back from this desultory crowd? "You stand there talking about all the wonderful things in Europe, but when are you going to do something for us here at home?" Daft, irrelevant, or what? The man is indignant that he gets less benefit because he's got £16,000 in the bank. Next
40 up, an angry man: "Why am I paying £77 a month council tax, worked all my life and got nothing for it?" Because it's a Tory council that put it up 9.7% this year, but he's still going to vote Tory anyway. "Why isn't the police station here open full time?" calls the next man. Not one voice takes up the European theme.

45 Local MP Gwyn Prosser works the crowd, picking up complaints. "Why hasn't the council fixed my fence?" says a man who claims he always voted Labour, but now he's going to vote BNP⁵. Why? "Well, Europe. I don't agree with one big state, not at all. England for the English." His MP takes him on: "Vote for that xenophobic, fascist party?" Turns out he's a liar. Labour records
50 show he never voted at all last time and he has never been Labour. But the people are always right, free to lie through their teeth, unlike their leaders.

Next man up tells me: "They give asylum seekers £160 a week for a single bloke." No, they don't, says the MP, but no one believes him. Prod them a bit and most here are anti-European. 'Europe' has become a euphemism for

PLEASE TURN OVER

55 'asylum', as Michael Howard⁶ well knows, blending the two together wickedly. In vain, the MP quotes latest asylum figures: a year ago 70 a day claimed asylum in Dover, now it is less than seven. But no one believes figures, they just know. Except they don't. In a haze, many confuse the EU constitution and the euro.

60 That's a day in the life of democracy, not much sublime and a lot of ridiculous. A busy foreign secretary in the middle of a war goes out to listen to complaints about fences and persuade the wretchedly indifferent to vote pro-European. Politicians are the people who do democracy, day in, day out. And day in, day out they are kicked in the teeth for it. Too often we commentators
65 sit in lofty judgement. But we are accountable to no one, just perusing polls, while they have to navigate seas of actual voters who may make scant sense, who vote on whim or through habit.

Politicians are despised partly for their virtues – their willingness to listen and explain anything to anyone, however rude. But often voters deserve a
70 good wiggling⁷. What about the democratic responsibilities that go with rights? Ask not what your country can do for you ... Stop whingeing, start thinking. Get informed. Make an effort. The country's future is in your hands, not politicians'. At least get out there and goddamn vote, which quite a few said they wouldn't. One small step towards making citizens take democracy more seriously would
75 be to oblige them all to vote.

Polly Toynbee, *The Guardian*, June 4, 2004

Annotations

- 1 Euro elections the elections to the European Parliament in June 2004
- 2 Jack Straw the Foreign Secretary
- 3 swing a journey with quick stops
- 4 Marks & Spencer British department store

- 5 BNP British National Party
- 6 Michael Howard leader of the Conservative Party
- 7 wiggling scolding

Textaufgabe II

At the other end of the dormitory Stuart Barry sat up in bed, talking to James Wheatley. George Turner went to join them. Stuart and George. James's gang. Stuart: tall, blond, blandly handsome, limited. Very much a follower. George: huge, big boned, coarse featured, a lump of dark hair on a bullet
5 head. Too stupid to be a leader.

And James himself: small, wiry, a clever, impish face, and shrewd, spiteful eyes. Eyes that now seemed to be roaming, slowly and deliberately, over the dormitory.

don't make eye contact

10 Jonathan dropped his eyes and pretended to read his book, feeling himself tense, wondering what amusements James and his minions might be planning for that night, and whether he would be an unwilling party to them.

He remembered a night three weeks ago when James had decided that William Abbott had insulted him. They had waited until lights out to drag
15 William from his bed, force him into a laundry basket, fasten its lid and send it hurtling down the fire escape so that William ended up in the sanatorium for three days with bruised ribs.

Neil Archer, one of the prefects, had come storming into the dormitory, demanding to know who was responsible, reminding them that bullying was
20 against the rules and threatening them all with a week of early morning runs unless the guilty ones confessed.

But James and his friends had said nothing. And the rest of them remained silent, too, condemning themselves to a week of rising before dawn and running across muddy fields for an hour before breakfast. They had sat in
25 silence because they could not do otherwise.

Because the only rule at Kirkston Abbey that really mattered was the unwritten one that you never told tales. No matter who did what to you, you never, ever told tales.

30 The door of the dormitory opened. Brian Harrington appeared. Brian, big and imposing, Captain of the House Rugby team. And now with the additional authority that came with being Head of House. An authority that had belonged to Paul Ellerson until ...

But he didn't want to think about that.

Brian's eyes scanned the dormitory, watching as those who were not
35 already in their beds now scurried towards them. 'Right, good night, everyone.' 'Good night, Harrington,' they chorused in response. Brian flicked off the light switch and pulled the thick, wooden door closed behind him. Leaving them alone, with the darkness and each other.

40 At first, silence, save for the wind that battered the windows, blowing in from the sea.

Then slowly the darkness began to fill with a soft buzzing sound; whispered conversations, hissed in voices that feared detection and punishment. Jonathan, silent himself, strained to catch James Wheatley's voice, trying to gauge his intentions, eventually detecting its high, sharp timbre, focusing in on
45 it anxiously, only to hear James yawning and saying 'good night' to Stuart. He felt himself relax. There would be no trouble that night.

He lay on his side, curled up in a ball, listening to the other voices die away as their owners drifted down into sleep. Coughs, sniffs, sneezes, the creak of bed springs as someone tried to get comfortable for the night. The occasional
50 churning of the hot water pipe that ran along the wall. A crowded, claustrophobic black.

Thoughts of Paul Ellerson kept coming into his head. He tried to block them out, tried to think of something else. Anything else.

PLEASE TURN OVER

He thought of how much he hated the dormitory, hated the lack of privacy,
55 hated the constant sense of being watched. He wished he had a room of his
own like they had in Abbey House. Single rooms. Rooms with locks. Locks
that could keep out people like James Wheatley and George Turner. Locks
that allowed you to sleep easily without wondering what surprises the night
might bring. He wished he was in Abbey House. Richard Rokeby was in Abbey
60 House.

He rolled on to his back and stared up at the ceiling, remembering the
events of the morning's Latin lesson. He thought back to how Richard had
spoken to Mr Ackerley. He thought of how Richard had snubbed James
Wheatley. He thought of how, unbidden, Richard had come to his aid.

65 And as he thought of it a strange new idea took root in his head. The idea of
a friendship between the two of them.

Why not? The fact that Richard had snubbed him after the lesson didn't
have to mean anything. He was in a hurry. That was all.

He began to plan in his head. Tomorrow he would start up a conversation
70 with Richard. He would try to draw him out, try to find out something about
him. Find a common ground between the two of them; a foundation on which
he could build.

But as he planned he came to see the basic flaw in his reasoning. Richard
wasn't like him. Richard didn't need friends. He was strong. All he needed was
75 himself.

The idea vanished as quickly as it had come, pierced by the cold lance of
logic, leaving nothing but a sense of emptiness and a small, aching desire.

I want to be like that. Oh god, I'd give anything just to be like that.

He lay on his back, staring up at the darkness, listening to the wind and the
80 heavy silence that surrounded him and dreaming of being far, far away.

From: Patrick Redmond, *The Wishing Game*, 1999

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Arbeitszeit: 270 Minuten

Der Prüfling hat e i n e Textaufgabe seiner Wahl zu bearbeiten.

WORKSHEET: Voting's too good for 'emmaximum number of
points attainable**I. Questions on the text**

Read all the questions first, then answer them in the given order.
Use your own words as far as is appropriate.

1. "Democracy is holy, politics is lowly." (II. 6/7). Explain the meaning of this sentence. **10**
2. Examine the picture the writer paints of politicians. **20**
3. What arguments does Straw give to underline the importance of Europe and what do voters actually think about Europe? **20**
4. Outline the voters' behaviour and interests as depicted in the text. **20**
5. Considering the writer's intention, analyse the language and the tone of the text. **20**
6. Analyse the meaning of the title. **10**

II. Composition 50

Choose one of the following topics. Write about 250 to 300 words.

1. "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country." (John F. Kennedy) Discuss.
2. "Democracy is a device that ensures we shall be governed no better than we deserve." (George Bernard Shaw) Discuss.
3. Europe – a promising concept? Discuss.
4. Write a letter to your representative in the European Parliament telling him/her about the issue(s) worrying you and your generation. Suggest possible solutions.

III. Translation**50**

Translate the following text into German:

Falling turnout is a trend visible all over the world. During the European elections in Britain in 1999, fewer than half the electorate voted. Even in eastern European countries that became democracies as recently as 1989-91, turnout has been falling. People don't turn out to vote, not because they already know who will win, but because they don't believe that politicians can or will deliver.

Nor are people ignoring the ballot box because the process of voting is too old-fashioned. It's true that the trudge to the voting station, the oversized slip of paper to be crossed with a pencil, is ill fitting with the techno-friendly Britain of the twenty-first century.

It's true also that internet or telephone voting, or an extended ballot period, might beef up the turnout. One million people voted via the internet and a freephone number to change Kellogg's *Choco Krispies* brand name back to *Coco Pops* after all. But the problem isn't ultimately one of accessibility; it is one of disillusionment. People are not voting because they have just stopped believing that politics matters.

Politics has become a product not really worth buying, another offer battling for the consumers' attention via ever more slick¹ advertising campaigns rather than substance.

From: *The Observer*, June 10, 2001

Annotation

1 slick here: dt. raffiniert

WORKSHEET: Redmond, *The Wishing Game*maximum number of
points attainable**I. Questions on the text**

Read all the questions first, then answer them in the given order.
Use your own words as far as is appropriate.

1. What does this excerpt show the reader about the education offered at Kirkston Abbey and the organisation of daily life there? **20**
2. Characterise James Wheatley and examine the role and the extent of bullying at Kirkston Abbey. **20**
3. Analyse the reaction to bullying at Kirkston Abbey. **10**
4. Characterise Jonathan and analyse his attitude towards Richard Rokeby. **20**
5. Show how the author makes use of narrative perspective and sounds in order to create atmosphere and suspense. **30**

II. Composition**50**

Choose **o n e** of the following topics. Write about 250 to 300 words.

1. "I would rather be a coward than brave because people hurt you when you are brave." (E. M. Forster) Discuss.
2. "Without friends no one would choose to live though he had all other goods." (Aristotle) What do you think?
3. Violence at schools has increased over the last few years. Write an article for a quality newspaper in which you analyse the causes and effects of this development.
4. You have been chosen as a spokesperson of a team which has prepared an interview with the Minister of Education. Your topic is: "To what extent does school prepare us for life?" Your questions can be direct questions or suggestions.
Write up the interview.

III. Translation**50**

Translate the following text into German:

Oliver Letwin's¹ claim that he would rather beg than send his children to a local comprehensive caused such outrage that he was forced to apologise a few days later. Yet all he did was say in public what most of his social class not only thinks, but says freely in private and, of course, acts on. There are very few people who could comfortably afford to have their children privately educated but choose not to.

Sadly, many people who cannot afford to give their children the peculiar experience that is private schooling have been led to share the middle classes' unshakeable belief that this experience is intellectually superior. But the league tables² where top public schools always come first are misleading: these schools ruthlessly weed out "under-performers" before exams – a fact forgotten by those who think they are not only better, but kinder than state schools.

However, the benefits most parents seek from private education are less academic than social. Most parents paying school fees are not, in reality, buying a richer intellectual experience for their child but a social environment they feel comfortable with, and the prospect of future social status for their offspring.

From: *The Guardian*, October 17, 2003

Annotations

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|---|---------------|---|
| 1 | Oliver Letwin | the Shadow Secretary of State for Economic Affairs and Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer |
| 2 | league tables | dt. Ranglisten |