

Sociology A-Level Transition Work

Education:

1. Make an analysis of 2019's GCSE and A level results:
 - Refer to newspaper reports. Include reports from 2 tabloid newspapers and 2 broadsheets for each set of results.
 - What were the headlines? Summarise the main points made by each report.
 - Who were the sources quoted in the articles and what did they comment on?
 - Organise the material you have referred to into fact and commentary.
 - Expand your analysis by searching the internet for references to the educational experiences/ attainment of males/females, working class/middle class students and students from an ethnic minority background.
 - Refer to 2 sources for class, gender and ethnicity and outline their content.



Statistics on educational achievement are collected by class, gender and ethnicity; they allow for comparison of different groups and to monitor trends over time.

2. Using the report and tables produced for the Department for Education:
 - What were the 3 most popular subjects at A level for males? How many entries did they have for males? How many entries were made for the same subjects for females?
 - What were the 3 most popular subjects at A level for females? How many entries did they have for females? How many entries were made for the same subjects for males?
 - Who were most successful at A level, males or females?

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/559505/SFR49_2016_A_level_and_other16-18_results_in_England_SFR_provisional.pdf

- Using the report produced on GCSE performance, outline differences in attainment in gender, ethnicity and class.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-gcses-key-stage-4#attainment-by-pupil-characteristics>

Researchers and theorists have attempted to explain the experience of different groups in education through factors that originate in the home and/or those that exist in school.

3.
 - Identify and explain factors that you think have contributed to your educational attainment and any that you believe to have been barriers to success.
 - Define 'cultural capital'.
 - Outline the ideas of Basil Bernstein (1975) on language and how these operate in education.
 - Explain what is meant by the 'hidden curriculum'.
 - What is meant by 'self-fulfilling prophecy'? How does this concept apply to education?
 - Outline the work done by Paul Willis(1977) in relationship to school subcultures in 'Learning to Labour'



Compulsory Topics

Education

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure
- differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society
- relationships and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil identities and subcultures, the hidden curriculum, and the organisation of teaching and learning
- the significance of educational policies, including policies of selection, marketisation and privatisation, and policies to achieve greater equality of opportunity or outcome, for an understanding of the structure, role, impact and experience of and access to education; the impact of globalisation on educational policy.

Crime and Deviance

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- crime, deviance, social order and social control
- the social distribution of crime and deviance by ethnicity, gender and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime
- globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the media and crime; green crime; human rights and state crimes
- crime control, surveillance, prevention and punishment, victims, and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies.

Theory and Methods

Students must examine the following areas:

- quantitative and qualitative methods of research; research design
- sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics
- the distinction between primary and secondary data, and between quantitative and qualitative data
- the relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'
- the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research
- consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories
- the concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory
- the nature of science and the extent to which Sociology can be regarded as scientific
- the relationship between theory and methods
- debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom
- the relationship between Sociology and social policy.

Optional Topics in Sociology (Either Set A or Set B)

Set A

Culture and Identity

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- different conceptions of culture, including subculture, mass culture, folk culture, high and low culture, popular culture and global culture
- the socialisation process and the role of the agencies of socialisation
- the self, identity and difference as both socially caused and socially constructed
- the relationship of identity to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexuality and social class in contemporary society
- the relationship of identity to production, consumption and globalisation.

Families and Households

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:



- the relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and to state policies
- changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, separation, divorce, childbearing and the life course, including the sociology of personal life, and the diversity of contemporary family and household structures
- gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships within the family in contemporary society
- the nature of childhood, and changes in the status of children in the family and society
- demographic trends in the United Kingdom since 1900: birth rates, death rates, family size, life expectancy, ageing population, and migration and globalisation.

Health

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the social construction of health, illness, disability and the body, and models of health and illness
- the unequal social distribution of health chances in the United Kingdom by social class, gender, ethnicity and region
- inequalities in the provision of, and access to, health care in contemporary society
- the nature and social distribution of mental illness
- the role of medicine, the health professions and the globalised health industry.

Work, Poverty and Welfare

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the nature, existence and persistence of poverty in contemporary society
- the distribution of poverty, wealth and income between different social groups
- responses and solutions to poverty by the state and by private, voluntary and informal welfare providers in contemporary society
- organisation and control of the labour process, including the division of labour, the role of technology, skill and de-skilling
- the significance of work and worklessness for people's lives and life chances, including the effects of globalisation.

Set B

Beliefs in Society

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- ideology, science and religion, including both Christian and non-Christian religious traditions
- the relationship between social change and social stability, and religious beliefs, practices and organisations • religious organisations, including cults, sects, denominations, churches and New Age movements, and their relationship to religious and spiritual belief and practice
- the relationship between different social groups and religious/spiritual organisations and movements, beliefs and practices
- the significance of religion and religiosity in the contemporary world, including the nature and extent of secularisation in a global context, and globalisation and the spread of religions.

Global Development

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- development, underdevelopment and global inequality
- globalisation and its influence on the cultural, political and economic relationships between societies
- the role of transnational corporations, non-governmental organisations and international agencies in local and global strategies for development
- development in relation to aid and trade, industrialisation, urbanisation, the environment, and war and conflict
- employment, education, health, demographic change and gender as aspects of development.

The Media

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- the new media and their significance for an understanding of the role of the media in contemporary society
- the relationship between ownership and control of the media



- the media, globalisation and popular culture
- the processes of selection and presentation of the content of the news
- media representations of age, social class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability
- the relationship between the media, their content and presentation, and audiences.

Stratification and Differentiation

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content:

- stratification and differentiation by social class, gender, ethnicity and age
- dimensions of inequality: class, status and power; differences in life-chances by social class, gender, ethnicity, age and disability
- the problems of defining and measuring social class; occupation, gender and social class
- changes in structures of inequality, including globalisation and the transnational capitalist class, and the implications of these changes
- the nature, extent and significance of patterns of social mobility.