

# Welcome to A Level Sociology!

I am Ms Humphrey 😊

## Why is Sociology important?

Speak to the person next to you about  
**why you chose Sociology for your next steps?**

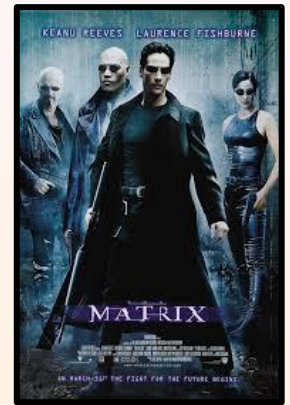
**Why is it an important subject for you?**

The function of sociology, as of every science, is to reveal that which is hidden.

*Pierre Bourdieu*

Do you agree with Bourdieu?  
Why?

Or another way to look at it is ....  
**Sociology is like taking the RED pill!**



Are you  
ready to  
take the  
RED pill?



The Matrix, lead character Neo was given the option of taking  
**a red pill, which would enable him to understand what was actually occurring  
outside the illusion created by the Matrix,** or  
**a blue pill, which would allow him to return to experiencing only that illusion.**

Sociology is the **study of the society.**

How we are influenced and shaped through being **members of groups and organisations.**

In Sociology we concentrate on:

- the way **we make society what it is**
- the way **society makes us what we are**

- Sociologists want to try and understand why social events like this happen?



- Going **beyond common sense and thinking critically.**
- They want to understand the **debates from theoretical perspectives. How do different academics see this?**

What do you think?

If you have studied Sociology before how might you explain this scenario ?

# What will you study in A Level Sociology?

- **Two Year Course**
- **Three Exams (2 hours each)**

**Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods**

**Paper 2: Culture and identity + Beliefs in Society**

**Paper 3: Crime and Deviance**

These will include assessment objectives such as:

**AO1** – Showing your knowledge of concepts/sociological theories/current trends and data.

**AO2** – Application of concepts/sociological theories/real life examples.

**AO3** – Evaluation and analysis.

You will be expected to show these skills in **short and extended writing questions.**

## **Future Courses/Careers:**

- Teaching
- Criminology
- Social Work
- Law
- Media
- Charity Work
- International Development
- Politics and Social Policy

# 'Big Questions' for A-Level Sociology

- To what extent is the individual shaped by society?
- Are we powerless or do we have power to influence our world?
  - Why is there inequality?
  - What makes us individual?

Lets have a look at a couple of **big questions** in more detail

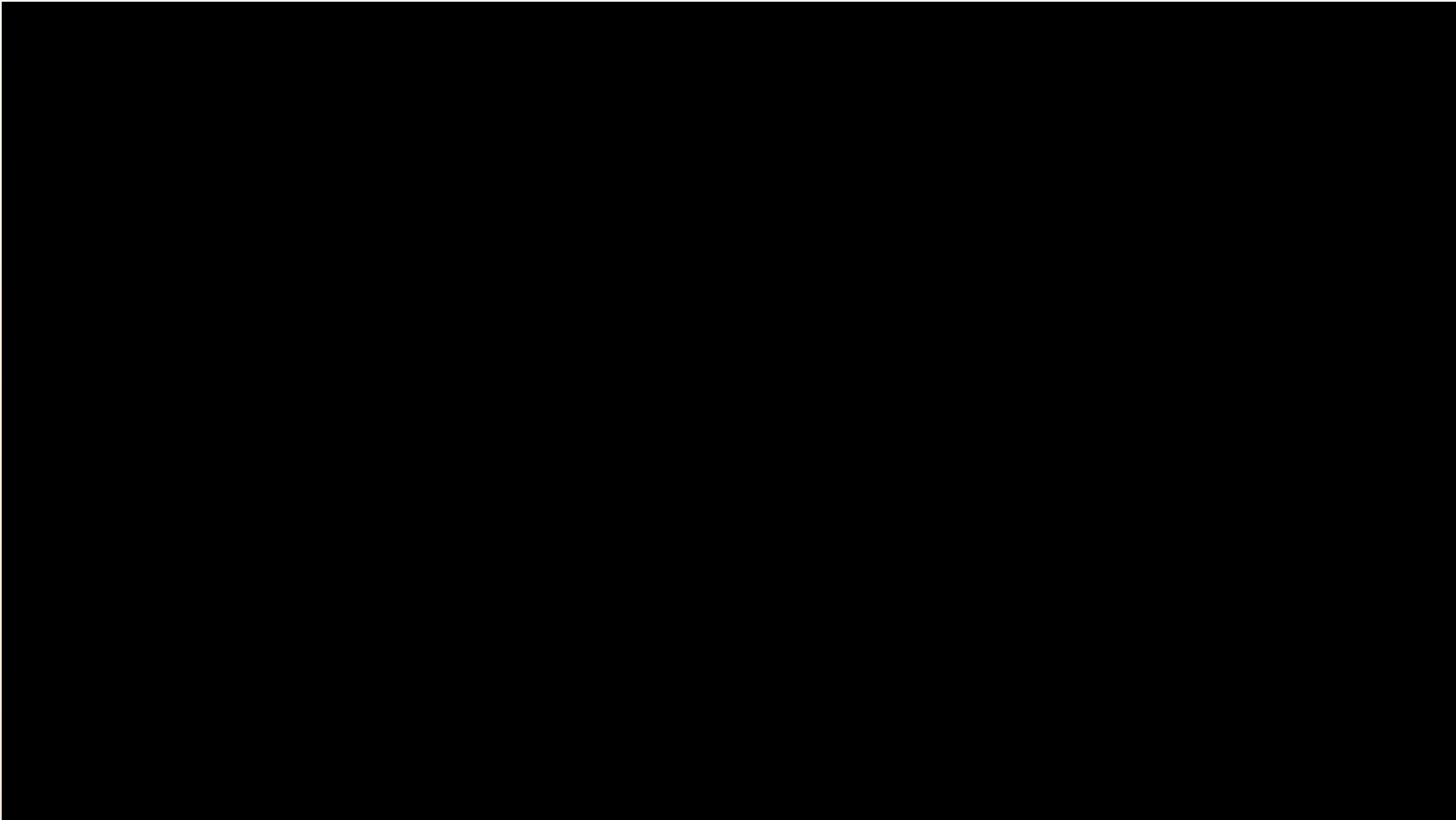


## **Two minutes!**

- Mind map all the people and groups you come into contact with on a daily basis
- How much do they influence your day ?



- Did your list include strangers?
- How much influence did you give them?

- 
- What do you think?
  - Would you conform?

Consider...  
What is the 'self'?



# **Big question – The Self ... what makes us 'us'?**

**Question: How much of who you are has come  
from yourself?**

**Take 2 minutes to list all the things that make up you**

Now in a different colour

**By each one write down what has influenced each of  
those things**

**How much of you 'self' did you influence?**

**Consider - how much control do we have over who we  
are?**

**Overall thought - How much of 'you' is from your own choices ?**

# So what does influence us?

Our family and other institutions such as school and religion **socialise** us into these things. This process is called **Socialisation**.

## **Norms = what you do**

These are the rules about how you should **behave** in different situations, for example:

- how we should dress in different places
- how we should speak to different types of people in society (adults vs children)

**Norms are what we consider 'normal'.**

## **Values = what you think**

These are the **attitudes and beliefs** we are taught to have. These include:

- the difference between right and wrong
- what is good/bad
- what counts as 'success'

**Values are what we see as important**

Complete the task on the sheet.

# What do Sociologists say? – The Structuralist view

## Functionalist view

- The self is a **product of social structures**
- For Functionalists – the self is a **product of socialisation and meritocracy**
- Various social institutions in society **allocate an individual's social roles.**
- This is **role allocation.**

**Your 'self' is just what society tells it to be!**

## Marxist view

They see the self as a product of Capitalism.

It is based on the **individuals relationship to the means of production**

They also argue that the self is **shaped by the Ruling Class and Ideology.**

**The ruling classes run the show!!**

**Your 'self' is just economics!**

This is ok  
right ?

# Lasting thoughts ....

We are all influenced by various things/people in our lives  
But to what extent?

We have a sense of 'self'  
What defines this?

As Sociologists our role is to explore the world **critically**.  
**Are you up for the challenge?**

