

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

Is this something which interests you – to find out more?
Why?

- 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 (essays) questions.**

What do we study at A-Level Sociology

Year 1 Units	Which Look to Answer Questions Like
Culture and Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is culture and why is it so hard to define? - What is the self? - Have we lost cultural diversity?
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why are girls getting higher grades than boys? - Does the education system teach you how to be independent or teach you how to obey? - Is the education system inclusive enough towards ethnic minorities?
Research Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the strengths and limitations of different methods of researching society?

Year 2 Units	Which Look to Answer Questions Like
Beliefs in Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is religion still important in the UK today? - What pushes people towards religious fundamentalism? - Does religion help or hinder social change?
Crime & Deviance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why do people commit crime? - Who is most likely to be a victim of crime? - What is the function of punishment?
Theoretical Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the strengths and limitations of different theoretical approaches of viewing society?

In groups discuss the highlighted questions – think like a sociologist !

- Sociology is a versatile subject that is particularly good in enhancing student's **critical thinking, essay writing, analytical and evaluative skills.**
- Victory A-Level Sociology students have gone on to study at University to study **Social Sciences, Law, Criminology, Psychology Philosophy and Economics.**

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?

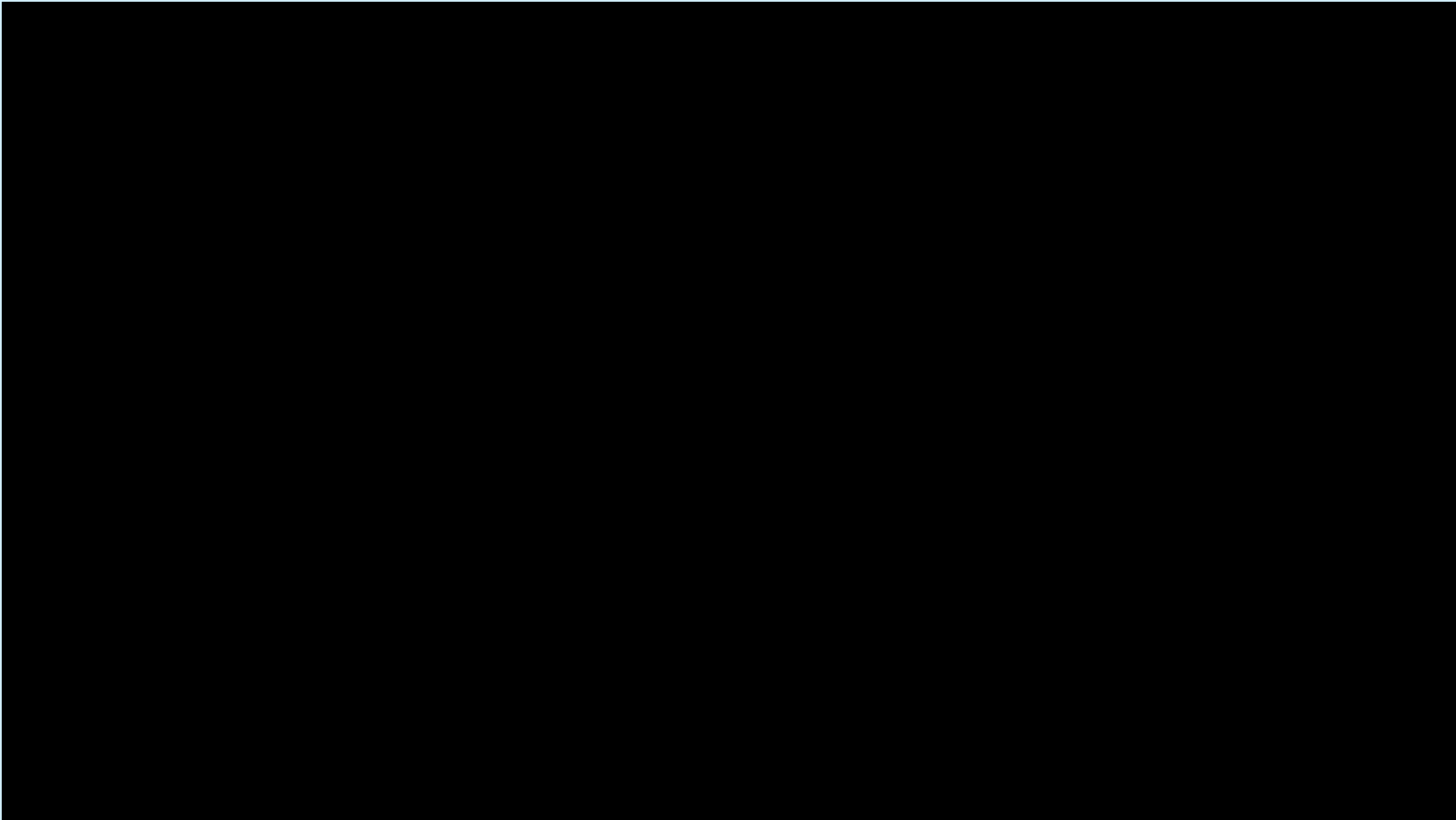
Lets have a look at a couple of **big questions** in more detail

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?



As Sociologists you will need to be critical thinkers to evaluate sociological theories about society

Practice your critical thinking skills in groups

- Would you rather be alive for the start or the end of the world?
- Would you rather be in school longer hours but fewer days, or more days and less hours?
- Would you rather give £1 million to your worst enemy, or burn it?
- Would you rather steal essential medicine for your partner and go to jail, or not steal the medicine?
- Would you rather live in a world with gender, or without gender?
- Would you rather keep the national lottery, or abolish it?
- Would you rather live without electricity or without education?

What is a typical

Lombroso(1876)
studied **prisoners** and
identified certain features
that they had in common.

He therefore claimed that if
you had these features, you
were

**more likely to become a
criminal!**

His features included -

- more acute sight
- Strong eyebrow line
- excessive use of tattooing

**What features did you
draw ?**

?



As modern Sociologists we hope we
have progressed in our understanding .

Now Sociologists tend to focus **on
social factors**

- *Education*
 - *Social class*
 - *Age*
 - *Gender*
 - *Ethnicity*
 - *Low socio-economic/poverty*
 - *Deprivation*
 - *Culture*
- And so on

In sociology we look at how different groups in society have different chances in life.

Life chances are defined as opportunities each individual has to improve his or her quality of life.

Who do you think has the best life chances ?

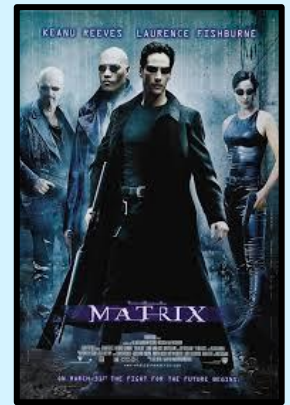
Task 1 - Rank these in order of the best life chances at the top

Be prepared to explain your choices

1. A white, working class girl
2. A black middle class boy
3. A white middle aged upper class man
4. A black working class woman
5. A Chinese middle class man
6. A white upper class woman
7. A Muslim young man



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.