

Sociology A Level

Preparation work: Pre-course Reading, Research and Tasks

Pre-reading and research will help you to become more familiar with the topics you are going to study on your A Level course. If you complete the tasks below they will also help you to become more confident when you start your course. It will also help show you where you can draw on links from GCSE subjects like History, English, Geography, RE, Drama, Art etc. The subject deals with the social world, so has links to many topics.

Specification :

A good place to start to look at the A level specification and familiarise yourself with what you will be studying on the course:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology>

Topics we cover :

Year 1: Families and Households
Education
Research Methods

Year 2: Crime and Deviance
Stratification (inequality)
Theory and Methods

Task 1:

What is Sociology? Use the following resources to make a 1 side summary (A4) of what sociology is. Include the following definitions in your summary: society, culture, norms, values.

Sources to help:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio> 'What is Sociology? Crash Course'.

Task 2:

Read the following summaries of these 4 key sociologists on the Tutor2U website. Then create one of the following to illustrate their key ideas about how society works, either: storyboard or cartoon, or a poster presentation, or a 3D model using play-doh, plasticine or junk from the recycling bin (take a photo of it!).

i) **Karl Marx:** <https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/reference/classic-texts-karl-marx-selected-writings-1857-1867>

ii) **Emile Durkheim:** <https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/reference/what-is-functionalism>

iii) **Sylvia Walby:** <https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/reference/classic-texts-sylvia-walby-theorising-patriarchy-1990>

iv) **Albert Cohen:** <https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/reference/classic-texts-albert-cohen-delinquent-boys-1955>

Task 3:

Watch this revision video on sociological research methods:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a442IFMFWVA>

Create a big mind map of all the different research methods discussed e.g. surveys, observation etc. For each one, write a short description of it, one advantage of the method and one disadvantage. Pick one method that you could use to find out about young people's experiences of lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic, and write a plan for how you would go about it, and how you could record your results.

Websites for Further Research and Reading:

One of the great things about Sociology is that issues about society are always in the news. You must keep up to date with news stories that relate to key topics you will be studying. Try to think critically about the stories – do they present a particular view, do you need to ask more questions?

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/family>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/ukcrime>

Sites for further research:

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology> - have a look at the 'classic texts'

<https://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/sociology>

Books to Read:

Just some suggestions:

- **Gang Leader for a Day** by Sudhir Venkatesh – real life research with a Gang in Chicago
- **1984** by George Orwell – set in an imagined future where the government has complete control over the population.
- **Chavs** by Owen Jones – class inequality in the UK
- **Goth** by Paul Hodkinson – an analysis of what it's like to be a 'Goth' in the UK today
- **Communist Manifesto** by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels – harder to read but short. Can download for free online.

Films/TV to Watch:

Any film or TV show about society is relevant – you just need to think like a sociologist – what does it show us about society? What else would you want to know?

- **Educating Rita** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4z8OcnIWU-Y>. Consider what the film tells us about social class, gender roles and education. What did you think of the key characters, Rita, Frank and Rita's husband Denny? How do their social backgrounds influence their behaviour?
- **Any of the 'Educating' series: Manchester, Yorkshire, Cardiff** – loads of these on Youtube. Consider what it shows us about inequalities and issues in education today.
- **Teenage Knife Wars** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8L0sIrljOzc>



Progression Opportunities

Why choose Sociology A Level:

- <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/subjects/what-can-you-do-sociology-degree>
- Careers using Sociology: please follow this [link](#)

We hope you enjoy completing these tasks and look forward to you joining the course.

