

Huish Episcopi Academy



Sociology Handbook & Transition 2023

Our Sociology vision is for students to uncover new ideas, feel challenged and better understand the world we live in

Teacher: Mrs Jones

Welcome to Sociology at Huish Sixth...

And congratulations on your success in gaining a place at Huish Sixth.

This handbook aims to provide you with an introduction to the subject and the facilities and resources available to you.

What is Sociology?

Are you curious about why things are as they are?

The 7 billion people on earth are members of a single biological species: *Homo sapiens*. But there are striking differences among different cultures in the world. The Chinese wear white at funerals while people in the United Kingdom prefer black. People in England say a watch "runs" while the Spanish say it "walks" and the Germans say it "functions." Most people in England kiss in public, the Chinese kiss only in private; the French kiss publicly twice (once on each cheek), while the Belgians kiss three times (starting on either cheek); the New Zealand Maoris rub noses and, for their part, few Nigerians kiss at all.

The world over, cultures wear much or little clothing, are peaceful or warlike, enjoy different kinds of art and music and hold different religious beliefs. We may be the same people biologically, but we differ in our tastes, behaviours and beliefs. These differences are called cultural differences. The study of societies or how people live is the discipline of Sociology.

Sociology is the study of how human societies shape the lives of the people who live in them. People make lots of decisions in the course of living every day. But we make these decisions within the context of "society;" our family, school, nation and the larger world. Our A Level course will mainly focus on western cultures and specifically the UK, however, we will consider wider contexts and settings when appropriate.

What can I do with an A Level in Sociology?

You will study the following topics: Family & Household, Education, Crime & Deviance, Stratification & Differentiation and Sociological Theory and Methods. We look at interesting social problems and issues such as:

- How does social class affect achievement at school?
- What do feminists say about the role of women in the family?
- Why do(n't) people commit crime?
- Does violence in the media lead to violence in society?

Your A level in Sociology will equip you with many skills that you can use in other subjects and in other areas of your life. Many degree courses include some Sociology, e.g:

Medicine & Nursing - the Sociology of Health

History - Social and economic history

English - the social context of novels, feminism in the novel, the development of language

Also, law, journalism, marketing, business, media - the list is long!

There are also many degree courses where an A level in Sociology will be really helpful, if not essential:

Sociology

Social Policy and Administration

Criminology

Cultural Studies

Law

American Studies

Psychology

Anthropology

Nursing

Midwifery

Sociology also opens doors to many areas of employment:

Social researcher, Counsellor, Community worker, Probation Officer, Social worker, Charity fundraiser, Primary or Secondary school teacher, Further Education Lecturer, Retail Manager, Journalist, TV researcher, Political researcher, Police Officer or even an agent for MI5!

Aims and objectives of the AQA Sociology A Level course

By studying Sociology you will:

- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the way society works and of how the members of society interact with each other
- Use sociological theories to explain social problems and issues
- Develop an understanding of the research methods used by sociologists to find out about the social world
- Reflect on your own experience of the social world in which we live
- Develop writing and debating skills which you will be able to use in other subjects and in your wider social life
- Be able to apply your knowledge of sociology to everyday life and, as a result, become more aware of the many ways in which we are all different

Examination structure

| Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods | Paper 2: a) Family and Households b) Stratification & Differentiation | Paper 3: Crime 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 | Assessed 2 hour written exam 80 marks 33.3% of A-level Questions Family and Households: extended writing, 40 marks Stratification & Differentiation: extended writing, 40 marks | Assessed 2 hour written exam 80 marks 33.3% of A-level Questions Crime and Deviance: short answer and extended writing, 50 marks Theory and Methods: extended writing, 30 marks |

Assessment objectives

Examiners emphasise the importance of Sociology students developing key skills. Your ability to demonstrate these skills will determine your grade in the examinations. **These skills are measured using the following Assessment Objectives:**

| Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) | Assessment Objective 2 (AO2) | Assessment Objective 3 (AO3) |
|---|---|---|
| <p>The examiners are looking for your ability to demonstrate KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING of sociological theories, studies, concepts and methods of enquiry.</p> <p>To gain AO1 marks, you need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Recall the names of sociologists○ Use sociologists' theories○ Use sociological concepts - key ideas and be able to define them○ Use evidence to support theories○ Understand the methods used to gain evidence to support theories and reasons for selecting them○ Be able to communicate the above in a coherent argument, selecting relevant information to answer the question set | <p>Here, examiners are looking for you to demonstrate your skills to APPLY sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods to a range of issues</p> <p>You must present your arguments in an organised, coherent manner, well communicated, displaying an awareness of theoretical debates in sociology using evidence to support and sustain arguments and conclusions</p> <p>You might give examples to support the arguments</p> | <p>Here, examiners are looking for you to ANALYSE and EVALUATE sociological theories, concepts, evidence and research methods in order to present arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.</p> <p>For this assessment objective you will need to show that you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Analyse the information and break it down into its constituent parts - looking for areas neglected and assumptions made, logical coherence in the argument○ Evaluate, i.e. weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of approaches, take nothing for granted, offer competing sociological arguments.○ Ask how evidence was gathered, when it was gathered, i.e. can it explain the present? Can it be checked/repeated? Is the approach theoretically biased? Have ethnicity, class and gender been taken into account?○ What are the good 'bits'? What are the bad 'bits'? Take the role of the judge and jury - hear the competing claims, consider the evidence, decide which is the most convincing, explain why, give your verdict justifying your choice. |

Assessment of your understanding in lessons

Assessment will be used as a way of helping you to improve, rather than just a method of indicating how you are doing. So, before completing each assessment activity, you will need to look at your last piece of feedback and think about the targets you were given so you can improve your skills.

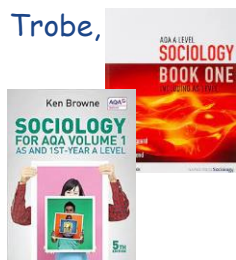
During lessons, your understanding and progress will be assessed through extended writing, group work, question and answer sessions, whiteboard activities, post-it note activities and practice exam questions.

You will also be expected to assess your own work and that of your peers. Peer-marking is an excellent way of learning what the examiner expects of you and it will be a regular feature of the course.

Main textbooks

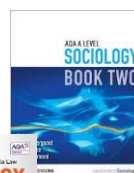
Year 12:

- AQA A Level Sociology: Book 1
By Webb, Westergaard, Trobe, Townend
- Sociology for AQA Vol. 1
By Ken Browne



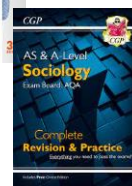
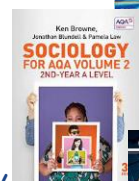
Year 13:

- AQA A Level Sociology: Book 2
By Webb, Westergaard, Trobe, Townend
- Sociology for AQA Vol. 2
By Ken Browne



Revision Guide:

- AS & A Level Sociology (AQA) published by CGP



It is really helpful to have your own copy of (at the very least) the revision guide - this will be available through school at a reduced price. Once you have experienced the textbooks mentioned above in school you will know which suits you best and you may wish to purchase your own copy - these can be picked up quite reasonably second hand online. This can be done once you have started in September.

Tips for your studies

Teaching and Learning styles: Sociology involves a variety of teaching and learning styles. For example, we will use discussion and debate, videos, group work, question and answer sessions and student presentations. Be proactive in all aspects of our lessons so that you make progress in your learning.

Study guidelines: Sociology will require a lot of commitment from you. It is recommended that you spend 5 hours a week outside lesson time on Sociology private study. Clearly the demands will vary according to how much work is set. It is vital that you develop good study habits at this stage and are proactive in making revision material as you go through the course, so that you are well prepared for the examinations.

Organisation:

This is the key to being a successful student. How to be organised:

- a) Buy a ring binder to keep all your work in or project notebooks can also work
- b) Buy dividers so you can separate different sections of your work.
- c) Date all your notes and handouts to keep them in order
- d) Take responsibility for catching up if you miss a lesson. I will email you the work missed or it will be on Google Classroom but you need to ensure you complete all the activities and understand the information.
- e) Ensure you meet homework deadlines. Your own learning outside of the classroom usually corresponds to something that I want to use in the lesson so you will be at a disadvantage if you do not have the information.

Reading:

On any Sociology course, it is useful to undertake wider reading to extend your knowledge and understanding. This includes textbooks, magazine articles, Sociology Review, newspapers, etc. An important skill in Sociology is the ability to pick out the most relevant bits. You should keep up to date with Current Affairs - read the paper, watch the news and bring in any interesting articles you find.

Wider reading list, useful websites & podcasts

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Everyday Sexism <i>Laura Bates</i> | Born a Crime <i>Trevor Noah</i> | www.sociology.org.uk |
| Natives: Race & Class in the ruins of empire <i>Akala</i> | Generation Z <i>Chloe Combi</i> | Seneca look for AQA Sociology - we will use this a lot through our course for review/preview work |
| Freakonomics <i>Levitt & Dubner</i> | Fake Law <i>The Secret Barrister</i> | <i>Sociology Review: in the library</i> |
| Unreal: A Critical History of Reality TV - BBC Sounds | Amma - Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo | Teach me a lesson with Greg James & Bella Mackie |
| Things Fell Apart - Jon Ronson | BBC Radio 4 - Thinking Allowed, Covid and change | Free Thinking - Sociology in the 21st Century |
| The following all on: Netflix or other streaming service | The Social Dilemma | Old Enough |
| I, Daniel Blake | Spider's Web | American Factory |
| Seaspiracy | Maid | Dirty Money |
| Moxie | They Live | 13th |

Broadsheet newspapers: The Guardian, The Times, The Financial Times, The Independent, The New York Times - sections on Families; Education; Crime

#discover, challenge, understand



Your 'bridging the gap' independent study task

#discover, challenge, understand

You need to do the following by the first lesson of Sociology in September 2023:

1. Read, watch or listen to a relevant information source - take a look at the suggested reading, listening, watching list on pg. 7 for inspiration - and write a review including what you learned, what questions it raised for you, whether you would recommend this to someone else
2. Reflect on your experiences of family and education. How have you been shaped by your family, how much influence do they have on your views and ideas? How has your educational experience been so far - the highs and possible lows - what's affected that?

When we meet in your first lesson you should have this work with you please. I look forward to meeting you!