

## Preparation Work



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

# What is Sociology?

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Sociology is the study of society and human behaviour. Sociologists study the social institutions that make up society including schools, families, and media. Sociologists use different research methods to create theories to explain human behaviour and how society works.

Sociology is about you and your life. Everything we cover, you will be able to relate to (and should have an opinion on!). Lessons include heated discussions on what is happening in our society: Why do schools use marketing strategies e.g. open days and adverts? Is childhood better today compared to the past? Why are crime rates highest for black people? Why do extremist groups such as ISIS exist in our world?

Sociology will get you thinking critically about the world around you.



## Sociology at Wyke

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- Two year course
- 100% examination (3 exams in summer 2022)
- AQA exam board

It is essential that you like reading and writing (as there will be lots of it!). Sociology is a thought-provoking subject, enabling you to reflect upon and evaluate the world around you, giving you a higher state of awareness.

Over the two-year course, you will prepare to sit 3 exam papers:

**Paper 1:** Education with Theory and Methods

**Paper 2:** Families and Households\* and Beliefs in Society

**Paper 3:** Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods



*\*Please note that we will be delivering Families and Households (not Health). Our department excels at Families and Households, so we are continuing with this topic.*

## Sociology Enrichment

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We offer a range of enrichment options including guest speakers in college. Speakers this year included Professor Simon Winlow discussing his undercover research with bouncers in the night club scene and Dr Nick Long on cross-cultural differences of individual success – West vs. East values.

You can watch Dr Nick Long's talk here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RuegJV\\_AeYA&list=PL6AAF0xhxeelmtKPnTolIICuWUNTOZ1jq&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RuegJV_AeYA&list=PL6AAF0xhxeelmtKPnTolIICuWUNTOZ1jq&index=2)

We run an annual trip to London which centres around the A Level Sociology Student Conference at UCL Institute of Education. You get face-to-face experience with the Sociologists covered in the course. The trip also includes a cultural experience – West End show.

Find out more about our trip here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6\\_zc5mTyh1Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_zc5mTyh1Y)



## Your preparation work

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The work in this booklet is to develop your knowledge and understanding of social groups: social class, gender and ethnicity. As a Sociology student, you will examine in-depth the experiences and treatment of different social groups. You will investigate the inequalities and hardships experienced by some social groups.

A Level Sociology requires you to write essays, so the final section in this booklet is an essay writing task.

**This booklet has 4 sections:** social class, gender, ethnicity and an essay writing task. Make sure you complete **all** of the work in each section.

➤ **Please bring your preparation work to your first Sociology lesson**

## SECTION 1: Social class

Social class is the most significant social group you will study in Sociology. To be successful, it is vital that you understand what we mean by social class; how it is measured and how social class impacts people's lives.

In 2020, social class remains a key marker of difference between people in the UK. You may not realise it, but we are constantly judging each other by factors associated with social class such as a person's job, where they live and the clothes they wear. Ever wondered why adults who meet for the first time always ask each other what job they do? By asking this, they are in effect measuring themselves against each other.



### Getting you thinking...

Write down your answers to these questions:

1. When you meet someone new, how do you work out their social class? What are the signs?
2. Most sociologists argue that there are 3 social classes in Britain. What makes someone upper class, middle class or working class? (*Consider their financial status, employment, hobbies, social connections etc.*)
  - a) Upper class
  - b) Middle class
  - c) Working class
3. Which social class do these people belong to **and why?**

a)



b)





4. A male bus driver wins the lottery. Does his social class change? **Why/why not?**

### How do we measure social class?

Traditionally, sociologists measure a person's social class in terms of their occupation. For example, if you work as a bricklayer, you are working class because you do a **manual job** (physical job involving your hands). If you are a lawyer, you are middle class as your job is **non-manual** and **professional** (requires a degree level qualification). If you own lots of **property and land**, you are upper class. Although, recently a group of sociologists created The Great British Class Survey, taking into account factors beyond a person's job or how much money they've got.

Watch this clip on The Great British Class Survey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlnIRiB0p44>

1. The Great British Class Survey is based on the work of a French Sociologist, **Pierre Bourdieu**. He argues that the middle class are in a better position compared to the working class because they possess three types of **capital**. **Economic capital** is to do with how much money you've got. **Cultural capital** is to do with your involvement in the arts (e.g. watching Shakespeare). **Social capital** is who you know, your social networks.

Write down some examples of each type of capital:

- a) **Economic capital** (*What might the middle class buy? What might they be able to do for their children?*)
- b) **Cultural capital**: (*Where might the middle class go for some culture at the weekend?*)
- c) **Social capital**: (*What kinds of jobs will their friends have? What kinds of conversations might they have?*)

Find out your social class by taking The Great British Class Survey:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22000973> (click on 'Tell us about you')

➤ *If you feel uncomfortable doing this, you can opt out or make up answers (your results are not recorded)*

2. Do you think The Great British Class Survey offers an accurate measure of someone's social class? Why/why not?

**Write a short paragraph to explain your opinion.**

### **Who are the working class? What are their lives like?**

As a Sociology student, you will examine the lives of the working class.

To gain an insight into working class attitudes and experiences, listen to this podcast with Dr Lisa McKenzie, a Sociologist and working class academic.

Listen here: <https://www.spreaker.com/user/thesociologyshow/dr-lisa-mckenzie>

*(If the link does not work, Google search 'the sociology show spreaker')*



**TASK** – Whilst listening to the podcast, **make notes** on the following:

- a) Lisa's life growing up
- b) Lisa's attitude towards education
- c) Lisa's definition of social class
- d) Why Lisa has an issue with traditional definitions of the working class
- e) Lisa's views on Grenfell
- f) Why the working class voted for Brexit



### **How does social class impact people's lives?**

In A Level Sociology, you will examine the impact of social class on people's lives including their chances of educational success, family life and likelihood of offending.

Let's now consider the impact social class can have on people's employment prospects.

Watch this short YouTube clip of Elvis, a working class lad, who wants to work as a trader in London's central business district. Then answer the questions below:

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



1. Elvis did not get the management consultancy job in the City because he lacked 'polish'. **Explain** what 'polish' means and why Elvis is disadvantaged.
2. With reference to the YouTube clip and the 3 types of capital (economic, cultural, social), **explain** why working class graduates are less likely to get into elite occupations (e.g. banking, law, consultancy).

## SECTION 2: Gender

Gender is another social group that you will examine as a Sociology student. To be successful, it is essential that you understand what we mean by gender; how it differs to sex, gendered expectations and how gender impacts people's lives.



### Sex and gender

1. What is the difference between the terms 'sex' and 'gender'? **Write down your ideas**

*Now let's see if you're right...*

Watch this short clip and answer the questions below: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=727CdJ6C\\_Xw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=727CdJ6C_Xw)

a) Explain what **sex** means.

b) Explain what **gender** means.

### Gendered expectations and stereotypes

In our society, men and women are expected to behave in different ways. Men are to be masculine, while women are to be feminine. **Copy and complete the table below with examples of behaviour expected of men and women.**

*Consider toys, colours, ways of behaving, appearance, roles in the family, jobs*

Men	Women

Are any of your examples gender stereotypes? **Gender stereotypes** are oversimplified, generalised ideas about men and women e.g. men are strong, women are weak.

1. Look at your table; **highlight or underline** any examples that are gender stereotypes.

2. Where did you learn these gender stereotypes? **Write down your thoughts**

**Why do we stereotype?** We stereotype because from a very young age we get used to seeing the world in terms of categories e.g. objects, animals, furniture. Stereotypes help us **to make sense** of the world around us; we try to bring some order to our busy, chaotic lives. However, jumping to conclusions about what individuals are like based on their group membership (e.g. man/woman, social class or ethnicity) can have harmful effects. For example, the gender stereotype that men should be dominant might result in **toxic masculinity**; men might show their superiority by sexually assaulting women.

### How does gender impact people's lives?

As a Sociology student, you will examine the impact of gender on people's lives including their experiences in the family and chances of educational success.

*Let's now examine the impact of gender on roles in the family...*

1. Traditionally, what roles would men and women perform in the family? What would they each be responsible for? **Write down your answer**



2. Some couples still want this. A new movement called "**TradWife**" seeks to bring back traditional gender roles.

Watch this clip and answer the questions below: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwT-zYo4-OM>

a) Do you think many women today would want this? Yes/no? **Explain your view**

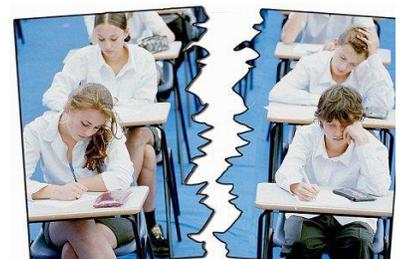
b) Many modern women would be against performing their traditional gender role. **Make a list** of ways in which the traditional gender role could be negative for women (*consider family finances, status, opportunities*).

*Let's now turn our attention to education...*

On average, girls achieve higher grades compared to boys.

Since the 1990s, boys have been falling behind girls in GCSE and A Level results.

**TASK** – List or mind map **possible reasons** why boys are falling behind in GCSE and A Level results.



Now listen to a podcast with Matt Pinkett and Mark Roberts, two secondary school teachers who recently researched boys underachievement. They discuss reasons why boys are lagging behind girls in GCSE and A Level results.

Listen here: <https://www.spreaker.com/user/thesociologyshow/boys-dont-try>

(If the link does not work, Google search 'the sociology show spreaker')



**TASK** – Whilst listening to the podcast, **add** to your list or mind map of reasons. Make sure you include the following reasons discussed in the podcast:

- a) Expectations
- b) Unconscious bias from teachers (how teachers stereotype)
- c) Peer pressure and masculinity in the classroom



### SECTION 3: Ethnicity

Ethnicity is the final social group that we will cover for now. To be successful, it is important that you understand what we mean by ethnicity; how it differs to race, racial stereotypes and how ethnicity can impact people's lives.



In the UK, the **ethnic majority** is white British: 81.9% of the UK total population is white British. All other ethnic groups (e.g. black, Asian) are known as **ethnic minority groups** because they make up a smaller proportion of the total UK population: 3% black and 7% Asian.

#### Race and ethnicity

1. Sociologists use the term ethnicity, not race. So, what is the difference? **Write down your ideas.**

*Now let's see if you're right...*

Watch this short clip and answer the questions below: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQOimokvJXo>

- a) Explain what **race** means.
  
- b) Explain what **ethnicity** means.

Copy and complete the following:

My ethnicity is...

My language is...

My nationality is...

I celebrate national events such as...

My favourite meals at home are...

The music I listen to is...



Your ethnicity reflects the **culture** that you are socialised in. For example, if you grew up in Hull in a white family, you will likely identify as white British. You **learned** what white British means through taking part in national celebrations (e.g. VE Day and the royal weddings), singing the national anthem at sporting events, enjoying fish and chips at the seaside etc. So, your **ethnic identity** is the outcome of social and cultural processes, in other words, your **environment** e.g. where you live, the foods you eat, your family.

### Racial stereotypes

Racial stereotypes are oversimplified, generalised ideas about ethnic groups; they come from ignorance and misunderstandings.

Channel 4 series, 'The Great British School Swap', saw pupils from Saltley Academy (99% South Asian) and pupils from Tamworth Enterprise College (95% white British) in Birmingham swap places. Before the swap, the pupils were asked to write down characteristics of White British and South Asian people. Many wrote down racial stereotypes. **Watch this:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Okhjkoh806E>



1. How might these racial stereotypes of South Asians impact the experiences of South Asian pupils? How might they be treated by other people e.g. future employers, the police, even teachers?

Black people regularly experience racial stereotyping. **Watch this:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EW-mPQkFd1M>

2. What is the racial stereotype of black people?
3. Black people are more likely to be stopped and searched by the police than any other ethnic group. **Explain** how racial stereotypes of black people might affect police attitudes and treatment of black people.



## **How does ethnicity impact people's lives?**

As a Sociology student, you will examine the impact of ethnicity on people's lives, including their chances of educational success and likelihood of offending. Let's now examine why black students are more likely to drop out of University compared to white British students. **Read this article by The Guardian newspaper:**

<https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2018/jan/17/why-do-black-students-quit-university-more-often-than-white-peers>



**TASK** – Produce **summary** notes on the reasons why black students quit University more often than white students. (A summary is when you give the main points)

## **Section 4: Essay writing task**

Using knowledge from this booklet and any of your own research, **explain** how social class, gender and ethnicity might impact people's lives in a negative way.

### **Requirements for your essay:**

- Written in continuous prose (full sentences)
- Includes 3 paragraphs (one paragraph on each social group)
- One side of A4 paper