



Aufgabenstellung

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe Valerie Jarrett's views on immigration and her demands as presented in the official White House blog. (<i>Comprehension</i>) 2. Analyse how she tries to convince the reader of her views. Consider structure, communicative strategies and stylistic devices. (<i>Analysis</i>) 3. Choose one of the following tasks. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Using your knowledge about the American Dream, discuss Jarrett's claim that "America's strength has always come from the rich diversity, and core decency" (ll. 47/48) of the American people. (<i>Evaluation: comment</i>) 3.2 Imagine you have just immigrated to the USA and had to wait for your Green Card for a long time. Write a critical letter to Jarrett. (<i>Evaluation: re-creation of text</i>) | <p>Punkte</p> <p>16</p> <p>24</p> <p>20</p> |
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Text:

Valerie Jarrett: New Citizens and the American Dream

Valerie Jarrett is a Senior Advisor to President Barack Obama. Her text was first published in the official White House blog.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of speaking at a naturalization ceremony for newly naturalized citizens of the United States of America.

There were over 700 representatives from 92 countries across 6 continents who became Americans. From the Philippines, to Germany, El Salvador, to Peru, to Australia, and every other corner of the globe, they embodied not just the face of the

Operator	Bedeutung	Beispiel
Describe	Eine genauere Beschreibung einer Person, einer Sache, einer Situation erstellen	"Describe Job's living conditions in London/England."
Analyse/ Examine	Eine detaillierte Analyse des Textes erstellen	"Analyse the impression the narrator creates of Indian society and how he manages to do so."
Discuss	Argumente für und wider einen Sachverhalt darstellen und auf dieser Grundlage zu einer begründeten Meinungsäußerung kommen	"Discuss if it makes sense for individuals to act in a more environmentally friendly way if..."
Comment (on)	Die eigene Meinung deutlich zum Ausdruck bringen und mit Begründungen und Belegen untermauern	"Comment on the statement that equality is 'one of those polite English fictions [...] that are like rease on a wheel shaft'."

There were over 700 representatives from 92 countries across 6 continents who became Americans. From the Philippines, to Germany, El Salvador, to Peru, to Australia, and every other corner of the globe, they embodied not just the face of the world, but the face of America.

Their presence is a testament to the promise of the American Dream. It's the dream that says no matter who you are, where you came from, what your last name is, what you believe, or who you love, if you come here, and work hard, if you believe in yourself, if you embrace the spirit of limitless possibilities, then in this great country, you can make it if you try.

All Americans have the same dream – receive a good education, have a job, the ability to afford a home, send their kids to college, health care so they don't have [to]

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worry about going broke if they get sick, or are in an accident, and the ability to retire with a little money in their pocket.

Our newest Americans came here in pursuit of that dream. And in so many ways, they are already woven into the fabric of our great country. They've gone to school here, worked here, been active in our communities, served, and defended our country through active military service, and made our nation stronger, safer, and better.

When the newest Americans stood tall, and faced our American flag, and pledged allegiance to the country they now official[ly] call home, my eyes swelled with tears, knowing that they were accepting both the privilege, and responsibility of citizenship in our great country. And they reminded me of how precious our citizenship is – of how much it is worth, why we should never take it for granted, and why it is worth protecting.

Simply put, they belong here. And they remind us again of the importance of fixing our immigration system, so that aspiring Americans can take the pathway that they have taken, and become full-fledged citizens.

That's why President Obama has made immigration reform one of his top priorities this year. Last month, the Senate passed an historic piece of legislation in an

they have taken, and become full-fledged citizens.

30 That's why President Obama has made immigration reform one of his top priorities this year. Last month, the Senate passed an historic piece of legislation in an overwhelming bipartisan vote. Now it's time for the House to take action.

Immigration reform is necessary because it speaks to our values as a country – a nation of laws, and a nation of immigrants. It's the right thing to do because our system is broken. And we also know that economic costs of inaction are simply too high to delay.

If the Senate bill were passed, our economy's GDP would grow nearly five and a half percent more over the next two decades, resulting in massive job creation.

40 We would see real wages will rise, federal deficits will fall by \$850 billion, and our debt will shrink as a share of the economy.

We would see a stronger housing recovery, thanks to stronger demand and higher prices for homes in neighborhoods hardest hit by the recession.

We would see foreign-born students educated in American universities stay in our country, and create jobs. [...]

45 These are real impacts that would benefit everyone. And this is our best chance in a long time to finally get this done. We owe it to our heritage, to our country's future, and to the next generation, to fix our broken system, today. After all, America's strength has always come from the rich diversity, and core decency of our people.

(598 words)

Valerie Jarrett: *New Citizens and the American Dream*. In: *The White House Blog*, July 31, 2013.
URL: www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/07/31/new-citizens-and-american-dream (Zugriff: 24.08.2015)

Annotations

1. 31 *Last month, the Senate passed an historic piece of legislation: here:* reference to a vote in the Senate on an immigration reform bill
1. 32 *the House: here:* reference to the House of Representatives



1. Here you need to present what the author thinks about immigration to the USA and what she demands that politicians do as a consequence. You should go into some detail on these two aspects.

- **America is a nation of immigrants.** - Views

- Immigrants come from all over the world.
- They are part of the country's history.
- They are responsible for its success.
- The new citizens are willing to take responsibility.
- Immigrants represent the American Dream: they hope for a better life and are prepared to work hard for it.

- **Jarrett claims that the current immigration system needs to be improved.** - demands

- The current system does not fit American values.
- The House of Representatives needs to pass the bill proposed by the Senate.
- The new legislation will lead to substantial, especially economic, improvements.

In her blog published on July 31, 2013 on the White House website, Valerie Jarrett presents her **views on immigration after she spoke at a naturalisation ceremony. She also demands that the current immigration system be improved.**

Jarrett firmly believes that the USA is a nation of immigrants. Immigrants have come from all over the world and their achievements have always played a major part in the country's history. Jarrett holds the view that the success of the USA depends on immigration and that the prospective new citizens are also willing to take that responsibility. According to Jarrett, immigrants embody the American Dream in the same way as American citizens. They, too, hope for a better life and are prepared to work hard for it.

} introduction

Linking words könnten
nicht schaden. Additionally, furthermore, etc

take that responsibility. According to Jarrett, immigrants embody the American Dream in the same way as American citizens. They, too, hope for a better life and are prepared to work hard for it.

However, the blogger claims that the current immigration system does not appropriately represent the country's values any longer and thus needs to be improved. Therefore, she asks the members of the House of Representatives to pass the bill on immigration reform proposed by the Senate, as it would lead to substantial improvements, especially for the country's economy*. To her mind, it would give the country better prospects for the future and allow it to stay true to its heritage.

(204 words)

* job creation, help with recession,
foreign born students in America
rise in GDP

2. In this task, you need to show how Jarrett tries to persuade the readers of her views on immigration and the necessity of immigration reform. In doing so, you are asked to focus on structure, communicative strategies and stylistic devices. It is vital that you explain the effect each of these has on the reader. Therefore, it makes sense to observe your own reactions to the text. To focus on structure, it can be helpful to divide the text into paragraphs and explain their respective contents and functions. As far as communicative strategies go, figure out how the author tries to involve and convince the readers. When it comes to stylistic

devices, you should focus on some especially striking examples. Name the device used as well as its function in the text.

- The structure leads logically to the call for a reform of the immigration system.
 - the naturalisation ceremony (ll. 1-6) → reason for the demand
 - American Dream (ll. 7-15) → establishes common ground
 - new Americans render a valuable service to their country (ll. 16-24)
 - importance of a new piece of legislation (ll. 24-32)
 - advantages of that new law (ll. 33-48)
- Communicative strategies are used to strengthen the sense of unity as well as to convince the readers of the author's argumentation.
 - elaborated reference to the American Dream → shared concept (ll. 7-15)
 - words with a positive connotation, e.g. the "promise of the American Dream" (l. 7), "limitless possibilities" (l. 10)
 - possessive determiner "our" and pronoun "we" → embraces everyone

Dream" (l. 7), "limitless possibilities" (l. 10)

- possessive determiner "our" and pronoun "we" → embraces everyone
- detailed description of personal experience at naturalisation ceremony (ll. 21–26)

- numbers to back claims of economic advantages (ll. 37–40)

- **direct appeal to the readers and to their patriotism** (ll. 46/47) → schwierig als nicht-Amerikaner

– The author uses stylistic devices to underline important aspects.

- enumeration of countries of origin (ll. 4/5) and generalisation ("every other corner of the globe", l. 5) → the USA is a country of immigrants
- elaboration on what the American Dream means (ll. 7–15) and generalisation ("All Americans", l. 12)
- emphasis on how immigrants have already contributed to the country (ll. 17–20) and line of three "stronger, safer, and better" (ll. 19/20)
- **metaphor**: "the fabric of our great country" (l. 17) → individuals are part of a greater whole
- **anaphora**: points out advantages of a reform of the legislation (ll. 39–44)

In her blog, Jarrett aims to convince the reader of her positive view on immigration and of the need to improve the existing system. In order to do so, she uses a structure that underlines the logic of her thoughts, communicative strategies that strengthen the sense of unity and stylistic devices, especially enumerations.

The blog's structure suggests that Jarrett's conclusions are inevitable. She starts by describing the reason for her blog post, namely her experience at a naturalisation ceremony (cf. ll. 1–6). As both new and old citizens share the same dream, she establishes a common ground between her readers and the prospective new Americans (cf. ll. 7–15). Next, she emphasises that the new citizens have already rendered valuable services to their country and are therefore an important asset to the USA (cf. ll. 16–24). As a result, she concludes that a new law is needed to allow immigration to remain successful in the future (cf. ll. 24–32) and finally, she cites many advantages of such a new law (cf. ll. 33–48).

The communicative strategies employed are meant to emphasise a sense of unity. This aim is achieved mainly by using the possessive determiner "our" and the pronoun "we" repeatedly (cf. ll. 16/17, 24/25, 39–44) and by referring ex-

tensively to the American Dream (cf. ll. 7–15), which is a traditional American concept supposedly shared by "[a]ll Americans" (l. 12). This common dream is further stressed by the use of words with a positive connotation, for instance when she mentions the "promise" (l. 7) of the dream and its "limitless possibilities" (l. 10). Furthermore, Jarrett also appeals directly to the readers' respon-

Topic Sentence

A-Support

B-Support

further stressed by the use of words with a positive connotation, for instance when she mentions the "promise" (l. 7) of the dream and its "limitless possibilities" (l. 10). Furthermore, Jarrett also appeals directly to the readers' responsibility for their country and its future by saying that they "owe it to [their] heritage, to [their] country's future, and to the next generation, to fix [their] broken system" (ll. 46/47). Thus, she also appeals to the readers' patriotism.

Another paragraph in which Jarrett tries to involve the readers directly is the description of her experiences and feelings during the naturalisation ceremony (ll. 21–26). By rendering the events in almost cinematic detail, she appeals to the readers' emotions and makes the abstract process of naturalisation more personal. Rather the opposite is true for lines 37 to 40, in which statistical evidence is given to persuade the readers of Jarrett's accurate research and therefore the authority of her claims.

As far as stylistic devices are concerned, she repeatedly employs enumerations to stress her view. In lines 4 and 5, she lists the new citizens' countries of origin to emphasise that the USA truly is a country of immigrants. She even goes as far as stating that the immigrants come from "every other corner of the globe" (l. 5), a generalisation to make the factual evidence seem even more impressive and inclusive. A couple of lines later, she uses several enumerations to highlight what the core idea of the American Dream is (cf. ll. 7–15) and once more generalises its applicability to "[a]ll Americans" (l. 12). In lines 17 to 20, she lists all the ways in which the new citizens have already contributed to their country and concludes that impressive enumeration with the line of three "stronger, safer, and better" (ll. 19/20). She also employs a metaphor to insist on her view that these immigrants have become a part of the USA when she claims that "they are already woven into the fabric of our great country" (l. 17). This accentuates again the sense of unity Jarrett wants to establish.

Another stylistic device employed is the anaphora, which puts emphasis on the advantages of a new piece of legislation. In three subsequent sentences, which all start with the words "[w]e would see" (ll. 39–44), Jarrett describes the positive effects connected to that law.

All in all, it can be said that Jarrett underlines her view by showing that changing the existing immigration system is just a logical consequence of events, by highlighting the positive consequences of the law proposed by the Senate and by appealing to the readers' sense of unity and patriotism. (687 words)

- 3.1 Here you are given a quote from Jarrett's blog, which you need to discuss taking into account your background knowledge of the American Dream. To start with, explain the quote in more detail and then find arguments supporting and contra-

C-Support

* In the course of the text

Conclusion

dicting Jarrett's claim. Finally, you need to come to a conclusion based on the arguments you have presented. Depending on your personal view and the conclusion you come to, decide which arguments you want to mention first. Those

supporting your personal view should come second.

- Jarrett believes that America's strength is based on ...
 - a common dream and shared values,
 - unity despite diversity ("rich diversity" = diversity as an asset).
- Possible arguments supporting that view:
 - The American Dream is a concept shared by most Americans.
 - Inherent in this dream are certain common values, e. g. liberty, self-reliance.
 - Many people call themselves Americans and feel American despite their different origins. → reference to the melting pot; "e pluribus unum" (phrase on the Seal of the USA)
- Possible counterarguments:
 - The situation of illegal immigrants is often terrible.
 - The social divide between rich and poor is alarming.
 - Racial problems and police brutality are still existent.

In her blog, Jarrett claims that "America's strength has always come from the rich diversity, and core decency" (ll. 47/48) of the American people. This quote refers to the cultural diversity of the country, which she perceives as a chance. She also hints at the values that many Americans share and which are embedded in their common dream. Thus, she only focuses on the positive aspects of immigration and the American Dream without taking into account problems connected to immigration, e. g. inequality, that still exist. Therefore, it is questionable whether Jarrett's claim of a successfully and unanimously lived American Dream will stand up to critical examination.

It can be taken for granted that the American Dream is a concept shared by most Americans. Politicians often refer to it in addresses to the nation. Inherent in this dream are certain values and beliefs, for instance that freedom, equality and opportunity are available to all Americans if they work hard to achieve their aims.

Real success stories from individual people who manage to make their way to the top. Arnold Schwarzenegger is just one famous example.

On the Seal of the United States, there is the Latin phrase "e pluribus unum", which means "out of many one". This goes to prove that the conviction that America is a melting pot in which people from different origins are forged into

Topic Sentence

Pro A

Pro B

On the Seal of the United States, there is the Latin phrase "e pluribus unum" which means "out of many one". This goes to prove that **the conviction that America is a melting pot in which people from different origins are forged into one nation is deeply engraved in the nation's consciousness.** The daily pledge of allegiance, which students make at the beginning of their school day, is another reminder of that unity and every American's responsibility to their country. **However, there are also important counterarguments to be considered. Despite all the positive examples of immigrants succeeding in the USA, there are probably even more stories of failure.** For example, the situation of illegal immigrants is often deplorable. On the one hand, illegal immigrants are used or even abused as cheap workers on farms and thus support the American economy, on the other hand, they are often made scapegoats for problems like unemployment. To my mind, **the most crucial argument contradicting Jarrett is racial inequality** which is still a real problem in the USA. Even 50 years after the death of Martin

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Pro B

Con A

Con B

Luther King, Blacks and Whites are not always treated equally and even though they officially have equal rights, there is evidence to suggest that police brutality is directed more often against Blacks and Hispanics than against Whites. After carefully considering the pros and cons, **I come to the conclusion that diversity is both an asset and a huge challenge.** Obviously, the USA profits greatly from immigrants. The country has certainly come a long way from slavery but it has not achieved social and racial equality yet.

(450 words)

Conclusion

3.2 For the assignment you need to write a formal letter to Valerie Jarrett in which you criticise her view. To do so, you are asked to take on the role of an immigrant who has just moved to the USA after having waited for a Green Card for a long time. That means you need to invent a fictional character whose point of view you have to stick to during the entire letter. Considering these requirements the task of being critical of Jarrett presents quite a difficult challenge as she actually welcomes naturalisation and you as a Green Card holder would probably agree with her. However, you will have to try to find aspects in which you think that not enough has been done yet and where you still feel insecure and misrepresented.

- **Take into consideration your addressee and the text form.**

- Stick to the conventions for writing a formal letter ("Dear Mrs Jarrett", "Yours sincerely").

- **Take into consideration your addressee and the text form.**
 - Stick to the conventions for writing a formal letter ("Dear Mrs Jarrett", "Yours sincerely").
 - Use formal language.
 - Start the letter by presenting personal reasons for writing this letter.
 - Make reference to what Jarrett writes in her blog.
 - Finish the letter by coming to a conclusion or appealing to Jarrett or the US government.
- **Invent a fictional character.**
 - name
 - maybe job
 - motivation for immigration
- **Criticise Jarrett's optimistic view and support your criticism by referring to your personal experience, e. g. ...**
 - difficulties in obtaining the Green Card (long duration of the procedure),
 - problems you face in the USA (e. g. your status as a Green Card holder, economic situation, insecurities about the future).

Valerie Jarrett
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Denise Schwartz
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5 August, 2013

Dear Mrs Jarrett,

... your blog about new citizens and the American Dream ...

August, 2013

Dear Mrs Jarrett,

After having read your blog about new citizens and the American Dream published on the website of the White House, I felt compelled to write to you to present a different perspective. My name is Denise Schwartz and I immigrated to the USA at the age of 34. Before that I had visited the country many times as a tourist and came to love its nature and people. Being a trained hotel management assistant, I had hoped to open my own little hotel in California. I would love to be self-employed and provide jobs for others. However, as I soon realised, plans and dreams are often not compatible with the harsh realities of the USA's legal system, despite it allegedly being the country of unlimited opportunities open to everyone who is willing to work hard.

From my decision to immigrate to my actual arrival in the USA, it took nine years because I had to wait for my Green Card for eight years. Eight years of living with doubts and insecurity is simply too long, and only because I do not belong to one of the favoured groups of immigrants. Is that what equality and the American Dream are about? Nonetheless, that was only the beginning as after my arrival in the USA, conditions did not improve for me.

I totally agree with you that many immigrants are willing to take on responsibility, but that is not made easy for people like me. I had saved quite a lot of money to start a new life in the USA, but as it took me some time to find an appropriate job, my savings were severely reduced. Now it is almost impossible to get a bank loan because no one knows if my Green Card will be renewed so that my status is not very attractive to banks. Therefore, when I read your account of the naturalisation ceremony, I was close to tears as well, but for a very different reason: I have almost given up hope of becoming a naturalised citizen.

Believe me, I know that I should consider myself rather lucky because I did get my Green Card after all, and I am now a legal resident in the USA. I have experienced first-hand that many hotels also employ illegal immigrants whose status is far worse than mine. They work very hard for little money and are always worried that they will be deported.

Therefore, I absolutely agree with you that the immigration system in the USA needs to be fixed. People who are law abiding and willing to work hard and do have jobs to support themselves should be allowed to legally stay in the country far more easily. At the moment, people like me are second-class citizens in the USA. To my mind, this does not reflect the American Dream or American values

at all. As you have correctly written, the economy will profit a great deal from a reform of immigration law, but it is us, the middle class, who make up a large part of the population, and that should not be forgotten. Me and many other immigrants are hoping for a real change in the system, a change from our status as Green Card holders to naturalised citizens, and we have been waiting for years and years. Even if it comes late, you and other bloggers and journalists should keep raising your voices and refuse to be satisfied with what has been achieved so far. The American Dream is still far from being accessible to everyone.

Yours sincerely,
Denise Schwartz

(592 words)