



# A Level Sociology Introduction Project 2021-22



This research based project is designed to give you an ideal grounding for your A Level Sociology course.

Research and complete the tasks independently over the next few weeks to prepare for the key topics within A Level Sociology.

Present the tasks in any format you like and bring it with you to your lessons. Please make sure that you include a learning journal in your notes where you can place all summaries.

Good luck and Enjoy ☺

*Look forward to working with you*



## **Welcome to Sociology A-level**

Welcome to Sturminster Newton High School Sixth Form. Please read all the information in this booklet carefully, this booklet should be filed in the front of your class folder. Please note there are a number of tasks at the end of this booklet that you will need to complete and bring into your first lesson.

Have you ever wondered about the full story behind the important issues in our society? How does the Coronavirus, that has impacted so many lives, affected people as they return to work or school?

Perhaps you feel like there is more to what you read in the papers or see on TV?

For instance, why does the western world link success with money or fame whereas other countries do not?

You have chosen to study Sociology and you will discover how to investigate these kinds of questions for yourself and begin to understand more about your own motivations and behaviours, gaining a wide range of very valuable skills that can be applied to almost any career.

Sociology seeks to understand all aspects of human social behaviour, including the social dynamics of small groups of people, large organisations, communities and institutions. Sociologists are typically motivated by their desire to better understand the fundamental principles of social life, believing that an understanding of these principles will help improve people's lives through more enlightened and effective policies.

### **What will I be learning and what will the lessons be like?**

Lessons will offer different learning opportunities with written work conducted alongside discussion and pair work, presentations, videos and practical work.

### **How will I be assessed?**

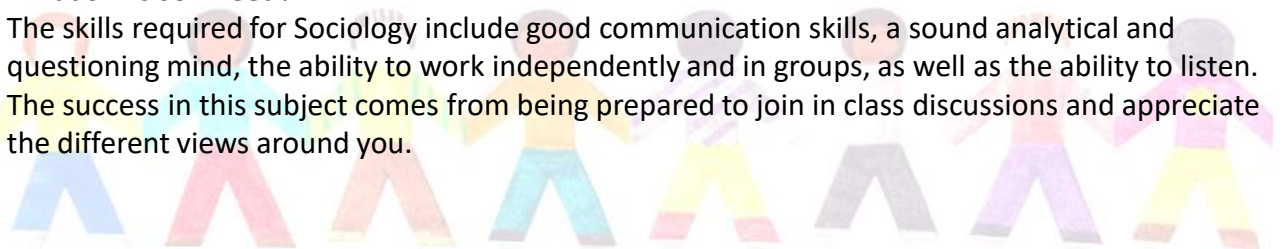
You will be given tests/summative assessment every few weeks. You will also be assessed through feedback (oral and written) of classwork, homework, end of topic test grades and a mock exam grade in January of Year 13. You will have individual teacher time to discuss results and personalised feedback is given for each student.

### **Do I need to have studied Sociology GCSE before?**

No, as the majority of students doing Sociology with us have not studied this subject before. Any relevant knowledge in this subject would help your understanding when discussing the subject in lessons – so reading ahead of the lesson is invaluable!

### **What skills do I need?**

The skills required for Sociology include good communication skills, a sound analytical and questioning mind, the ability to work independently and in groups, as well as the ability to listen. The success in this subject comes from being prepared to join in class discussions and appreciate the different views around you.



## Expectations on this course

### From the teachers:

- All students can achieve the best grade possible
- All students will enjoy what they learn
- Subject knowledge is up-to-date as well as current resources available for all students
- Homework given weekly. This will be assessed, with appropriate feedback (including guidance on how to improve your work).
- Regular Assessment with constructive, personalised feedback.
- Dedicated student time for any questions/queries

### From the student:

- All students are to uphold a respectful and courteous manner to each other and to the teacher at all times, inside and outside of school (e.g. on school trips)
- Attendance and punctuality is crucial. If you are likely to be absent for a few days, it is **your** responsibility to get all materials and catch up with all work missed, including doing any assigned homework. Persistent lateness to, and absence from, class will result in disciplinary procedures, in accordance to sixth form policy
- A high level of commitment and the willingness to work on an on-going basis. You should allow at least 3 hours *independent* study of sociology per week.
- Maintain an organised work folder. Folders will be checked regularly and **all** work should be brought to class, including all past papers.
- Homework to be submitted on time. Not doing so, without a valid reason, will result in consequences. Persistent lateness of homework will result in contact with parents/guardians and referral to the Head of Sixth form.
- If you have any problems during this course please talk to any of the Sociology teachers as soon as possible. Communication is key to understanding how you are progressing in the course.

### Equipment needed for each lesson:

1. A folder to fit A4 notes in – I would suggest a small A4 folder for each topic rather than a big ring binder. You will need different folders for each teacher.
2. Dividers to organise your work by theory and subsections matched to the specification
3. A4 pad where you can remove notes / assessments to file or pass to your teachers into folder, Index cards for revision
4. Pens, ruler, calculator, highlighter

You will be lent the textbooks by the department for the duration of your time on the course. These must be returned to the department when you finish the course.

You are expected to purchase revision guides. These can be purchased through the department at a significant discount to other suppliers.



## **Skills needed to succeed in Sociology:**

- Intellectual curiosity and the ability to engage in independent research.
- To regularly review previous knowledge, analyse sources of information/methods of data collection and apply the knowledge gained to various aspects of life.
- The ability to work independently and to be relied upon as part of a team e.g. in the preparation of presentations.
- Knowledge gained must be expressed effectively in writing using evidence that can be found in theories in sociology.
- A willingness to contribute to class debate and to listen, question and consider the views of others in a sensitive manner.

## **The Sociology Course overview**

A-level Sociology offers you the opportunity to develop the essential knowledge and understanding of central aspects of sociological thought and methods. It is designed to encourage you to demonstrate the application of a range of skills and consider the integration of sociological themes.

## **What does the course consist of?**

You will be exploring the following areas in your 1st year of study:

- Families and Households: This area looks at aspects of the family, family structure (e.g. marriage, cohabitation etc.); change within the family (e.g. gender roles); childhood and status of children and demographic trends (e.g. birth rates)
- Education: You will study the role and purpose of education; differential educational achievement of social groups (social class, gender and ethnicity); relationships and processes within schools; the significance of educational policies and the application of sociological research methods to the study of education.
- Sociological research methods: You will look at a range of quantitative and qualitative methods of research used in sociology; their strengths and limitations.



# The AQA Course

## A Level Year 1

### Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods

#### Assessed

- 2 hour written exam
- 80 marks
- 33.3% of A-level

#### Questions

- Education: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks
- Methods in Context: extended writing, 20 marks
- Theory and Methods: extended writing, 10 marks

#### Topics:

- Education
- Methods in Context

### Paper 2: Topics in Sociology

#### Assessed

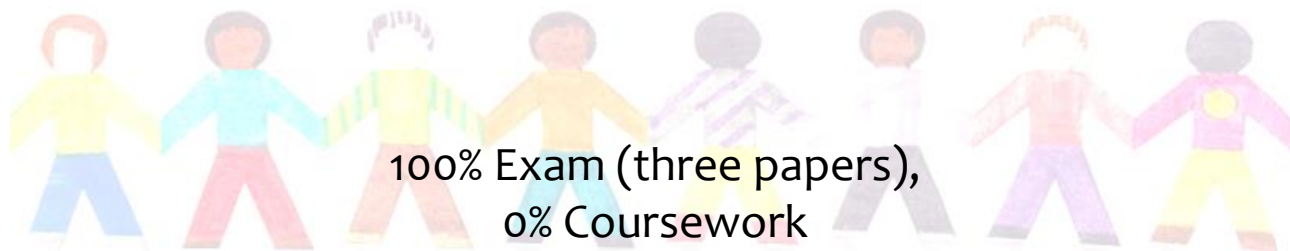
- 2 hour written exam
- 80 marks
- 33.3% of A-level

#### Questions

Section A: extended writing, 40 marks  
Section B: extended writing, 40 marks

#### Topics:

- Families and Household
- Research Methods



100% Exam (three papers),  
0% Coursework

## What might the subject lead onto?

Sociology trains you to answer the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions about human societies, giving you a competitive edge in the job market and providing a strong intellectual background for students considering careers in the following professions or businesses: Administration; Business; Health and Welfare Service; Education; Journalism; Public Relations: Police and Research and Law.

## How can I prepare for A-level Sociology?

As you have not studied Sociology before, start reading around the topics listed in the exam content such as families or education. Look at quality newspapers online and watch films and documentaries which you feel have sociological relevance and summarise/analyse from a sociological perspective. Keep any articles you find interesting and add your own analysis or write summaries from novels and film/TV and create an ongoing file which you can share with your peers and staff throughout your A level studies. Consider issues relating to Families and Households; Education, Crime or Beliefs in Society.

Here are some useful resources...

### Websites:

- **The British Sociological Society (BPS)** <http://www.britsoc.co.uk/what-issociology.aspx>
- [www.sociology.org.uk](http://www.sociology.org.uk)
- [www.aqa.co.uk](http://www.aqa.co.uk)
- [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>
- [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)
- [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)
- [www.mori.com](http://www.mori.com)
- [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

### Programmes:

- Benefits Britain
- 24 hours in Police Custody
- Crimewatch (old episodes on YouTube)
- Britain's New Super Rich
- Unreported world
- Dispatches
- Educating Yorkshire / Educating Essex / Educating Cardiff



## Transition Tasks:

Please complete these tasks during the summer and then bring your completed work to your first Sociology lesson.

### **Task 1: How do Sociologists think?... (20-30mins)**

This task is designed to start to prepare you to think as a sociologist by learning some key words.

**10 Key concepts you need to know in Sociology – please look these up and write a definition for each.**

Key Concepts	Definition
Norms	
Values	
Socialisation	
Beliefs	
Status	
Diversity	
Social Construction	
Perspectives	
Theory (not scientific)	



## Task 2: Family... (1 hr)

Focus on topics :Consider the role the family and education has in shaping the individual.


Answer the following questions on the role of **The Family**

Who lives with you?	
Who in your family is the most influential on your opinions and attitudes?	
Who makes the most important decisions in your family?	
Describe your view of the perfect family	
Does the Family play an important role for individuals within it and if so how?	
How does the family support individuals within it?	
In what way can the family be a negative experience for the individual?	
What areas of concern does society have about the family as an institution in 2016?	
Does the Family have a positive or negative function for society and why?	
What is your view of a perfect childhood?	



## Task 3: Education... (1 hr)

Answer the following questions on the role of **Education**

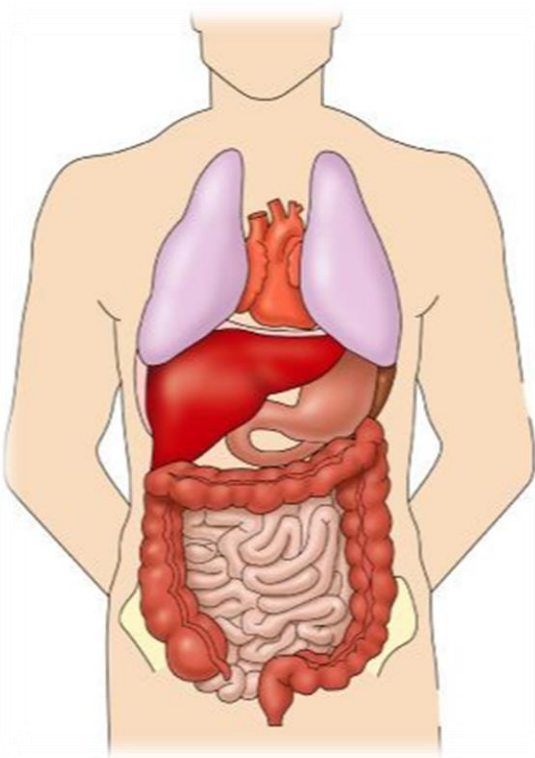
What factors do you think influence being successful or unsuccessful in education?	
How do we measure educational success?	
Do you have any ideas as to what you would like to be doing in 10 years time?	
How important is education in getting to where you want to be in 10 years time?	
What are you parent's/ primary caregiver's view on education?	
Have all your friends chosen to go on to college and study A Levels, or have they chosen other paths?	
Did your parent/s influence your choice of post-16 education or did you make the decision independently?	
How do you think sociologists can /should explore these educational issues?	
What values and norms have you picked up regarding expectations of behaviour from your family and your experiences of education?	

## Task 4: Research Projects...(2 hr)

- 1) Read the newspapers, such as the Daily Mail, or a news website, such as the BBC news website. Find three stories about family life in Britain today which you can use to prepare a short two minute talk about why these stories highlight how the family is so important to society.
- 2) Explain why you think education is so important to society. Write about what education provides for individuals as well as society in general. Aim to write at least 500 words showing as many different reasons for why education is so important. Use any of your own, and your family's experiences.



## Task 5: Functional Functionalists... (1 hr)



1. Write definitions for Free Will and Determinism.
2. Research Functionalism and produce a fact sheet outlining the “Organic Analogy”

3. Watch this YouTube clip of The Adjustment Bureau Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZJOTP4nTaE>

Link this to Functionalism.



### 4. Summing up...

Summarise everything that you have discovered about Functionalism (approx. half a page)

## Task 6: Fiery Feminists... (1-2 hrs)



everyday  
sexism  
project

1. Watch youtube clip:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9v2hcsL5i0>
2. What do you think Feminism is?
3. Research Feminism and produce a fact sheet outlining definitions and provide examples.
4. Research @/#EverydaySexism (remember this is a public forum and some content may not be appropriate and the school can take no responsibility over the content)

4. Research examples of gender inequality within the UK in contemporary society.

### 5. Summing up...

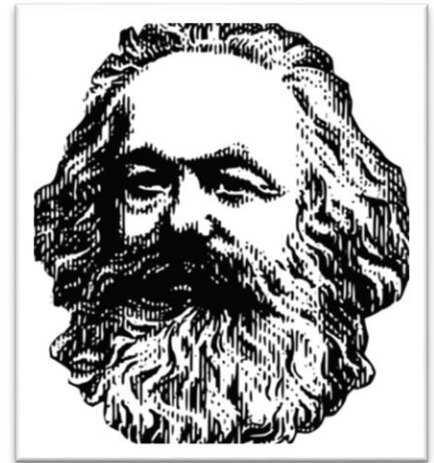
Summarising everything that you have discovered about Feminism – present as an information poster.



# Task 7: Magnificent Marxists... (1 hr)

1. Watch youtube clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz3eOb6YI1s>



2. Define all key words on the video clip.
3. Research Marxism and produce a fact sheet outlining the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.



4. Research examples of class inequality within the UK in contemporary Society.

## 5. Summing up...

Summarising everything that you have discovered about Marxism.

## Task 8: Passionate Post-modernists...(1 hr)

1. Produce a factsheet outlining what post-modernism is and what it says about society?



2. Produce a table outlining the differences between a modern and post-modern society.

Modern	Post-Modern

3. Find examples of post-modern changes in society within the Media. For example Same Sex Marriages in the USA.



### 4. Summing up...

Summarising everything that you have discovered about Post-modernism.

## Task 9: The Family... (1 hr)

### *The Family Five*

There are five main Sociological approaches or perspectives. You have already researched them and explained the key terms.

Now outline their assumptions regarding the Family as a Sociological institution and tag Sociologists which put forward these ideas.



## Task 10: Essay Writing (2 hrs)

As part of the course you will have to write extended essays. Using the research that you have carried out and the summaries, write an essay outlining why sociology and the perspectives researched are important to society today.

### Structure:

1. Introduction: Define sociology...
2. What do Functionalists say about society and how does this link to society?
3. How do Marxists differ from Functionalists and how do their theories relate to society today?
4. How do Feminists differ from Marxists and how do their theories relate to society today?
5. What comments do Postmodernists make about today's society?
6. Conclusion: Make a decision. Is Sociology relevant to today's society?





# Useful Resources & Further Reading

To help you on your way...

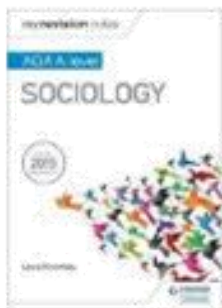
## Websites:

- AQA New Specification – <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192/introduction>
- AQA - Example Assessment Material - <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192/assessment-resources>
- S-Cool Revision Materials - <http://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/sociology>
- Every Day Sexism Project - <http://everydaysexism.com/index.php/about>
- Who Needs Feminism - <http://whoneedsfeminism.com/about.html>
- He for She Campaign - <http://www.heforshe.org/>

## Youtube Videos:

- Emma Watson Addresses the UN <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6XTx2Rg04g>

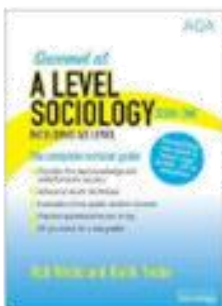
## Books:



### My Revision Notes: AQA a Level Sociology [Book]

by Laura Pountney · Hodder Education Group · Paperback · 256 pages · ISBN 1471882659

Target success in AQA A-level Sociology with this proven formula for effective, structured revision.



### Succeed at A Level Sociology Including AS Level: Book One: The Co...

by Rob Webb, Keith Trobe · Napier Press, Brentwood · Paperback · 105 pages · ISBN 0954007999

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