



# A Level Sociology Induction

## Okehampton College – Post-16

On the following pages you will find suggested activities to prepare you for Year 12 Sociology and a short essay to complete.

**Sociology  
expands our  
knowledge  
of the  
world.**

**AQA SOCIOLOGY (7192)**

The topics that you will be studying are:

### Year 1 Sociology

Unit 1 – Families and Households

Unit 2 – Education, Sociological Research Methods

### Year 2 Sociology

Unit 3 – Beliefs in Society

Unit 4 – Crime and Deviance, Sociological Theory and Methods

Dear Year 12 Student,

Welcome to A Level Sociology at Okehampton College. I am really excited that you have chosen to take this fantastic new course and I'm certain we will have a lively and engaging 2 years.

Firstly, a little bit about the subject as I doubt many of you have studied much Sociology before. Sociology is a social science, Sociology explores the social world around us; it is the **scientific** study of **society** and **human behaviour**. Sociologists try to explain what holds society together, the causes of social problems, and the reasons behind social continuity, trends and social change.

You will develop skills in critical thinking and learn to evaluate case studies and the work of sociologists. The key areas of study in Year 12 are family and education in the UK, together with sociological theory and research methods. This will be followed in year 13 by the study of beliefs and Crime and Deviance. You will explore how power and control is exercised in our society; through family, education and the criminal justice system.

Although you have not studied Sociology as a stand-alone subject before there are many areas that overlap with other subjects, this is why it is such a popular A Level. There are lots of links with Philosophy, RS, History, Geography, English, Science and Politics. The analytic nature of the subject lends itself to a wide variety of courses at University.

Sociology is everywhere...

### **The Telegraph, 2016: The gender gap**

*There is still a significant gender gap when it comes to what boys and girls are taking for their A levels.*

*In a trend that continues into university study, subjects such as computing and physics are dominated by boys while girls flock to courses on performing arts and sociology.*

The above is an issue we can study sociologically by examining what factors in education have led to this gender gap. You will investigate questions in year 12 such as 'what roles do teachers, schools, parents and the community play in educational achievement?' AND 'how do educational policies impact on the experience of education?' and 'should the government interfere in family life?'

Now that you are a sociologist you need to adjust your reading/tv habits to demonstrate this. Keep in touch with current affairs by watching the news, read a newspaper, listen to podcasts.

I hope this taster booklet gives you a flavour for the course and inspires you for September. Have a lovely summer, you've had a busy year and you need to take some time out for YOU so enjoy it!

Looking forward to seeing you all in September.

Best wishes,

Miss Cookson

### Activity 1.

Sociology is everywhere so you'll be able to see aspects of it in all forms of media. Try searching for the following titles and make notes on any videos you watch, try to keep it relevant to the topics taught in Sociology (see front page).

- School Swap documentary
- Stacey Dooley documentaries (BBC Iplayer/Youtube)
- Black Mirror (Netflix)
- Louis Theroux documentaries
- Dispatches documentaries (40D)
- Panorama documentaries (BBC Iplayer)

## Activity 2.

# As few as one in 20 born in poorest areas go to university

14<sup>th</sup> August 2017



Only one in 20 pupils in some of the country's poorest postcodes progress to higher education, according to new analysis by Teach First.

The charity has called for the government to improve entry rates by writing off student debt to get better teachers into challenging schools. It has also called on universities to start offering university access programmes at primary level.

According to Teach First's research, on average only one in five young people born in the country's poorest postcodes progress to university, while half of those born in the

wealthiest postcodes do so.

However, the gap is even more stark between some areas.

## Big differences

For example, in some parts of Derbyshire, as few as one in twenty students go to university, while in parts of Buckinghamshire it is more than 80 per cent. This means that those born in some of the richest areas are up to 18 times more likely to attend university than those in some of the poorest areas.

Teach First also found big differences between the choices made by disadvantaged young people when it came to university compared to their more privileged peers.

A ComRes poll of 18-25 year olds found that 41 per cent of the most advantaged students said they chose their university because it was the best for what they wanted to study, compared to only 31 per cent of the least advantaged.

Similarly, the reputation of a university was important to 53 per cent of the most advantaged students, but it only was for 46 per cent of the most disadvantaged.

Disadvantaged students are also more likely to choose an institution close to where they live, with 29 per cent saying they chose their university on this basis, compared to 24 per cent of the most advantaged.

Of the most disadvantaged pupils who did not go to university, only 12 per cent said this was because their grades weren't good enough.

## 'More must be done'

To ensure students were able to make more informed choices when it came to university, Teach First said there should be a trained careers middle leader in every school to develop and lead a careers strategy. It suggested this could be paid for out of money councils and academies are required to set aside for the apprenticeship levy.

Teach First says the government should offer student loan forgiveness to attract the best possible graduates into teaching, where they can help young people from deprived communities achieve their potential.

It suggests 20 per cent of student debt could be cleared for those working for two years, increasing to 50 per cent for those who remain in certain geographic or subject areas for five years.

The charity also says that universities' access work is coming too late, with programmes frequently aimed at pupils aged 16-18 "by which point much of the effects of disadvantage have already played out".

Instead, it argues that access work should start at primary school to give pupils "the best possible opportunity to make informed and supported decisions about their futures at an earlier age".

Brett Wigdortz, Teach First's chief executive and founder, said "there are still far too few disadvantaged pupils getting to university".

"They're simply not given the same chance to reach their full potential, with less access to brilliant teaching and less guidance on how they can turn their aspirations into reality. "

He added: "More must be done by the government, universities and society as a whole to break down the barriers to social mobility that are preventing too many of our young people reaching as far as their potential allows".

*Task: Based on the article above complete the box overleaf.*

What is a meritocracy?

Does this article suggest we live in a meritocracy?

Why is it important that 'poor' students go to university?

Activity 3 – Write a 500-word response ready to be handed into Miss Cookson in September in answer to the following question:

*Does Britain still have a class system?*

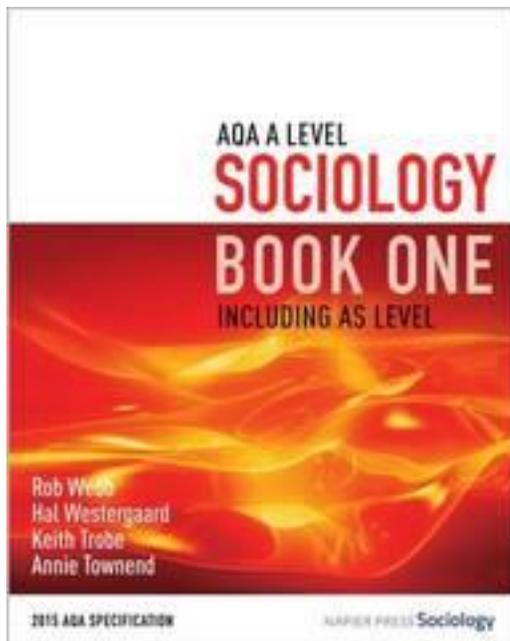
Additional Information:

-as you are now in the 6<sup>th</sup> form you are expected to bring your own notepads/papers to class  
-organisation is key and you will need to keep your notes filed by topic (folder checks)  
-textbooks are provided by school, to be used in class only, you are under no obligation to buy your own, however should you wish to this is the book we use.

AQA A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY BOOK ONE

Webb et al

ISBN: 97809540079



Other sources of information/ways to develop your sociological understanding of local, regional, national and global issues

- BBC News
- 'Thinking aloud' Radio 4 podcast
- Twitter #sociology
- Panorama
- Read a range of different newspapers
- Social media

