

Zentralabitur 2022	Englisch – Berufliches Gymnasium – Nachschreibtermin	Material für Prüflinge
Prüfungsteil 2: Textaufgabe – Aufgabe I	eA	Prüfungszeit*: 240 Min.

\*Die Prüfungszeit setzt sich zusammen aus 210 Minuten Bearbeitungszeit und 30 Minuten Auswahlzeit.

## Aufgabenstellung

1. Describe Marina Lewycka's attitude towards Britain. (30 %)

2. Compare the experience of immigrants as presented in Lewycka's text with the experience of the characters in the short stories "Loose Change" and "The Rain Missed My Face and Fell Straight to My Shoes." (30 %)

3. You are taking part in a British Council summer course on "Approaching the Migrant Experience." You have been asked to hand in an article for the course website in which you discuss the following statement by author Chinua Achebe: "An author can influence and change our beliefs on certain topics using their writing."

Write the article, also referring to the text at hand and materials studied in class.

(40 %)

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## Material

### Text: Excerpt from Marina Lewycka, “Refugees and Exiles” (2018)

When I used to read the stories of refugees, mothers and children being plucked from leaky boats off the coast of Turkey and Libya, or young people’s bodies washed up lifeless on Mediterranean shores, it was all terribly sad, I thought, but nothing to do with me.

5 After all, I was comfortably settled in the UK, with a state pension, a lifetime as a British taxpayer behind me, and, most important of all, a British passport.

I had got my first British passport when I was twenty-two years old. Until then, I had traveled around Europe as a teenager on an “Alien’s Travel Document,” blue with two black stripes. My older sister, who was born in Ukraine, had a blue travel document with one black stripe, which meant that she was stateless. My two black stripes meant that my alien nationality was officially “undetermined” – I had been born in a German “displaced persons” camp after the end of World War II. So strictly speaking my family were not even refugees – we were forced laborers who sought refuge in the West rather than going back to Stalin’s Soviet Union. [...]

15 Around 1950 we moved to Yorkshire into our first home of our own, a two-up two-down terraced house in a mining village; all we had to endure was the ineluctable nosiness of our coal miner neighbors, diluted with countless cups of tea. People were kind to us, and very curious. And of course it helped that the Russians and Ukrainians had been allies of the British, and suffered massive losses, in what my parents still spoke of as the Great Patriotic War.<sup>1</sup>

At school I was bullied by a gang of little boys – the same little boys who pulled the wings off butterflies, stamped on worms, and made life a misery for fat kids, kids who wore glasses, or those who were seen to be *swots* (as I was). In other words, then as always, there were bullies on the lookout for vulnerable victims.

25 I got my revenge by coming top in everything, and by being more English than the English. The stories I read as a child, like *Winnie the Pooh*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, were the staples of a comfortable middle-

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<sup>1</sup> Great Patriotic War – the Second World War

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class English childhood; I didn't seem to notice how very different the children in those stories were to my own migrant childhood. I read English literature at university, and spent my weekends cycling around Cotswold villages<sup>2</sup> and rubbing brasses<sup>3</sup>. I fell madly in love with English poetry and English wit and when I graduated I went on to be an English teacher. I blended in so totally that even I forgot that I wasn't *really* English.

So the rising volume of anti-immigrant anti-refugee rhetoric in the popular press in the twenty-first century took me quite by surprise – these didn't seem to me to be the same English people I had grown up amongst, who regularly arrived on our doorstep with a fresh-baked cake or an invitation to dinner. Did they really hate us so much? [...]

It all came to a head in the UK with the EU referendum in June 2016, and with hindsight it is easy to see that much of this refugee-phobia was part of an orchestrated campaign to persuade ordinary Britons, many of whom had never knowingly seen a refugee except on television, to cast their vote for Brexit in the referendum. Places with the lowest number of migrants and refugees, like Wales and Cornwall, also recorded the highest anti-immigrant sentiment. Of course they probably *had* seen refugees – people like myself, not the huddled desperate dangerous characters who were portrayed in the popular media. [...]

Things which had been off-limits before, ideas that could not be expressed, words which could not be used in polite company, were now freely and ubiquitously said in the public domain. A German friend of mine, who taught German in a local school, walked into his classroom the day after the referendum to find all the children frenziedly banging their desk lids and chanting "BREXIT! BREXIT!" Random acts of violence against "foreigners," always present at a low level, became commonplace and unremarkable. Women wearing burqas were assaulted on public transport. I witnessed someone rushing up to a complete stranger whom they deemed to be a foreigner in a busy street and shouting into her face, "We voted for you to go home! Now go!" My parents had sought refuge in one country – the tolerant and generous

<sup>2</sup> Cotswold villages – the Cotswolds is a particularly picturesque area in England

<sup>3</sup> rubbing brasses – reproducing brass ornaments by placing a sheet of paper on top of them and rubbing the paper with a pencil, chalk etc.

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Britain of the NHS<sup>4</sup>, the BBC, Oxfam<sup>5</sup>, free cod-liver oil and orange juice for the young, free milk and meals in school, good wages ensured by strong trade unions, and Yorkshire neighborliness. I grew up with all the advantages of post-war prosperity underpinned by the post-war consensus, a strong welfare state, heritor to a rich centuries-old culture with the jewel of the cunning and subtle English language as my native tongue. It feels now as though I am destined to live out my days in a very different country – a Britain of austerity, private provision, short term contracts and the minimum wage, a crude and violent language in the popular press which urged the prime minister to wage war on the 48 percent of people who like me had opposed Brexit [...].

So where do I belong now, I wonder? In the rural shambolic Ukraine of my parents' memories – not even my own memories? In Germany where I was born, now rebuilt and prosperous, whose post-war decades of soul-searching have brought it face to face with the darkness and horror that can lie at the heart of a bid for “national greatness”? Or here among British people, who treated me with such kindness when I was a refugee, but never, it seems, saw me as one of them? Maybe as with all of us the country which is our true home is the idyllic rose-tinted land of our own childhood, from which we are always exiles.

(998 words)

Quelle: Marina Lewycka. “Refugees and Exiles.” *The Displaced: Refugee Writers on Refugee Lives*. Ed. Viet Thanh Nguyen. New York: Abrams, 2018. 121-127.

## Hilfsmittel

Ein- und zweisprachiges Wörterbuch der Zielsprache

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<sup>4</sup> NHS – National Health Service

<sup>5</sup> Oxfam – a charity organization