



Between Two Worlds

Englisch-Abitur NRW 2026 · Grundkurs · Schreiben / Leseverstehen · Themenfeld
Individuum und Gesellschaft.

CONTEXT

The following is an extract from the novel *Somewhere Between* (2025) by the fictional British-Nigerian author Yemi Osei-Larbi. The novel follows Adaeze Okeke, a 17-year-old girl growing up in Hackney, East London, the daughter of Nigerian immigrants. Her parents, deeply rooted in Igbo traditions, place high value on discipline, academic achievement, and communal reputation. Adaeze attends Northfield Academy, a multi-cultural secondary school, where she is part of a close-knit group of friends. The extract takes place on a Monday morning, the day after Adaeze missed her friend Lola's garden party, an event she had secretly longed to attend. The novel explores themes of belonging, identity, and the quiet negotiations that children of immigrants make every day.

Text

Yemi Osei-Larbi: *Somewhere Between* (2025)

The moment Adaeze walked through the school gates on Monday morning, she felt it — that familiar tightening in her chest, the one that had been there since Friday's party. She hadn't gone. Of course she hadn't gone.

"You missed out," Priya said, falling into step beside her. "Lola's garden, fairy lights everywhere, music till midnight. It was perfect." She paused, glancing sideways. "Your mum again?"

Adaeze said nothing. She shifted the strap of her bag and looked straight ahead.

The truth was more complicated than her mum. It was her mum's voice in her head at 7 p.m. on Friday, when she'd been standing in front of her mirror in the dress she'd bought secretly — a deep green wrap dress, the kind that made her feel like someone else, someone lighter. A good daughter does not run around at night like she has no home. She'd changed back into her school hoodie before her mother even reached the landing.

At lunch, Adaeze sat at the edge of the table, listening to the others reconstruct the party in fragments — who'd danced with whom, who'd cried, who'd kissed someone they shouldn't have. She laughed at the right moments, nodded, performed. It was a skill she'd refined over three years at Northfield Academy: the art of being present without being seen.

But lately, the performance was exhausting her.

After school, walking home past the chicken shop and the Poundland and the bus stop where her dad used to wait for her when she was small, she took out her phone and stared at the message she'd drafted and deleted four times:

I want to be part of things. I want to go next time.

On the kitchen table at home, her mother had left out Adaeze's grandfather's photograph — as she always did on Sundays, as if to remind her. A man in a stiff suit, unsmiling, dignified. We did not come this far, her mother liked to say, for you to become nothing.

Adaeze sat down slowly across from the photograph.

She thought about the green dress, still folded under her bed. She thought about Priya's voice, you missed out, and the way it had lodged itself somewhere behind her ribs.

Then she picked up her phone. Her fingers hovered.

This time, she pressed send.

Yemi Osei-Larbi, *Somewhere Between* (London: Ridgeway Press, 2025), pp. 34–36.

Tasks

- 1 Sum up the challenges Adaeze faces at school and at home as presented in the extract. **13 marks**

- 2 Analyze how Adaeze's inner conflict is presented in the extract. Focus on narrative perspective and use of language. **14 marks**

- 3 Choose one of the following tasks:

3.1 "Being caught between two cultures is not a weakness – it is a source of strength." (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Nigerian author, b. 1977) Assess to what extent this statement applies to young people with immigrant backgrounds in Britain today, taking into account the extract and your work done in class on questions of identity. **17 marks**

3.2 On the evening after pressing send, Adaeze writes an entry in her personal diary, reflecting on her decision, the tensions with her mother's expectations, and what being truly herself means to her. Write her diary entry. **17 marks**

Hinweis

Bei Aufgabe 3 bearbeitest du nur eine der beiden Optionen, also 3.1 oder 3.2.

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