

Sociology - A Level

Progression to A Level Sociology at Hereford Sixth Form College.

Exam board AQA

We begin with discussing Sociology and how it is a study of society. Key theories such as Functionalism, Marxism, Feminism, New Right and Postmodernism are initially explored. The first theme is Education where we look at how the key theories view Education in relation to the role and purpose it serves in society.

What is Sociology? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio>

The following is a brief explanation of just one of the theories on You Tube. There are also quick videos on the other theories too. These are useful to gain an initial understanding.

Marxism <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gR3igiwaeyc>

News

Its important as a sociologist to understand what's going on in the world and to try and relate theory to it. Here's a link to the latest news by the BBC

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Class Textbook

Everything can be located in the textbook: Webb R, Westergaard H, Trobe K, Townend A . AQA A Level Sociology Book One. This is the class textbook but students are NOT required to purchase one. However, if you wish to have a copy at home that's fine.

Recommended Books

1. Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class, Owen Jones (2011)
2. Gang Leader for a Day, Sudhir Venkatesh (2009)
3. Respectable: The Experience of Class, Lynsey Hanley (2016)

Documentaries/TV

1. Harrow: A Very British School (Amazon Prime)
2. Educating Essex (Channel 4)
3. Secret Life of Four and Five Year Olds (Channel 4)
4. Storyville on iPlayer <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mfx6>
5. Panorama on iPlayer <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t14n>
6. Stacey Dooley documentaries

FILMS

1. Billy Elliott (2000)	5. The History Boys (2006)
2. Made in Dagenham (2010)	6. Suffragette (2015)
3. Freedom Writers (2007)	7. Lion (2016)
4. The Kids are All Right (2010)	8. I Daniel Blake (2016)

Twitter feeds

1. @TheSocReview – The Sociology Review A Level magazine
2. @DailySociology – sociology news every day
3. @SocImages – links to interesting articles and research
4. @TheSocCinema – pop culture and film links with sociology
5. @SassySociology – a PhD student specialising in gender, ethnicity and inequalities
6. @LearnSoc - this is the official twitter page of one of the largest sociology websites
7. @SociologyLens -provides links to current sociological topics, research and issues to debate

Task 1: What is Sociology?

In 100-150 words, summarise what you believe Sociology to be. This YouTube clip can be used to help you: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LK5J0-cM-HE>

Task 2: Key concepts

Find the definitions for the following concepts and create a glossary of key terms:

Socialisation Primary socialisation Secondary socialisation Agents of socialisation Institutions/Agencies in Society Norms Values Age Ageing population Achieved status Ascribed status Culture Ethnicity and Gender Identity Institutional racism Racism Sex discrimination Social Class	Useful websites to help with your preparation task: https://www.memrise.com/course/928320/aqa-sociology-key-terms/1/ https://www.sparknotes.com/sociology/glossary/terms/
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Task 3: Morning Routine Write a list of everything that you do in the order that you do it in, in the first hour after waking up in the morning. Now consider how your daily routine compares to those of your family and peers. List what you do the same and what you do differently. What does this tell us about ourselves as individuals? Are we born with this routine or socialised into it?

Task 4: Complete the following research tasks by reading the articles and answering the questions:

- a. Why rich kids are so good at the marshmallow test

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/06/marshmallow-test/561779/>

Questions: Define immediate gratification and delayed gratification. What does the most recent research tell us about delayed gratification? How does this link to family structure?

- b. NHS faces staggering increase in cost of elderly care, academics warn.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/may/24/nhs-faces-staggering-increase-in-cost-of-elderly-care-academics-warn-dementia>

Questions: What impact is an ageing population having on public services? Is there anything that can be done to change this?

- c. Miss America waves bye-bye to bikinis <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-44370240>

Questions: What factors have contributed to making this change? How does this link to the objectification of women? How would feminists view this?

- d. The Met 'use more force' against black people <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-44214748>

Question: Summarise the statistics presented in this article. Is this evidence of institutional racism or wider racism in society?

The following link to AQA highlights the topics we study: Paper 1 Education, Methods in context and Theory and Methods. Paper 2 Families and Households and Media. Paper 3 Crime and Deviance and Theory and Methods.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192/specification-at-a-glance>

Sociology A Level

Sociology is the study of human social life. There are many different aspects of Sociology to address, so you must be curious and attentive to looking at the world in a different way!



Look at this photograph the other way; not everything is as it seems!

There is usually another way of looking at things – and that is what we do as sociologists.

We take normal, taken-for-granted life and turn it upside down, looking for meanings and very often we end up seeing things very differently.

Social Change

The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing; others say it is shrinking. The important point to grasp is: society does not remain static over time; it constantly changes

– Through decades, centuries; and across countries, societies.

Task 1

Think of 3 different ways society has changed over the last 100yrs.

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Name three ways in which British society is different to another (America, Italy, Afghanistan etc)

Why has society changed? Why are societies different

Norms

Norms are social rules that define correct and acceptable behaviour in a society or social group to which people are expected to conform. They are essential to human society. They guide and direct our behaviour and allow us both to understand and predict the behaviour of others.

Norms exist in all areas of social life. In Britain, being late for work or an appointment; jumping queues in supermarkets; never saying hello to friends are likely to be seen as rude or annoying because they are not following the norms of accepted behaviour.

Norms are usually enforced informally—by the disapproval of other people, embarrassment, or a ‘telling off’ from parents.

Task

Think of some examples of how you behave differently for each of the environments below.

School:

Home:

Friend’s house:

Values

Values are less specific than norms. They are general guides for behaviour. Values are ideas and beliefs about what is ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ and about standards which are worth maintaining and achieving in any society. In Britain, values include beliefs about respect for human life, privacy and private property, about the importance of marriage and the importance of money and success.

Task What do you hold strong views on?