

Subject in a Page: Sociology



In a nutshell:

Sociology is the study of society, social institutions – such as education, the family and the media – and human behaviour. It challenges assumptions, explores real-world issues and provides a deeper understanding of social structures, inequalities and social change. Studying sociology opens your mind to new perspectives and equips you with critical thinking, communication and research skills.

In Sociology we:

- Learn, develop and demonstrate our knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods through definitions, explanations and illustrations (AO1) theories, concepts, evidence and research methods to a range of social issues, demonstrating how sociological ideas can be used to understand different aspects of social life and real-world situations (AO2)
- Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods, identifying strengths and weaknesses, offering alternative perspectives, and making reasoned judgements and conclusions (AO3)

Think like a sociologist:

- Question the familiar and taken-for-granted assumptions about how the world works; challenge the idea that individual behaviour is solely the result of personal choices.
- Examine the ways in which social institutions shape individual lives and social interactions
- Explore different forms of social inequality, including class, race and gender, and how different groups within society understand and interact with each other.
- Evaluate truth claims and data and consider multiple perspectives; recognise that social phenomena can be viewed and experienced in multiple ways.

Write and talk like a sociologist:

- Anomie
- Consensus and conflict
- Class structure
- Feminism
- Functionalism
- Globalisation
- Hegemony
- Interactionism and structuralism
- Interpretivism and positivism
- Left and right realism
- Marxism
- Meritocracy
- Modernity and postmodernism
- New Right
- Postmodernism
- Quantitative and qualitative data
- Reliability and validity
- Social facts

Read like a sociologist:

- Collins' A level Sociology for AQA, Chapman et al
- Sociology for AQA, volumes 1 and 2, Ken Browne
- And the Sun Shines Now, Adrian Tempny
- Discipline and Punish, Michael Foucault
- The Establishment, Owen Jones
- Gang Leader for a Day, Sudhir Venkatesh
- Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance, Howard S. Becker
- Poverty Safari, Darren McGarvey
- Rough Justice, Wendy Joseph KC
- Vulture Capitalism, Grace Blakely

Revise like a sociologist:

- Use your knowledge organisers and topic companions
- Complete mind-maps and make flashcards for each key theory and topic, as well as for key terminology and sociologists/studies
- Quiz with peers
- Use Tutor2U's online resources including their revision blast sessions
- Practise planning and writing essays
- Practise past papers
- Keep up to date with current affairs relevant to topics to make links to the real world

Experience it like a sociologist:

- Follow the news and current affairs closely, examining multiple sources
- Watch documentaries about social issues and human behaviour
- Visit the crown courts (educational trip)
- Visit the Royal Courts of Justice, the Clink Prison Museum and the London Dungeons (educational trip)
- Hear from current and previous prisoners (in school)
- Carry out your own sociological research

Progress to a career in:

- Community development
- Education
- Healthcare
- Human resources
- Government and policy
- Journalism
- Law
- Non-profit organisations
- Policing and criminal justice
- Public relations and communications
- Research
- Social work