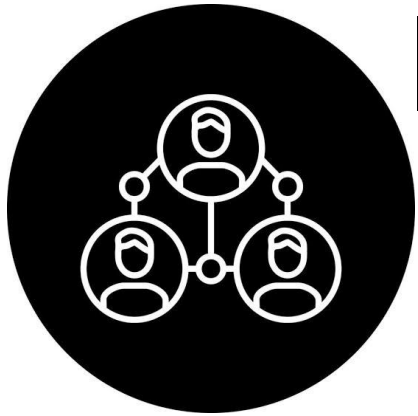


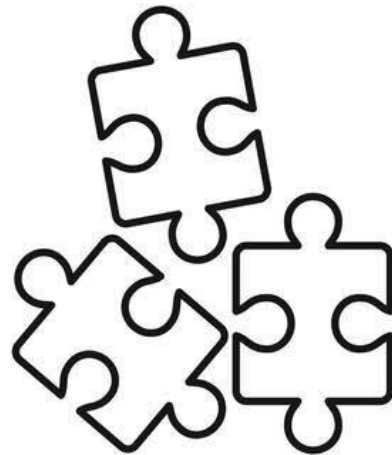
GCSE Sociology



Introduction to Sociology



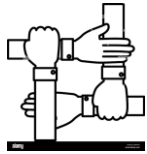
Revision Guide



GCSE SOCIOLOGY - INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY - 1

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of human behaviour and relationships. It considers how people are affected within social groups.



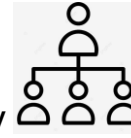
Examples:

Why do middle class students perform better at school than working class students?

Are there different roles in the home for men and women?

Key Concepts

Social Structures: the way society organises itself e.g. the systems of family, education, criminal justice.



Social Processes: The way people are affected by interactions e.g. socialisation, social control.

Social Issues: Problems within society e.g. domestic violence.

Culture

Culture: The shared way of life in a society e.g. sport, food & drink, music, clothing.

Sub-culture: A small group within a society with separate and distinct characteristics e.g. punks.



Cultural diversity: A variety of cultural groups within a society.

Nature Vs Nurture

Nature: Behaviour is mostly determined by the genetic make up we inherit from parents

Nurture: Much of human behaviour is learned through socialisation and experience

Feral child: A child who has been isolated from human contact from a young age and lacks socialisation



Norms & Values

Values: General guidelines for behaviour in society e.g. respect.

Norms: Expectations of how to behave in specific situations e.g. in a library.

Laws: A list of written controls that can be enforced.

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Status

Social Status: Social standing or prestige in society an individual has.

Ascribed status: Status that is given to you at birth e.g. being born into wealth or royalty.



Achieved status: Status that is earned on merit e.g. getting a good job after working hard in education or excelling at a sport.

Race & Ethnicity

Race: An outdated term that describes the physical and social characteristics of a group.

Ethnicity: A group that defines itself based on a common heritage, nationality, culture or religion.



Social Roles

Social Role: Patterns of behaviour expected by individuals in different situations e.g. expected behaviours as a mother.



Multiple roles: The fact that individuals regularly switch between different roles e.g. parent, worker, friend.

Role conflict: When individuals struggle to juggle their multiple roles e.g. being a parent to a sick child on a day when you are expected to do an important presentation at work.

Stratification

Stratification: Ways of hierarchically (using levels) dividing people. This can lead to inequality and discrimination. An example is **social class** – Upper / Middle / Working / Underclass.



Socialisation

Socialisation: The lifelong process of learning how to fit into a society. This may be different from culture to culture.

Primary socialisation: Early socialisation that would usually come from parents.

Secondary socialisation: The second stage of socialisation performed by people and institutions outside the family e.g. schools, work, peer group, mass media, religion.



Gender socialisation: The teaching of behaviours seen as appropriate for males and females e.g. females grow their hair long and wear dresses.

Class socialisation: The teaching of behaviours seen as appropriate for the different classes e.g. middle class working hard at school.

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Consensus Vs Conflict

Consensus Theories: Sees people in society as having shared interests and society functions as most people have the same norms and values e.g. Functionalism



Conflict Theories: See society as groups that compete leading to inequality e.g. Marxism & Feminism



Functionalism

- Societies have basic needs – functions
- All parts of society needs to work together to prosper much like a machine
- All members need to hold ideas in common – value consensus
- Society needs social order and this involves socialisation
- Popular particularly during the 1950's
- Looks at all of society – Macro
- Founded by Emile Durkheim



Marxism

- A conflict theory – emphasis on friction and inequality between social classes
- Suggests different classes have different interests within a capitalist society – making profit at one end and decent pay and conditions at the other
- Societies are unstable and will eventually fail if the wealthy continued to exploit the poor and powerless
- Looks at all of society – Macro
- Popular at times through the end of the 19th and through the 20th C. Seems to be having a new resurgence amongst the young
- Founded by Karl Marx



New Right

- Seen as more political than sociological
- Focusses in on the responsibilities of the individual
- Supports the concept of competition in society
- Supports very traditional values
- Associated with the leadership of Margaret Thatcher during the 1980's

Feminism

- Based on the belief that society is dominated by men (patriarchy)
- Waves of feminism throughout history
- Belief that men gain the most from family life
- Point to men earning more and having higher positions in society
- Certain laws have helped e.g. equal pay, but feminists believe the imbalance still exists
- Radical feminists want to see very dramatic changes, but others recognise progress (Liberal feminists)
- Can be both macro and micro



Interactionism

- Focusses on small scale human interaction (micro) and recognises that the individuals experience will be different
- Recognises that even in one lifetime a person's interpretation of life will change
- Popular in 1960's & 1970's
- Linked to Max Weber who felt that people were influenced by more than class