

GCSE Sociology

QE KS4

Induction Pack for Sociology



Welcome to GCSE



Introduction

We look forward to meeting you in September and commencing our journey into learning about the different perspectives of how the world works, and to challenge our own conceptions of this!

Firstly, please make a copy of the booklet and save it in your work area with your name on it. You can type directly into your copy of the booklet so in September you can use the information as you go through the course.

The following activities will give you a greater level of understanding and awareness of the topics and issues that we cover on the GCSE Sociology course. A link to the examination board (WJEC), with further details on the course content, and style of assessment is included here:

https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/sociology-gcse/#tab_overview

Some of the topics you will study include:

- The Family
- Education
- Crime
- Stratification
- Research Methods

Sociology is a subject that requires a good understanding of how society works, and a fantastic way of gaining and adding to this is to regularly be watching and reading news programmes and websites. The enclosed activities will also begin to ignite your “**sociological imagination**”, whereby you will, over time, gain the ability to see the world through the lens of the sociologist.

An Introduction to Sociology at QE

Activity 1 - “Things are not what they seem”

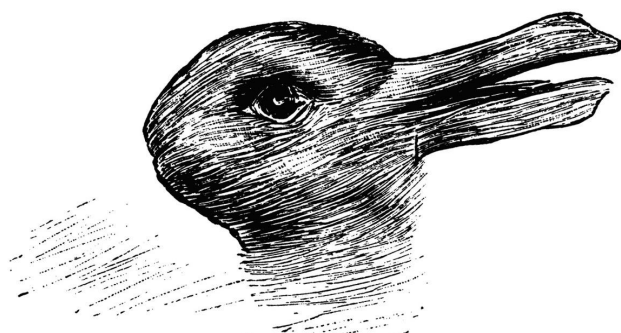
Sociology is the study of human social life. There are many different aspects of Sociology to address, so you must be curious and attentive to looking at the world in a different way!



Look at the photograph the other way up – not everything is as it seems

There is usually another way of looking at things – and that is what we do as sociologists. We take normal, taken-for-granted life and turn it upside down, looking for meanings. And very often we end up seeing things very differently. For example, why do you think we seem to “naturally” queue up at the supermarket in England? Did you know this isn’t the “norm” in other countries?

What do you see here? Try looking at them from a different perspective. Can you see another image?



Activity 2 - Key Sociological Terms

In sociology there are many **key terms & concepts** that we use (the “language of sociology”). Create a colourful poster of the following key terms to help you remember them:

- **Norms** - Rules that define expected and appropriate behaviour.
- **Values**- Beliefs and ideas we see as desirable in society
- **Socialisation**- The process of how we learn norms, values and our culture.
- **Culture**- A way of life of a group, including the values, beliefs, religion, knowledge & skills.
- **Primary Socialisation** –The process of learning how to behave in early childhood, usually through the family.
- **Secondary Socialisation** – Our second wave of Socialisation. The process of learning how to behave in different settings and with different people (E.G. Through education or the media).
- **Agents of social control** - The groups in society that control people's behaviour (such as the police).
- **Society**- A group of people who share a culture and a way of life.



Activity 3 - Investigating & Analysing Social Change



Social Change

The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing, whilst others say it is shrinking. For example, does social media help us feel more connected, or more isolated than previous generations? This is one example of the great debates in sociology!

The important point to grasp is that society does not remain static over time; it constantly changes through decades, centuries and across different countries. To find out about these changes, sociologists often conduct **different types of research**.

For this task, **interview** a relative or family friend who is older than you. Ask them about their experiences growing up, and whether they think British society is different today compared to the past. Then, create a **mind map** or **notes** of the key changes or similarities they mention.

In the space below, write down the 3 ideas that came up in your interview that you found **most interesting** or think are the **most important** changes for British society.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why do you think these factors were the most interesting or important?

Activity 4 - Keeping Up With Current Affairs!



As sociologists, we need to keep our eye on the ball as to what key events are happening in the world around us. We call these events “**current affairs**”, which could include major incidents, celebrations, political change, health emergencies or crimes (to name a few!). To find out about current affairs, we can read news articles (both in

newspapers and online), listen to the radio or podcasts, or have conversations with family and friends (to name a few!).

What key events have happened **within the UK** in the last 5 years (either positive or negative)?
Mind map as many as you can in the space below (at least 4):

Key events within the UK in the last 5 years

What key events have happened **across the world** in the last 5 years (either positive or negative)? Mind map as many as you can in the space below (at least 4):

Key events across the world in the last 5 years

In the spaces below, answer the following questions:
Which key event do you think has had the biggest impact? Why?

Which key event do you think sociologists (including yourself!) would be most interested in researching? Why?

Activity 5 - Researching the Social World

Sociologists use a range of research methods to find out about the social world. This includes why people behave a certain way (such as committing crimes), what influences government policy, the trends in the number and background of students attending university (to name only a couple!). Some of the methods used include:

- Interviews.
- Observations.
- Statistical analysis.
- Questionnaires.
- Documents.
- Case studies.
- Experiments.



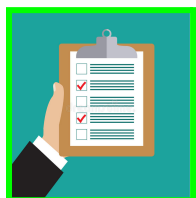
Task: Look up the definitions of each of these research methods in sociology. Then, create a **revision resource** (such as a poster, flash cards, poem, etc) that defines **each** of the above methods.

These resources may help with your research:

- The Sociology Teacher - <https://www.thesociologyteacher.com/research-methods-sociology-revision>
- Revise Sociology - <https://revisesociology.com/research-methods-sociology/>

Activity 6 - Sociological Research in Action!

One method sociologists use to research the social world is **observations**. This involves the sociologist purposefully watching a phenomena or people's behaviour in order to understand either why or how often something is occurring. There are several ways to conduct observations, two of these including:



- Structured observations - Where the sociologist uses **predefined coding categories** to record observed behaviour, such as a tally chart.



- Unstructured observations - Where a sociologist makes **detailed notes** about what they are observing, without using coding categories.

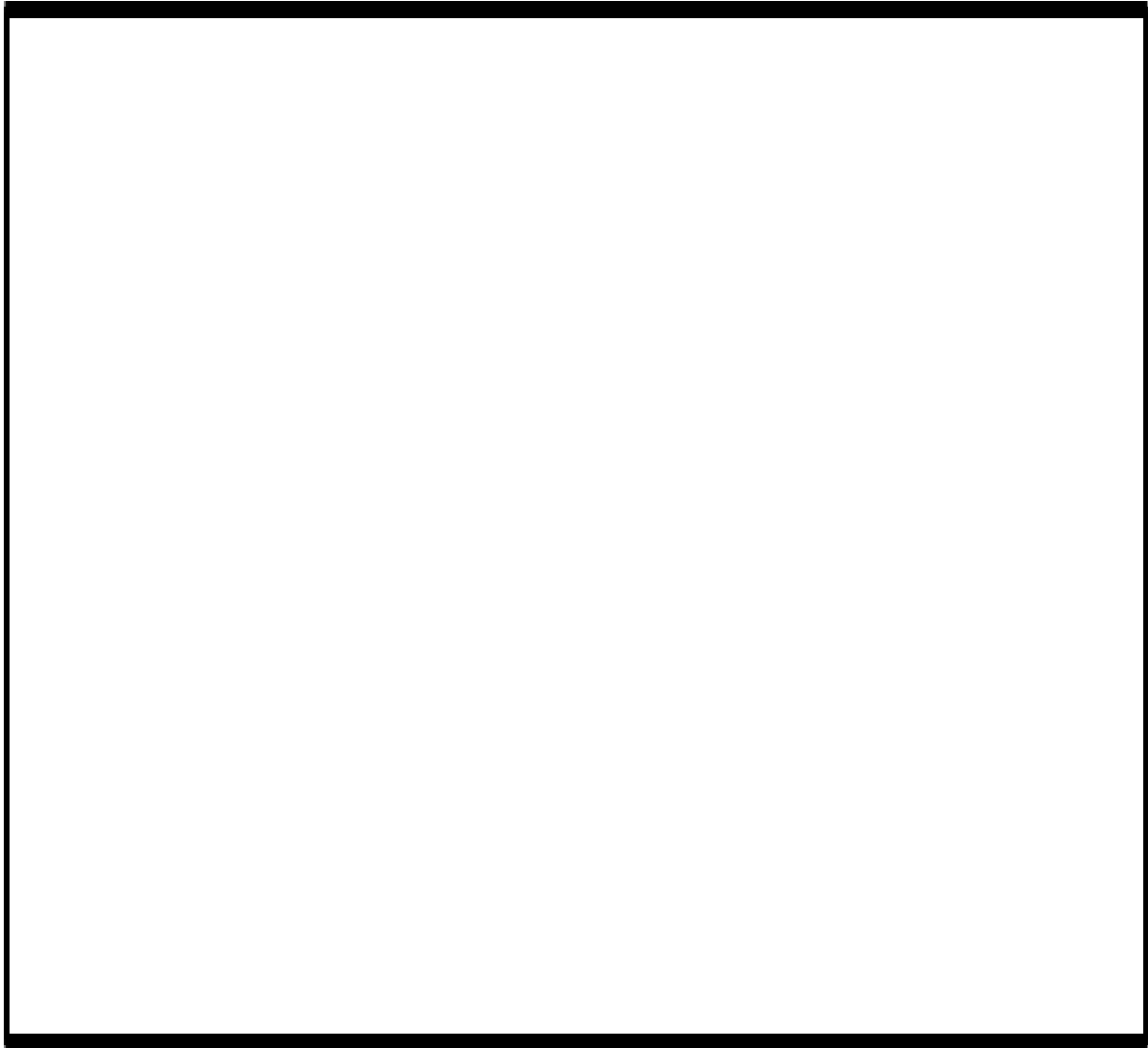
Task A: Pick a public area where you can discreetly observe people going about their day to day life. This could be a park, a museum, a cafe, etc.

- 1) For conducting a **structured observation**, write down **8 behaviours** you think you are likely to observe in this setting in the table below. E.G. "Shouting" for a park.
- 2) Then, when conducting your observation, **tally** everytime you see this behaviour occurring in a 10-15 minute period.

Tally

[illegible]

Task B: Use the same or another public place to conduct an observation. You will now conduct an **unstructured observation**. This means that this time, rather than using a tally chart, you will write **detailed notes** about what you observe (not including names!) in the space below:



Task C: In the space below write down your main **findings** (E.G. What common patterns did you observe?):

Task D: Then, write a paragraph below explaining which type of observation (structured or unstructured) you found better and why. Do you think each had their own strengths & weaknesses?



Closing Thoughts!

Well done completing the GCSE Sociology Induction Booklet- we are already looking forward to meeting you in September! By completing these tasks you are already well on your way to becoming a sociologist!

If you are hungry for more (as most sociologists often are!), you can complete some of the following extras:

- Watch some key sociological or general programmes with situations that you can analyse. For example, what do programmes like Love Island and First Dates tell us about expected gender roles, norms and behaviours? What do programmes such as Educating Essex tell us about schooling, poverty and achievement?
- Listen to the radio, read news articles or watch the news whilst having breakfast. This will help you keep up to date with current affairs (news, legislation changes, political debates, crimes, etc). What topics particularly stand out to you? Why do you think this is?
- Look up some famous sociological studies on a topic of your choice. How do these help gain knowledge of society's workings? Which studies stand out to you?