



Sociology

Transition Booklet

Year 11 to Year 12

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Welcome to A' Level Sociology

It is fantastic that you are considering studying A Level Sociology. This pack contains a programme of activities and resources to prepare you to start in September. The pack contains a range of activities which centre around the core themes that you will study in Sociology. Remember, if you wish to really study the world around you it is important to have a political awareness and to stay up to date with current affairs.

Sociology is an interesting and versatile subject which is extremely relevant to everyday life. Sociology is a popular A level as it allows students the opportunity to explore fascinating concepts and theories and apply them to modern society. Due to its broad nature, sociology is a great subject to study if you are interested in pursuing a career within teaching, social work, the police force, the prison service, nursing, politics and many more. It also compliments several other A level subjects, particularly Psychology, English and History.

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of society, in particular, the western developed world. It explores the meaning of culture and identity to different groups in society. It is considered a social science and carries out research using a range of methods such as interviews, questionnaires, experiments and case studies. A particularly crucial element of sociology is the emphasis it places on examining inequality between different social groups within society. It also pays huge attention to the structure of society, especially the social institutions such as education, the family, the government, religion, media and health care.

The A' Level course includes the following:

Each paper is worth 33.3% of the final grade.

Paper 1 EDUCATION WITH THEORY AND METHODS: 2 HOURS 80 marks 33.3% of the final A' Level mark

Section A: Education – Questions worth 50 marks

- Outline two... (4 marks)
- Outline three... (six marks)
- Applying material from Item A, analyse two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item B and your own knowledge, evaluate... (30 marks)

Section B: Methods in context – Question worth 20 marks

- Applying material from Item C and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using (method) to investigate (issue in education)... (20 marks)

Section C: Theory and Methods – Question worth 10 marks

- Outline and explain two... (10 marks)

Paper 2 TOPICS IN SOCIOLOGY: 2 HOURS 80 marks 33.3% of the final A' Level mark

Section A: Families & Households - Questions worth 40 marks

- Outline and explain two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item A, analyse two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item B and your knowledge... (20 marks)

Section B: Beliefs in Society – Questions worth 40 marks

- Outline and explain two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item A, analyse two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item B and your knowledge... (20 marks)

Paper 3 CRIME AND DEVIANCE WITH THEORY AND METHODS: 2 HOURS 80 marks 33.3% of the final A' Level mark

Section A: Crime & Deviance – Questions worth 50 marks

- Outline two... (4 marks)
- Outline three... (six marks)
- Applying material from Item A, analyse two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item B and your own knowledge, evaluate... (30 marks)

Section B: Theory and Methods – Questions worth 30 marks

- Outline and explain two... (10 marks)
- Applying material from Item C and your knowledge, evaluate... (20 marks)

There are 3 examinations at the end of year 13. This subject is 100% exam - there is no coursework element. As you can see above, although exams do include a range of short answer questions, sociology is predominantly an essay based subject. Therefore, it is essential that you have good literacy skills.

Look at the specification for more detail about these topics. You can find this at:

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

You will be expected to know and understand (AO1) the information about the topics, to be able to apply (AO2) that knowledge and understanding and to be able to analyse and evaluate (AO3) that knowledge and understanding.

Preparing for year 12 study

The following tasks will give you an idea of the kinds of topics and core themes we study in sociology. If you need any more help or support, please contact me on the email above.

TASK 1: Core themes in Sociology

Throughout Sociology, we continually consider the impact that different areas of society have on different social groups. Complete the following activities.

Social Class

'Why are rich kids so good at the marshmallow test?'

Read the article and answer the question.



<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?

Age

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

Read the article and answer the questions.

<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?

Gender

'Miss America waves bye-bye to bikinis'

Read the article and answer the questions.

<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?

'The dark side of female empowerment: The rise of Britain's 'gangster girls' running gangs'

Read the article and answer the question.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/10857716/Britains-gangster-girls-The-dark-side-of-female-empowerment-The-rise-of-women-and-females-running-gangs.html>

Question: Are the rise of 'girl gangs' a direct effect of female liberation? How else could they be explained?

Ethnicity

'Met 'use more force' against black people'

Read the article and answer the question.

<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?

Secret teacher: The emphasis on British History is depriving students of balance

<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/may/26/secret-teacher-history-bias-school-fear-student-future>

Question: Define the term ethnocentric curriculum. What changes would you suggest need to be made, if any, to the UK's education system?

TASK 2: Socialisation & Culture

A really important part of Sociology is to understand about the process of socialisation and how that affects us both as individuals and as a collective society.

What makes us Human?

Consider the following questions;

- *Are we meant to live alone?*
- *What would a person be like if they grew up without human contact?*
- *What would a person be like if they were then introduced into a society?*
- *Do we need a society in which to survive?*
- *Can someone be truly human if they grew up without human contact?*
- *Are we ruled by our instincts?*

Watch the video and compare how, as children, we behave and how Oksana behaves. What has been the impact of the lack of human contact?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nv3ocntSSUU>

What is Culture?

Virtually all the things that we do have to be learned from others, for example walking, speaking, knowing what to eat, defending ourselves etc. A desert island baby is unlikely to survive, therefore we need other people. We have now established an important principle. Human behaviour is largely learned through a process called *socialisation*. Therefore what is termed as culture, which is our way of life, including the ways in which we behave relates to:

- the language we speak
- the clothes we wear
- the food we eat and whether we eat it with knives, forks and spoons
- the homes we live in
- to the things we believe about the origins of life
- what is good or bad
- or the ways in which we should be governed.

The above are all acquired from other people (this involves the process of socialisation into the culture of our society)

Task: Using the above criteria, describe the British culture. How does your list compare to the suggestions on the link below?

<https://www.studying-in-uk.org/british-culture-and-social-norms/>

Primary & Secondary Socialisation

Socialisation is the term that sociologists use to describe the life-long process of learning the culture of any society. Culture is socially transmitted from one generation to the next through the process of socialisation. The American sociologist Charles Cooley (1864–1929) distinguished two types of socialisation: primary and secondary. These two forms of socialisation are defined partly in terms of the particular groups or ‘agencies’ in which they occur.

Primary socialisation: The family is the main agency where an individual learns many of the basic lessons for life such as language, how to act as a boy or a girl, how to share and how to love.

Secondary socialisation: Associated with the later stages of identity formation, from later childhood and continuing through adulthood. The school is an important example of an agency of secondary socialisation, but all formal organisations, including religion and work, are influential.

Task: List 2 ways in which your family teach you something. Similarly, list two ways in which school teaches you something (something other than subjects!)

Socialisation is not only the process by which we learn the culture of our society; it is also a mechanism of social control.

This refers to methods used to persuade or force individuals to conform to those values, norms and patterns of behaviour which the culture of their society requires. Social control involves the use of rewards and punishments. Sociologists refer to these as sanctions. These may be either positive sanctions (rewards) or negative sanctions (various types of punishment):

Positive sanctions may range from gifts of sweets from parents to children, to merits and prizes at school, to promotion at work or to knighthoods and medals.

Negative sanctions may range from expressions of disapproval, physical punishment, being ridiculed or gossiped about, dismissal from work to being fined or imprisoned.

Task: List and briefly explain three positive and three negative sanctions which affect the way you behave in your daily life.

Norms are social rules which 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; laughing during funerals; walking through the streets naked or never saying hello to friends are likely to be seen as rude, annoying or odd 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 of the social norms for each of these situations; school, home, a friends house, workplace.

Knowledge recap: List the definitions for the words you have just learnt.

<u>Key Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Sociology	
Identity	
Structure	
Agency	
Nature/Nurture	
Socialisation	
Culture	

Norms	
Values	
Status	
Role	

TASK 3: Religion & Secularisation

One of the topics we will study is Beliefs in Society. A key debate within this topic is whether secularisation is occurring. In short, is the influence of religion on society, in decline?

It can be argued that the process of secularisation is occurring – this means that religious influence is declining. In 2007, 2% of the population attended religious ceremonies on Sundays compared with 40% in 1851. There is also declining attendance at Christmas & Easter – two of the major Christian events. Fewer than ½ of all marriages in the UK involve a religious ceremony. Less than a ¼ of babies are now baptised, compared with 2/3 in 1950. However, this effect is not seen throughout all religions and some faith such as Islam are actually growing.

Task: Research some evidence which suggests that religion may be declining.

Consider why this might be the case (think of as many reasons as you can)

Find some counter-evidence which suggests that religion still has an important role to play in society.

Challenge: Research what is meant by 'postmodernism' and consider why they believe that religion is declining.



TASK 4: Extended knowledge

Sociology is everywhere, so you'll be able to see aspects of it in all forms of media. Try searching for the following titles and make notes on any videos you watch, try to keep it relevant to the topics taught in Sociology.

Film, TV series & Documentaries

- Blood diamond
- Beasts of no nation
- Suffragettes
- Erin Brokovich
- Bhopal
- Deep water horizon
- This is England
- Train Spotting
- Riot Club
- The Help
- Hidden Figures
- Pride
- Civil Liberties
- East is East
- Made in Dagenham
- American Beauty
- Of Mice and Men
- The Iron Lady
- The 'Up' series (eg. 56 Up, 63 Up) on Netflix or Youtube
- The Secret Life of 5 year olds
- Any documentaries, including Panorama, Louis Theroux, Stacey Dooley, Mind of a Murderer etc



Books, Articles and Research papers

- Brave New World – Aldous Huxley
- Animal Farm – George Orwell
- 1984 – George Orwell
- Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class – Owen Jones
- The Establishment and How They Get Away With It – Owen Jones
- The Handmaid's Tale – Margaret Atwood (also a series)
- Vox – Christina Dalcher
- The God Delusion – Richard Dawkins
- Outsiders: Studies in Sociology of Deviance – Howard S Becker
- Folk Devils and Moral Panics – Stanley Cohen
- A Glasgow Gang Observed – Patrick James
- Gang Leader For A Day – Sudhir Venkatesh

<https://hecticteachersalevelsociologysite.wordpress.com/>

Really good content summaries and exam advice



<http://politybooks.com/kenbrowne/students/mcq/default.asp>

Great for summary worksheets and quizzes

<http://precookedsociology.com/>

Really good videos explaining key concepts



<http://www.earlhamsociologypages.co.uk/websitelinks.htm>

Some excellent summaries and loads of links to other useful resources

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheTEACHERSOCIOLOGY>

Brilliant for exam advice and how to answer certain questions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68eFC1_nIwA&list=PLp8BSCLLWBUCTQVzkyCPQIAe69uhVWC5A

Very useful exam advice



Make your time spent on social media more productive!

- Links to research articles
- Ideas for Independent study
- Exam question help
- Current affairs in Social Sciences

