

**Key Stage 5 (12)**

**Course title: A-Level sociology**

**Exam board: AQA**

**Specification code: 7192/1, 7192/2, 7192/3**

**Family and Households**

Students are introduced to what sociology is the study of, and the core themes of sociology e.g. culture and identity, socialisation, consensus and conflict, nature/nurture, diversity and identity and inequalities in society.

Following on from these introductory lessons on one side of the course students start the topic of Families and Households exploring the social structure and social change within this context. Students will develop an understanding of changing patterns of marriage, cohabitation and divorce as well as acknowledging the changing nature of childhood and gender roles.

**Core topics**

- The debate around equality between couples in families including questions such as ‘Are couples becoming more equal?’
- Understand that childhood, as we know it, is a modern phenomenon. Childhood is different in different cultures and was different in the past. We explore the nature of childhood, and changes in the status of children in the family and society.
- To explore the different perspectives on the family. Functionalism, Marxism, feminism and the personal life perspective.
- Investigate how our population has changed over the last 100 years. Understand and be able to evaluate the reasons for population changes, including birth and death rates, family size, life expectancy, the ageing population, migration and globalisation.
- Understand that there have been major changes in family and household patterns over the last 50 years. We consider changes in marriage, divorce, cohabitation, civil partnerships, one person households and extended family households.
- Understand that different perspectives have different views on family diversity—some viewing it more positively and some less so. This includes looking at modernist and post-modernist approaches to family diversity.
- Understand the ways in which government policies (aimed directly and indirectly at the family) affect family life.

### **Education Part 1**

Following on from the introductory lessons students then cover the first 3 topics in education: class differences in achievement (external and internal factors) and ethnicity and achievement.

#### **Core topics**

- Introduction to class differences in achievement focusing on external factors such as cultural and material deprivation, and cultural capital.
- Class differences in achievement - internal factors. We explore labelling theory, the self-fulfilling prophecy and issues of streaming. We then consider pupil subcultures and pupils' class identities and the school. Students are then asked to look at the interplay of both internal and external factors and how this affects achievement.
- Ethnic differences in achievement including the influence of internal and external factors such as institutional racism and the ethnocentric curriculum.

### **Education Part 2**

Students will continue to explore educational achievement in terms of gender, exploring patterns of gender achievement. We then consider theories of education, including the Functionalist and Marxist views on education. The final section of this module considers educational policy.

- Gender differences in education including the gender gap, external factors such as impact of feminism and girls' changing ambitions. We then look at internal factors including girls' identities and how this affects achievement. Following this we consider why boys may be falling behind and finally the topic of gender and subject choice.
- The role of education in society including the Functionalist and Marxist perspective in education.
- Educational policy and inequality. We explore the main features of important educational policies and the impact these have had and continue to have on inequality of achievement.
- Consolidation of topic including exam technique and decoding questions.

### **Research methods**

Students are introduced to the way sociologists investigate society by exploring a range of research methods. The key element is for students to gain an understanding of how sociologists gather sound evidence to test theories. They also investigate which methods are most suitable for the specific context being studied.

- How sociologists choose a research method.
- The research context—exploring education as a context for sociological research and how each of the five main groups may pose problems and opportunities for the sociologist.
- Experiments—types, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses, applying experiments to the context of education.
- Questionnaires - types of questions, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses, applying questionnaires to the context of education.
- Interviews— different types of interviews, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses, applying interviews to the context of education.
- Participant observation—different types of PO evaluating the strengths and weaknesses, applying PO to the context of education.
- Secondary sources - official statistics and documents.