

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of society and of people and their behaviour. Sociology is evidence-based, not just about opinions, but backed up by research carried out by sociologists.

Sociologists argue that much of human behaviour is learned, and not instinctive. Much of this learning occurs in our early years and has a huge influence on our behaviour and development.

Watch this clip on children separated from society and explain how it contributes to the argument that social behaviour is learnt below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rktd4P6ewY>

KEY CONCEPTS IN SOCIOLOGY

Culture, Norms & Values



Find a sociological definition of culture and write it below;

Culture.....
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Members of society share **norm and values**. **Values** are general principles or goals. They tell us what is good and what we should aim for. Write down three British values below;

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Norms are specific rules that govern behaviour in certain situations. Each culture has detailed norms governing different aspects of behaviour such as food, dress, jobs etc. Write down three social norms below;

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Different cultures will have very different **norms and values**. Write down three norms or values from other cultures that differ from British culture;

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Groups that have their own culture, apart from the mainstream culture, are called **subcultures**. Write down three examples of subcultures and a norm or value associated with each one;

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Cultures and their norms and values change over time. For example, attitudes to smoking have changed in the recent past. Give three examples of norms and values that have changed significantly in British culture in the recent past;

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....



Socialisation, Status & Roles

Socialisation refers to the process of learning one's culture – all the things that are necessary to be accepted as a member of society. Socialisation begins when we are born and continues throughout life. Find the definitions of the following terms;

1 Primary Socialisation

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2 Secondary Socialisation

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Write down three things we will learn during **primary socialisation**

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Write down three things we will learn during **secondary socialisation**

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

A status is a position in society. Some statuses are **ascribed**; they are based on fixed characteristics that we are born with and cannot normally change. Other statuses are **achieved** through our own efforts, such as getting into university or being promoted at work.

Write down two of your own ascribed statuses and one achieved statuses.

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Those with particular statuses are expected to follow certain norms of behaviour. This set of norms makes up a person's **role**. Write down three norms associated with the role of a teacher:

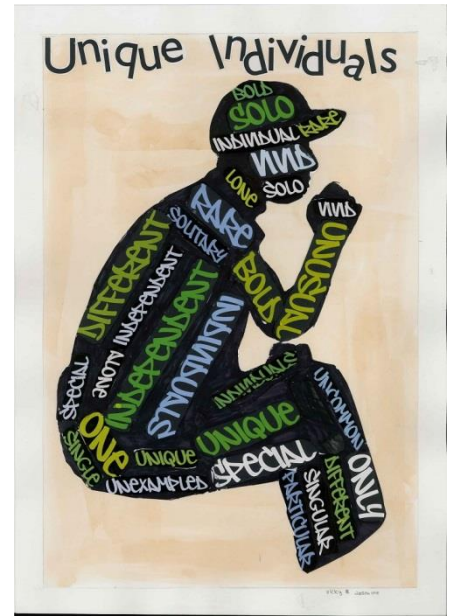
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Individuals & Society

Sociologists disagree on the extent to which society shapes us as individuals, and the amount of choice we have in how we act.

The structural view sees us as shaped by the structure of society. We are like puppets on a string, manipulated into behaving in a certain way.

The social action view sees us as having free will and choice and the ability to choose our actions and interactions.

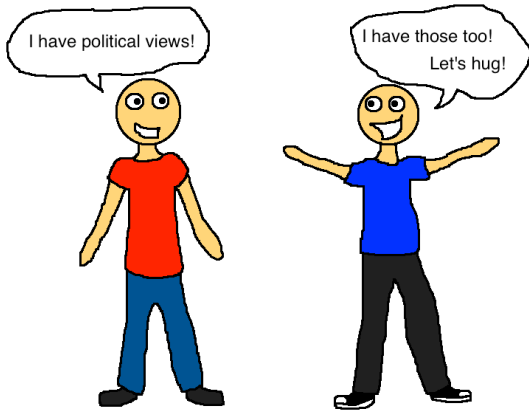


In what ways do you have freedom of choice about your education

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

In what ways are your choices shaped by wider society

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....



Sociological Perspectives

Sociologists generally argue that society is based on agreement (**value consensus**) or disagreement and **conflict**. The key consensus theory is functionalism. The key conflict theory is Marxism.

Write a brief definition of **functionalism**

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write a brief definition of **Marxism**

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Another perspective is **Feminism**. What is feminism?

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A final perspective is **postmodernism**. What is postmodernism?.....

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Identity

Sociologists are interested in how different classes, genders, ethnic groups and age groups have different identities and life chances.

Write down how you think each factor may impact on any aspect of a person's life

Gender.....
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Social Class
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Ethnicity.....
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Age.....
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Sociology Research

Sociologists use a variety of research methods to gather evidence about the real world. Write a definition of the following research methods or sources of information;

Experiments.....
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Social Surveys.....
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Interviews.....
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Participant Observation.....
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Official Statistics.....
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Sociologists are concerned with the validity, representativeness and reliability of their research. Write a definition for each term below;

Validity

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Representativeness

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Reliability

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Thank you for completing the transition work. We hope you are keen to continue learning about Sociology in year 12.

