

Hinweise für den Prüfling

Einlese- und Auswahlzeit: 45 Minuten

Bearbeitungszeit: 240 Minuten

Auswahlverfahren

Wählen Sie von den drei vorliegenden Vorschlägen einen zur Bearbeitung aus. Die nicht ausgewählten Vorschläge müssen am Ende der Einlesezeit der Aufsicht führenden Lehrkraft zurückgegeben werden.

Erlaubte Hilfsmittel

1. ein Wörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtschreibung
2. ein an der Schule eingeführtes einsprachiges Wörterbuch

Sonstige Hinweise

keine

In jedem Fall vom Prüfling auszufüllen

Name: _____ Vorname: _____

Prüferin / Prüfer: _____ Datum: _____

Textaufgabe (literarischer Text)

Dehumanization

Assignments

1. Summarize the text. **(30 BE)**

2. Point out literary techniques used by the author and analyse their function. **(35 BE)**

3. Comment on the statement that “people stopped being human in 1913” (l. 1). Take into account that Ford’s assembly line has often been considered one of the most important steps towards the realization of the American Dream for the masses. **(35 BE)**

Material**Working on the line**

In his novel 'Middlesex' J. Eugenides gives us an idea concerning the working situation at Ford Motor Company in the 1920s by depicting the life of an immigrant family.

Historical fact: people stopped being human in 1913. That was the year Henry Ford put his cars on rollers and made the workers adopt the speed of the assembly line. At first, workers rebelled. They quit in droves, unable to accustom their bodies to the new pace of the age. Since then, however, the adaptation has been passed down: we've all inherited it to some
5 degree, so that we plug right into joy sticks and remotes, to repetitive motions of a hundred kinds.

But in 1922 it was still a new thing to be a machine.

On the factory floor, my grandfather was trained for his job in seventeen minutes. Part of the new production method's genius was its division of labor into unskilled tasks. That way you
10 could hire anyone. And fire anyone. The foreman showed Lefty how to take a bearing¹ from the conveyor², grind³ it on a lathe⁴, and replace it. Holding a stopwatch, he timed the new employee's attempts. Then nodding once, he led Lefty to his position on the Line. On the left stood a man named Wierzbicki; on the right, a man called O'Malley. For a moment, they are three men, waiting together. Then the whistle blows.

15 Every fourteen seconds Wierzbicki reams⁵ a bearing and Stephanides grinds a bearing and O'Malley attaches a bearing to a camshaft⁶. This camshaft travels away on a conveyor, curling around the factory, through its clouds of metal dust, its acid fogs, until another worker fifty yards on reaches up and removes the camshaft, fitting it onto the engine block (twenty seconds). Simultaneously, other men are unhooking parts from adjacent conveyors – the
20 carburettor⁷, the distributor⁸, the intake manifold⁹ – and connecting them to the engine block. Above their heads, huge spindles pound steam-powered fists. No one says a word. Wierzbicki reams a bearing and Stephanides grinds a bearing and O'Malley attaches a bearing to a camshaft. While other workers screw in the air filter (seventeen seconds) and attach the starter motor (twenty-six seconds) and put on the fly-wheel¹⁰. At which point the engine is finished
25 and the last man sends it soaring away...

Except that he isn't the last man. [...] A man sends it dropping down onto a chassis rolling out to meet it, as three other workers remove a car body from the oven, its black finish baked to a shine in which they can see their own faces, and they recognize themselves, momentarily,
30 before they drop the body onto the chassis rolling out to meet it. There are other men below, hauling the engine in, as a chassis rolls out to meet it. These men attach the engine to the transmission (twenty-five seconds). Wierzbicki reams a bearing and Stephanides grinds a bearing and O'Malley attaches a bearing to a camshaft. My grandfather only sees the bearing in front of him, his hands removing it, grinding it, and putting it back as another appears. The conveyor over his head extends back to the men who stamp out the bearings and load ingots
35 into the furnaces; it goes back to the Foundry where the Negroes work. [...] The Foundry is the deepest recess of the Rouge¹¹, its molten core, but the Line goes back farther than that. It extends outside to the hills of coal and coke, it goes to the river where freighters dock to unload the ore, at which point the line becomes the river itself, snaking up to the north woods

40 until it reaches its source, which is the earth itself, the limestone and sandstone therein, and then the Line leads back again, out of substrata to river to freighters and finally to the cranes, shovels, and furnaces where it is turned into molten steel and poured into molds, cooling and hardening into car parts – the gears, drive shafts¹², and fuel tanks of 1922 Model T's. [...]

45 By day, no words, by night, hundreds. Every evening at quitting time my exhausted grandfather would come out of the factory and tramp to an adjacent building housing the English school. He sat in a desk with his workbook in front of him. The desk felt as though it were vibrating across the floor at the Line's 1.2 miles per hour. He looked up at the English alphabet in a frieze on the classroom walls. In rows around him, men sat over identical workbooks. Hair stiff from dried sweat, eyes red from metal dust, hands raw, they recited with the obedience of choirboys:

50 "Employees should use plenty of soap and water in the home."
"Nothing makes for right living so much as cleanliness."
"Do not spit on the floor of the home."
"Do not allow any flies in the house."
"The most advanced people are the cleanest."

55 Sometimes the English lessons continued on the job. One week, after a lecture by the foreman on increasing productivity, Lefty speeded up his work, grinding a bearing every twelve seconds instead of fourteen. Returning from the lavatory later, he found the word "RAT" written on the side of his lathe. The belt was cut.

(841 words)

Jeffrey Eugenides: *Middlesex*, New York, 2002, pp. 109 – 112

Annotations

¹ Kugellager

² Förderband

³ schleifen

⁴ Drehbank

⁵ (aus-)fräsen

⁶ Nockenwelle

⁷ Vergaser

⁸ Verteiler

⁹ Ansaugrohr

¹⁰ Schwungrad

¹¹ the name of the Ford plant at the river Rouge, a few miles south of Detroit

¹² Getriebewelle