

# **Abiturprüfung 2014**

## **ENGLISCH**

– Textteil –

**Arbeitszeit: 190 Minuten**

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

## Textaufgabe I

### The New American Super-Family

Amanda Gentle and millions like her are proving Thomas Wolfe<sup>1</sup> wrong. You can go home again.

Like so many other Americans, Gentle was hit hard as the financial dominoes fell in 2008. The value of her house dropped while property taxes  
5 soared. When she was laid off from her job as director of marketing and sales for a small publishing company, she could no longer keep up. So, at 35 years old, Gentle did what numerous other 20- and 30-somethings are doing: She moved back in with her parents. “It was difficult,” Gentle readily admits. “I had a successful career, and I went from being on my own, in a good place, to  
10 basically starting over.”

Gentle is not alone. Adult children of boomers<sup>2</sup> – famously overeducated and underemployed – have created a moving-back-home tsunami. The driving force behind this trend is financial pressure, particularly rising housing costs, health insurance premiums, and college debt. Now, more than one in five  
15 young adults lives in multi-generational households.

But it’s not just the young who are coming home to roost. Many elderly parents of boomers are moving in with their children as well. All told, the number of multi-gen households grew about 30 percent during the past decade, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. It reflects a turning back to  
20 what used to be, well, normal.

“We had a 50-year experiment of thinking of families as two parents and two kids,” says John Graham, co-author of *Together Again: A Creative Guide to Successful Multigenerational Living*. “What’s happening right now is that the 50-year nuclear family experiment is ending.”

25 Not everyone is moving back home. Some never left. Dan, a 25-year-old  
healthcare consultant, lives with his parents on the northeast side of  
Philadelphia. While going to college, he stayed at home, and after graduating,  
Dan gave independence some thought, then decided to stick around. “When I  
move out, I’d like to be able to make a down payment on a decent place, not  
30 some hole in the wall,” Dan says. “The best way to save money is to spend  
wisely, and right now that means living at home.”

Whatever the circumstances, being an adult in your parents’ home is  
different from being a teen there. Before Gentle moved in with her parents this  
past January, the family sat down in the living room and discussed  
35 expectations, including chores, financial responsibilities, and how long she  
would stay. This phase of basically resetting her GPS could have turned into  
an ugly high school flashback. Instead, having new structure in her life was  
soothing. “After all the stress of being laid off and losing my house, it was very  
comforting to be with my family,” Gentle says. “I’m used to being very self-  
40 sufficient and independent, but it was nice to take a deep breath for a moment  
and get back on my feet.”

Gentle has found a job and plans to move out again soon, but author  
Graham sees multi-gen living as the wave of the future. “The boomerang kids’  
experience is spring training for the long season of baby boomer retirement,”  
45 he says. “They’re learning how to live together. That’s vital, because in the  
next 10 years, boomers will start moving in with their children.”

He’s undoubtedly correct, but the trend of elderly parents rejoining their  
children has already begun. When Hurricane Irene raked the Eastern  
Seaboard this past summer, 79-year-old Lois Bechtel grew uneasy as the  
50 winds increased and the rain pounded her Stamford, Connecticut, home.  
Instead of weathering the storm alone, she dashed a few steps into the  
adjoining house to be with her daughter’s family, safe and secure. “If I lived on

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my own, I'd be by myself in storms or other emergencies," Bechtel says. "Now I know that if I get sick, they're close by. It's a comfort." Bechtel lives in an attached apartment that allows her privacy when she wishes. According to a  
55 2010 Coldwell Banker trend survey, home builders are on the multi-gen bandwagon, increasingly incorporating in-law apartments and adding other features for extended family members, such as separate entries, multiple kitchens, and second master bedrooms.

60 So, if we're all going to share, will we be able to get along? It may surprise you that not only is the answer an emphatic yes, but the multi-gen household may yield unexpected benefits, from sharing chores and childcare to the more abstract but equally vital opportunity to really get to know one's cultural history. In fact, according to Graham, the nuclear family concept  
65 wasn't ever that terrific in the first place: "We're not designed to live that way. We're designed to thrive in extended family units," he says.

From: Doug Donaldson, "The New American Super-Family", in: *The Saturday Evening Post*, July/August 2012, adapted from <http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2012/07/05/in-the-magazine/trends-and-opinions/superfamily.html> (abridged)

### Annotations:

- 1 Thomas Wolfe      author of the novel *You Can't Go Home Again* (1940); the phrase "you can't go home again" means that once you've left your old life, you can't return to it
- 2 boomers              baby boomers, *here*: people born between 1946 and 1964

## Textaufgabe II

### Running Late

*Dana Halter, the protagonist, is an American woman in her early thirties who at the age of four suffered an infection which left her profoundly deaf.*

She was stressed, stressed out, running late. And when she got to the four-way stop at the end of the block she felt momentarily blessed because there was no one there to stop for, yet even as she made a feint of slowing and shifted from neutral to second with a quick deft plunge of clutch and  
5 accelerator, she spotted the patrol car parked just up the street in the bruised shadow of an SUV.

There was a moment of suspended time, the cop frozen at the wheel of his car, she giving him a helpless exculpatory<sup>1</sup> look, and then she was past him and cursing herself as she watched him pull a lazy U-turn behind her and  
10 activate the flashing lights.

She watched the cop – the patrolman – in her side mirror as he sliced open the door, hitched up his belt and walked stiffly to her car.

She had her license and registration ready and held them out to him in offering, in supplication, but he didn't take them, not yet. He was saying  
15 something, lips flapping as if he were chewing a wad of gristle<sup>2</sup>, but what was it? It wasn't *License and registration*, but what else could it be? *Is that the sun in the sky? What's the square root of a hundred forty-four? Do you know why I pulled you over?* Yes. That was it. And she did know. She'd run a stop sign<sup>3</sup>. Because she was in a hurry – a hurry to get to the dentist's, of all places – and  
20 she was running late.

"I know," she said, "I know, but... but I did shift down..."

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He was young, this patrolman, no older than she. His eyes were too big for his head and they bulged out like a Boston terrier's. There was a softness to his jaw, that when combined with the eyes – liquid and weepy – gave him  
25 an unfinished look, as if he weren't her age at all but an adolescent, a big-headed child all dressed up spick-and-span in his uniform and playing at authority. She saw his face change when she spoke, but she was used to that.

He said something then, and this time she read him correctly, handing him the laminated license and the thin wafer of the registration slip. He backed  
30 away from the car and said something further – probably that he was going to go back to his own vehicle and run a standard check on her license before writing out the standard ticket for running the standard stop sign – and this time she kept her mouth shut.

For the first few minutes she wasn't aware of the time passing. All she  
35 could think was what this was going to cost her, points on her license, the insurance and that now she was definitely going to be late. And if she was late for the dentist and the procedure that was to take two hours minimum, as she'd been advised in writing to assure that there would be no misunderstanding, then she would be late for her class<sup>4</sup> too and no one to  
40 cover for her.

But what was taking him so long? She had an urge to look over her shoulder, fix the glowing sun-blistered windshield with a withering stare, but she resisted the impulse and lowered her left shoulder to peer instead through the side mirror.

45 Nothing. There was a form there, the patrolman's form, a bulked-up shadow, head bent. She glanced at the clock on the dash<sup>5</sup>. Ten minutes had passed since he'd left her. She wondered if he was a slow learner, dyslexic, the sort of person who would have trouble recollecting the particular statute of the motor vehicle code<sup>6</sup> she stood in violation of.

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Right away she could see that something was wrong. His body language was different, radically different, the stiffness gone out of his legs, his shoulders hunched forward and his feet stalking the gravel with exaggerated  
55 care. She watched till his face loomed up in the mirror – his mouth drawn tight, his eyes narrowed and deflated – and then turned to face him.

That was when she had her first shock.

He was standing three paces back from the driver's door and he had his weapon drawn and pointed at her and he was saying something about her  
60 hands – barking, his face discomposed, furious – and he had to repeat himself, more furious each time, until she understood: *Put your hands where I can see them.*

From: T.C. Boyle, *Talk Talk*, New York 2006 (abridged)

### Annotations:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1 exculpatory        | pretending to be innocent   |
| 2 wad of gristle     | lump of meat that is hard to chew                                   |
| 3 to run a stop sign | to fail to stop at a stop sign                                      |
| 4 class              | <i>Dana teaches at a high school for deaf students</i>              |
| 5 dash               | <i>short for:</i> dashboard; part of the car in front of the driver |
| 6 motor vehicle code | set of official rules about driving                                 |