

A-level Sociology at CNS

Name: _____

- You should spend some time during the summer holidays working on the activities in this booklet.
- You will be required to hand in this booklet in your first lesson at the start of Year 12 and the content will be used to form the basis of your first assessments.
- You should try your best and show commitment to your studies.
- We are really looking forward to welcoming you to this dynamic, exciting, and challenging subject!



City of Norwich School
An Ormiston Academy | Excellence in all



greetings &
salutations!



What is Sociology?

Why are you interested in Sociology?

At A-level, we cover the following topics:

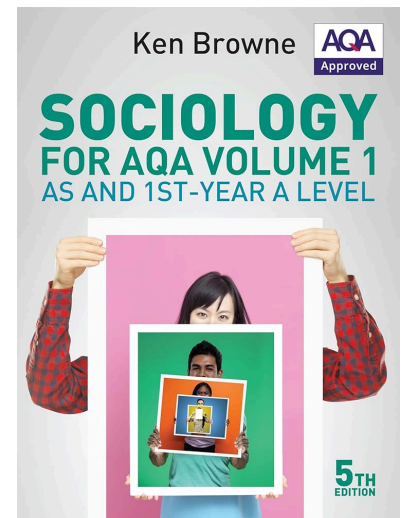
| Year 12 | Year 13 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education with Methods in Context• Families and Households | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Media• Crime and Deviance• Theory and Methods |

Look at the specification for more detail about these topics (you will find it online): [AQA A-level Sociology 7192 Specification](#). This textbook is the one we suggest you purchase to support your studies →

You will be expected to know and understand (AO1) the information about the topics, to apply (AO2) that knowledge and understanding and to be able to analyse and evaluate (AO3) that knowledge and understanding.

What is in this booklet?

There are two main themes that run through AQA A-level Sociology that should be considered in each of the topics studied. It is important that, as sociologists, we are always thinking about how society is shaped and why it changes over time.



• Socialisation, culture and identity

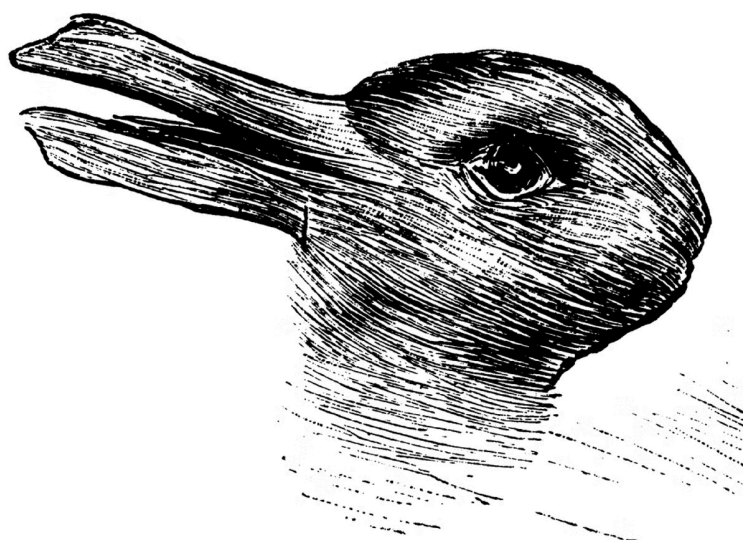
- What are norms?
- What are values?
- How do sociologists define culture?
- What is identity?

• Social differentiation, power and stratification

- Why do some people have more power than others?
- How does our class, gender, and ethnicity affect our social position?
- Is society unfair? If so, why?

TASK Match the definition to the correct key concept.

| Key Concept | Definition |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Socialisation | Who a person is: how they see themselves and how others see them. |
| Culture | Social characteristics that make an individual or group distinct from another, e.g. income, gender, age, etc. |
| Identity | A social process where people learn the norms and values of their culture. This mainly takes place during childhood, but continues throughout teenhood and adulthood. |
| Social differentiation | Ability of individuals or social groups to exert their own will over others, and to ensure that decisions taken reflect their own interests. |
| Power | Share norms, values, language, and customs of a given people. |
| Stratification | Refers to the unequal division of society into hierarchically ordered layers - with the most privileged at the top and the least privileged at the bottom. |



The terms above show us that sociology is paradoxical: it is everywhere but nowhere at all. Power is everywhere, but it is not clearly visible to the eye.

Our job, as sociologists, is to reveal that which is hidden - the different perspectives, opinions, views, and ideas of sociologists. We take normal, taken-for-granted life and turn it upside down, looking for meanings. And very often we end up seeing things very differently.

What is Culture?

Virtually all the things that we do have to be learned from others, for example walking, speaking, knowing what to eat, defending ourselves etc. A desert island baby is unlikely to survive, therefore we need other people. We have now established an important principle: human behaviour is largely learned through a process called 'socialisation'. Therefore, what is termed as culture, which is our way of life, includes the following:

- the language we speak
- the clothes we wear

- the food we eat and whether we eat it with knives, forks and spoons
- the homes we live in
- to the things we believe about the origins of life
- what is good or bad
- or the ways in which we should be governed.
- The above are all acquired from other people (this involves the process of **socialisation** into the **culture** of our society)

TASK What is 'British' culture?



Socialisation

'Socialisation' is the term that sociologists use to describe the life-long process of learning a culture's **norms** and **values**. Culture is socially transmitted from one generation to the next through the process of socialisation. The American sociologist Charles Cooley (1864-1929) distinguished two types of socialisation: **primary** and **secondary**. These two forms of socialisation are defined partly in terms of the particular groups or 'agencies' in which they occur:

- Primary socialisation: the family is the main agency where an individual learns many of the basic lessons for life such as language, how to act as a boy or a girl, how to share and how to love.
- Secondary socialisation: associated with the later stages of identity formation, from later childhood and continuing through adulthood. The school is an important example of an agency of secondary socialisation, but all formal organisations, including religion and work, are influential.

Define norms:

Define values:

TASK Match the example to either 'norm' or 'value'.

| Norm or Value? | Example |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Value | Walking around a supermarket quietly |
| Norm | Respecting animals |
| Value | Young girls dressing in pink and playing with barbies |
| Norm | Believing that all people should be treated with kindness |
| Value | Shaking hands when you meet someone new |
| Norm | Being honest |

TASK Think of three norms expected in each of the following places:

School

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Home

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Social Change

The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing; others say it is shrinking. The important point to grasp is that society does not remain static over time. It is ever-changing through decades and across different societies.

TASK Think of three different ways society has changed over the last 100 years. Try to be specific about what has happened.

One change is that different sexual identities are more acceptable in the UK today. From my research, I found that homosexuality is still illegal in some countries. In the UK, however, we have celebratory events for LGBTQ+ people and the vast majority of young people are more liberal in their attitudes.

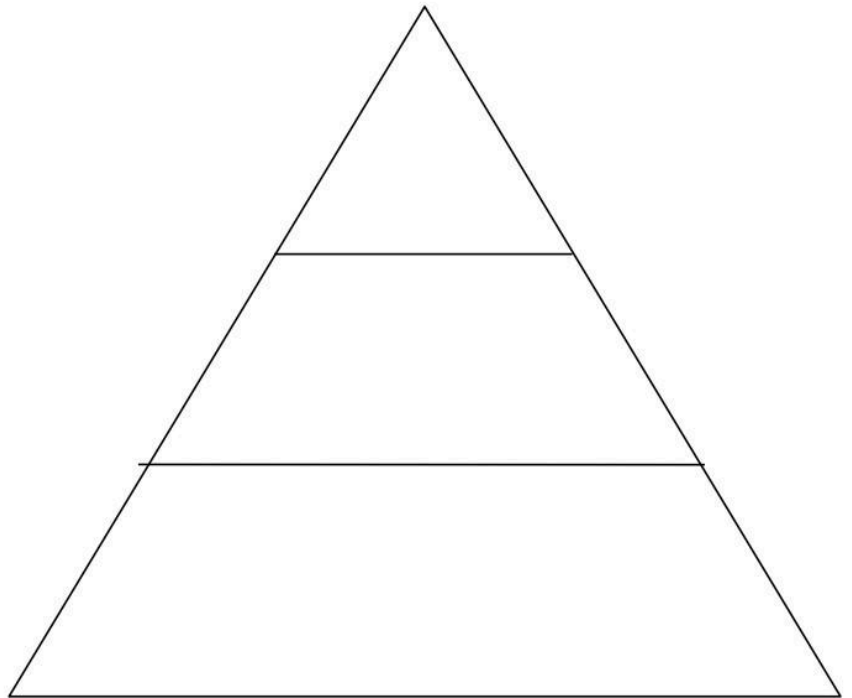
- 1.

2.

3.

Spotlight: Social Class

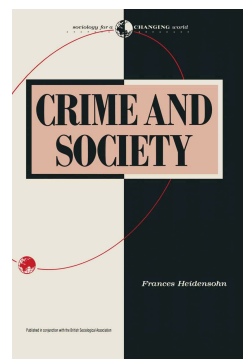
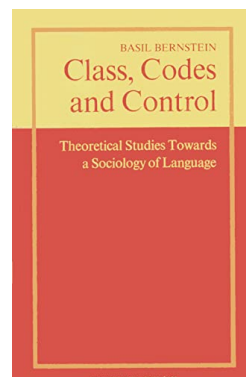
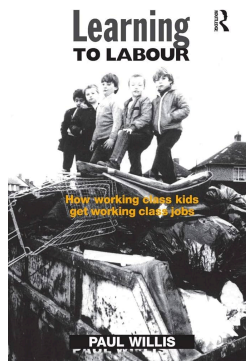
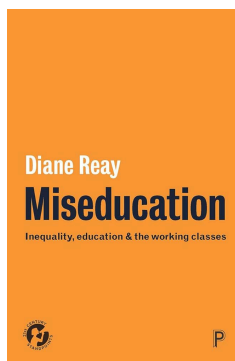
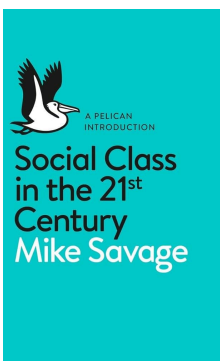
One topic that cuts across culture and power is social class. As sociologists, we are interested in why society is unequal and what impact our social class position has on our access to decent income, healthcare, education, and life expectancy.



TASK Add the following labels to the social class hierarchy diagram above:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Middle class Working class Upper class Largest group Smallest group | Most powerful Least powerful Professional/graduate jobs, e.g. lawyers, dentists | Manual jobs, e.g. mechanics and hairdressers The royal family Blue-collar White-collar |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Are you interested in social class? Here are some optional books you might like to read over the summer holidays:



TASK Read the Guardian article to the right (first link on Google) and answer the comprehension questions below.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/nov/21/english-class-system-shaped-in-schools>

1. How does Reay describe her experiences in education?

2. What is education like for working-class students in England?

3. What did the report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development find?

4. "Research suggests it is the wealth and inclination of parents, rather than the ability and efforts of the child, that have the most bearing on a child's educational success today." Why do you think this is the case?

5. Why is Reay critical of Oxbridge's failure to attract students from working class backgrounds and ethnic minorities?

'Working-class children get less of everything in education - including respect'

Interview Diane Reay grew up on a council estate, the eldest of eight, and became a Cambridge professor. Now she wants to talk about inequality in education



► Diane Reay says she had to work twice as hard as a middle class child to achieve - and it is worse for schoolchildren today. Photograph: Martin Godwin/The Guardian

You're all done! Thank you for completing this introduction booklet - and we look forward to meeting you!