

HEADSTART
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Sociology

Sociology is...

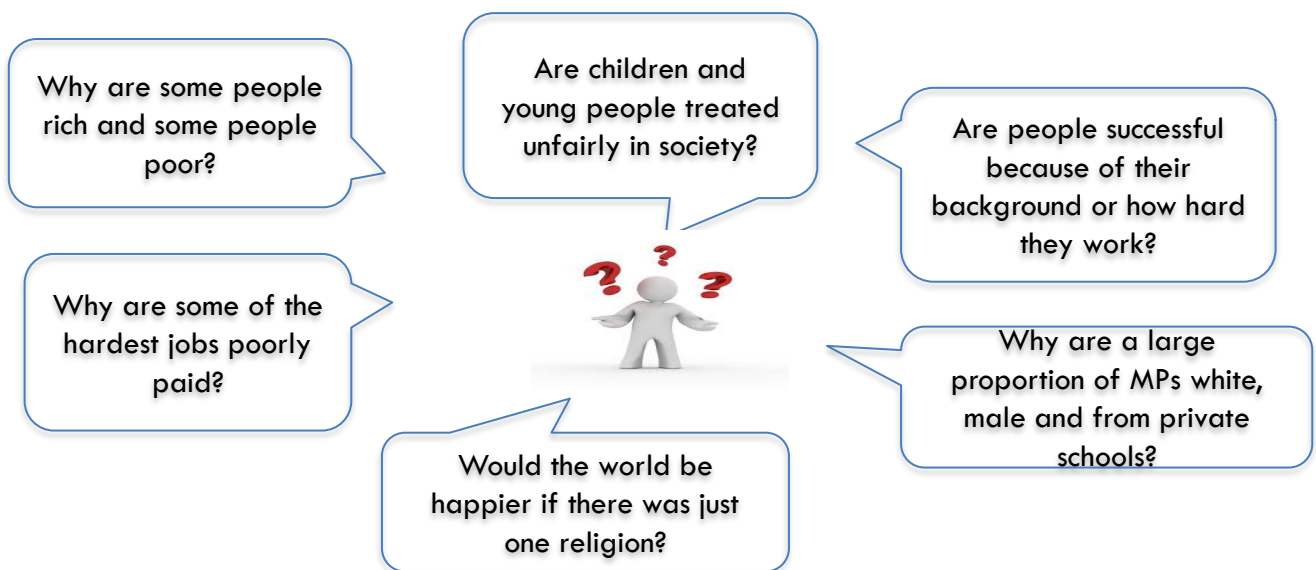


Time guide for each activity

1. The study of society, large groups of people and individuals.
2. It studies how and why people behave the way they do in society
3. Looks at how structures such as family and government influence human behaviour
4. A social science which uses research to investigate and predict human behaviour to help governments improve the lives of its citizens
5. A critical and radical subject, it is about questioning why society is as it is. It is about digging under the surface, looking at what is really going on.

Is sociology for me?

Yes, if you're interested in questions like these...



Sociology is **NOT**...

- An easy subject
- Just common sense
- Wishy-washy and unscientific
- Psychology



What will I study?

Year 1	Year 2
Introduction to theory Education Theory and methods Methods in context The Media	Crime and deviance Theory and methods Culture & Identity

We follow the AQA specification

Quiz

What kind of Sociologist will you be? Circle the answer you agree with the most.

1. The defining characteristic of human behaviour is:

- A) Their gender/ sex
- B) Their social class
- C) Their Race
- D) Their integration into society
- E) Their culture



2. We have the freedom to choose our own behaviour

- A) Yes
- B) No
- C) Depends
- D) Doesn't matter
- E) What is freedom?



10 minutes

3. What are your views on the family?

- A) Family is oppressive to women and teaches us to conform to gender roles
- B) Family is a tool of the ruling class teaching us to obey authority
- C) Family is a vital part of socialisation that teaches us norms and values
- D) Family is what you make it, everyone has a different view on it
- E) Family – what is a family? You can't define it

4. When it comes to inequality

- A) Gender is the most serious issue!
- B) Money and power the rich exploit the poor!
- C) Inequality is normal part of society
- D) Inequality is a label that has different meanings to people
- E) You make your own reality up

5. When it comes to Crime

- A) The justice system is more lenient on women
- B) Criminal laws protect the rich and powerful
- C) Crime is good for society as it reminds us of the rules
- D) Crimes are actions labelled as wrong to influence our behaviour
- E) Crime – what is a crime? Can we really define what a crime is?

6. When it comes to religion

- A) Religion oppresses and controls women – telling us to cover up and be obedient
- B) Religion is a tool used by those with power to control us
- C) Religion is a useful institution which unites people who share a common set of beliefs
- D) Religion means different things to different people
- E) Religion is just another meta-narrative (big story) people use to explain reality

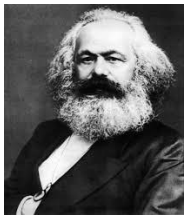
Quiz Answers: What kind of Sociologist will you be?

Mostly A – Feminist



You are most likely to turn into our Feminist Sue Sharpe. Feminism looks at how society is structured in a way that benefits men while oppressing women – this is known as patriarchy (male domination.). The theory is often a misunderstood as stereotypes and misconceptions about it exists. Many people do not realise that there are several types of feminism such as black, radical feminism and liberal.

Mostly B – Marxist



You are most likely to turn into Karl Marx. Marxism looks at how society is constructed is a way that produces class conflict with the rich having all the power and control whilst the poor are oppressed. Marx argues that the root cause of class inequality is down to capitalism as it encourages people to be greedy and materialistic. Just as capitalism replaced feudalism, Marx argues that capitalism will one day be replaced with communism

Mostly C- Functionalist



You are most likely to turn into Emile Durkheim. Functionalism is theory which argues that members of society are united together by a shared set of idea and beliefs called 'norms' (normal behaviour.) These norms are accepted by all members in society and are enforced by structures such as family and education. They see society like a human body – with all parts needed in order for it to 'function' and work effectively.

Mostly D- Interactionist



You are most likely to turn into Becker. Interactionism looks at how people create meaning during social interactions, how they present and construct the self (or identity) as well as how they define situations. One of the perspectives key ideas is that people act the way they do because of how they define situations. Becker uses the example of nudity to illustrate how timing, place and audience can influence how people see an action or idea.

Mostly E – Post-Modernist



You are most likely to turn into Foucault. Post-modernism is a more recent Sociological theory which seeks to question and de-construct existing structures and understandings of reality. Post modernism rejects the idea that one theory such as functionalism, Utilitarianism, religion or even science can explain reality!

Theory is a big part of Sociology

Task 1 Functional Functionalists

A sociological perspective that views society as a complex system with different parts working together to maintain stability and social order.

Read the blog posts below and answer the questions.

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/blog/meet-the-perspectives-functionalism-part-1>

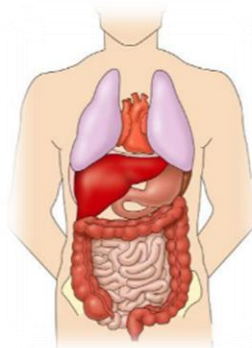
1. Which Frenchman is renowned for Functionalism?
2. Why was he interested in social changes from the move between pre-industrial society and modern industrial society?
3. What do you think a 'collective conscious' is?

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/blog/meet-the-perspectives-functionalism-part-2>

4. What is society compared to in the organic analogy?
5. What is meant by the organic analogy?
6. What are the two mechanisms for ensuring individuals conform to shared norms of society according to Parsons? (Outline and explain each)

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/blog/meet-the-perspectives-functionalism-part-3>

7. What is one strength of Functionalism as a theory?
8. What is one weakness of Functionalism as a theory?



30 minutes



Task 2 Fiery Feminists

A perspective that recognises and opposes patriarchy (male dominance in society) and advocates for the rights of women.

Below are some dates for key events in the history of women's rights in the UK.

- **1918** – Representation of the People Act
- **1970** – Equal Pay Act
- **1975** – Sex Discrimination Act
- **2010** – Equality Act
- **2015** – Shared Parental Leave introduced

1. Produce a **timeline** representing the key events. For each event, include a clear explanation of what occurred and why it was significant.
2. Feminism includes a range of perspectives. Research the beliefs of Radical, Marxist, Liberal, and Difference Feminists. What are their main ideas about how society works, and what changes do they believe are needed to achieve gender equality?
3. Watch this video and answer the questions:

HeForShe: [Emma Watson at the HeForShe Campaign 2014 - Official UN Video](#)

- What is the main message of the HeForShe campaign?
- Why does Emma Watson believe gender equality is an issue for everyone?
- What examples does she give from her own life?
- How does this speech challenge stereotypes about feminism?

Theory is a big part of Sociology

Task 3 Magnificent Marxists

Watch YouTube clip and answer the questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOGFSUu5UzA>



1. Is society based on conflict or consensus? Explain your answer.
2. What is communism according to Marx?
3. What is capitalism?
4. When was Marx formulating his theory? Why is this important?
5. Who are the Proletariat?
6. Who are the Bourgeoisie?
7. How would the working class change society?
8. What would the new economic/political arrangement be called?



20 minutes

Task 4 Sensational Social Action Theorists

Functionalism, Feminism and Marxism all differ in their approach to explain society. However, they all share one key feature. They are **structural (macro) theories**. This means that they look at society as a whole. Your next task is about **action (micro) theories**. This means they look at smaller parts of society and how they interact to understand society.

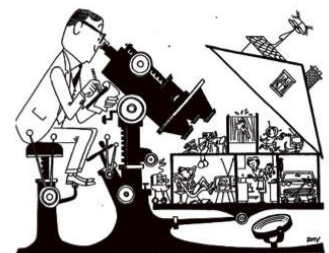
Watch YouTube clip and answer the questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJrnwOPC2f8>

1. What is meant by social action theory?
2. How do we decide meanings behind actions/events?
3. Who is the main theorist?
4. Who focuses on labelling?
5. What is labelling?
6. What can labelling lead to?



15 minutes



MACRO



MICRO



Theory is a big part of Sociology



Task 5 Passionate Postmodernists

15 minutes

Postmodernism is an approach that attempts to define how society has progressed to an era beyond modernity. Within this era individuals are more likely to have a greater importance placed on science and rational thought as traditional metanarratives no longer provide a reasonable explanation for postmodern life.

Watch YouTube clip and summarise some of the key features of postmodern society. Ensure you use key terms. E.g. hybridity.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqsP0vQJJ44&playnext=1&list=PLA09D91AD0BA40476>



Task 6 Theory Finale



Out of the 5 theories you have researched, which Sociological theory do you most and least agree with and why? Explain your reasons in detail making sure you explain what it was about that particular theory (**at least two sides of A4!**)

1.5 hours

We will send out answers to tasks 1-5 during your first week and we will take this analysis (task 6) in during your first lesson to assess your literacy skills and engagement with the activity. **There is a writing framework for this task on the next page for you to follow.**

Remember, we are not expecting you to be experts in theory at this stage. Just try your best to write in developed paragraphs. You may wish to do your own further research into the sociological theories, use statistics and evidence to support your answers.

Task 7 Getting Prepared

Buy an A4 lever arch Sociology file. You will need dividers (headings for these are on the right). You will need to bring this with you to your Sociology lessons. There will be a folder check every half term so you must keep this organised.



30 minutes



Divider Headings

Course information and Huish 30

Induction and Theory

Education

Research Methods

Methods in Context

The Media

Theory

Crime & Deviance

Culture & Identity

Theory is a big part of Sociology

Task 6 Writing Framework

1. Introduction (1 paragraph)

Briefly introduce what sociology is and why sociological theories are important.

Mention the five theories you researched.

State which theory you agree with most and which you agree with least (your thesis statement).

2. Overview of the Five Theories (1–2 paragraphs)

Give a short summary of each theory (1–2 sentences per theory).

Include key thinkers and main ideas. You can use a table or bullet points if that helps with clarity.

3. The Theory You Most Agree With (2–3 paragraphs)

- Name the theory and explain its main ideas in more detail.
- Explain why you agree with it:
- What makes it convincing?
- How does it explain society well?
- Use examples, statistics, or real-life situations to support your view.
- Mention any strengths or positive impacts of this theory.

4. The Theory You Least Agree With (2–3 paragraphs)

- Name the theory and explain its main ideas.
- Explain why you disagree with it:
- What are its weaknesses or limitations?
- Are there examples where it doesn't explain society well?
- Compare it briefly to the theory you preferred.



1.5 hours

5. Conclusion (1 paragraph)

- Summarise your main points.
- Reflect on what you learned from comparing the theories.
- Mention if your opinion changed during your research or writing.



Writing Tips

- Use clear topic sentences to start each paragraph.
- Try to use sociological terms where appropriate (e.g., “social structure,” “inequality,” “conflict,” “consensus”).
- Aim for around two sides of A4 in total (about 800–1000 words).
- Proofread your work for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.