

Welcome to Sociology

Welcome to the fascinating world of Sociology!

As you begin your journey in this subject, you'll explore the intricacies of human society, examining how individuals and groups interact, the structures that shape our lives, and the various social phenomena that influence our behaviour and experiences.

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of society, social institutions, and social relationships. It involves understanding how human actions and consciousness both shape and are shaped by surrounding cultural and social structures. Sociologists investigate the social causes and consequences of human behaviour, seeking to explain social patterns and changes over time.

A-Level Sociology

We study the AQA specification, and study the following topics:

1. Education
2. Families
3. Beliefs in society
4. Crime and deviance
5. Theory and Methods

These are divided into three papers, which are each 2-hour exams and make up 100% of your final grades.

In this booklet you will find

- Facts about Sociology
 - Your Sociology key terms and comprehension tasks
 - Your research task.
 - Resources for Sociology
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Did you know?

Sociology isn't limited to studying one's own society.

It includes the study of global social processes and issues, helping us understand the interconnectedness of societies worldwide.

Sociologists conduct social experiments to understand human behaviour. One famous experiment, the "Stanford Prison Experiment," explored the psychological effects of perceived power by assigning volunteer students roles as guards and prisoners in a simulated prison environment.

Auguste Comte, often considered the father of sociology, originally referred to the field as "social physics." He later coined the term "sociology" from the Latin word "socius" (companion) and the Greek word "logos" (study).

Symbols play a crucial role in sociology. From national flags to wedding rings, symbols convey powerful meanings and help maintain social cohesion.

Career Paths-A degree in sociology opens diverse career paths. Sociologists work in fields like social work, education, marketing, human resources, public policy, and more, using their

Sociology In Our Society

Read the following passage and answer the questions below!

"Sociology is the study of human society, its structures, and its dynamics. It seeks to understand how social institutions such as family, education, and the legal system affect individuals and groups. By analysing social interactions and cultural norms, sociologists aim to uncover patterns that influence human behaviour and societal changes."

Questions:

1. What is the primary focus of sociology?
2. Name three social institutions that sociologist's study.
3. How do sociologists aim to understand human behaviour?
4. Why is it important to study patterns in social interactions?

Key Terms Research

Research and define the following twenty key terms. This exercise will help you become familiar with the essential concepts in sociology. Use the internet or a home dictionary to help.



The first definition has been done for you.

1. Sociology-is the scientific study of society, social relationships, and social institutions. It seeks to understand how individuals and groups interact within societal structures and how these interactions shape behaviours, cultures, and social change.
2. Socialisation-
3. Norms-
4. Values
5. Culture

6. Role

7. Status

8. Institution

9. Stratification

10. Social Mobility

11. Deviance

12.Crime

13.Ethnicity

14.Gender

15.Class

16.Family

17.Education

18.Capitalism

19.Patriarchy

20.Globalisation

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 various parts which all work together to keep society stable. They believe people agree on what is important (there is a value consensus) and people conform to the norms of society. They tend to focus on the positive functions of various 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_ilcc

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=D6DI-9pSW-4>

Key sociologists in our subject

Auguste Comte

I am Auguste Comte, often regarded as the father of sociology. Born in France in 1798, I coined the term "sociology" and believed that society could be studied scientifically.

I proposed that societies evolve through three stages: the theological, the metaphysical, and the scientific. My work laid the foundation for positivism, emphasizing observation and reason as the basis for understanding human behaviour.



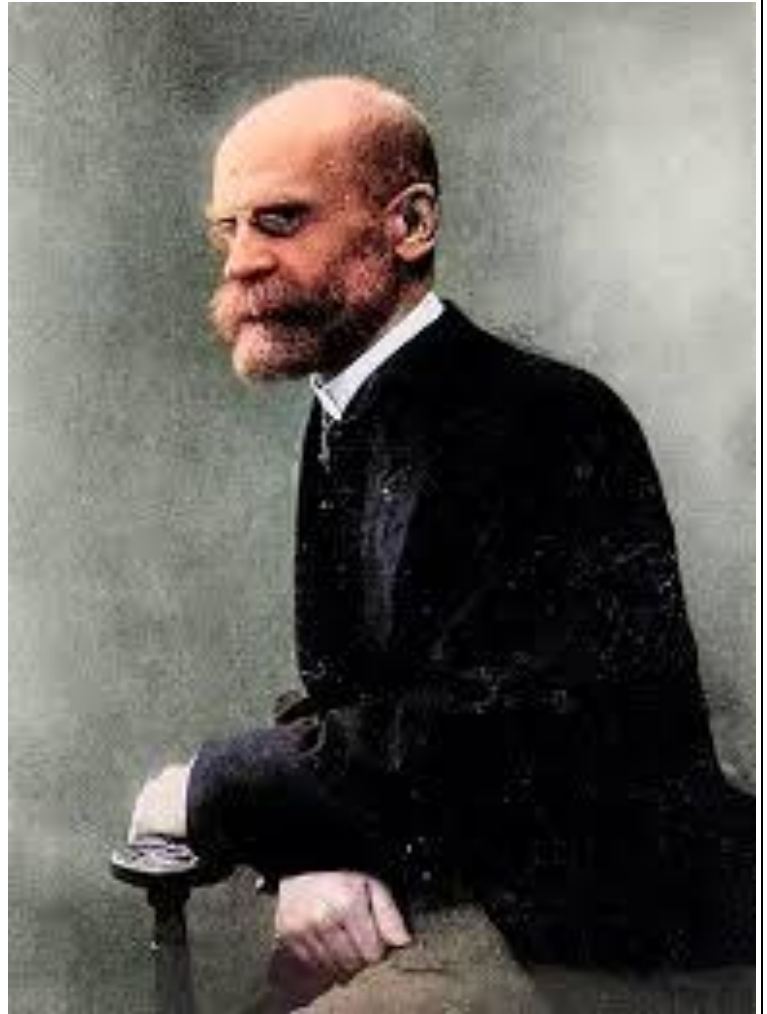
Questions:

1. What are the three stages of societal evolution according to Comte?
2. What term did Comte coin to describe the scientific study of society?
3. What philosophical approach did Comte advocate for in sociology?
4. In which country was Auguste Comte born?

Émile Durkheim

I am Émile Durkheim, a founding figure in the field of sociology, born in France in 1858. My work focused on how societies maintain order and coherence, particularly through collective consciousness and social institutions.

One of my most famous studies, "Suicide," examined the social factors influencing this personal act. I introduced key concepts such as social facts, anomie, and the division of labour.

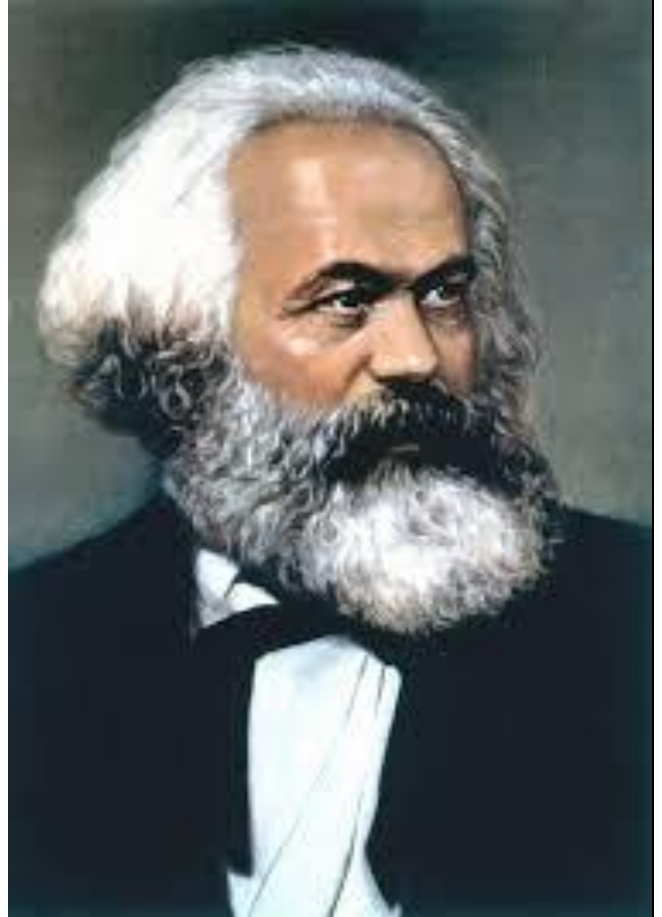


Questions:

1. What is the title of Durkheim's famous study on suicide?
2. What concept did Durkheim introduce to describe the norms, values, and structures external to individuals?
3. How did Durkheim explain the concept of anomie?
4. When and where was Émile Durkheim born?

Karl Marx

I am Karl Marx, a revolutionary thinker born in Germany in 1818. My theories about society, economics, and politics laid the groundwork for the development of Marxism, modern socialism and communism. I believed that the history of all existing society is the history of class struggles. My works, including "The Communist Manifesto" and "Das Kapital," focus on the conflicts between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.



Questions:

1. What are the titles of two of Marx's most famous works?
2. How did Marx describe the history of society in terms of class struggles?
3. What are the two main classes in conflict according to Marx?
4. Where and when was Karl Marx born?

Ann Oakley

I am Ann Oakley, a pioneering British sociologist and feminist born in 1944. My work has been influential in the fields of gender studies, health sociology, and feminist social science.

I challenged traditional gender roles and highlighted the importance of housework and family in women's lives. My books, such as "The Sociology of Housework," have made significant contributions to understanding gender inequalities.



Questions:

1. What are some of the main areas of study for Ann Oakley?
2. How did Oakley challenge traditional views on gender roles?
3. What is the title of Oakley's influential book on housework?
4. When and where was Ann Oakley born?

Research Task

Now that you have a brief introduction to these four influential sociologists, choose two of them and conduct in-depth research on their contributions to sociology.

- Prepare a summary of your findings and be ready to discuss how their ideas have shaped contemporary sociological thought.

Your resources

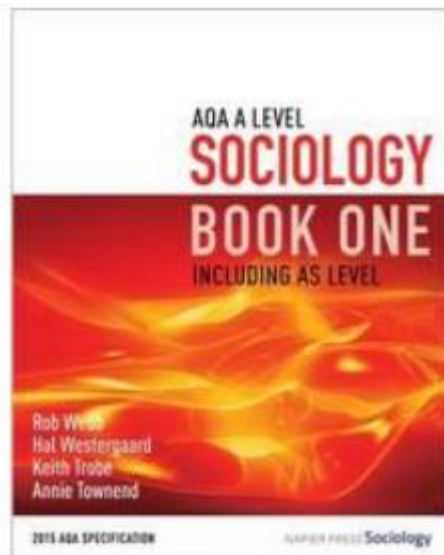
You have made a fantastic decision to study Sociology and to investigate society through its successes, its criticisms, and social issues.

To prepare to thrive in Sociology ensure that you have the following listed resources.

- Notepad
- A well-resourced pencil case that includes highlighters
- Post it notes.

One step ahead

We will be using the textbook below for our first year of study. we encourage you as a department to ensure you have a copy of your own to extend your learning at home.



AQA A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY BOOK ONE Webb et al ISBN: 97809540079



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