

Sociology at PHS Sixth Form

TRANSITION TASKS



So, what exactly is Sociology?

How can I prepare for the A Level?

Where can Sociology take me?

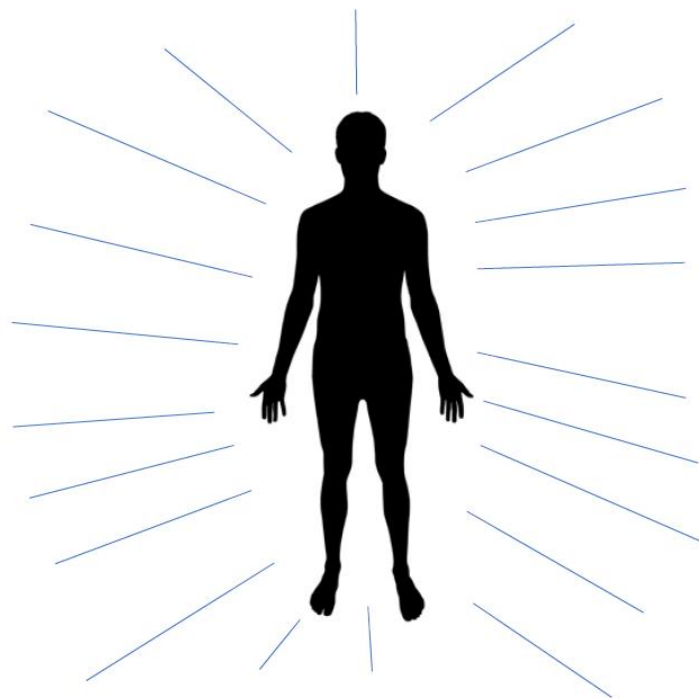
...use this workbook to get ready for the course and find answers to the questions above...

So, what is Sociology?

THE BASICS:

We could give you a nice definition, what would be better is finding your own out! Use the internet to check out the British Sociological Association. Can you find a definition on their page? Write it here:

You will have now discovered that Sociology is about the things that make us, us... Around the character below challenge yourself to list at least 20 things that have shaped YOU into the person YOU are today:



The huge list of influences which have shaped us as a person are all factors which sociology would discuss and research. It asks the BIG questions around these, for example:

- Who does best out of these things? (like school?)
- Are these things fair?
- Does a certain group own these things? (like the media!)
- How do these things shape our behaviour? (like religion?)

Sociologists often discuss the 'norms and values' of society. There are many acts which we deem to be normal and that 'fit in' with the values of society. For example, going to school or having a hair cut. List down 3 other concepts/actions that fit within society's norms:

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CRIME AND DEVIANCE:

Now using the internet research 3 examples of specific criminal acts which go against the 'norms' of society. Write 5 facts about each in the boxes below:

CRIME CASE ONE:

CRIME CASE TWO:

CRIME CASE THREE:

Within sociology there are a wide number of 'perspectives', or 'sociological theories'. These are simply different ways of looking at the world around us, different viewpoints. Look for example at one of your chosen crimes.....why do YOU think it happened?

Ok, what might someone else say was the main cause of this crime?

...you've got it. Two different perspectives.

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES:

Lets find out about some sociological perspectives then.

FUNCTIONALISTS:

- Functionalists are linked to 'right wing' politics (don't know what this is? google it and find out).
- They see society as one distinct group all based around a shared group of values, our collective conscience.
- Society according to them is like a human body with lots of different functions (organs) working together for the smooth running of society as a whole (body). For example, the education system trains people for the workplace...etc...They call this the 'organic analogy'

- Functionalists see individuals as being shaped by the larger systems in society around them.

SELECT ONE OF YOUR CRIMES....What do YOU think a Functionalist sociologist would say about your crime?

MARXISTS:

- Marxists are what we call 'conflict sociologists' as they look at the conflict between two groups in society.
- They believe that society is completely unfair and that this is terrible!
- They see there being two social classes in society, the bourgeoisie, who own EVERYTHING! And control EVERYTHING!, and the proletariat, who are essentially just slaves for the bourgeoisie.
- Marxists believe that everything within capitalist society is focussed on creating this class divide between these two groups, so the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor.

SELECT ONE OF YOUR CRIMES...What do YOU think a Marxist would say about your crime?

So...now we've looked at two core perspectives and you have applied them to crime! This is a skill that you will use throughout the course. Now that you have a basic understanding of sociology, norms and values, the aspects of society that shape us and some sociological perspectives it is time for YOU to explore further.

YOUR TASK: Why should I study Sociology? Create a 1500 word response to this essay question. You can google any of the popular help sites below to get ideas.

POPULAR HELP SPOTS:

- British Sociological Association
- ReviseSociology – useful A Level guidance site
- The Complete University Guide
- What can you do with a Sociology degree – Times Higher Education

You can choose to focus on sociology in general or narrow your response down to include examples of how sociology answers questions for people in the areas of education, crime, families and the media.

Email your essay to Mr Bennett at abennett@poyntonhigh.org.uk

