**A-level Sociology**

**at The Blue Coat Sixth Form**

**Part of the Social Sciences Department**



**Part 1**

Welcome Sociologists! This is Part 1 of the Bridging course aimed to get you ready for your A level Sociology course.

The idea behind the bridging course is to give you a head start and so that you are already familiar with some of the key concepts and terms you will be using throughout the course. It doesn’t matter whether you have studied Sociology at GCSE- we are going to get you all ready for A-Level.

You have chosen a subject that will ‘keep you on your toes’ and make you think in ways you couldn’t imagine. You will certainly have a very different outlook on society by the end of your course.

**Section A- What is Sociology?**

The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing; others say it is shrinking. The important point to grasp is: society does not remain static over time; it constantly changes – through decades, centuries; and across countries, societies.

**Task 1:** Answer the following questions

* Give 3 different ways society has changed over the last 100yrs – think about the different areas of social life and work.
* Name 3 ways in which British society is different to another (America, Italy etc.)
* Why has society changed? Why are societies different?

**Task 2:** What is Sociology?

Watch the video clip on YouTube: What is Sociology? Crash Course Sociology <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio> and note down what you understand about Sociology.

Find the definitions for the following key sociological terms:

● Socialisation (primary socialisation and secondary socialisation)

● Norms

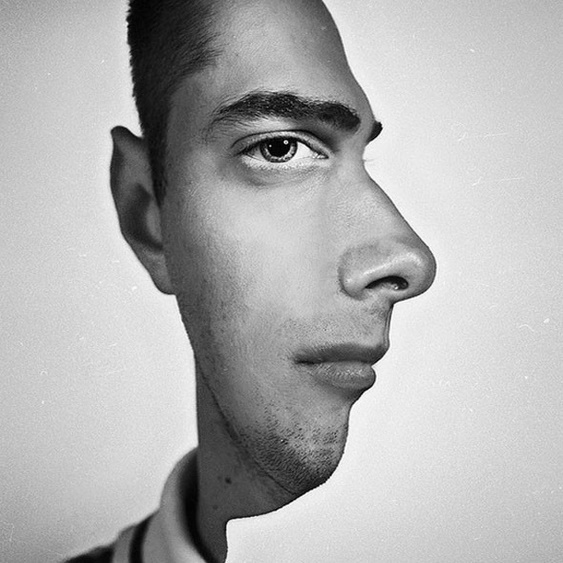
● Values

● Culture

● Social Class

● Gender

● Ethnicity

[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjigqiopOLbAhVMVxQKHWZzBw0QjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://www.seenox.org/incredible-visual-illusions-will-make-you-feel-like-on-drugs/&psig=AOvVaw3FBeiv_qt64EG9G-NAIyRO&ust=1529585523353145)**Section B – Differing opinions on society**

Sociology is the study of human social life. There are many different aspects of Sociology, so you must be curious and attentive when looking at the world.

Look at this photograph; not everything is as it seems!

There is usually another way of looking at things – and that is what we do as 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.

**Task 3**: Each group of statements represents a sociological perspective. Say which ONE statement out of each group you agree with and give reasons why you have chosen it.

a) Men dominate.

b) Gender inequalities exist.

c) Women are systematically disadvantaged.

d) All men hate women some of the time. Some men hate women all of the time.

e) Women are the takers of shit.

I agree with…

a) Society exists in a state of balance.

b) Society works for the benefit of all.

c) Structures in society exist to help people and the smooth operation of society.

d) We live in a democracy.

e) People are judged only in terms of their merit / skills / intelligence.

I agree with…

a) Life is unfair.

b) People are not paid enough.

c) The world is run for a very small group of people.

d) Most people cannot see that they spend their entire lives being exploited.

e) Our current system for organising the economy does not work.

I agree with…

**Task 4:**

A theory is something that explains the relationship between two or more things. A perspective can be defined as a way of looking at and seeing something. To have a perspective, therefore, means to look at something (whatever that thing might be) in a particular way. When we talk about the sociological perspective, therefore, we are talking about the particular way those sociologists, as opposed to non-sociologists to try to understand human social behaviour.

Use the internet to find out about the main sociological theories. For each one, explain the main idea and concepts and the key sociologists:

● Functionalism

● Marxism

● Feminism

● Action Theories

● Postmodernism

● Which sociological perspective do you agree with? Why?

The YouTube channel and websites below are good for summaries of the main theories:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtMJ-AfB_7J1538YKWkZAnGA>

<https://revisesociology.com/sociology-theories-a-level/>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/topics/group/theory-methods-key-terms>

If you’re finding it tricky, just note down some key terms for each perspective and make sure you look them up.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Functionalism | Marxism |
| Feminism | Action Theories |
| Postmodernism | **Which sociological perspective do you agree wit** **h and why?** |

**Next time!**

In the next part of the bridging course we will be looking at some **key studies** in the sociology of the family and education.

**Excited to know more?**



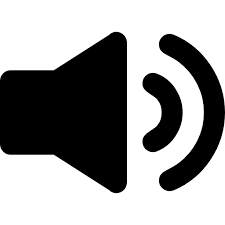
**Some recommended reading**

* Gang Leader for a Day by Sudhir Venkatesh
* Watching the English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour by Kate Fox
* Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class by Owen Jones
* We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



**Watch the TED talk**

* <https://www.ted.com/talks/sherry_turkle_connected_but_alone>
* <https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists>
* <https://www.ted.com/talks/roxane_gay_confessions_of_a_bad_feminist>
* <https://www.ted.com/talks/irene_mora_for_women_in_pursuit_of_motherhood_and_a_career>



**Listen to the podcast**

* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/play/b0b2kpm0>
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05strvl>
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03mg95w>
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qy05/episodes/player?page=36>

**Useful information to know**



**What specification is it?**

**AQA A level Sociology 7192**

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192>

**What text book will I use?**

Text books for Year 1 and Year 2 will be provided by the Sixth Form, but if you want to purchase a copy this is the amazon link.  
  
<https://www.amazon.co.uk/AQA-Level-Sociology-Book-Including/dp/0954007913>

