

Abiturprüfung Lesen/Schreiben: A Tale of Muslim Britain (3.2) – Writing an article for a project website

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AUF EINEN BLICK

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Themen:	individual and society, identity and belonging, growing up

Erwartungshorizont

Aspects shaped by family and friends depending on the quality/existence of social bonds:

- Values and beliefs: e.g. providing a moral compass / religious affiliation
- Culture and traditions: e.g. family introducing language and passing down cultural heritage, friends introducing different perspectives and customs
- Attitude towards diversity: e.g. living in different family set-ups, family members/friends representing diversity
- Personality: e.g. offering role models; emotional support building self-esteem and resilience, enabling growth through conflicts
- Lifestyle and hobbies: e.g. sharing interests, influencing choices in clothing and music, exerting peer pressure
- Career and ambitions: e.g. offering guidance and support, sharing common goals
- Political beliefs: e.g. giving room for political discussions / participation

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Beispielantwort

Mirror and Compass: How Family and Friends Shape Who We Become

By Steven Raabe

Identity formation is often described as a lifelong process influenced by a range of internal and external factors. Among the most significant external influences are family and friends, who shape how individuals perceive themselves, their values, and their place in society. While personal autonomy plays an important role, social relationships remain central in constructing identity.

One of the most fundamental influences of family and friends lies in the development of values and beliefs. From early childhood, families often provide a moral framework that guides behaviour and decision-making. For example, parents who regularly attend church may raise their children with Christian values such as forgiveness or charity. A friend group, on the other hand, might question these beliefs, for instance during a discussion about whether it is acceptable to skip school for personal reasons, leading to a reassessment of personal ethics.

Culture and traditions are also strongly shaped by close social relationships. Families are usually responsible for transmitting language, customs, and cultural heritage across generations. A concrete example is a bilingual household where children grow up speaking both German and Turkish at home, while also adapting to German school culture. Friends can introduce additional cultural practices, such as celebrating Diwali with classmates from Indian backgrounds or trying new foods during international school events, which broadens cultural awareness.

Another key aspect is personality development. Family members and friends often act as role models whose behaviour is observed and internalised. For instance, a teenager with an older sibling who is confident in public speaking may become more outgoing and willing to participate in class presentations. Similarly, a supportive best friend who listens during stressful exam periods can help build emotional resilience and self-confidence, whereas constant criticism within a peer group may reduce self-esteem.

Lifestyle choices and hobbies are similarly influenced by social circles. Shared interests in music, sports, fashion, or entertainment often develop within peer groups. For example, a group of friends who play football together every weekend may encourage each other to join a local club. Likewise, teenagers may start listening to certain music genres such as hip-hop or K-pop simply because it is popular within their friendship group, or feel pressure to wear specific clothing brands to fit in.

Furthermore, family and friends can shape career aspirations and ambitions. Parents who work as doctors or engineers may inspire their children to pursue similar careers through everyday conversations about their jobs. At school, friends who plan to study abroad might encourage others to consider international universities as well, creating shared goals and motivating academic effort.

Political beliefs may also be influenced through social interaction. Families often discuss political issues at the dinner table, such as debates about climate policies or immigration laws, which can shape a young person's early opinions. Friends might engage in discussions on social media or during school breaks about protests or elections, which can either strengthen existing views or introduce new perspectives.

In conclusion, family and friends play a crucial role in shaping identity across multiple dimensions, including values, culture, personality, lifestyle, career choices, and political beliefs. While individuals are not solely defined by their social environment, these relationships provide the framework within which identity is formed and continuously developed.

(441 words)

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