**Sociology Transition work**

**Introduction**

Sociology refers to the study of society – the way people interact together in society, and how society shapes us and our decisions. Studying sociology will help you to understand different perspectives, to write analytic essays and crucially, to understand the same issue can be seen from multiple perspectives. One of the main issues we study in sociology is equality – how and why society is unequal, and why different people have different chances of succeeding in life. This will be the focus of this work pack.

Sociologists believe society can be broken down into different parts: social institutions. These include: education, the family, the mass media (TV and newspapers), the criminal justice system, health and religion. These different parts work together and play an important role in shaping our lives. They also believe that every society has a culture, which means a way of life, and a set of norms (expected behaviours) and values (what we hold to be important).

How do we become part of society? Sociologists argue that children go through a process called socialisation, which means learning society’s norms and values. At home, children go through primary socialisation, where they learn how to speak, share and other basic behaviours and norms. Secondary socialisation comes later, at school and beyond, where individuals learn from their peers and others.

Our behaviour is influenced by those around us – we are encouraged to conform to society’s expectations and norms (obey the rules and do what is expected) and discouraged from deviating from this. These expectations are enforced by sanctions from others – positive sanctions when we do the right thing, eg a smile, a laugh, or a reward, and negative sanctions when we do the wrong thing, a disapproving frown, a shake of the head, or a detention. The way society encourages us to confirm and discourages us from deviating is known as social control.

**Quick check: find and write out the definitions of the following words.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sociology** |  |
| **Sociologist** |  |
| **Social institutions** |  |
| **Norms** |  |
| **Values** |  |
| **Sanctions** |  |
| **Primary socialisation** |  |
| **Secondary socialisation** |  |
| **Social control** |  |

In Sociology, there are three main different sociological perspectives, or ways of looking at society:

1. **Functionalists**: these sociologists believe society runs smoothly, and is made up of different parts which all work together to keep society stable. They believe people agree on what is important (there is a value consensus) and people generally conform to the norms of society. They tend to focus on the positive functions of different parts of society. Watch this video to find out more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-83vVeSC2_g>
2. **Marxists**: based on the ideas of Karl Marx, they focus on inequalities based on social class (how much or little money someone has). They believe this is the main inequality in society. They argue there are two main classes: the working class (proletariat) and ruling class (bourgeoisie) and believe the ruling class own and exploit the workers, treating them badly and giving them low pay so they can make more money for themselves. Watch this video and find out more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSQgCy_iIcc>
3. **Feminists**: see gender inequality, inequality between men and women, as the main inequality in society. They argue women are treated badly and exploited by men, and that society is patriarchal (male-dominated). Watch this video to find out more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6Dl-9pSW-4>

**Complete the table to summarise the different perspectives:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Summary | Image |
| Functionalism |  |  |
| Marxism |  |  |
| Feminism |  |  |

**Is the criminal justice system fair?**

The criminal justice system refers to all parts of the system that creates and enforces the laws. This includes the government, who create and pass laws, police officers, who enforce the laws, judges, who decide sentences for those convicted of crimes and prison and probation officers.

Here are some statistics on the criminal justice system:

* Black people are 9 times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police
* The police are 3 x more likely to use force against black people
* Young, black males are overrepresented in prison

There are many explanations for these statistics, summarised below:

1. Institutional racism: this means racism embedded in the criminal justice system. The murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 by five white youths led to the Macpherson Report of 1998 and revealed the huge extent of institutional racism in the police force – the report recommended increasing the diversity of the police force and establishing an independent police complaints service, but there are still concerns of institutional racism in the police today.
2. Family structure: Tony Sewell argues lone parent families are likely to lead to black boys being involved in crime
3. Poverty: people from some ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to live in poverty and therefore more likely to commit crime.

The treatment of different groups, particularly different ethnicities, in the criminal justice system demonstrates one of the main inequalities which remains an issue in the UK, affecting people’s life chances significantly.

This results both in it appearing that more ethnic minority groups, especially black people, commit more crime (when they may just be targeted more by the police) and ethnic minority individuals not being taken seriously as victims of crime.

In addition, feminists argue women are often not taken seriously as victims of crime like domestic violence and sexual assault. They argue the patriarchal criminal justice system are keen to blame women for making themselves into victims of these crimes by dressing/ acting a certain way.

Even though there are a specific set of laws that everyone must follow, sociologists argue that these rules and the enforcement of the law are applied differently, unequally, to different groups of people, resulting in these inequalities.

**Research task: read/ watch/ listen to the sources below, and write 500 words describing whether or not the criminal justice system is fair and why/ why not.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Key points** |
| Documentary: [Stephen Lawrence, Time for Justice](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsHwKPE0mjU) |  |
| Article: [Institutional Racism 20 years after Stephen Lawrence’s murder](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/feb/22/institutional-racism-britain-stephen-lawrence-inquiry-20-years) |  |
| BBC Teach Clip: [Institutional Racism](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XL5f45TJgM) |  |
| Article: [David Lammy describing why stop and search is unfair](https://www.theguardian.com/law/2018/oct/13/stop-and-search-is-unjust-unfair-ineffectual-david-lammy) |  |
| Clip: [Tony Sewell explaining his perspective that lone parent families lead to black boys being involved in gangs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tU1tMhvf3OQ&t=11s) |  |
| Clip: David Lammy [discussing racial bias in the Criminal Justice System](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvMouTYuw7g) |  |

**Further reading/ watching/ listening**

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| --- | --- |
| **Documentaries/ TV** | * Panorama, Louis Theroux, Stacey Dooley, Mind of a Murderer etc
* I, Daniel Blake (Amazon Prime)
* Years and Years (BBC i-player)
* The ‘Up’ series (eg. 56 Up, 63 Up - on Netflix or Youtube)
* The Secret Life of 5 year olds (Channel 4 series)
* McMafia (Netflix)
* Freedom Writer’s Diary (Amazon Prime)
* When They See Us (Netflix)
* The Society (Netflix)
* Love, Simon (Amazon Prime)
* Ted Talks/Sociology (online)
* Made in Dagenham (BBC i-player)
* Wonder (Netflix)
* The Wife (Netflix)
* Growing up Gifted (iPLayer)
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| **Links to documentaries** | [Poor Kids: Life on the Breadline (Child Poverty Documentary) | Real Stories](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ck.henney%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CPackages%5CMicrosoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe%5CTempState%5CDownloads%5Cwww)[www.ted.com/talks?topics%5B%5D=sociology](http://www.ted.com/talks?topics%5B%5D=sociology)[BBC Panorama](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006t14n)[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/topics/Sociology\_of\_culture](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/topics/Sociology_of_culture)[Black Mirror](http://www.netflix.com) [www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches](http://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches) |
| **Books** | * Brave New World – Aldous Huxley
* Animal Farm – George Orwell
* 1984 – George Orwell
* Educated – Tara Westover
* Invisible Women – Caroline Criado Perez
* Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class – Owen Jones
* The Establishment and How They Get Away With It – Owen Jones
* Natives - Akala
* The Handmaid’s Tale – Margaret Atwood (also a series)
* Vox – Christina Dalcher
* The God Delusion – Richard Dawkins
* Outsiders: Studies in Sociology of Deviance – Howard S Becker
* Folk Devils and Moral Panics – Stanley Cohen
* A Glasgow Gang Observed – Patrick James
* Gang Leader For A Day – Sudhir Venkatesh
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| **Podcasts** | <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/department-sociology-podcasts> <https://www.spreaker.com/show/the-sociology-show> [www.anchor.fm/allsociology](http://www.anchor.fm/allsociology)[www.measureradio.libsyn.com/podcast](http://www.measureradio.libsyn.com/podcast)[www.socialsciencespace.com/author/socialsciencebites](http://www.socialsciencespace.com/author/socialsciencebites)[www.thesocialbreakdown.com](http://www.thesocialbreakdown.com)[www.soundcloud.com/thesociologicalreview](http://www.soundcloud.com/thesociologicalreview)[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qy05](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qy05)[www.anchor.fm/digital-sociology-podcast](http://www.anchor.fm/digital-sociology-podcast) |
| **Websites** | [www.theguardian.com/education/sociology](http://www.theguardian.com/education/sociology)[www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/sociology](http://www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/sociology)[www.tutor2u.net/sociology/blog](http://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/blog)[www.nortonbooks.typepad.com/everydaysociology/](http://www.nortonbooks.typepad.com/everydaysociology/)[www.soc.washington.edu/news](http://www.soc.washington.edu/news)[www.sociologysal.blogspot.com](http://www.sociologysal.blogspot.com)[www.gendersociety.wordpress.com](http://www.gendersociety.wordpress.com)[www.creativesociology.blogspot.com](http://www.creativesociology.blogspot.com)[www.sociologylens.net](http://www.sociologylens.net)[www.blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/](http://www.blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/)<https://revisesociology.com/><https://www.senecalearning.com/><https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology><https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192><https://thesociologyguy.com/a-level-sociology/><https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6VpoZj33Df_rNb8KymCczw><https://napierpress.com/> |
| **Online courses** | * Intro to Sociology (New York University): <https://www.courses.com/new-york-university/intro-to-sociology>
* Introductory sociology (Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur): <https://www.courses.com/indian-institute-of-technology-kanpur/introductory-sociology>
* Foundations of modern social theory (Yale University): <https://www.courses.com/yale-university/foundations-of-modern-social-theory>
* Reading Marx’s Capital (City University, NY): <https://www.courses.com/city-university-of-new-york/reading-marxs-capital>
* What do we mean by ‘family’ (intermediate): <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/sociology/what-do-we-mean-family/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* ‘Problem’ populations, ‘problem’ places (intermediate): <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/sociology/problem-populations-problem-places/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* Children’s rights (intermediate): <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/people-politics-law/politics-policy-people/sociology/childrens-rights/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* Social problems – who makes them (intermediate): <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/people-politics-law/politics-policy-people/sociology/social-problems-who-makes-them/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* Identity in question: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/people-politics-law/politics-policy-people/sociology/identity-question/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* Social construction and social constructionism (intermediate): <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/people-politics-law/politics-policy-people/sociology/social-construction-and-social-constructionism/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* Understanding economic inequality: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/understanding-economic-inequality/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>
* Beyond the ballot – Women’s rights and suffrage from 1866 to today: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/womens-rights>
* Understanding gender inequality: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-gender-inequality>
* Religion and conflict: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/religion-and-conflict>
* Why religion matters – religious literacy, culture and diversity: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/why-religion-matters>
* Gender representation in the media: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/gender-and-the-media>
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