

A Curriculum for Life – Diskussions- und Schreibanlässe zum Thema „Erwachsenwerden“ (Klasse 10–13)

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M 1 A Curriculum for Life: Discussion cards

A curriculum for life (1)

“**Common Core Standard**” is a detailed list of things students should be able to do in one subject at the end of a school year in the USA.

But there are also many things to be learned and done outside school.

In a Time Magazine editorial, author Kristin van Ogtrop suggests 10 different activities teenagers should be able to do outside school on their way to becoming adults. She calls them “**Life’s Common Core**” and claims they will help teenagers become better people. Here are three of her suggestions.

1. Discuss the activities. (Why do you think they were suggested? How difficult / strange / old-fashioned are they for teenagers? What might they teach you, and why is this aim worth learning? In what way will they make you a better person?)
2. As a group, decide on a favourite and make sure you can justify your decision.
3. Come up with more challenges that you find helpful to make teenagers better people and, as a group, settle for one which you note on your cards.

- Learn to cook a good meal that can feed the entire family, no matter what size family you have.

- Hold down (= bear) an unpleasant job that makes you hate your parents a little bit because they won't let you quit. [...]

- Go somewhere over the weekend without your phone, just so you know what it feels like to be in solitary confinement (= in prison without any contacts), or dying.

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V

A curriculum for life (2)

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But there are also many things to be learned and done outside school!

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1. Discuss the activities. (Why do you think they were suggested? How difficult / strange / old-fashioned are they for teenagers? What might they teach you, and why is this aim worth learning? In what way will they make you a better person?)
2. As a group, decide on a favourite and make sure you can justify your decision.
3. Come up with more challenges that you find helpful to make teenagers better people and, as a group, settle for one which you write on your cards.

- Go somewhere for the weekend without your phone, just so you know what it feels like to be in total confinement (= in prison without any contacts), or trying.
- Every time you get a new toy or gadget, give an old toy or gadget away to someone who can't get new things as often as you do.
- Read a book for pleasure. If you start one and still hate it on page 50, find another one. Repeat as needed until you find a book you really love.

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Kristin van Ogtrop: “10 things teens really need to know before they leave home”, in: www.realsimple.com/work-life/family/kids-parenting/ten-ways-to-make-teens-better-people

M 2 A Curriculum for Life: Additional tasks

Choose one of the following topics and work on it alone or with a partner.

1. Kristin van Ogtrup's list of requirements is a list of "Do's" for teenagers. Write a list of five "Don'ts" for teenagers and prepare to explain to the class why you think they should by all means avoid doing those five things or getting into those situations.
2. Pick two ideas your class came up with. Write an email to Kristin van Ogtrup explaining to her why you think she should expand her catalogue to twelve requirements and include these two items.
3. Pick one of van Ogtrup's ideas that you find controversial and in a group of two or three, prepare a role play (parent – teenager, teacher – teenager or other adult – teenager) which you then present in front of the class.
4. Do a survey among the students in your class and find out similar postulations that exist in their families. Present them to the class.
5. Brainstorm on what **Life's Core Competence** requirements parents or teachers might come up with in twenty years time. Explain what might have changed and what might have become necessary by then.
6. Pick one of van Ogtrup's challenges you might feel inclined to rise to. Imagine you have left home and risen to it. Write a letter back home starting with "I did it!" and explaining why you did it and what it did to you.
7. Kristin van Ogtrup frequently writes about parenting. In an open "Letter of apology to a son graduating from college" she wrote:

"... Years ago I read a parenting book that included this advice: When your child does something amazing, "I am so proud of you." Instead say, "You should feel so proud of yourself." That is a hard habit to break, inserting the parental I and confusing your child's identity with your own. Forgetting that it's not about you. Stepping back when you should be stepping back. And so I will say to you, Owen, on the day you wear that cap and gown: My beloved child, you should feel so proud of yourself. It was all you"

- a) Choose a partner from your group and discuss whether you think the advice is sound or unnecessary.
- b) Put yourself into the position of Owen who has just graduated from college and who certainly feels proud, but also grateful to his parents. As Owen, write a letter home telling your parents that it was NOT all you, explaining their share in your success and expressing your feelings.



Im Folgenden finden sich mögliche Impulse für die Lehrkraft zum Ablauf dieser Aktivität.

Step 1 Diskussion in der Kleingruppe (20 Minuten)

Discuss in groups of four. You have a discussion card with a short text, discussion tasks and several prompts. Study your cards and discuss. You have 20 minutes for discussion and for your decision.

Step 2 Diskussion von van Ogrups Thesen im Plenum, Ranking (10 Minuten)

Come back together to discuss. Present your group's favourite suggestion and give reasons for your choice. Then decide on the class' two favourite suggestions and the one suggestion you find most unnecessary.

Step 3 Diskussion der eigenen Ideen, Ranking (10 Minuten)

Each group has to come up with its own idea that should be added to van Ogrup's catalogue. Present your idea and explain your choice. Then decide on the class' two favourite additions.

2. Stunde oder Hausaufgabe

Sollte mehr als eine Stunde Zeit zur Verfügung stehen, bietet **M 2** eine Vielzahl **weiterführender oder vertiefender Aufgaben** zum Thema „**Life's Common Core**“. Die Schüler wählen ein Thema aus, das sie allein oder in Partnerarbeit bearbeiten. Anschließend werden ausgewählte Ergebnisse vor der Klasse vorgetragen.

Erwartungshorizont (M 2)

1. Don't aim at receiving more than you give. – Don't follow the crowd in everything you do. – Don't waste your time worrying about what other people think about you.
2. Individual solutions
3. About reading a book

You: Ah, no, Mum, come on, why should I read a stupid book? You know I hate reading!

Mother: Sweetheart, there is so little you do to educate yourself, a bit of reading would really do you good. Look, I found a very interesting book for you, it's about one of the greatest characters of the last century – Nelson Mandela ...

You: Oh, that athletics gold medal winner?

Mother: (sighs): No, darling, he was a South African politician who fought against apartheid and racism in his country and even after 27 years in prison sought no revenge but reconciliation.

You: (grumbles) Mom, is there a film about him I can watch?

Mother: No, honey, really, you should read a book and hang on up to the last page.

You: What's the point? Books bore me to death.

Mother: It isn't always exciting. Knowledge doesn't always thrill you to pieces. Sometimes you need to trudge through something although it is hard and you are simply not interested. Often life obliges you to do much more than just one book's worth of drudgery, so you might as well start practicing sooner than later. Go ahead, start reading, I'm sure you'll be impressed with Nelson Mandela.

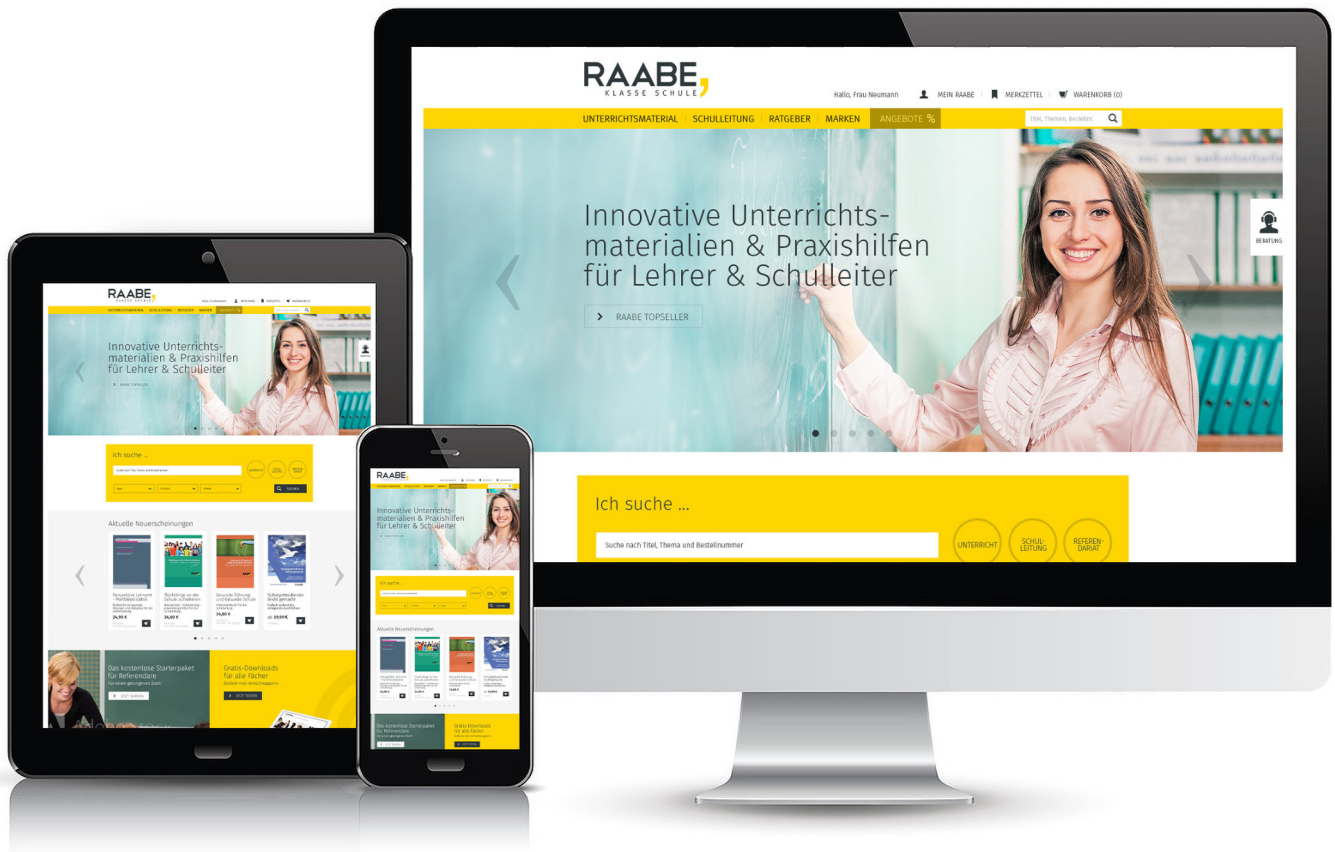
You: But Mum, this stupid advice says: read a book FOR PLEASURE, not for drudgery! You're just trying to torment me, typical Mum-fashion.

Mother: OK, Rob, read the first 50 pages and if you really don't like it, we'll look for another one, right?

4. Individual solutions

5. Spend one weekend without creating any waste at all. – Make a list of what distinguishes virtual friends from real friends. – Plan a holiday relying on public transport only. Devote time to a needy person once a week for a year. – Learn to make jam, bake bread, make a cake and cook something without relying on convenience foods.

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