

Maturitätsprüfung 2008

Englisch

Name:

Class:

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Part	Time	Points	Page
Reading	~ 15 minutes		1
1. Comprehension	~ 20 minutes	40	2-4
2. Vocabulary	~ 15 minutes	25	4-5
3. Essay	~ 60 minutes	60	6
4. Grammar incl. Translation	~ 60 minutes	75	6-8
Reading over	~ 10 minutes		
Total:	180 minutes	200	

Please note:

- ▶ Write your name and your class on **every** sheet.
- ▶ Write **the essay and the translation** each on a **separate** sheet of paper. The other exercises are to be written into the spaces provided.
- ▶ All questions are to be answered, except for the essay, where you must choose **one** of the three topics.
- ▶ Please write legibly and leave a margin of 2 cm on the right of every sheet.

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(Reading time: ~15 minutes)

From *The Economist* print edition, June 29th 2006 (adapted)

Pursuing happiness

It's the pursuit, rather than the end-product, that makes Americans so American

ONE of the most striking things about the Declaration of Independence that Americans celebrate with such gusto on July 4th is that so much of it is dull — hardly worthy of the tons of fireworks and barbecue that are sacrificed in its honour. But all this tedium is more than made up for by a single sentence — the one about “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”.

The sentence was remarkable at the time — a perfect summary, in a few words, of exactly what was new about the new republic. Previous countries had been based on common traditions and a collective identity. Previous statesmen had been exercised by things like the common good and public virtue (which usually meant making sure that people played their allotted¹ roles in the divinely established order). The Founding Fathers were the first politicians to produce the explosive combination of individual rights and the pursuit of happiness. It remains equally remarkable today, still the best statement, 230 years after it was written, of what makes America American. The Book of Job gives warning that “man is born unto trouble, as the sparks² fly upward.” Americans, for all their overt religiosity, have dedicated their civilisation to proving Job wrong.

Everywhere you look in contemporary America you see a people engaged in that pursuit. You can see it in work habits. Americans not only work harder than most Europeans (they work an average of 1,731 hours a year compared with an average of 1,440 for Germans). They also endure lengthy commutes³ (who

cares about a couple of hours a day in a car when you have a McMansion⁴ to come home to?). You can see it in geographical mobility. About 40m of them move house every year. They are remarkably willing to travel huge distances in pursuit of everything from bowling conventions to factory outlets. You can see it in religion: Americans relentlessly shop around for the church that most suits their spiritual needs. And you can see it in the country's general hopefulness: two-thirds of Americans are optimistic about the future.

Since Americans are energetic even in deconstructing their own founding principles, there is no shortage of people who have taken exception to the happiness pursuit. They range from conservatives such as Robert Bork, who think the phrase encapsulates the “emptiness at the heart of American ideology”, to liberals who think that it is a justification for an acquisitive society.

One criticism is that the pursuit is self-defeating. The more you pursue the illusion of happiness the more you sacrifice the real thing. The flip side of relentless mobility is turmoil and angst, broken marriages and unhappy children. Americans have less job security than ever before. They even report having fewer close friends than a couple of decades ago. And international studies of happiness suggest that people in certain poor countries, for instance Nigeria and Mexico, are apparently happier than people in America.

Another criticism is that Americans have confused happiness with material possessions (it is notable that Thomas Jefferson's call echoes Adam Smith's phrase about

“life, liberty and the pursuit of property”). Do all those pairs of Manolo Blahnik shoes really make you happy? Or are they just a compensation for empty lives à la “Sex and the City”?

If opinion polls on such matters mean anything — and that is dubious — they suggest that both these criticisms are flawed. A 2006 Pew Research Centre study, “Are we happy yet?” claims that 84% of Americans are either “very happy” (34%) or “pretty happy” (50%). The Harris Poll's 2004 “feel good index” found that 95% are pleased with their homes and 91% are pleased with their social lives. The Pew polls show that money does indeed go some way towards buying happiness: nearly half (49%) of Americans with annual incomes of more than \$100,000 say they are very happy compared with just 24% of people with incomes of \$30,000 or less. They also suggest that Americans' religiosity makes them happier still: 43% of Americans who attend religious services once a week or more report being very happy compared with 31% who attend once a month or less and 26% of people who attend seldom or never.

The pursuit of happiness explains all sorts of peculiarities of American life: from the \$700m that is spent on self-help books every year to the irritating dinner guests who will not stop looking at their BlackBerries. It may even help to explain the recent surge of anti-Americanism. Many people dislike America today because of its failure to live up to its stated ideals. But others dislike it precisely because it is doing exactly what Jefferson intended. For some Europeans, the pursuit of happiness in the form of monster cars and mansions is objectionable on every possible ground, from aesthetic to ecological. You cannot pursue happiness with such conspicuous enthusiasm without making quite a lot of people around the world rather unhappy.

(~830 words)

¹ given

² bits of brightly burning material from a fire

³ trips from home to work and back

⁴ large showy house

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1. Text comprehension

(40 points)

1.1 True or false

(10 points)

The following sentences are either true or false. Mark those that are true with a T, and those that are false with an F.

- 1) The author finds the Declaration of Independence fun to read.
- 2) The new document expressed a new philosophy of life.
- 3) The author believes that the document is now out of date.
- 4) According to the author, the Book of Job can be seen as a confirmation of the American way of life.
- 5) Recent research shows that Americans work at least five hours a week more than Germans.
- 6) The concept of “the pursuit of happiness” has been attacked by both conservatives and liberals.
- 7) According to the text, it is prosperity that has brought Americans closer together.
- 8) The author believes that recent opinion polls are of undoubted importance in the evaluation of current trends in American life.
- 9) Recent research shows that Americans consider religion an important factor in making them happy.
- 10) The author believes that the pursuit of happiness in America is the first step toward making people around the world happy.

1.2 Multiple choice questions

(30 points)

Please **circle** the letter before the line that **best** completes the sentence according to the information given in the text.

- 1) On July 4th Americans celebrate
 - a) the honour of the country.
 - b) the tradition of fireworks.
 - c) the founding of the country.
 - d) their own happiness.
- 2) What the author finds so striking about the document is
 - a) the role it gives to America as the most powerful nation on earth.
 - b) the role of the Book of Job.
 - c) the boring nature of most of the text.
 - d) its insistence on national identity.
- 3) According to the author, what is so special about the expression “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” is
 - a) that it sums up in a few words a long tradition.
 - b) that it expresses the innate religiosity of most Americans.
 - c) that it expressed the novelty of the way of life of the new country.
 - d) the use of the word “pursuit”.
- 4) The expression “the Founding Fathers” can be understood as meaning
 - a) the first Europeans to settle in what is now the United States.
 - b) the authors of the document in question.
 - c) the original genetic ancestors of the country.
 - d) the first men in human history to write about happiness.

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- 5) The author of the article believes that the combination of individual rights and the pursuit of happiness
- is a contradiction.
 - is an excellent summary of America's national character.
 - has been badly damaged by recent changes in American politics.
 - encapsulates the emptiness at the heart of American ideology.
- 6) According to the text, Americans have a life style where
- they do not have to work as hard as people in Europe.
 - most of the people own more than one house.
 - they are faithful to the church of their origins.
 - they are willing to travel a long way to work.
- 7) The expression "[t]he flip side" (lines 77-78) is an idiomatic way of speaking of what could be called
- the bright side.
 - the other side.
 - what is missing.
 - a kind of jump.
- 8) Recent research shows that
- Americans have more financial security than citizens of other countries.
 - security in the United States has made its citizens happier than people in poorer countries.
 - an acquisitive society is a disaster.
 - in spite of their belief in the pursuit of happiness, Americans are apparently not as happy as people in economically less privileged countries.
- 9) The author believes that
- Americans have confused happiness with material possessions.
 - Manolo Blahnik shoes can make you feel better.
 - "the pursuit of property" is also important.
 - it is interesting to find a variation of Adam Smith's words in Thomas Jefferson's.
- 10) The word "these" (line 102) refers to
- Robert Bork and liberals.
 - lines 74 – 91.
 - the opinion polls.
 - Manolo Blahnik shoes and "Sex and the City".
- 11) Opinion polls show that most Americans believe that
- church-going plays an important role in their happiness.
 - money is not an important factor in happiness.
 - they are becoming happier and happier.
 - the pursuit of happiness is self-defeating.
- 12) The expression "such conspicuous enthusiasm" (lines 145-146) refers to
- "all sorts of peculiarities in American life".
 - "the pursuit of happiness" in general.
 - "monster cars and mansions".
 - none of the above.
- 13) The author believes that the pursuit of happiness is
- helpful in explaining only the core issues of American life.
 - of no use in explaining recent changes in attitudes in Europe toward America.
 - an irrelevant concept in our time.
 - of help in understanding why Americans behave the way they do.

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- 14) The text maintains
- a) that most Americans find their happiness in work.
 - b) that a lot of people dislike America today because it has not fulfilled its ideals.
 - c) that happiness is best found in intimate relationships.
 - d) that the American “pursuit of happiness” is the major reason for the recent increase in anti-Americanism.
- 15) The author’s attitude toward “the pursuit of happiness” can best be characterised as
- a) optimistic and enthusiastically supportive.
 - b) pessimistic and rather discouraged.
 - c) somewhat ironic and intrigued.
 - d) sarcastic and scathingly critical.

2. Vocabulary (25 points)

2.1 Word formation (10 points)

The following sentences (1-10) are to be read as a single text. Use **one word** that **fits the gap** and belongs to the **same word family** as the word in **CAPITALS**.

There are two examples (0, 00) at the beginning.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 0) The sentence was ... remarkable at the time. | REMARK |
| 00) It was an .. extraordinarily ... original document. | ORDINARY |
| 1) It is all too forgotten that the statement that “all men are created equal” literally restricted | EASY |
| 2) the condition of | EQUAL |
| 3) to men – and white | OWN |
| 4) of property at that. Not | SURPRISE |
| 5) many people objected to the of a situation which excluded African-American men, all women | JUST |
| 6) and anyone without land from full | CITIZEN |
| 7) Things have changed since then. The situation in America today, with a black man and a white | POLITICS |
| 8) woman in | COMPETE |
| 9) to be the Democratic Party’s candidate in the November elections, | PRESIDENT |
| 10) would have been to the country’s founding fathers! | IMAGINE |

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2.2 Synonyms

(10 points)

Underline the word that could best replace the word *in italics* in each of the following sentences so that the initial sentence retains its **original meaning**.

- 0) pursuit (sub-title)
It's the *pursuit*, rather than the end-product, that makes Americans so American.
a) achievement b) search c) continuation d) procedure
- 1) gusto (line 4)
Americans celebrate with such *gusto*.
a) noise b) enthusiasm c) courage d) tiredness
- 2) tedium (line 8)
But all this *tedium* is more than made up for by a single sentence.
a) fuss b) tendency c) boredom d) interest
- 3) overt (line 34)
Americans, for all their *overt* religiosity, have dedicated their civilisation to proving Job wrong.
a) exaggerated b) apparent c) hidden d) clear
- 4) endure (line 45)
They also *endure* lengthy commutes.
a) bear b) avoid c) encourage d) last
- 5) relentlessly (line 56)
Americans *relentlessly* shop around.
a) reluctantly b) eventually c) ceaselessly d) hardly
- 6) shortage (line 65)
There is no *shortage* of people.
a) lack b) smallness c) littleness d) absence
- 7) taken exception to (lines 65-66)
They have *taken exception to* the happiness pursuit.
a) accepted b) questioned c) excepted d) valued
- 8) acquisitive (line 72)
It is a justification for an *acquisitive* society.
a) wealthy b) possessive c) materialistic d) worldly
- 9) compensation (lines 97-98)
Or are they just a *compensation* for empty lives?
a) salary b) substitute c) symbol d) reward
- 10) dubious (line 101)
That is *dubious*, to say the least.
a) indebted b) impossible c) possible d) doubtful

2.3 Antonyms

(5 points)

Add a **negative prefix** to the word *in italics* to form an **antonym**:
One example has been done for you.

- 0) Exams make me *happy*. unhappy
- 1) It is a question of what is done in its *honour*. (line 8)
- 2) The sentence was *remarkable* at the time. (line 12)
- 3) You can see it in geographical *mobility*. (line 49)
- 4) Americans have less job *security* than ever before. (line 81)
- 5) Most Americans are *pleased* with their homes. (line 110)

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3. Essay

(60 points)

Choose **one** of the three following topics for an essay (300-400 words).

- 1) Ideals and reality.
- 2) Comment on the following quotation:
“The pursuit of happiness is a most ridiculous phrase; if you pursue happiness, you’ll never find it.” (Percy Snow)
- 3) Write a story of your own invention ending with the words:
“And they lived unhappily ever after.”

4. Grammar

(75 points)

4.1 Re-phrasing sentences

(20 points)

Complete the second sentence so that it has **the same meaning** as the first sentence, using the word given. Do **not** change the word given. You must use **between two and seven** words, including the word given.

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

- 0) When does the next exam begin?
Could ~~you tell me when~~..... the next exam begins? (tell)
- 1) According to the “Declaration of Independence”, governments should be elected by the people.
The authors of the “Declaration of Independence” (wanted)
..... elected by the people.
- 2) Although British troops were successful at the beginning of the War of Independence, they lost the war.
..... at the beginning of the War of Independence, British troops lost the war. (spite)
- 3) The British army was better clothed than the American.
The American army the British. (not)
- 4) Martin Luther King’s speech, “I have a dream”, brought politicians to the realization that the government had not fulfilled the promise of the “Declaration”.
Martin Luther King’s speech, “I have a dream”, (made)
that the promise of the “Declaration”
- 5) I regret not having heard Dr. Martin Luther King’s speech.
I Dr. Martin Luther King’s speech. (wish)
- 6) A racist shot him in 1968.
..... in 1968. (was)
- 7) They think a single gunman carried out the attack.
A single gunman the attack. (to)
- 8) I think people should not forget history.
I history. (rather)
- 9) My parents made me visit Washington.
..... my parents. (was)
- 10) I last saw the city three years ago.
I 2005. (have)

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4.2 Gap-filling

(5 points)

Complete each gap with **one word only**.

It is everywhere. Some 380m people speak it as their first language. A billion are learning it, (1) a third of the world's population are in some sense exposed (2) it and, (3) 2050, it is predicted, half the world will be more or (4) proficient (5) it. English, (6) other words, has moved (7) the times. Already (8) the 19th century it had spread across an empire (9) which, some said, the sun never set. It thus began its rise as a global language. But however accommodating English might be, (10) real reason for the latter-day triumph of English is the triumph of the English-speaking United States as a world power.

4.3 Verb forms (active and passive voice, participles and infinitives)

(20 points)

Complete the following text by placing the words in brackets in the correct form and order. **Do not add** any nouns or pronouns.

The "Declaration of Independence" (1) (write) in 1776, but it (2) (be) the subject of intense debate ever since. (3) (intend) as a document to justify a colonial revolt against an occupying power, the "Declaration" soon (4) (become) a kind of moral treatise against tyrannical government, one that later (5) (use) as a model for future governments in Europe, including Switzerland. Simply put, no government, (6) (recognise) or not by the international community, (7) (try) to formulate such an argument before.

But who (8) (give) citizenship in the early United States? You (9) (may/surprise) to learn that the right to vote (10) (limit) to men only, and white men at that, and, moreover, only to men (11) (own) property. In other words, if Hillary Clinton (12) (be) born in the eighteenth century, she (13) (not/can/vote) in an election!

All black males (14) (make) citizens of the United States in 1863, in the middle of the Civil War. But women – whatever their color or ancestral country of origin – (15) (must/wait) until shortly after the First World War before they (16) (can/vote).

The situation (17) (change) a great deal since America (18) (found). Today, if a person (19) (wish) to run for president, all he or she (20) (need) is the support of a major political party – and a lot of money!

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4.4 Error correction

(10 points)

Some of the sentences are correct and some have one or more mistakes. If a sentence is correct, put a tick (✓) at the end of each line. If the sentence has a word which should not be there, cross it out. If a word or a structure is incorrect, cross it out and correct the mistake in the space at the end of each line.

- 1) On Saturday, I invited lots of friends to my birthday party, that lasted the whole night.
- 2) When I was a child, I was used to do my homework alone.
- 3) I hadn't realised my mother-in-law will stay until the end of the month.
- 4) I've lost my key. I'll have to have another key made.
- 5) If he hadn't spoken so badly English, the people at the conference wouldn't have left early.
- 6) Michael had an argument with a neighbour of his.
- 7) This is the same jumper like we saw at the department store.
- 8) Guess what! I've seen one of my primary school classmates at the cinema yesterday.
- 9) I wondered why was my mother driving so fast.
- 10) Tomorrow it isn't raining, so we'll be able to go swimming.

4.5 Translation

(20 points)

Translate the following sentences into idiomatic English. Translate as freely as necessary and as closely as possible.

- 1) Seit 1776 feiern die Amerikaner jedes Jahr den „Independence Day“ mit Feuerwerken.
- 2) Benjamin Franklin las die Unabhängigkeitserklärung und man glaubt, dass er mindestens 48 Korrekturen machte.
- 3) Benjamin Franklin warnte seine Freunde, dass sie alle gehängt würden, wenn ihr Projekt scheitern würde.
- 4) In England wurde die Unabhängigkeitserklärung zuerst im „Gentleman's Magazine“ gedruckt, welches die amerikanische Politik seit vielen Jahren verfolgt hatte.
- 5) Während des Bürgerkriegs erinnerte Abraham Lincoln die weissen Amerikaner an die Versprechen, welche die Unabhängigkeitserklärung gemacht hatte.
- 6) Abraham Lincoln sagte in seiner Rede 1863, er wolle, dass auch schwarze Menschen Bürger werden.
- 7) Genau hundert Jahre nach Lincolns Rede erinnerte Martin Luther King die Nation an die Unabhängigkeitserklärung.
- 8) Martin Luther King beklagte sich 1963, dass die Hautfarbe noch immer wichtiger sei als der Charakter einer Person.
- 9) Wenn die Rede nicht so erfolgreich gewesen wäre, hätte Time Magazine Martin Luther King nicht „Mann des Jahres 1963“ genannt.
- 10) Wir hoffen, es ist uns gelungen, mit diesen Sätzen zu zeigen, warum die Unabhängigkeitserklärung so wichtig ist.