

Summer 2020 Preparation

A-Level Sociology

Why study Sociology at Magna?

You will receive outstanding teaching from very experienced A-level teachers, who will provide you with engaging and active learning to help you develop a true passion for the subject. With the smaller class sizes, you will receive more one-to-one support than you would from other sixth form institutions. Sociology at Magna follows the AQA specification, designed to reflect the way sociology is delivered at undergraduate level. You will become a competent and critical thinker, with the analytical skills to assess the concepts, perspectives and research in sociology. As a result, by the end of the course, you will be a fluent communicator, who is able to write a concise and persuasive line of argument on a multitude of social concepts, processes and issues.

The purpose of your task

Sociology looks at the complex and multi-layered foundations of society and this task will introduce you to some of the different perspectives, or lenses, that sociologists use to make sense of the same society. Widely speaking sociologists fall into two camps; a consensus or conflict perspective. Consensus perspectives believe society is harmonious and made of groups who are largely in agreement and share the same set of values. On the other hand, conflict perspectives argue that society is made up of competing groups, with the powerful group yielding control over the other groups. This task will help you gain a better understanding of some of these different perspectives.

Your task

1. Produce an informative booklet on 4 major perspectives in sociology (Functionalism, Marxism, Feminism and Social Action Theory).

Success criteria for this task:

- Image(s) that represent key aspects of each perspective – you can either draw/print/produce electronically.
- Key terms that are fundamental to the approach (e.g. Marxists believe that the working class are exploited by the capitalist class (the powerful and ruling groups in society) so that economic inequalities in society can be maintained. I would expect to see these terms included.
- As you read through each perspective select the terms that appear to be specific and help distinguish it from the other perspectives.

Deadline for Task: First lesson in the week commencing 7 September 2020



- Key individuals within this perspective (e.g. *Durkheim and Parsons as major pioneers of functionalism*).
- You may like to include some key criticisms of each perspective too.



2. Evaluate the view that consensus theories are an accurate representation of society. Maximum word count = 300. NOTE: This is not a lot of writing so make sure you carefully plan your response first!
 - Paragraph 1: Write a clear and concise outline of functionalism as a consensus approach to society (approx. 150 words).
 - Paragraph 2: Evaluate the 'overly positive' consensus approach; use evidence from Feminist and/or Marxist views to explain why the 'overly positive' Functionalist view of society may not actually be a very accurate representation of society (approx. 150 words).

Recommended resources

1. Type this website page in your search engine:
<https://revisesociology.com/introduction-to-sociology/>
2. Click on the links and read the following articles:
 - [An Introduction to Sociological Perspectives](#)
 - [An introduction to Functionalism](#)
 - [An introduction to Marxism](#)
 - [An introduction to Feminism](#)
 - [Liberal, Radical and Marxist Feminist Perspectives on Society](#)
 - [An introduction to social action theory](#)

NOTE: Use the information here to help you complete the introductory tasks!

Recommended reading and activities list

If you are able to purchase the core textbook (see 'essential resources' below) before the summer then this is a good place to start with your reading!

Alternatively, the www.revisesociology.com website is a great resource for helping you understand some the key concepts and topics taught in sociology.

You will be learning the following topics in year 12 so feel free to research any/all of them to get a good head start: Research methods, Sociological perspectives, education and families.

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Required stationery and equipment

Arch lever folder (for filing the work as it's been completed)

A4 folder (Large enough to fit a workbook and bits of classwork/homework etc. This will be the one you bring back and forth to class)

Plastic wallets (optional)

6- or 10-piece file dividers

White board pens

Black/blue pens

Green pen

Highlighters

Post-it notes (not essential)

Fine liner coloured pens for revision resources

Things to consider

Sociology is a social science because it aims to use objective and scientific processes to gain a better understanding of society so developing a strong understanding of the research methods used by sociologists will be paramount to outstanding results at A level. You will therefore be expected to design, conduct and analyse your own sociological research. In addition, you will need to be fairly competent in written communication due to the emphasis on essay writing at A level. It is also important to note that sociology overlaps with other subjects, namely history and politics. You do not need to study history or politics at A level to do brilliantly on sociology but an appreciation of how events and differing political agendas of the past have influenced, and will continue to influence, the development of society will put you at a great advantage.