



HAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

Learning together Achieving together

Y11 – Y12 Summer Bridging Tasks 2025

Sociology A Level

Name: _____

- You should spend some time during the summer holidays working on the activities in this booklet.
- You will be required to hand in this booklet in your first lesson at the start of Year 12 and the content will be used to form the basis of your first assessments.
- You should try your best and show commitment to your studies.
- We are really looking forward to you coming to Hampstead School Sixth Form and studying A Level Sociology

WHAT IS 'SOCIOLOGY'?

Definition of Sociology:

INDUCTION OVERVIEW

In the first two weeks you will be familiarising yourself with the two main themes on the course:

1) **Socialisation, culture and identity**



2) **Social differentiation, power and stratification**



Activity: Match the definition to the correct key concept

Key Concept	Definition
Socialisation	Who a person is: how they see themselves and how others see them.
Culture	Social characteristics that make an individual or group distinct from another e.g. income, gender, age, ethnic background
Identity	Social process by which people learn the norms and values of their culture; mainly takes place during childhood, but continues throughout life via agencies of society (e.g. educational system, mass media)
Social differentiation	Ability of individuals or social groups to exert their will over others, and to ensure that decisions taken reflect their own interests.
Power	Shared norms & values, as well as shared language, knowledge + material goods, of a society
Stratification	Refers to (unequal) division of society into hierarchically ordered layers - or strata - with the most privileged at the top & the least favoured at the bottom

It is VERY important that you keep these notes and begin to organise them as ORGANISATION in Sociology is essential!

INDUCTION KEY TERMS GRID

Using a combination of textbooks and knowledge that you have learned in your research so far, find the definitions of the following concepts. Once you have done that, try to think of examples for each, perhaps from your own experiences.

Key Term	Definition	Example(s)
Socialisation		
Primary socialisation		
Secondary socialisation		
Identity		
Social control		
Sanctions		

Key Theme 1: Socialisation, Culture and Identity

Sociologists believe that behaviour is LEARNED rather than genetic/biological.

Those who believe our behaviour is determined by our NATURE, think that behaviour is...	Those who believe our behaviour is determined by our NURTURE, think that behaviour is...

Sociological evidence: if human behaviour was caused by nature, not nurture, there wouldn't be wide differences between cultures in terms of customs, values, beliefs, roles: all humans would behave in similar ways. This suggests that behaviour is affected by the culture that you are born into.

What is meant by **culture**, and what do people within a culture tend to have in common with each other?



We are born into a culture: a social world that already exists and we have to learn 'how things are done' in it. Only by learning the cultural rules of society can a human interact with other humans. This process is called **socialisation**, and is the process of **internalising** the norms and values of a **culture** so that ways of thinking and behaving are taken for granted.

Primary socialisation is the first stage of this lifelong process. Agencies of primary socialisation include the family. It is at this stage that children learn language and basic norms and values. These can be formally taught, but they are most likely to be picked up informally by children imitating their parents.

Our norms and values are reinforced throughout our lives from institutions outside of the family. This is known as **secondary socialisation**. Can you think of any institutions that might do this?

In the boxes below:

- (i) **Define each in your own words**
- (ii) **Name some norms and values that British people usually follow**

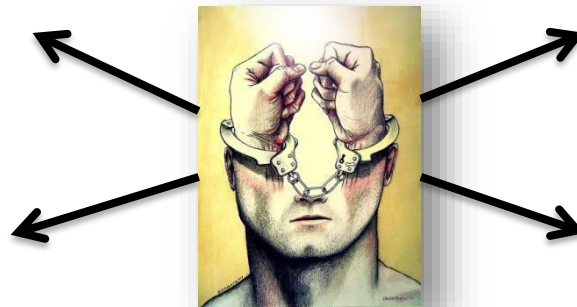


- Parents may use **sanctions** to reinforce approved behaviour and punish behaviour defined as unacceptable. Such processes help children learn how they are expected to behave in a range of social situations. Can you think of examples of:



Positive sanctions?	Negative sanctions?

- Other institutions try to control behaviour too. This is known as social control. Give some ways in which this happens, including both FORMAL and INFORMAL methods:



SOCIALISATION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY ACTIVITY 1 ⇒ Read the following article and then answer the questions below:

SEEING THE STRANGE IN THE FAMILIAR: THE NACIREMA

Every culture contains its own unique patterns of behaviour, which seem alien to people from other cultural backgrounds. As an example, we can take the Nacirema, a group described in a celebrated research investigation by Horace Miner (1956). Miner concentrated his attention on the elaborate body rituals in which the Nacirema engage, rituals which have strange and exotic characteristics. They are a North American group living in the territory between the Canadian Cree, the Yaqui and Tarahumare of Mexico, and the Carib and Arawak of the Antilles. Little is known of their origin, although tradition states that they came from the east.

The fundamental belief underlying the whole system appears to be that the human body is ugly and that its natural tendency is to weakness and disease. Encased in such a body, people's only hope is to avoid these characteristics through the use of the powerful influences of ritual and ceremony. Every household has one or more shrines devoted to this purpose... The focal point of the shrine is a box or chest which is built into the wall. In this chest are kept the many charms and magical potions without which no native believes he could live. These preparations are secured from a variety of specialised practitioners. The most powerful of these are the medicine men, whose assistance must be rewarded with substantial gifts. However, the medicine men do not provide the curative potions for their clients, but decide what the ingredients should be and then write them down in an ancient and secret language. This writing is understood only by the medicine men and by the herbalists who, for another gift, provide the required potions.

The Nacirema have an almost pathological horror of and fascination with the mouth, the condition of which is believed to have a supernatural influence on all social relationships. Were it not for the rituals of the mouth, they believe that their teeth would fall out, their gums bleed, their jaws shrink, their friends desert them, and their lovers reject them. They also believe that a strong relationship exists between oral and moral characteristics. For example, there is a ritual ablution of the mouth for children, which is supposed to improve their moral fibre.

The daily body ritual performed by everyone includes a mouth ritual. Despite the fact that these people are so careful about care of the mouth, this rite involves a practice which strikes the uninitiated stranger as revolting. It was reported to me that the ritual consists of inserting a small bundle of hog hairs into the mouth, along with certain magical powders, and then moving the bundle in a highly formalised series of gestures.

1. *What's your initial reaction to the Nacireman culture (way of life)? Be ready to justify your answer.*
2. *List as many **norms** and **values** of the Nacireman **culture** as possible.*
3. *Consider any similarities between the Nacireman **culture** and our own.*
4. *Find evidence within the article that **culture** and **behaviours** are **learned** rather than **instinctive** or **innate**.*

SOCIALISATION, CULTURE AND IDENTITY ACTIVITY 2 ⇒ Read the following article and then answer the questions below:

CASE STUDY: THE PORTUGUESE ‘CHICKEN GIRL’

We can illustrate the importance of primary socialisation by examining feral children to see what cultural characteristics they lack.

What are ‘feral children’?

.....
.....
.....

Isabel Quaresma is ten, but cannot talk, and is only now learning to eat with a spoon. She is a ‘wild child’ who has only recently been bought into regular contact with human beings. Since birth the child has lived in a chicken coop. Her mother is a mentally deficient rural worker living in poverty. The mother works in the fields all day and soon after Isabel’s birth confined her to the chicken coop where she was thrown pieces of bread and shared the chicken feed with the fowls. Neighbours gossiped about this scandal for years but had done nothing, not wanting to interfere with a family matter.



Isabel Quaresma

At last, however distinct hospital radiographer at Torres Vedras Hospital approached local institutions to accept Isabel. After a string of refusals, the radiographer took her into his own home, but could not cope. Isabel’s contact with humans had been minimal and she could neither talk nor was she potty trained – in the chicken coop she had lived in her own excrement. Her gestures and sounds resembled those of fowls she had lived with since infancy. She scratched food up with her hands. Isabel now lives at a private clinic for severely handicapped children in Lisbon. The most striking thing about her appearance is her severely stunted body. She has a tiny head, and the stature of an infant. X rays have shown her skull structure to be sound. Her dwarfed form is almost certainly due to malnutrition. One eye is clouded with cataract, thought to be the result of a scratch from the hens she lived with. She communicates through repetitive calls and beats her arms and drums her feet to express emotion – actions probably imitative of her only living companions. Dr Joao dos Santos is optimistic about her chances of a social awakening. But, he explains: it all depends on whether we can build warm human contacts which will move her to want to speak and communicate with us’ (Source: Jill Joliffe in the Guardian, 12th June 1980)

Questions

1. Describe the ways in which Isabel Quaresma differed from a normal ten year old

.....
.....
.....

2. Imagine that immediately after your birth you were raised by apes in the forest. If this happened you would lack certain social skills necessary for living in human society, such as the ability to talk a human language and the knowledge of customs like queuing for buses. But what skills might you have gained?

.....
.....
.....

Key Theme 2: Social Differentiation, Power & Stratification

STRATIFICATION – LAYERS WITHIN SOCIETY

Activity: Complete the grid below in detail What are the types of stratification in the UK?

What is *stratification*?

Stratification systems vary over time and place:

- In parts of rural India, the caste system operates.
- In Medieval Britain, the feudal system existed.
- In South Africa for most of the 20th Century, apartheid separated the nation.

Stretch and Challenge Research Suggestion:
Find out about one of these types of stratification and assess how much it differs from social class stratification in Britain today.

	Type of Stratification	Differences in terms of wealth, status and life chances
1		
2		
3		
4		

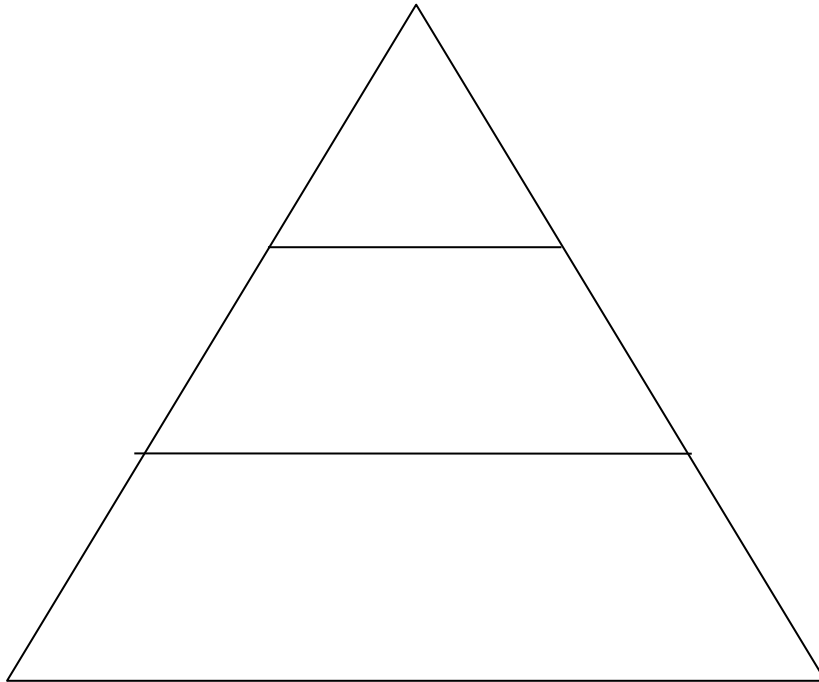
Example: Social Class

The government (and some sociologists) measure social class by a person's **occupation** (what people do for a living). Those in non-manual/skilled/professional jobs such as doctors, teachers and office workers are defined as middle-class, while those in unskilled/semi-skilled/manual jobs such as electricians, bus drivers and street sweepers are defined as working-class.

Remember: social class is very difficult to define.

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of using occupation to measure social class?





2. Add the following labels to the social class HIERARCHY diagram above:

middle class
working class
upper class (aristocracy)
largest group
smallest group

most powerful
least powerful
professional/graduate jobs
e.g. lawyers, dentists

manual jobs e.g. mechanics
and hairdressers
the royal family
blue-collar
white-collar

Watch this clip on Social class and the British Class Survey from 'The One Show' (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zInIRiB0p44>), and answer the questions below:



1. When did the 3-tier social class system emerge in the UK?

2. What are the 3 components of social class, according to the British Class Survey and Bourdieu?

3. What are the main problems with the Survey?

Task- Write down your ideas to the following questions

Do you think social class has affected your life at all? Why/why not?

Can you think of any reasons why social class might have become less important in the UK over the last century?

SOCIAL CLASS FILL THE GAPS

Social class is very difficult to _____ as sociologists disagree about the existence of class (have class boundaries disappeared or become blurred?), whilst others disagree on the nature of class and therefore how it should be _____. Some argue that class is about your culture and attitudes whilst other argue that social class can be measured in relation to your _____ or income. However to help us understand class, the following descriptions should help:

The _____ class is one of the largest social classes, referring to those working in manual jobs – jobs involving physical work and literally, work with their hands, like _____ or labouring work.

The _____ class is also a very large class, and refers to those in non-manual work – jobs which don't involve any physical effort, which are usually performed in offices and involve _____ and ICT work or various kinds. Some argue that those in the lowest levels of non-manual work, such as _____ and those in routine office work, should really be included in the working class, as their pay and working conditions are more like those of manual workers than many sections of the middle class.

The _____ class is a small class, and refers to those who are the main owners of society's wealth, including landowners and the traditional _____. Often these people do not work for others as they have such large assets that work is not _____ to survive.

The _____ is a small class, and refers to a group of people who are right at the bottom of the class structure, whose _____ often excludes them from full participation in society.

define	paperwork	wealth	necessary	middle
underclass	measured	factory	aristocracy	poverty
working	supermarket checkout operators			upper