

Life Hacking – Erwartungshorizont

A) Monologischer Teil

Erste Aufgabe

- people's lives can be treated as systems (analogy: computer technology) that can be hacked, i.e. you can influence this system from outside in any way you want; while hacking into IT systems usually has a destructive purpose/ is illegal, in this context the intention of "hacking" is to optimise one's life with the goal of perfection (ll. 1-3)
- however, although the ultimate goal is self-improvement and happiness, the author draws attention to the fact that attempts at hacking one's life may actually have the opposite effect:
 - ✓ finding love: attempting to "optimise" love by dating a great number of candidates in order to find the perfect partner, people often do not know where to stop and are actually unable to find a match because there is simply too much choice in the digital world (ll. 4-8)
 - ✓ rigidity: a relationship is not just about finding someone who fulfils a given set of criteria and sorting out the ones that do not meet them; you need to be able and willing to negotiate and compromise (ll. 9-13)
 - ✓ optimising the wrong thing:
 - ✓ increasing one's productivity or achieving material success can make one's lifestyle more efficient, but that does not necessarily mean that one's life has changed in a meaningful way (ll. 14-17)
 - ✓ abandoning a consumerist lifestyle: similarly, completely abandoning consumerist behaviour (job, possessions, taking part in the digital world) may not lead to meaningful, satisfactory changes and therefore contentment in one's life, either (ll. 18-22)
- the key to a self-optimising that leads to true satisfaction seems to be moderation instead of rigidity (ll. 22-24)

Zweite Aufgabe

individuelle Schülerantworten, mögliche Aspekte:

the concept of self-improvement:

- on the one hand: seeking to become the best version of oneself is key to our intellectual, emotional, social, ... development (e.g. life-long learning); it helps us adapt to changes/ developments in our socio-cultural environment and prevents us from becoming dissociated or stuck in old habits; therefore, it is an essential skill for leading a meaningful, satisfactory life [+Beispiele aus dem Unterricht]
- on the other hand: the author is right when he claims that self-improvement can have the opposite effect: it can make us dogmatic and we end up rigidly

obeying a given set of rules, criteria or ideologies that actually prevent us from being able to adapt to our surroundings and open up to people; especially when it comes to relationships, seeking perfection can actually lead to isolation and lack of empathy [+*Beispiele aus dem Unterricht*];

- all in all: attempts at self-improvement should never be regardless of what is going on around us; you should constantly question if what you change is actually meaningful in the given circumstances as opposed to ideological and dogmatic; the author is right when he claims that moderation is the key [+*Beispiele für moderation*]

in the context of “the ambiguity of belonging”:

- the idea of self-improvement is closely linked to the need to belong: on the one hand, we constantly try to improve ourselves in order to be able to fit in and be appreciated or respected by others; on the other hand, according to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, creating a sense of belonging is necessary in order to achieve self-actualisation
- so the support by the people around us may help us improve our lives, e.g. Walt in *Gran Torino* helps Thao become a more mature and independent person who learns that he can actually do things; similarly, Evelyn in *The Shape of Things* makes Adam become more attractive and thus able to conform to the expectations of mainstream culture
- however, there is the danger that those changes may lead to a person not being true to themselves anymore; instead of a person developing their own identity, they may actually lose their identity and instead only try to be the person that others expect them to be; though Adam becomes more attractive, he loses his moral integrity by trying to become the surface that Evelyn needs for her art project; though Thao becomes more independent and active, do the dog, the Gran Torino and the job at the construction site really represent a meaningful course in HIS life?

B) Dialogischer Teil

Erweiterung des Umfelds der Aufgabe:

Der erste Impuls soll die SuS dazu anhalten, das im Text erläuterte Konzept des *life hacking* auf die behandelten Texte zum Schwerpunktthema zu übertragen, sofern dies nicht schon im Rahmen der zweiten Aufgabe zum monologischen Teil geschehen ist.

Der zweite Impuls soll eine Brücke zu weiteren Aspekten des Schwerpunktthemas schlagen, die erläutert und (unter Bezug auf persönliche Erfahrungen und/oder Unterrichtsinhalte) illustriert werden.

1. *Illustrate and comment on the idea of life-hacking in The Shape of Things and Gran Torino and relate this to the text.*

individuelle Schülerantworten, mögliche Aspekte: siehe oben

2. *Explain and illustrate other factors that make the need to belong ambiguous. How do they shape our identity?*

mögliche Aspekte (Beispiele je nach Unterricht/ persönlicher Erfahrung):

- ethnicity (z. B. Walt and Thao: prejudice/ distance at the beginning although they are both loners; learning about the new culture/ new values as an enrichment of both their personalities in the course of the film)
- age (z. B. Walt and Thao: great age difference, not part of the same peer group, very different interests; however, both profit from Walt's tutoring Thao (belonging as the feeling of being taken care of and taking care of others))
- family (z. B. Walt and Thao: Walt dislikes his family and is actually unable to establish a sense of belonging with them; Walt and Thao are not related/ do not live together; however, in the end the Lors feel more like family to Walt than his own sons; it is actually someone else's family that helps him develop a sense of belonging (blood relations vs. the family you choose))
- gender (z. B. Sue: "girls go to college, boys go to jail"; however, she also has to face violence/ (verbal) abuse by different gangs; therefore victim of male dominance; on the other hand, she is able to fight back and because she is very smart, authentic and straightforward; she is the one to "coach" the male protagonists (Walt, Thao) and thus establishes a greater sense of belonging for herself and others)
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