



We want you to be really successful and what it takes to be successful at GCSEs is different from being successful at A-Levels. Although you have fewer subjects there are different skills at A-Level and the volume of work is greater because the depth and detail is more demanding.

Bridging the Gap Work will reassure you that the subject you have selected is for you, or allow you time to change your choice of subject at enrolment, as long as there is space and you meet the entry criteria. We want you to study a course that interests you and you are sufficiently qualified to study.

Subject: A-Level Sociology

Head of Subject: Miss I Hoole (ihoole@sphcs.co.uk)

Aim of Bridging Work (Week 6):

- Begin to investigate educational inequality.
- Write sociological paragraphs to discuss – Is Britain Fair?

Essential Equipment List for 1st Lesson:

- Pens
- Pencils
- Ruler
- Highlighters
- Flashcards
- Lever arch folder (Ideally 2)
- A4 lined paper (not an exercise book)
- Plastic wallets
- Folder dividers (At least 12)

All these items can be sourced from affordable places like Poundland, Wilko or Tesco but if there are any issues let me know.

Recommended:

- **Tutor2u Education Flash Cards**

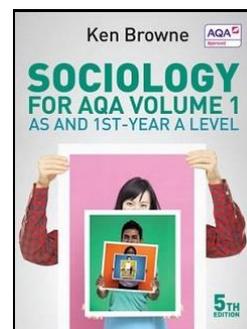
<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/store/education-revision-flashcards-for-aqa-alevel-sociology>

- **Families and Households Skills**

<https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/store/families-households-exam-skills-workbook-aqa-alevel-sociology>

Textbook(s) for September:

Ken Browne AQA Sociology Year 1 (must be the 5th edition)



Suggested Reading List:

Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class
by Owen Jones

Half the Sky: Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

The Establishment: And how they get away with it
Paperback by Owen Jones

The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone
by Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson

The Communist Manifesto (Paperback)
by Karl Marx

Learning to Labour by Paul Willis

Watching the English by Kate Fox

Tasks – WEEK 6 WB 8.6.20

Hello future Sociologists,

Hope you continue to be okay in these odd circumstances and had a nice break in half-term. The sixth week of Sociology Bridging work is to get you to thinking about debates around inequality in the UK.

Please ensure you save all work in a folder on your computer or if you handwrite it keep it safe in a folder as you'll need to show your work as part of the entry requirements for the course.

IS BRITAIN FAIR? – The Education System

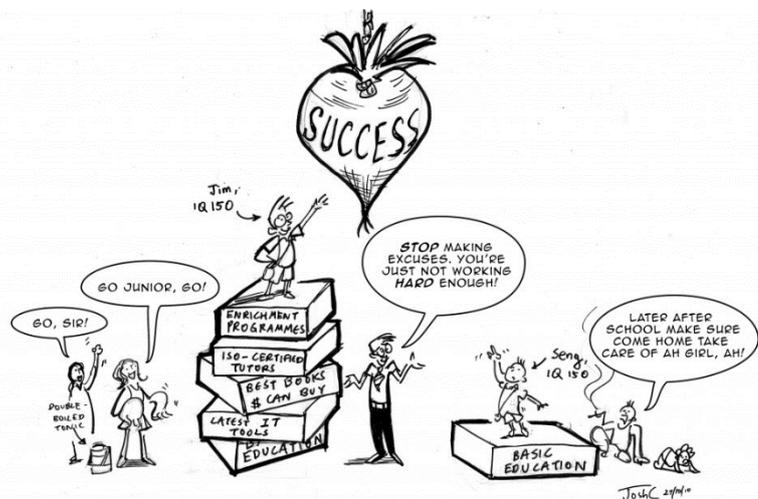
Read the information:

- Two babies are born on the same place. Do they have an equal chance of...
... *being healthy?*
... *going to university?*
... *getting a well-paid job?*
... *avoiding prison?*
... *succeeding in school?*

- One third (30%) of children in Britain live in poverty
- People born into the most deprived (poor) areas of the UK are likely to live, on average, 10 years less than those in affluent (well off) areas
- Only 30% of those receiving Free School Meals (FSM) (low family income) achieve a pass in English and Maths at GCSE compared to 60% of those who do not receive FSM
- Only 7% of the population go to fee-paying schools, but they make up 42% of students at Oxford and Cambridge and dominate top jobs in law, journalism, politics and health
- Last year, there was a 13% increase in food bank use

These statistics paint a bleak picture of whether or not Britain is a fair society. Before we engage in the debate of whether or not Britain is fair, we must define what we mean by this.

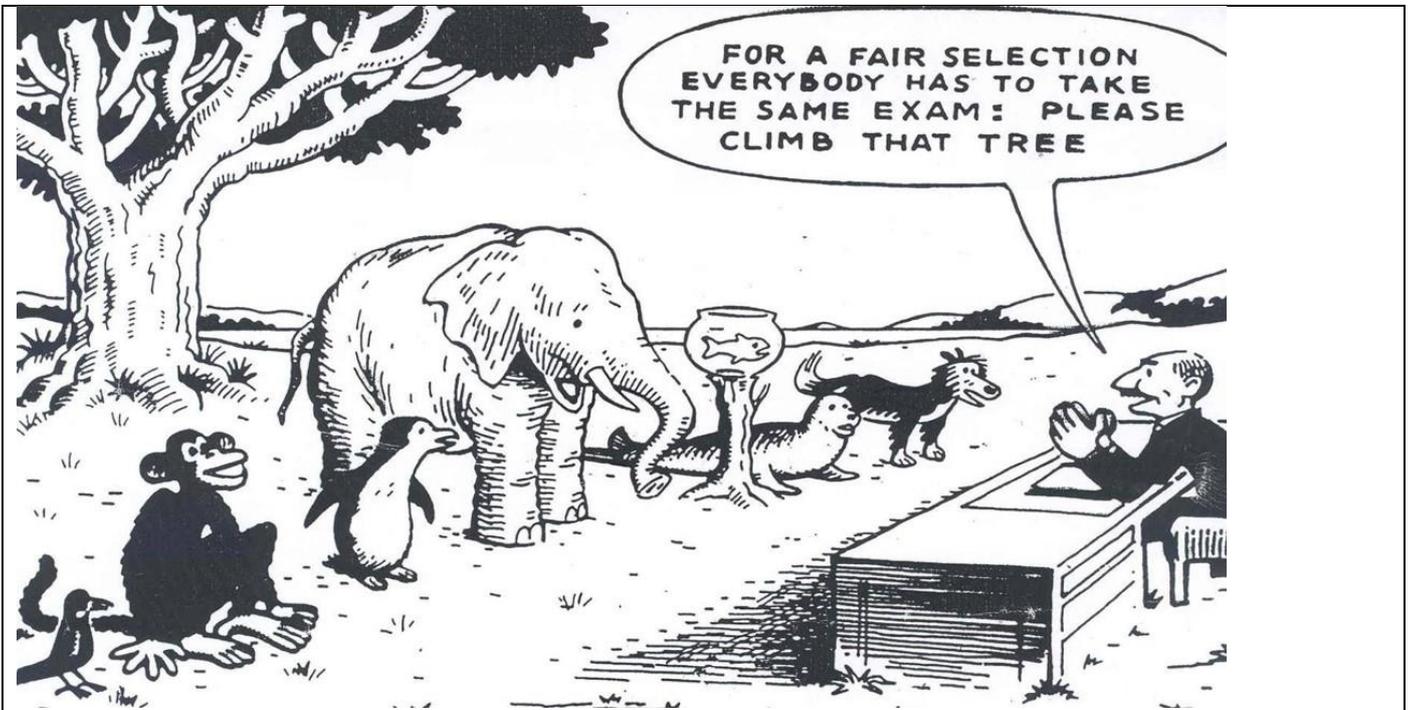
In Sociology, a 'fair' society is a society where everyone has equality of opportunity – everyone has an equal chance of achieving success and their background does not determine this. Sociologists call this a 'meritocracy' – a society where status is based on merit (hard work and talent) rather than the position you are born into. In a meritocracy, effort should be the only factor determining the position someone gains in life. Functionalists believe contemporary (modern) Britain is a meritocracy and that success is determined only by hard work. (Look back to previous bridging work if you can't remember what a functionalist is).



MERITOCRACY

Quick check: look at the two cartoons and reflect on the statistics above.

In your opinion, does everyone have an equal chance to succeed? Why or why not? Write your response in the box provided.



In your opinion, does everyone have an equal chance to succeed? Why or why not?

Marxists disagree with functionalists, arguing society is not a meritocracy. They believe those born into the working class (poorer members of society) have less chance of succeeding in life. They believe the upper class (the rich) have a much higher chance of succeeding and dominate the top positions in society.

Feminists also disagree, arguing women have less chance of succeeding than men. They argue society is patriarchal, meaning that men have an inbuilt advantage compared to women, and that women are disadvantaged and oppressed.

Other sociologists believe people from ethnic minority backgrounds are disadvantaged, due to individual and institutional (embedded) racism.

Is the education system fair?

- Education policy institute found disadvantages children were 18 months behind their peers by the time they took their GCSEs
- More affluent (advantaged) students have heard 30 million more words than disadvantaged students by the time they are 5

Table 13: Attainment 8 and Progress 8 for FSM eligible and all other pupils

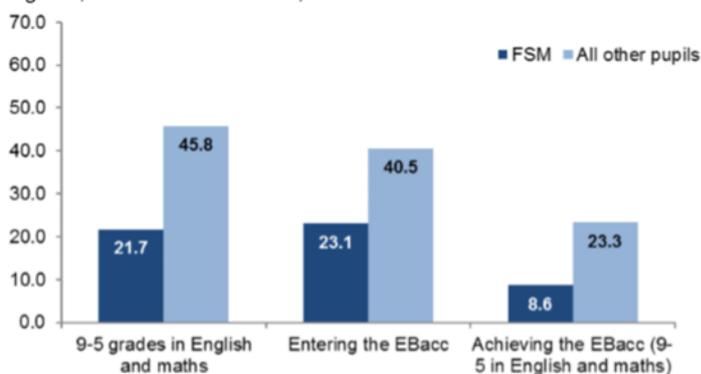
England, state-funded schools, 2017

	Number of pupils at end of key stage 4	Average Attainment 8 score	Average Progress 8 score	Progress 8 lower confidence interval	Progress 8 upper confidence interval
FSM	69,261	35.0	-0.48	-0.49	-0.47
All other pupils	458,598	48.0	0.04	0.03	0.04

Source: Key stage 4 attainment data

Figure 17: Attainment in threshold measures for FSM eligible and all other pupils (including grades 5 or above in English and maths)

England, state-funded schools, 2017



Source: Key stage 4 revised attainment data

Pupils can claim Free School Meals if their household income is less than £16,000, so it is used as a measure of social class or poverty.

1. What percentage more students not on FSM achieve a grade 5 in English and Maths compared to students on FSM?
2. What does this show about which students do better in education?
3. Can you think of any reasons for this?

At school, children from different backgrounds receive very different outcomes in education. Here are some of the main reasons:

1. Material deprivation – students may lack the physical resources they need to study, like books and internet access. How might this impact their exam results?
2. Labelling – students may be labelled as lower achieving by teachers. This is when teachers attach a label to students and treat them differently. They may see working class students as less motivated, less able and less hard working. How might this impact their results?
3. Parental attitudes – parents from working class backgrounds may be less involved and less engaged in their children's education, possibly because they had a bad experience of school themselves.

Many wealthy parents can afford to send their children to independent schools too.

Some sociologists also argue ethnic minorities have a worse experience of education, because they experience racism and institutional racism. Some also argue these inequalities are due to differences in the family structures of different ethnicities.

Research task: read the articles and watch the documentaries and listen to the podcast to get a better understanding of the inequalities in education. (Please note: do your best – you may choose to watch one of the documentaries, or all of them – try to make summaries of the articles- I have put a * on those I think are important). You need to gain enough research to answer -Is the British Education fair? – so if you feel you have enough – using only a couple of sources is fine.

Source	Key points
<p>Podcast: Professor Cecil Wright discussing the ethnic inequalities in education, including her experiences at school</p> <p>*RECOMMENDED*</p>	
<p>Article: Diane Reay explaining the unequal treatment of working class children in education</p> <p>*RECOMMENDED*</p>	

<p>Report (just read the executive summary): <u>The impact of attitudes and expectations on educational attainment</u></p>	
<p>Documentary: <u>Too Poor for Posh School?</u></p> <p>*RECOMMENDED*</p>	

Clip: [Should we abolish private schools?](#)

Documentary:
Professor Green,
[Living in Poverty](#)

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Use the information to write 500 words explaining why education in contemporary Britain may not be fair, including which groups may be more disadvantaged – use evidence from your research. Use the sentence starters if you need help getting started.

Write your response here:

Sociologists may argue that education is not equal because...

For example,

This shows that the education system is unequal because...

This can be supported by...

A particular group which is disadvantaged is...

For example...

This shows that the education system is unequal because...

This can be supported by...

Some sociologists may argue that education is equal...

For example...

This shows that the education system is equal because...

This can be supported by...

