

The Friary Sixth Form



Sociology Subject Bridging Pack 2025

Course Expectations



Welcome to Sociology!

Sociology students are expected to arrive to their first lesson in September with all sections of their Bridging Pack complete, and with all of the following equipment:

- Two lever arch folders
- Two sets of folder dividers
- A large supply of plastic wallets
- Writing equipment and highlighters
- An A4 pad for note making
- The following textbook – Napier Press Sociology 'AQA A Level Sociology Book One.' These can be bought from new or second hand.



In year 12 you will study Families and Households, Education and Research Methods.

In year 13 you will study Beliefs in Society, Crime and Deviance and Sociological Theory.

The course will be delivered by the following teachers:

- Mrs Barratt - hbarratt@friaryschool.co.uk
- Miss Golder - sgolder@friaryschool.co.uk
- Mrs Morgan - hmorgan@friaryschool.co.uk

Course Overview



The AQA A-Level Sociology course is 100% examined at the end of year 13 through 3 exams. All exams are 2 hours in length.

Although students will be assessed on particular topics within these exams, there are some core and integral themes as part of the AQA Sociology A-Level course that we will deliver throughout the two years. These are -

- sociological theories, perspectives and methods
- the design of the research used to obtain the data under consideration, including its strengths and limitations.
- socialisation, culture and identity
- social differentiation, power and stratification.

Year 12 Study - Education

- the role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure
- differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society
- relationships and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil identities and subcultures, the hidden curriculum, and the organisation of teaching and learning
- the significance of educational policies, including policies of selection, marketisation and privatisation, and policies to achieve greater equality of opportunity or outcome, for an understanding of the structure, role, impact and experience of and access to education; the impact of globalisation on educational policy.

Year 12 Study – Research Methods and Methods in Context

- quantitative and qualitative methods of research; research design
- sources of data, including questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics
- the distinction between primary and secondary data, and between quantitative and qualitative data
- the relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'
- the theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research
- Students must be able to apply sociological research methods to the study of education

Year 12 Study - Families and Households

- the relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and to state policies
- changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation, separation, divorce, childbearing and the life course, including the sociology of personal life, and the diversity of contemporary family and household structures
- gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships within the family in contemporary society
- the nature of childhood, and changes in the status of children in the family and society
- demographic trends in the United Kingdom since 1900: birth rates, death rates, family size, life expectancy, ageing population, and migration and globalisation.

Year 13 Study - Beliefs in Society

- ideology, science and religion, including both Christian and non-Christian religious traditions
- the relationship between social change and social stability, and religious beliefs, practices and organisations

- religious organisations, including cults, sects, denominations, churches and New Age movements, and their relationship to religious and spiritual belief and practice
- the relationship between different social groups and religious/spiritual organisations and movements, beliefs and practices
- the significance of religion and religiosity in the contemporary world, including the nature and extent of secularisation in a global context, and globalisation and the spread of religions

Year 13 Study - Crime and Deviance

- crime, deviance, social order and social control
- the social distribution of crime and deviance by ethnicity, gender and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime
- globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the media and crime; green crime; human rights and state crimes
- crime control, surveillance, prevention and punishment, victims, and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies.

Year 13 Study – Sociological Theory

- consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories
- the concepts of modernity and post-modernity in relation to sociological theory
- the nature of science and the extent to which Sociology can be regarded as scientific
- the relationship between theory and methods
- debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom
- the relationship between Sociology and social policy.

Tasks



Task 1

Sociology is a fairly new discipline and there are lots of different ideas about how we should define it.

- a) Read through the 5 definitions provided.
- b) What similarities can you find between these definitions? Make a list.
- c) What differences can you find between these definitions? Make a list.
- d) Using no more than 200 words create your own definition of sociology.

A. Ginsberg ("The Study of Society", 1939):

"Sociology may be defined as the study of society; that is of the web of human interactions and relationships".

B. Sugarman ("Sociology", 1968):

"Sociology is the objective study of human behaviour in so far as it is affected by the fact that people live in groups".

C. Giner ("Sociology", 1972):

"The purpose of Sociology is the scientific study of human society through the investigation of people's social behaviour".

D. Giddens ("Sociology", 1989):

"Sociology is the study of human social life, groups and societies. It is a dazzling and compelling enterprise, having as its subject matter our own behaviour as social beings. The scope of sociology is extremely wide, ranging from the analysis of passing encounters between individuals in the street up to the investigation of world-wide social processes".

E. Lawson and Garrod ("The Complete A-Z Sociology Handbook", 1996):

"Sociology is the study of individuals in groups in a systematic way, which grew out of the search for understanding associated with the industrial and scientific revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries".

Now consider and write answers to the following questions—

- 1. Why is sociology an important subject?
- 2. Does it seem more like a humanities subject or a science subject from the definitions you've read?
- 3. What sort of topics do you think sociologists research?
- 4. What sort of jobs do you think sociologists are well suited to?

Task 2– What is the purpose of Education? My reflections.

One of the first modules you will consider is the function of education in society. Before we consider sociological theories and explanations about the role and purpose of education, you need to write around 500 words and reflect on your personal experiences and views of education.

Extended writing forms a large part of the course so make sure you structure this like an essay, with an introduction and conclusion and try to use key terms from your glossary. Think about the following questions:

1. Research and find out what changes have taken place in education in the last 50 years.
2. Did you enjoy school? Why?
3. Did you learn anything else at school aside from what was taught in the classroom?
4. How did you behave at school? Why?
5. Who did you hang around with at school? Why?
6. What do you think the role and purpose of education is?

Extension – research sociological explanations of education and see if this matches your experiences. You may like to consider Functionalism, Marxism and Feminism. You can include this in your work.

Task 3 – Research an influential Sociologist

Independent research is also something you will be challenged with in year 12 and 13. To demonstrate you already have some research skills you need to research a sociologist of your choice. You should then create a short summary (around 250–500 words) including information about their key ideas and studies.

Do you already agree/ disagree with any of their theories? Can you see any examples of their theory in modern society? Include this!

Examples include: Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Ann Oakley, Anthony Giddens.

Task 5 —Researching a Contrasting Society

A lot of your studies in sociology will revolve around life in the UK, however it is really good to understand that not all societies are the same and many will have their own contrasting cultures, norms and values. Therefore, to demonstrate this please research a society that is completely different to the one we live in and write a report explaining your sociological findings. It may be another country, a subculture or group within a country or even a tribe!

You need to—

1. Present your research/findings. Create a fact file using images where possible.
2. Summarise how this society's culture is different to our society.
3. Summarise how this society's culture is similar to our society.

Task 6 – Sociological Podcasts

Independent learning is a key element of being successful in your A-Level studies and now is a great time to start some! You'll need to have a divider in your folder dedicated to all the independent learning you have completed. The more you do, the higher your grades! To get you started, please choose at least 3 sociological podcasts to listen to on the following website. There are 100s to choose from and topics range from the sociology of serial killers all the way to the sociology of beauty!

You need to create a summary of each of the podcasts you listen to and may be asked to share this with the class on our return!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/boo6qy05/episodes/player>

Task 8– Families and Households

One of the first topics you will learn about in year 12 is called 'Families and Households.' To make a good start on this already you need to start considering how some of the key changes that have taken place within modern families and how this might have changed society.

Research and explain how the following policies and laws have affected family life and structure over the last 50 years...

- A. The Divorce Act 1969 and 1984
- B. The Paternity Act 2010

C. The Civil Partnership Act 2004

D. The Marriage Act 2013

Can you find and summarise some other changes that have taken place within families over the last 50 years as a consequence of changing laws or policies?

Glossary



Sociology has its own language!

Here are a list of the kind of terms you will need to learn and understand.

You need to research the following terms and create a neat glossary.

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Norms | Labelling | Patriarchy |
| Values | Material Deprivation | Hierarchy |
| Culture | Meritocracy | Inequality |
| Consensus | Role | Capitalism |
| Ideology | Social Class | Social Solidarity |

Additional Reading



Recommended Reading

You should be reading newspapers on a regular basis throughout the year to ensure you are up to date on current social affairs. The Guardian is particularly useful and can be accessed online as well as The Times Educational Supplement. There is also a list of books below you may want to dip into:

Micheal Haralambos, Haralambos and Holborn, Sociology themes and perspectives (2008).

Ann Oakley, The Sociology of Housework, (1984).

Eric Hobsbawn, How to Change the World: Tales of Marx and Marxism, (2012).

Thomas Boronski, Sociology of Education, (2015).

Reni Eddo-Lodge, Why I'm no longer Talking to White People about Race, (2018)

Caroline Criado Perez, Invisible Women, (2019)

Akala, Natives. Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire. (2019)

Documentaries and Films

Louis Theroux, America's Most Hated Family. **Available on Netflix.**

Question Time. **Available on BBC IPlayer.**

Up Series. **Available on BBC IPlayer.**

The Stanford Prison Experiment. **Available on YouTube.**

Frontline: Merchants of Cool. **Available on YouTube.**

Religulous. **Available on Netflix.**

Sixteen: Class of 2021. **Available on 4OD**

Supporting Resources



<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192/introduction>

Up to date information from AQA including the full specification, past exam papers and revision resources.

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology>

A range of practice questions, sociology revision notes and helpful summary videos for each topic.

<https://thesociologyguy.com/revision-notes/>

A range of revision mind maps and notes for each topic.

<https://revisesociology.com/tag/revision-notes/>

A range of revision mind maps and notes for each topic.

<https://napierpress.com/>

Links to the course textbook including helpful workbooks to guide revision notes.

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

A useful website to research contemporary social issues such as education.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/boo6qy05/episodes/player>

Hundreds of sociological podcasts available. All episodes are around 25 minutes.