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your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. 100%(4)100% found this document useful (4 votes)28K viewsSociety is defined as a group of people who live in a defined territory, interact with one another, and share a common culture. It consists not only of individuals and
their cultural norms, AI-enhanced title and descriptionSaveSave What is Society For Later100%100% found this document useful, undefinedAI-generated AbstractThe paper raises fundamental questions about the definition and understanding of society in the context of contemporary ethnic and cultural complexities. It draws parallels between past
and present social transformations, particularly noting the impact of globalization on the conceptualization of society. The discussion emphasizes the gaps between cultural flows and fixed social identities, arguing for a need to reevaluate the elements that contribute to social cohesion and the essence of what constitutes a society. Last Updated on
December 13, 2022 by Karl ThompsonSociety is a concept used to describe the structured relations among a large community of people which cannot be reduced to a simple collection or aggregation of individuals. (1)Sociology is the study of the relationship between society and individuals and how and why societies change over time,
so clearly having a working definition of this concept is very important for sociology students. This post explores some competing definitions of society which was so fundamental in early modernist sociology. The concept of society can be traced to the
fourteenth century, when the primary meaning was companionship or association, a meaning which still exists today. However, the specific sociological meaning of society was not developed until the nineteenth century. A strong argument can be made for the view that it was Emile Durkheim who first developed the sociological meaning of society
which he used when he established sociology as a new discipline which dealt with the collective reality from individuals, and exists in its own right, exerting an influence over individuals within a bounded territory, which for Durkheim essentially
meant the nation state. However, the relevance of bounded-societies has been questioned since the 1970s due to globalisation, and the increasing amount of people, money, and communications moving across national borders. Because of this, some sociologists argue that sociology should shift its analysis from societies to (global) mobilities. The
concept of sociology has been fundamental to sociologys self-identity, with most text books using the concept to define the discipline, withthe study of societies often being defined as large communities, existing within nation states. Talcott Parsons added another important
defining characteristicofsociety that it should be self-perpetuating, or able to reproduce itself without external assistance. For most of sociologys history, sociologists have studied and compared societies, and intheories of development such as
modernisation theory, which outline why certain societies (or nation states). There have been many attempts to understand social change by focusing one specific driving force, for example sociological theorising has developed the following conceptualisations of
society:Industrial societyPost-industrial soc
individual may be more of a reflection of the dualistic legacy of western philosophy rather than society and the individual. Norbert Elias was one of the first to develop a sociology which focused more on social processes,
concentrating more on shifting relationships at a variety of levels, from individual interactions to inter-state conflicts. Globalisation has also put into question the usefulness of focusing on individual interactions to inter-state conflicts. Globalisation has also put into question that most nation states, and criminal organisation and social movements cut across national boarders,
making them seem less useful as a focus for social analysis. John Urrys (2007) social mobilities project, which focuses on the study of processes of movements across national borders is one way in which sociology has moved its analysis away from the nation state in response to globalisation. John Urryhas suggested that sociology might usefully move its
analytical focusbeyond societies as global networks and flows become more effective and powerful, they tend to cross national boundaries, which are now seen as more permeable than ever. The concept of society thus seems less relevant than ever, and the job of sociology is to devise ways of understanding the varied range of mobilities and what
kind of social life they are producing. One sociologists who argues that the concept of society is a collective representation which still resonates with peoples perception of social reality as it actually exists. For example, national identity (however confused) still has meaning to many people
and politicians can still draw on the concept of the nation to pull people together, as the case of Brexit in 2016 suggests. Also, nation states are the only collective entities capable of generating the kind of income necessary (through taxation) to maintain nuclear arsenals and standing armies, along with mobilising popular support to use these in support
of their aims. I usually teach this material as part of an introduction to sociology, the concept of society is after all one of the key ones students need to understand! To return to the homepage revisesociology.comSources(1) Giddens and Sutton (2017) Essential Concepts in Sociology This question came up in the families and households section of the
June 2023 Topics in Sociology A-level exam paper. This is was a 10 mark with item question. In such questions you MUST take your two points from the item. Read Item C below and answer the question that follows. Item CGlobalisation has increased the movement of people around the world. It has also led to wider access in the UK to technological
developments. Globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic labour in the UK. Applying material from Item C, analyse two ways that globalisation may affect domestic lab
migrationIncreasing access to technologies. The mark scheme says that you could mention the following or other relevant ones: Arber and Ginn; Ehrenreich and Hochschild; Gershuny; Kan; Shutes; Silver and Schor; Vertovec. One aspect of globalisation is
Increasing movements of people around the world has meant increasing migration to the UK.In the 1950s to the 1970s this meant primarily an increase in Caribbean and Asian families to the UK.Traditionally, Asian families had more traditional gender roles. Women took on most of the housework and childcare. As a result, there was an increase in
the traditional gendered division of labour. Men assumed the breadwinner role, while women held the role of carer. In recent years, there has been a move towards more equality within gender relations. However, contemporary Asian families still tend to stick to traditional roles. A lot of more recent migrants work as household cleaners and child
carers. For those households that can afford them, this would mean men do less domestic work. Women would also do less domestic work themselves. However, probably this would mean men do less domestic work themselves. However, migrant women are burdened with even more
domestic labour, just working for someone else. Most of these paid domestic workers are women, so this just reinforces traditional domestic roles. A final aspect of migration is emigration is emigration. Many older people migrate to foreign countries, meaning they would not be available to do childcare for their grandchildren. This could increase the amount of
domestic labour parents have to do. A second aspect of globalisation is increased access to new technologies in the UK. Hans Rosling famously analysed the impact of the washing machine on freeing up women from domestic labour. Washing used to take an entire day a week. Now it doesnt. Women in the UK have benefitted by being able to spend
more time on education and in work. Household technologies have largely reduced what radical feminists refer to as the dual burden. However as Marxist Feminists point out this would apply more to wealthier rather than poorer households. Household technologies have reduced inequalities in the domestic division labor, but they are not completely
gone. Even with techs, women still do more domestic labour than men. Moreover, technologies are gendered Women are more likely to limit themselves to using power tools for DIY. Technology may also have had negative impacts on the domestic division of labour.
The rise of tablets and phones have made it easier for children to access people like Andrew Tate. He spreads a message of toxic masculinity. This message advocates for traditional gender roles. The idea that women should clear up after men, for example, is part of it. For more A-level sociology exam question and answers see my page on exams, short
answer questions and essays. SUPPLY AND DEMANDHousing supply is affected by both the quantity and quality of accommodation. Setting acceptable and affordable standards for policymaking purposes is therefore a complex task. In England the current official gauge is based on the minimum decent homes standard set by Labour in 2000, revised
in 2006 to incorporate new health and safety ratings and meet the need for more eco-friendly, energy efficient housing. Similar, though somewhat tighter, standards were also introduced elsewhere in the UK along with targets as in England for social landlords to meet them. Nevertheless, in England for example, 27 per cent in the social sector and 37
per cent in the private rental sector in 2010 failed to meet the governments decent home standard (DCLG, 2011), although this standard has not been updated since 2006 (Henderson, 2019) and review is now underway (DCLG, 2020). Quality and quantity of housing are inevitably interlinked, at the end of the First World War this became a major
political issue, captured in the slogan Homes fit for heroes and prompting the development of public housing. At this time the supply was mainly about quality. During the Second World War, however, house building stopped, 450,000 houses were destroyed and 3 million damaged by enemy bombing. The immediate post-war decades therefore saw an
insufficient quantity of dwellings (and initially building materials too), triggering the largest house building programme ever undertaken in the UK. This meant that by the turn of the century, however, demand was outpacing provision once again, a process that
intensified as house building stalled in the wake of the 2008 recession and continuing demographic change, sparking concerns over a housing crisis. In England, for instance, the government predicted an annual growth in new households of 232,000 between 2008 and 2033, double the current annual rate of house building (DCLG, 2010a; Montague,
2012). Significant shortfalls were also identified in Wales and Scotland, though less so in Northern Ireland (Pawson and Wilcox, 2011). Regional changes also impact here with economic factors leading people to move to areas with greater employment opportunities. However, housing does not move with households, with the result that supply and
demand do not easily match. This can lead to shortages in some areas, with empty and hard-to-let properties in the older industrial areas of the UK and shortages in growth areas, most notably in the South-East of England. House prices in such areas of the UK and shortages in some areas, with empty and hard-to-let properties in the older industrial areas of the UK and shortages in growth areas, most notably in the South-East of England.
10.1 illustrates recent changes in the pattern of home ownership. Whilst owning outright was the most common type of tenure for those 65 years and over, since 1993 the number of young people with a mortgage has decreased and more young
people are in privately rented accommodation a quarter of this age group in the early 2010s compared to 1 in 10 in 1993. More broadly demographic and cultural changes also affect demand. Rising life expectancy means there are more elderly occupying homes for longer than previously and often single-person households. Young people too are living
as singletons (but with large numbers living with parents until their mid-thirties due to limited affordable housing) or childless couples for longer. More couples are separating or divorcing, dividing the household into two. Rising birth rates and future pressures within schools may influence demand for housing. There have been increased numbers of
concealed households, where an older generation (e.g. elderly parents) move in with one of their adult children and their family or a young couple living with parents. School performance can also impact on demand for housing in certain areas if a school is well-performing people wish to move into the relevant catchment area to get their children into
those schools. Figure 10.1 Home ownership since 1980, England. Source Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2020. These developments in demand and supply are the major factors influencing the housing market, driving up rents and house prices in places where prospects are good and large numbers want to live (so-called
hotspots), and leading to low demand and empty properties elsewhere (often in areas with other significant socio-economic problems). They are also the issues that most concern policymakers as they seek to ensure decent housing is available for all, at prices they can afford and that also meets more recent concerns over environmental
sustainability. General interventions aiming to control the availability of and access to housing have been a feature of social policy for over a century, and have occupied a critical, albeit fluctuating, role in public debate. Indeed, it is probably fair to say that public policy change here has been more marked than in any of the other major areas discussed
in this book. A key theme considered within this broader debate has been the changing nature of home tenure over recent decades. House ownership is a rather complex legal and economic issue. Technically ownership is a rather complex legal and economic issue. Technically ownership rights apply to land rather than buildings (though in practice, of course, the two are inseparable), and, more significantly, these may
be held outright (freehold) or shared (leasehold). The latter means the (freehold) owner of a house can rent (lease) it to someone else in return for payment. The effect of this, in simple terms, is to create different kinds of provision, generally referred to as tenures: Owner-occupied housing, where the property is bought for a capital sum from the
builder or a previous occupier (usually with the aid of a mortgage; see below). Rented housing, where the dwelling is let by an owner, who retains a legal interest in it and collects rent payments from the occupier. The latter is provided with varying tenancy arrangements by different types of owners, the main ones in the UK being: Private
landlords.Local Authorities (LAs) providing public housing (initially called council housing). Independent, non-profit Housing Associations and other regulated suppliers (registered providers in England). Provision by the last two, especially since
legislation in 2008, is generally referred to as social housing and can also include low-cost home ownership, though this is a small proportion of the market for housing have long operated for both owner-occupation and private renting, going back to the nineteenth century, whilst aristocrats and middle classes could build or buy their own
home. For most people this was financially impossible, and most lived in accommodation rented from someone else. The massive population growths and shifts which accommodation rented from someone else. The massive population growths and shifts which accommodation rented from someone else.
Thus, the private rented market expanded rapidly during the nineteenth century, but with high levels of exploitation by the (rentier) landlords. Most of the dwellings built for rent were small, badly constructed, unsanitary and generally overcrowded, with many poorer families having to manage in one or two rooms. Philanthropic attempts at
improvement had little impact and by the turn of the century it was clear the private rental market had not delivered adequate or sufficient housing. This led to a decline in private letting and the
growth of LA houses to rent, bifurcating the rental sector. The other major development was the emergence of a new market for owner-occupiers made possible, by the spread of mortgages enabling people to borrow money to buy a home. Like all markets the housing market has been driven by the profit motive and in seeking to capitalize on their
holdings, those who own houses (or land) have not necessarily responded to housing needs. Governments have sought to meet these, but have had to do so through intervening in, or providing alternatives, to that market. Housing policy in practice therefore has been about the relationship between the operations of private markets and the meeting of
and 10.3). In the UK, for instance, the last century saw a contraction of private renting, increasing owner-occupation, a rise and then fall in LA provision, and a growth in the role of Housing Associations overtook LAs as the main social housing provider
home ownership fell for the first time since the 1980s. This was paralleled by a resurgence of private renting. Studies suggest these trends are likely to continue over the next decade, with home-ownership falling to just under two-thirds and private renting. Studies suggest these trends are likely to continue over the next decade, with home-ownership falling to just under two-thirds and private renting. Studies suggest these trends are likely to continue over the next decade, with home-ownership falling to just under two-thirds and private renting.
tenure 1914 to 1999. Source: Hicks and Allen (1999).(Bar graph showing changes in proportions of Owner-occupied, Local Authority, Housing Association, and Private rented over time.) Figure 10.3 Trends in tenure 1980 2020. (Line graph showing changes in household numbers by tenure: own outright, buying with mortgage, local authority, housing
association, private renters.) It is important to note that housing is built to last and therefore generates a physical legacy. With the UKs housing stock being amongst the oldest in Europe (Andrews et al., 2011) with only 21 per cent of homes in England built since 1980 and 22 per cent constructed before 1919 (DCLG, 2012). Some old houses are
lavishly sized and proportioned and, especially when renovated, provide some of the most expensive homes around. Others, particularly those initially built to rent, still constitute some of the most expensive homes around. Others, particularly those initially built to rent, still constitute some of the most expensive homes around.
has been on upgrading. Critical thinking does not occur in isolation, Advanced critical thinking skills typically require a combination of different cognitive abilities and personal attitudes, many of which are outlined below. Effective critical thinking depends on several intellectual skills, including classification, selection, differentiation, comparison, and
contrast. These abilities enable individuals to break down and analyze information systematically. A strong critical analysis. Gathering more information about a topic allows individuals to form well-informed judgments
about whether key facts, alternative perspectives, and various interpretations have been sufficiently considered. While critical thinking is typically associated with rationality and objectivity, it can still elicit emotional reactions. This is because evaluating arguments often involves grappling with contradictory viewpoints and encountering information
that challenges existing beliefs. People may feel frustration, resistance, or anxiety when faced with evidence that contradicts their assumptions. If the conclusions drawn from new data are unexpected, they can provoke discomfort or reluctance to reconsider prior views. Although academic environments emphasize logical reasoning over emotional
responses, emotions still influence decision-making and critical evaluation. The ability to regulate emotional reactions when engaging in debates or analyzing controversial issues is an essential skill. Remaining calm and composed while constructing well-reasoned arguments enhances ones ability to communicate persuasively and think critically. Aim
to be calm and rational, not emotional! Critical thinking requires careful attention to detail and persistence in pursuing minor elements that provide deeper insights into a broader issue. Detecting Patterns and Trends: Identifying relationships through data
analysis, mapping connections, and recognizing recurring themes. Reviewing Information Thoroughly: Going over material multiple times to avoid missing key points. Considering Alternative Perspectives: Examining the same information from multiple viewpoints to develop a more well-rounded understanding. Practicing Objectivity: Setting aside
personal biases, emotions, and preferences to ensure conclusions are as fair and evidence-based as possible. Evaluating Consequences and Long-Term Effects: Assessing whether a decision that seems beneficial in the short term might have negative long-term outcomes. Strong critical thinking requires making well-informed judgments. As previously
mentioned, our thought processes may not always be entirely reliable if we fail to recognize the factors influences can stem from our assumptions, biases, prior experiences, personal beliefs, and preferencesmany of which we take for granted as normal or universal. Often, these underlying influences shape our understanding
of ourselves and the world around us without conscious awareness. Individuals who demonstrate exceptional critical thinking skills tend to be highly self-reflective. They frequently analyze and reassess their personal motivations, interests, potential prejudices, and areas where their knowledge is incomplete. They actively challenge their own
perspectives and carefully evaluate whether the evidence they rely on is sound and unbiased. Becoming more aware of our thinking that we
were previously unaware of can be unsettling. Similarly, questioning long-held beliefs can feel challenging, as these ideas are often intertwined with our personal identity. When our beliefs are questioned, it can sometimes mean holding an unpopular
perspective within our social circles. Friends, family members, or colleagues may interpret the same evidence differently or reject alternative viewpoints altogether. Standing by a well-reasoned but minority position takes confidence and resilience, particularly when we acknowledge that theres always a possibility that we, too, could be
mistaken. Below, three lecturers share their different approaches to critical thinking. Their methods show how to read, analyze, and evaluate information effectively. First, I skim the text to get a general idea and see if it agrees with or challenges what I already believe. I compare what Im reading with what I already know about the topic and relate it to
my own experiences. As I go through the text, I summarize key points in my head to help me follow the overall argument. I dentify the authors viewpoint, asking: What is their main argument, and what are they trying to convince me of? As I read, I check my understanding of each section. If something is unclear, I reread itoften, things make more
sense the second time. If it still doesn't make a note to revisit it later once I have more context. I then analyze the writers reasoning and decide whether I find it persuasive. If I agree with the argument, I ask myself why. Is it based on expert opinions? Is the evidence strong and reliable? If I disagree, I try to understand why. Is it just a gui
reaction, or do I have solid reasons for rejecting it? If Im relying only on instinct, I look for concrete evidence that either supports or contradicts my doubts. Finally, I form my own opinion and check whether it is convincing. Could I defend my view if someone challenged me? This approach focuses on analyzing information in a structured way and then
forming a well-supported opinion. Critical thinking is not just about what is writtenit also involves understanding the bigger picture. I focus on the main issue by historical events, cultural debates, or financial and political interests
that shape what is being written. Often, whats considered true is shaped by popular opinions, social trends, and outside influences, not just facts. This approach helps me look beyond the words and understand how context affects the meaning of what Im reading. The third lecturer agrees with the first two approaches but adds another step: figuring outside influences, not just facts. This approach helps me look beyond the words and understand how context affects the meaning of what Im reading. The third lecturer agrees with the first two approaches but adds another step: figuring outside influences, not just facts. This approach helps me look beyond the words and understand how context affects the meaning of what Im reading.
what is important and what is just extra detail. Not all information is equally important. I need to find the key points and ignore anything that isnt useful. Prioritizing information is key. I focus on the most important ideas instead of getting lost in unnecessary details. I keep asking myself: Is this fact accurate? Does it relate to the main argument? Is it
the best example to prove the point? I also question what really matters rather than being overwhelmed by too much information. Using an analytical approach to break down and understand new information. Looking
beyond the text to consider how outside factors influence arguments. Sorting through information carefully to find what is truly important. Challenging your own thinking to make sure your conclusions are fair and logical. Critical thinking is a crucial skill for A-level sociology students, enabling them to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information
systematically. By employing critical thinking, students move beyond memorization and engage deeply with sociology by focusing on core thinking abilities, research, and debates. This article explores how to apply critical thinking in A-level sociology by focusing on core thinking abilities, research, and debates. This article explores how to apply critical thinking in A-level sociology by focusing on core thinking abilities, research, and debates. This article explores how to apply critical thinking in A-level sociology by focusing on core thinking abilities, research, and debates.
thinking in sociology involves classification, selection, differentiation, comparison, and contrast. These skills help students deconstruct complex theories and concepts. For example, when studying sociological perspectives like Functionalism and Marxism, students should: Classify the foundational principles of each theory. Compare and contrast their
views on social institutions. Differentiate between their explanations of sociological theories and their real-world implications. (Overview of Sociological Theories) Thorough research is vital for strengthening critical analysis in sociology.
Gathering comprehensive information allows students to form well-informed judgments by considering key facts, alternative perspectives, and various interpretations. For example, when exploring the role of education in society, students might: By evaluating diverse viewpoints and supporting evidence, students develop a well-rounded understanding
of educations role in society. Engaging with sociological content can provoke strong emotional reactions, particularly when topics challenge personal beliefs or societal norms. Recognizing and managing these responses is essential for maintaining objectivity and rational analysis. For example, discussions on sensitive issues like race, gender, or class
may lead to discomfort or defensiveness. To navigate these emotions: Acknowledge personal biases and emotions influence interpretations. Strive to maintain objectivity by focusing on empirical evidence and logical reasoning. A good example is the New Right perspective on the family, which argues that
traditional nuclear families are essential for social stability. While some students may strongly agree or disagree with this perspective, critical thinking emotional responses, students engage more effectively in sociological debates and discussions. Critical thinking in
sociology demands careful attention to detail and a commitment to accuracy. This involves: Observing patterns and trendsFor example, identifying the rise of postmodern family structures while also considering how traditional family forms persist. Reviewing multiple sources a second reading of a sociological study may reveal biases, limitations, or
alternative explanations that were not obvious initially. Cross-checking information Does another study support or contradict a claim? For instance, if a study claims that crime rates are increasing, a critical thinker would check official crime statistics, compare different sources, and consider factors like changes in reporting methods. This level of
careful evaluation ensures that sociological conclusions are based on factual evidence rather than assumptions. Self-awareness is a key aspect of critical thinking, as it helps students recognize how their assumptions are based on factual evidence rather than assumptions. Self-awareness is a key aspect of critical thinking, as it helps students recognize how their assumptions. Self-awareness is a key aspect of critical thinking, as it helps students recognize how their assumptions.
and how they align or conflict with different sociological theories. Seek feedback from peers and instructors to identify blind spots. Engage with diverse perspectives to challenge and broaden ones viewpoints. For example, students analyzing the causes of crime may initially believe that poverty is the main reason people commit crimes. However, and instructors to identify blind spots.
broader look at interactionist perspectives reveals that labeling and societal reactions also play a key role. By reading about Beckers labelling theory, students might reconsider their initial assumptions and recognize that crime is socially constructed. By developing self-awareness, students improve their ability to critically assess sociological
arguments without bias. Applying critical thinking to A-level sociology involves breaking down theories, researching thoroughly, managing emotions, refining accuracy, and developing self-awareness. By embracing these strategies, students can move beyond memorization and engage deeply with sociological theories and concepts. Rather than just
accepting theories at face value, critical thinkers question, compare, and analyze arguments. These skills not only enhance academic performance but also help students will be better equipped to tackle complex social
problems, challenge dominant perspectives, and construct well-supported arguments. This blog explores the role of critical thinking in academia, the challenges students face in developing these skills, and how embracing nuanced, evidence-based reasoning leads to more informed perspectives. Ready to sharpen your analytical mindset? Lets dive
in!Students are expected to develop critical thinking skills so that they can dig deeper below the surface of the subject they are studying and engaging in critical dialogue with its main theories and arguments. This is usually through engaging in critical dialogue with its main theories and arguments. This is usually through engaging in critical dialogue with its main theories and arguments.
ways of arriving at a point where we really understand something is by doing, or replicating, the underlying research for ourselves. However, as undergraduates, and indeed in everyday life, there simply isnt time to research everything we encounter. The depth of understanding that comes through direct experimentation has
to be replaced, at times, by critical analysis of the work of other people. Students need to develop the ability to critically evaluate the work of others. While some find this easy, others tend to accept or apply the results of other people. Students need to develop the ability to critically evaluate the work of others.
main points being made. Bodner (1988), for example, describes chemistry students as being unable to apply their knowledge outside the narrow domain in which it was learnt. They know without understanding. Bodner suggests that, instead of focusing on standard chemical calculations in books, students should be looking for answers to questions
such as How do we know? and Why do we believe? Bodners description is likely to be just as true for students, and for people generally, to rely unquestioningly on research that is based on faulty or ill-structured projects. Evidence
from small-scale studies is often treated as if it were absolute proof of a general principle, and is sometimes quoted year after year as if it were an established fact. Of course A-level sociology students who will have studied research methods should be much less likely to fall into this trap. Do you recognise anything of yourself in Bodners description of
students? What effect would the approach he suggests have on your learning and understanding?In academic contexts, criticism refers to an analysis of positive features as well as what does not. Good critical
analysis accounts for why work is good or poor, why it works or fails. It is not enough merely to list good and bad points. For most academic programmes, students are expected to take a well-reasoned, evidence-based, critical approach to what they hear, see, read, and learn. That is the case even when considering the work of respected
academics. Normally, any theory, perspective, data, area of research, or approach to a discipline could be subject to critical analysis. Some colleges, such as religious foundations, may consider certain subjects to be out of bounds, but this is not typical. The Idea or the Action, Not the PersonA distinction is usually drawn between the idea, work, text
theory, or behaviour on the one hand, and on the other, the person associated with these. This is also true when making critical analyses of other students work if this is a requirement of your course. Even so, it is worth remembering that people identify closely with their work and may take criticism of it personally. Tact and a constructive approach
are needed. Giving difficult messages in a way other people can accept is an important aspect of critical evaluation. Your works rubbish, of course, but as a human being, youll do, I suppose! Irma wasnt famed for her tact. In our day-to-day lives, we can slip into thinking everything is right or wrong, black or white. In the academic world, answers may
occur at a point on a continuum of possibilities. One of the purposes of higher-level thinking is to address questions that are more complicated and sophisticated and do not lend themselves to straightforward responses. You may have noticed that the more you know about a subject, the more difficult it becomes to give simple answers. With the interne
at our fingertips, we are used to obtaining answers within minutes of formulating a question. However, in the academic world, questions are raised in new areas, and answers may not be found for years, or even lifetimes. This can feel uncomfortable if you are used to ready answers. This does not mean, though, that vague answers are acceptable. If
you look at articles in academic journals, you will see that they are very closely argued, often focusing on a minute aspect of the subject in great detail and with precision. Students, too, are expected to develop skills in using evidence, even if drawn from other peoples research, to support a detailed line of reasoning. It is worth remembering that in
academic work, including professional research for business and industry, researchers often need to pursue lines of enquiry knowing that: No clear answers may emerge; It may take decades to gain an answer; They may contribute only a very small part to a much larger picture. Finding out where the best evidence lies for the subject you are
discussing; Evaluating the strength of the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning to guide your audience through the evidence appears to lead; Constructing a line of reasoning through the evidence appears to lead through through the evidence appears to lead through through the evidence appears to lead through through the evidence appears to 
your argument. The idea of the Orient evolved from Western colonial powers. It is a politically dangerous and culturally biased idea. This concept continues to infect Western views of the Eastern world. This powerful argument is made by Edward Said in his influential text, Orientalism (1978). The concept of Orientalism, he says, works in two important
ways. It presents the East as a homogeneous region. The East is depicted as exotic, uncivilized, and backward. At the same time, it constructs the Wests idea of the East. This idea is a simplified, unchanging set of cultural representations. Orientalism offers us a useful criticism of Optimist views of globalisation. Edward Said explains that the idea of
modern Orientalism arose from a significant historical event. In 1798, a French army led by Napoleon briefly conquered Egypt in battle. This conquest was significant because Napoleon took with him not only soldiers, but also scientists, recorders, and interpreters. These experts were given the job of recording and categorizing what they saw. In
doing so, they created a version of the Orient as objective knowledge. Their words gained unquestionable authority back home in Europe. However, as Said suggests, they were looking at the East through the lens of the imperialists who sent them. The West saw itself as rational, civilized, and progressive. Their words gained unquestionable authority back home in Europe. However, as Said suggests, they were looking at the East through the lens of the imperialists who sent them.
experts were meticulously crafted. This meant that the East was presented to Europeans in a highly packaged way. The West explained the East. In the process, it was moulded to suit the European mind. Literary figures such as Lord Byron appropriated and disseminated this idea of what Orientals were like. They romanticized the Orient but
continued to emphasize its inalienable difference. The problem continues, Said says, because the idea of the Orient has never been questioned. The Western view of the East in all its forms keeps arising. This includes food, fashion, and sets of images. The Orient is seen as a place of mythical exoticism. It is the home of Sphinx, Cleopatra, Eden, Troy
Sodom and Gomorrah, Sheba, Babylon, and Muhammad.Orientalism is a framework used to understand the Orient, says Said. At the same time, it tells us that the peoples of the East are different. It portrays them as frightening. The world is viewed as a violent fanatic. Western nations feel the need to protect themselves from the infiltration of the
Other. The challenge, he says, is to find a way of coexisting peacefully. The Oklahoma bombing, USA, in 1995. The media first blamed the attack on Muslims and Arabs (the other). However, a white American was responsible for the attack 1375 Chaucer refers to the Orient as the lands lying east of the Mediterranean. Early 19th century French
academic Silvestre de Sacy sets out the terms of modern Orientalism. In 1836, Edward William Lane published Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians. This book became an important reference for writers was the French novelist Gustave Flaubert. 1961 Franz Fanon writes about the dehumanizing forces of colonialism in
The Wretched of the Earth.1981 Sadik Jalal al-Azm argues that Orientalism tends to categorize the West. This is similar to the way Said was the founder of post-colonial studies. He was born in West Jerusalem during the British Mandate in Palestine. His father was a wealthy
Palestinian-American of Christian faith. Said went to private international schools in Lebanon, Egypt, and the USA. He later studied at Princeton and Harvard. He then became a professor of English Literature at Columbia University. He taught there until his death in 2003. Said wrote prolifically on a wide range of topics, including music and
Palestinian issues. Said stated that he was politicized by the Six-Day War of 1967 between Israel and its Arab neighbours. After this event, he became an important voice for the Palestinian cause, especially in the USA. In 1999 he founded an Arab-Israeli orchestra with the conductor Daniel Barenboim, in the belief that music transcends politics. 1978
Orientalism1979 The Question of Palestine1993 Culture and ImperialismFor students of A-level sociology Orientalism is a useful theory to know for the Globalisation explained. This theory and methods question came up in the May 2020 A-
level sociology Education with Theory and Methods exam paper. Outline and explain two problems of using primary qualitative methods in sociological research (10) Below I include the mark scheme is as follows: cannot make generalisations cannot isolate
cause and effectdifficulties analysing datalow in reliabilitysubjective the imposition problemunscientificcannot generate social laws. Personally I see these as falling into three groups which naturally fit together. Cannot make generalisations/ cannot generate social laws. Personally I see these as falling into three groups which naturally fit together. Cannot make generalisations/ cannot generate social laws. Personally I see these as falling into three groups which naturally fit together. Cannot make generate social laws. Personally I see these as falling into three groups which naturally fit together.
imposition problem/ subjective/ unscientific. So the strategy here is to pick two of these and make these your points. And it would be good to use examples from some qualitative methods, namely Participant Observation or Unstructured Interviews, ideally both The first problem of using primary qualitative research methods such as Participant Observation or Unstructured Interviews, ideally both The first problem of using primary qualitative research methods such as Participant
Observation is that they are unscientific, and influenced by the subjective biases of the researchers who use them. A good example of this is Venkateshs study Gang Leader for a Day. He seemed to really like the leader of the way he
interpreted his actions. He may also have been selective in what he wrote, possibly keeping some of the worst crimes out of his publication. A related problem is that they are difficult to repeat in the same way and get the same results. This is
research they may follow different leads, speak to different people, and find an entirely different interpretation of the same gang. Although this is a moot point because by the time Venkatesh published his in-depth study the projects where he did the research had disappeared, so the length of time it takes to write up findings adds to this problem of
reliability.HOWEVER, one can at least verify the findings by showing them to the respondents who took part. A second problem of primary qualitative data is that it is not usually possible to isolate cause and effect and uncover social lawsFor example with unstructured interviews which are respondent led you might have a broad topic area and then
ask respondents different questions to different respondents. You would have a nice thick description of what respondents think and feel about a topic area, but also just a mess of qualitative data. The data you would get would be messy, possibly quite long winded and possibly with lots of irrelevant information if the researcher allowed the
respondents too much freedom. Thus if you do 10 unstructured interviews you might end up with 10 very different sets of findings with no common themes. It would be hard for a researcher to analyse this data and find the common themes. It would be hard for a researcher to analyse this data and find the common themes.
             uestions and limit the options available to the respondents. Having said that today it should be possible to use software to find the common themes in qualitative data, but even that might miss out on picking up on respondents talking about the same thing in different ways. For more posts on exam advice for A-level sociology
see my exams and essays page. AQA Sociology Past Papers This is a 20 mark methods in context question with Theory and Methods exam paper (7192/1). Link to the Mark Scheme for the Paper here. Below I include the Item and Question, a full answer, and some hints and tips. If you like this sort of thing then
you might also like this post: pages and posts: Read Item C below and answer the question that follows. Pupils behave in many different ways in schools. Some pupils conform to school rules. Interactions between teachers and pupils, and between
peers, are likely to influence behaviour. Sociologists are interested in researching patterns of pupil behaviour, particularly disruptive behaviour. One way of studying pupil behaviour in schools is to use non-participant observation is that the
sociologist can observe behaviour both inside and outside classrooms. Non-participant observation allows behaviour may not be classified in the same way by different researchers. Applying material from Item C and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the
strengths and limitations of using non-participant observation to investigate pupil behaviour in schools (20). These questions are METHOD + TOPIC, so you need to get in all of the methods stuff (theoretical, practical ethical) as a base, and then APPLY the methods to the topic, and this means USING THE ITEM! pupil behaviour: uniform. completing
tasks, breaking rules. Interactions between teachers and pupils, and peers influence behaviour. Non PO can be used inside and outside the classroom. Can categorise behaviour before handCategories of behaviour may not be classified in the same way by researchers. Validity depends on overt covert/ cant ask questions about meaning (only observing)/
limited because you can only look for a few types of behaviour. Practical NOT practical, if in-person, one has to be in the classroom. Have to gain access to the school. Representativeness limited because of limited capacity to observe. Reliability can be repeated, but categories. Ethics
consent?Personally I find its easiest to imagine you are going to do the research, put yourself in the shoes of the research pupil behaviours in-school, but practically it will probably only be useful to explore a limited range of behaviours. Research pupil behaviours in-school, but practically it will probably only be useful to explore a limited range of behaviours.
use Non PO in different classrooms to explore what kind of teaching approaches correlate with positive or negative student behaviours. For example, a researcher could sit in a classroom and count how much time they spend
helping students with the later, and see if this is correlated with higher student engagement in terms of less off-task chatter, more completion of tasks, or even test results if done in the lesson. If you did the research in league with the school you could focus on the same students and their behaviour responses in different teaching environments, and
with different peers in their different subjects, this could be very scientific and favoured by positivists. This kind of comparative approach would require the researcher to know what they are looking for in the first place, and to be able to quantify their findings they would need appropriate activity and behaviour grids to record data into. In terms of
validity, a problem may be that pupil behaviour may be different with a researcher present within the classroom. For this reason, filming a class may improve validity, although ethically students and ideally parents and teachers would have to be informed of this in advance to gain consent. One observer may also miss out on some pupil behaviour in
larger classes, they simply may not be able to see everything going on in a class of say 30 pupils, and for this reason filming may again be useful to go back and observe again. Filming would also allow for a second research to check findings, improving reliability. The item mentions that different researchers may not categorise behaviour in the same
way, this is a problem which could reduce reliability, especially if researchers are from different genders. Women may be less likely to see bad behaviour of girls, for example, and the same for men with boys, unconscious researcher bias may reduce validity and thus reliability. However as mentioned above,
filming observations in classrooms could be a way to overcome this, different researchers would have to gain access to the school, and classrooms, teachers and pupils would probably not be very keen. In
terms of representatives you would be limited to one class at a time, and one hours work of in-class observations would have to be written up and checked afterwards. If you wanted to research across different schools, access would have to be written up and checked afterwards. If you wanted to research across different schools, access would have to be written up and checked afterwards.
that if youre doing this in corridors, playgrounds, or social spaces, there would be a lot of coming and going of different students, so you wouldn't be able to focus on particular students, as you could do with being in a classroom. This kind of outside the classroom would be messier than in-classroom, and to be honest i don't know what youd be looking
for, maybe just open ended observation would yield something useful, but I cant really see the point? Maybe you could use this to measure general rowdiness in different schools and see if this is correlated with staff presence (but the answer here seems obvious?). On reflection there seems little to gain from doing this.Less structured non PO outside
of classrooms would also be more subject to the subjectivities of the researchers. One other way of doing non participant observation may be to set cameras up in corridors and school gates, these could measure things like student lateness, and maybe other things with the right AI software, but of course AI software has to be programmed which
means that is open to human bias too. Weaknesses of non-PO would be that you cant ask students WHY they are doing, so you wouldnt have any in-depth information from participants. This also raises ethical problems in that non-PO done on its own would be researching without any say-so from the participants, treating them like
guinea pigs, and this method is in some ways like a field-experiment. This method thus wouldn't be favoured by interpretivists. One final thing is that OFSTED inspections and school internal observations offer a secondary source of non-PO data that could form the basis of further non-PO work, findings from either of these could be used as a jumping
off point for further research. For example previous internal school observations may have found that, for example, Kahoot works really well to engage students, so further observations could see if this is true in a wider range of subjects, or if IT more generally improves student performance. In conclusion I think non PO is a useful method for exploring
correlations of specific behaviours within classrooms, but must have a narrow focus to be useful i cant see how it would be useful doing more general observations outside of the classroom, it would be too impractical and too open to the subjective whims of the researchers to yield anything useful I think. Methods in Context topics More methods in
context questions. With recent advancements in medical technology, one would believe that more tests and earlier diagnosis simply mean better health. But what if our quest to detect diseases early is actually hurting us more than it is helping us? Consultant neurologist Dr Suzanne OSullivan asserts that we now face a new kind of health crisis. This
crisis is brought about not by hidden disease. It is caused by overdiagnosis. It is not doctors being wrong. It is diagnosing illness that will never have hurt anyone. In some cases, the illness may never have appeared at all.Dr OSullivan reflects on her 30 years of medical practice and growing dismay at the trend towards overdiagnosis. She speaks of
patients like Stephanie and her teenage daughter Abigail. Stephanie had epilepsy and wanted an explanation; Abigail though, was a healthy teenager. After screening them genetically, Dr OSullivan informed Abigail she had a progressive neurological disease. The condition hadnt yet appeared. The diagnosis was technically true. It had no therapy or
cure. However, it created anxiety over an eventual future that is unlikely ever to materialize. Abigail had changed from optimal health to the ominous diagnosis. It may alter our self-concepts. It can affect our sense of self-body even when no treatment is
necessary. In another case, a young woman named Darcie had accumulated multiple diagnoses over the years. She was diagnoses were given despite her having relatively minor or anxiety-based symptoms. The incessant medicalisation of her day-to-day experience rendered her iller, rather than
healthier. And maybe even more importantly, it prompted her to see herself solely as ill. This is not an unusual trend. More children are being diagnosed with neurodevelopmental disorders than ever before today. But mental illness issues in adolescents still rise. Clearly, more diagnoses have not resulted in better outcomes. Whats causing this trend,
then? It is a mix of factors. These include increased public awareness and more advanced technology. Pharmaceutical company advertising also plays a role. Additionally, the rise of social media pathologizes normal emotions and behaviors. Genetic testing and high-tech scans can now detect small abnormalities years before symptoms ever arise. But is
it helpful to know you may fall ill in 30 years time? In Dr OSullivans view, early diagnosis without treatment can generate fear, anxiety, and unnecessary medical interventions. Consider cancer, for instance. We praise early detection of many cancers would never have resulted in harm. Patients are treated for them
nonetheless. And with disorders like Parkinsons, now diagnosed before symptoms begin, early information might merely prolong a life lived with Parkinsons. There is no cure, so it doesn't lead to a life without it. Medical labels also have psychological consequences. Being told you are sick, even if you don't know anything is wrong, can make people fee
and act sick. This is called the nocebo effect: the negative opposite of the placebo. A diagnosis, while sometimes helpful, can validate a persons notion that they are in pieces. This can create a vicious cycle of stress, dependence on healthcare, and reduced quality of life. Dr OSullivan is not calling for diagnosis to be prohibited far from it. She is,
however, demanding a more cautious, patient-centred approach. Tests must be employed only when they can actually do good. Practitioners must be about healing suffering, not just labeling it. In an increasingly label- and early-diagnosis-obsessed
culture, we must ask: Are we making folks healthier or just more anxious?Dr. OSullivans concerns about overdiagnosis and the psychological impact of medical labels can be further understood. This is achieved through sociological impact of medical labels can be further understood. This is achieved through sociological impact of medical labels can be further understood. This is achieved through sociological impact of medical labels can be further understood. This is achieved through sociological impact of medical labels can be further understood.
later interpretivist sociologists. This theory emphasises how individual meanings and social interactions shape our understanding of reality. This includes health and illness is not just a biological fact. Illness is also a socially constructed identity. This post on
Social Action Theory highlights the influence of labeling on how we define and react to health conditions. Our reactions are influenced by how others label us. Medical professionals especially influence how they
see themselves. It can also affect how others treat them. This happens regardless of whether they actually feel unwell.Dr. OSullivans cases of Abigail and Darcie show this in practice. The diagnosissometimes given for a condition that may never even manifestcan reshape a persons self-concept and daily life. This mirrors what labelling theorists like
Howard Becker describe: a person becomes their label. The label can bring about real changes in behaviour, relationships, and even physical well-being (as seen with the nocebo effect). Furthermore, the social construction of illness means that what counts as sick or well is partly decided by social norms. Medical definitions and cultural attitudes also
play a role. These criteria change over time and differ between societies. The explosion in neurodevelopmental and mental health diagnoses reflects changing definitions. It shows greater awareness. It also demonstrates how new categories of illness are created and legitimised socially, not just medically. Social Action Theory suggests we should pay
attention to the meanings that individuals attach to health, symptoms, and diagnosis. Medical professionals, under pressure from technology, social media, and pharmaceutical interests, may be less about biological reality. It may be more about how it changes
their identity, relationships, and future expectations. In summary: Dr. OSullivans critique supports the sociological view that diagnosis is not just a technical act but a social process. Labelling can have unintended consequences, turning healthy people into patients and creating anxiety where none may have existed. From a Social Action Theory
perspective, the solution is not to reject diagnosis. Instead, it should be applied thoughtfully. Recognising that the meanings attached to illness are as important as the medical facts themselves is crucial. Donald Trumps designs on Greenland have stunned the world. The story opens a window into bigger questions about globalisation and geopolitics. It
also questions who really gets to own the future. This post explores some basic facts about Greenland. It also offers some analysis on whether we are now in a post-globalisation age. Blame Erik the Red, the Norse explorer who named it strategically around 982 AD. His aim? Attract more settlers by making a massive ice-covered island sound
welcoming. The name stuck, but over 80% of Greenland is still covered in ice today. The population first claimed Greenland as a colony. It became solely Danish in 1814. After World War II, the US treated it like a protectorate.
Then, in 1953, Greenland officially became a Danish province. What followed was controversial: forced assimilation known as Danization. Greenlanders were fitted with IUDs without consent to lower birth rates. Greenlanders voted for home rule in 1979 and
gained further autonomy in 2009. Denmark still oversees foreign policy and defence, but Greenland runs its own government and domestic affairs. There is strong local support for eventual full independence. He has called it strategically nice. Greenland sits near Russian missile routes and hosts critical US military bases. Its rich in rare earth
minerals, and as the ice melts, it could offer new shipping routes and mining potential. But there a big catch: Arctic mining is notoriously difficult, and even China has pulled out of projects there. Plus, Greenland already supports US military operations without being owned by it. Denmark quickly rejected Trumps original 2019 proposal to by
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Greenland: Greenland is not for sale. Greenland leaders echoed this, calling the move unacceptable and uniting across political lines to oppose it. Trumps follow-up? He didnt rule out taking it one way or another. Greenland is the most sparsely populated place on Earth. Most settlements are coastalthere are almost no roads inland. Winters bring near-total darkness; summers, endless light. The weather is brutal, the health challenges serious, and yet the people remain deeply connected to their land and culture. Lets dig deeper by applying some sociology theory. According to optimist globalisation theorists, Trumps proposal reflects how global integration turns everythingeven icy islandsinto economic assets. Rare earth minerals, shipping lanes, and strategic location? Its the dream of borderless capitalism. Pessimist theories of globalisation highlight how global power still exploits the periphery. Greenlanders are Indigenous, self-governing, and have already faced forced assimilation. A rich foreign nation trying to buy them off? Its not

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newits colonialism 2.0. Some sociologists argue that the nation-state is declining, while others think globalisation is in reverse. But Greenland shows how smaller nationsand even semi-autonomous onescan still resist global superpowers. Local democracy and cultural pride won out over geopolitical ambition. James W. Messerschmidts work on
masculinities and crime offers another angle. Trumps aggressive push to own Greenland is an assertion of hegemonic masculinity. It involves dominating territory, flexing power, and refusing to take no for an answer. Trumps failed Greenland gamble wasnt just a bizarre news storyit revealed how globalisation, imperial legacy, and modern identity.
politics collide. The people of Greenland, often overlooked in global politics, made their voices heard: they are not for sale. Check out these sociology May 2022 7192/1 Education with Theory and Methods Paper. This blog post presents an essay
which should score in the top mark band. Read Item B below and answer the question that follows. Item BThe patterns of educational achievement by gender have changed over time. Some sociologists explain these patterns of educational achievement by gender have changed over time.
such as employment opportunities, may also contribute to these patterns. However, the way schools are also likely to affect gender differences in educational achievement. Applying material from Item B and your knowledge, evaluate sociological explanations of gender differences in educational achievement.
in educational achievement. [30 marks]Over the past few decades, there has been a significant shift in gender patterns of educational achievement in the UK. Boys used to outperform girls. However, recent data shows that girls now generally achieve better results at most levels of education. Item B highlights that external factors to schools, such as
socialisation, play a significant role. Parental attitudes are also important in explaining gendered patterns of achievement. One key external explanation is gender role socialisation. Sociologist Ann Oakley argued that gender socialisation begins at home. Girls are encouraged to be more passive and compliant. These traits are valued in schools. Parents
are also more likely to encourage girls to read, which may explain their stronger literacy skills early on. Another significant external factor is the changing position of women in society. The rise of feminism since the 1970s is notable. Sue Sharpe highlights this in her study Just Like a Girl (1976, 1994). She found that girls aspirations changed from
marriage and family in the 1970s to careers and independence by the 1990s. This shift is also supported by improvements in employment opportunities and the introduction of equal pay and anti-discrimination laws. As a result, girls now see educational achievement as key to their future. In contrast, Paul Williss classic study Learning to Labour (1977)
offers insight into why boys might underachieve. Willis found that working-class boys often formed anti-school subcultures valued manual labour over academic work was devalued. External factors like socialisation and changing opportunities
help explain long-term changes. However, they cannot fully account for variations within schools are organised and the social interactions that take place within schools are also likely to affect
gender differences. Teacher expectations and labelling play a major role. John Abraham found that teachers tend to view girls as more capable and better behaved. This perspective leads to higher expectations and more encouragement. This can produce a self-fulfilling prophecy, boosting girls achievement. Conversely, boys are often labelled as
disruptive, which can undermine their confidence and encourage anti-school attitudes. The influence of peer group cultures is significant. Willis showed that boys may experience pressure to act tough. They may avoid academic work, creating anti-school subcultures that hinder achievement. The structure of assessment is another factor. According to
research by Stephen Gorard, the introduction of coursework in the 1980s and 1990s benefited girls. Girls generally had better organisation and sustained effort. More recently, the coursework was reduced. There was a return to exam-based assessment. This change led to a slight narrowing of the gender gap. Subject choices also matter. Girls are
more likely to choose humanities and arts subjects. Boys tend to gravitate towards sciences and technology. This pattern is shaped by both peer pressure and teacher encouragement, and has long-term effects on achievement and future opportunities. However, critics argue that focusing on gender alone ignores other key factors such as class and
ethnicity. Not all girls are high achievers; working-class girls, in particular, still face significant barriers. Although Item B does not directly mention policy, education policy and gender explains several initiatives. Policies like GIST (Girls into
Science and Technology) have encouraged girls to pursue non-traditional subjects. WISE (Women into Science and Engineering) has also promoted this effort. They have encouraged girls to pursue non-traditional subjects. WISE (Women into Science and Engineering) has also promoted this effort. They have encouraged girls to pursue non-traditional subjects. WISE (Women into Science and Engineering) has also promoted this effort.
underachievement. Girls have overtaken boys at most levels. Critics suggest more targeted interventions for boys are needed, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In conclusion, the gender gap in educational achievement is shaped by a complex interaction of external factors. External factors such as gender socialisation,
changing aspirations, and employment opportunitieshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role. Internal school processes, such as labelling and assessment methodshighlighted by Oakley, Sharpe, and Willishave played a major role.
must consider the diversity of experiences among boys and girls. They must also consider intersections with class and ethnicity. Links to sources: Key references used: Ann Oakley (gender socialisation) Sue Sharpe (Just Like a Girl) Paul Willis (Learning to Labour) John Abraham (teacher expectations and labelling) Stephen Gorard (impact of coursework
and assessment)A level sociology revision education, families, research methods, crime and deviance and more! If you like this sort of thing, then you might like my A level sociology revision mega bundle which contains the following: over 200 pages of revision notes 60 mind maps in pdf and png formats 50 short answer exam practice questions and
exemplar answersCovers the entire A-level sociology syllabus, AQA focus. Twenty Twenty-FiveDesigned with WordPressIt has been suggested that this article be merged with Social. (Discuss) Proposed since May 2025. Connected group of individuals For other uses, see Society (disambiguation). Clockwise from top left: A family in Savannakhet, Laos; a
crowd shopping in Maharashtra, India; a military parade on a Spanish national holiday. A society (/ssati/) is a group of individuals involved in persistent social interaction or a large social group sharing the same spatial or social territory, typically subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations. Societies are characterized by
patterns of relationships (social relations) between individuals who share a distinctive culture and institutions; a given society may be described as the sum total of such relationships among its constituent members. Human social structures are complex and highly cooperative, featuring the specialization of labor via social roles. Societies construct
roles and other patterns of behavior by deeming certain actions or concepts acceptable or unacceptable these expectations around behavior within a given society can enable its members to benefit in ways that would otherwise be difficult on an individual basis. Societies vary based on
level of technology and type of economic activity. Larger societies with larger food surpluses often exhibit stratification or dominance patterns. Societies can have many different forms of government, various ways of understanding kinship, and different gender roles. Human behavior varies immensely between different societies; humans shape
society, but society in turn shapes human beings. The term "society" often refers to a large group of people in an ordered community, in a country or several similar countries, or the 'state of being with other people', e.g. "they lived in medieval society." [1] The term dates back to at least 1513 and comes from the 12th-century French societe (modern
French socit) meaning 'company'.[2] Societe was in turn derived from the Latin word societas ('fellowship,' 'alliance', 'association'), which in turn was derived from the noun socius ("comrade, friend, ally").[2] Further information: SocialityAnt social ethology: Ants are eusocial insects. The social group enables its members to benefit in ways that would
not otherwise be possible on an individual basis. Humans, along with their closest relatives bonobos and chimpanzees, are highly social animals. This biological context suggests that the underlying sociability required for the formation of societies is hardwired into human nature. [3] Human society features highly social animals. This biological context suggests that the underlying sociability required for the formation of societies is hardwired into human nature.
important ways from groups of chimps and bonobos, including the parental role of males,[4][5] the use of language to communicate,[3] the specialization of labor,[6] and the tendency to build "nests" (multigenerational camps, town, or cities).[6]Some biologists, including entomologist E.O. Wilson, categorize humans as eusocial, placing humans with
ants in the highest level of sociability on the spectrum of animal ethology, although others disagree.[6] Social group living may have evolved in humans due to group selection in physical environments that made survival difficult.[7]Further information: SociologyIn Western sociology, there are three dominant paradigms for understanding society:
functionalism (also known as structural functionalism), conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism.[8]According to the functionalist school of thought, individuals in society work together like organs in the body to create emergent behavior, sometimes referred to as collective consciousness.[9] 19th century sociologists Auguste Comte and mile
Durkheim, for example, believed that society constitutes a separate "level" of reality, distinct from both biological and inorganic matter. Explanations of social phenomena had therefore to be constructed within this level, individuals being merely transient occupants of comparatively stable social roles.[10]Conflict theorists take the opposite view, and
posit that individuals and social groups or social classes within society interact on the basis of conflict rather than agreement. One prominent conflict theorist is Karl Marx who conceived of society as operating on an economic "base" with a "superstructure" of government, family, religion and culture. Marx argues that the economic base determines
the superstructure, and that throughout history, societal change has been driven by conflict between laborers and those who own the means of production.[11]Symbolic interactionism is a microsociological theory that focuses on individuals and how the individuals are individuals and how the individual and how the individuals are individuals and how the individual and how the individuals are individuals and how the individuals are individuals are individuals.
create common symbols and meanings,[13] and use this frame of reference to understand how individuals interact to create symbolic worlds, and in turn, how these worlds shape individuals behaviors.[14]In the latter half of the 20th century, theorists began to view society as socially constructed.[15] In this vein, sociologist Peter L. Berger describes
society as "dialectic": Society is created by humans, but this creation turns in turn creates or molds humans.[16]Jos Rizal, a theorist of colonial societiesThe sociologic emphasis placed on functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism, has been criticized as Eurocentric.[17] The Malaysian sociologist Syed Farid al-Attas, for example
argues that Western thinkers are particularly interested in the implications of modernity, and that their analysis of non-Western cultures is therefore limited in scope. [17] As examples of nonwestern thinkers who took a systematic approach to understanding society, al-Attas mentions Ibn Khaldun (13321406) and Jos Rizal (18611896). [17] Khaldun, an
Arab living in the 14th century, understood society, along with the rest of the universe, as having "meaningful configuration", with its perceived randomness attributable to hidden causes. Khaldun conceptualized social structures as having two fundamental forms: nomadic and sedentary. Nomadic life has high social cohesion (asabijja), which Khaldun conceptualized social structures as having two fundamental forms: nomadic and sedentary.
argued arose from kinship, shared customs, and a shared need for defense. Sedentary life, in Khaldun's view, was marked by secularization, decreased social cohesion, and increased interest in luxury.[18] Rizal was a Filipino nationalist living toward the end of the Spanish Colonial Period who theorized about colonial societies. Rizal argued that
indolence, which the Spanish used to justify their colonial occupation, was instead caused by the colonial occupation, was instead caused by the period of colonial rule, and argued that exploitation, economic disorder, and colonial policies that discouraged
farming led to a decreased interest in work.[19]Sociologists tend to classify societies based on their level of technology, and place societies in three broad categories vary, and classifications are often based on level of technology, communication, and economy. One
example of such a classification comes from sociologist Gerhard Lenski who lists: (1) hunting and gathering; (2) horticultural; as well as specialized societies (e.g., fishing or herding).[21]Some cultural evolution has a
profound effect on patterns of community. Hunter-gatherer tribes have, at times, settled around seasonal food stocks to become agrarian villages. Villages have grown to become agrarian villages. Villages have grown to become agrarian villages. Villages have grown to become agrarian villages.
industrial society, food production, which is carried out through the use of human and animal labor, is the main economic activity. These subdivisions are hunting and gathering, pastoral, horticultural, and agrarian.[21]Main article: Hunter
gathererSan people in Botswana start a fire by hand. The main form of food production in hunter-gatherers move around constantly in search of food. [23] As a result, they do not build permanent villages or create a wide variety of artifacts. The need for
mobility also limits the size of these societies, and they usually only form small groups such as bands and tribes, [24] usually with fewer than 50 people per community. [25][24] Bands and tribes are relatively egalitarian, and decisions are reached through consensus. There are no formal political offices containing real power in band societies, rather a
chief is merely a person of influence, and leadership is based on personal qualities. [26] The family forms the main social unit, with most members being related by birth or marriage. [27] The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to their extended leisure time: Sahlins described hunter-gatherers as the "original affluent society" due to the properties of the sall affine time time time.
hunter gatherer societies work three to five hours per day. [28] [29] This perspective has been challenged by other researchers, who have pointed out high mortality rates and perennial warfare in hunter-gatherer societies challenges the
purported relationship between technological advancement and human progress.[33][34]Main article: Pastoral society Maasai men perform adumu, the traditional jumping dance. Rather than searching for food on a daily basis, members of a pastoral society rely on domesticated herd animals to meet their food needs. Pastoralists typically live a
nomadic life, moving their herds from one pasture to another.[35] Community size in pastoral societies is similar to hunter-gatherers (about 50 individuals), but unlike hunter gatherers, pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple community size in pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple community size in pastoral societies usually consist of multiple community size in pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies usually consist of multiple communities the average pastoral societies are average pastoral societies and average pastoral societies are avera
open areas where movement is easy, which enables political integration. [36] Further information: Horticulture and Subsistence patternFruits and vegetables grown in garden plots, that have been cleared from the jungle or forest, provide
the main source of food in a horticultural society. These societies have a similar level of technology and complexity to pastoral societies emerged about 10,000 years ago, after technological changes of the Agricultural Revolution made it possible to cultivate crops and raise animals.[37]
Horticulturists use human labor and simple tools to cultivate the land for one or more seasons. When the land becomes barren, horticulturists clear a new plot and leave the old plot to revert to its natural state. They may return to the original land several years later and begin the process again. By rotating their garden plots, horticulturists can stay in
one area for a long period of time. This allows them to build permanent or semi-permanent villages. [38] As with pastoral societies include craftspeople, shamans (religious leaders), and traders. [38] This role specialization allows horticultural societies to
create a variety of artifacts. Scarce, defensible resources can lead to wealth inequalities in horticultural political systems. [39] Main article: Agrarian society Ploughing with oxen in the 15th century Agrarian societies use agricultural technological advances to cultivate crops over a large area. Lenski differentiates between horticultural and agrarian
societies by the use of the plow.[40] Larger food supplies due to improved technology mean agrarian communities are larger than horticultural communities. A greater food supplies due to improved technology mean agrarian communities are larger than horticultural communities.
merchants, and religious figures, who do not directly participate in the production of food.[41] Agrarian societies are especially noted for their extremes of social classes and rigid social mobility.[42] As land is the major source of wealth, social hierarchy develops based on landownership and not labor. The system of stratification is characterized by
three coinciding contrasts: governing class versus the masses, urban minority versus peasant majority, and literate minority versus illiterate minority versus illiterate majority. This results in two distinct subcultures; the urban elite versus the peasant masses. Moreover, this means cultural differences within agrarian societies are greater than differences between them.
[43] The landowning strata typically combine government, religious, and military institutions to justify and enforce their ownership, and support elaborate patterns of consumption, slavery, serfdom, or peonage is commonly the lot of the primary producer. Rulers of agrarian societies often do not manage their empire for the common good or in the
name of the public interest, but as property they own.[44] Caste systems, as historically found in South Asia, are associated with agrarian societies, where lifelong agricultural routines depend upon a rigid sense of duty and discipline. The scholar Donald Brown suggests that an emphasis in the modern West on personal liberties and freedoms was in
large part a reaction to the steep and rigid stratification of agrarian societies. [45] Main article: Industrial society Industrial society Industrial society Industrial Revolution, rely heavily on machines powered by external sources
for the mass production of goods.[46][47] Whereas in pre-industrial societies the majority of labor takes place in primary industrial societies, labor is mostly focused on extracting raw materials into finished products.[48] Present-day societies vary in their degree of
industrialization, with some using mostly newer energy sources (e.g. coal, oil, and nuclear energy), and others continuing to rely on human and animal power.[49]Industrialization is associated with population booms and the growth of cities. Increased productivity, as well as the stability caused by improved transportation, leads to decreased mortality
and resulting population growth. [50] Centralized production of goods in factories and a decreased need for agricultural labor leads to urbanization. [47][51] Industrial societies are often capitalist, and have high degrees of inequality along with high social mobility, as businesspeople use the market to amass large amounts of wealth. [47] Working
conditions in factories are generally restrictive and harsh.[52] Workers, who have common interests, may organize into labor unions to advance those interests. [53]On the whole, industrial societies are marked by the increased potential for deadly
 warfare. Governments use information technologies to exert greater control over the populace. Industrial societies also have an increased environmental impact. [54] Main article: Post-industrial societies also have an increased environmental impact. [54] Main article: Post-industrial societies also have an increased environmental impact.
Advanced industrial societies see a shift toward an increase in service sectors, over manufacturing. Service industries include education, health and finance. [56] Main article: Information society where the usage, creation, distribution, manipulation and integration of
information is a significant activity.[57] Proponents of the idea that modern-day global society is an information society posit that information society position information society position and the society position of the soc
has been discussed since the 1930s, in the present day, it is almost always applied to ways that information technologies impact society and culture. It therefore covers the effects of computers and telecommunications on the home, the workplace, schools, government, and various communities and organizations, as well as the emergence of new social
forms in cyberspace.[59]Main article: Knowledge societyThe Seoul Cyworld control roomAs the access to electronic information society to the knowledge society. A knowledge society generates, shares, and makes available to all members of
the society knowledge that may be used to improve the human condition.[60] A knowledge society differs from an information society in that it transforms information into resources that allow society to take effective action, rather than only creating and disseminating raw data.[61]Social norms are shared standards of acceptable behavior by groups.
[62][63] Social norms, which can both be informal understandings that govern the behavior of members of a society, as well as be codified into rules and laws, [64] are powerful drivers of human behavior.
the structure of society by occupying social roles.[10] According to symbolic interactionism, individuals use symbols to navigate and communicate roles, which argues that roles provide scripts that govern social interactions.[67] Main articles: Gender, Gender role,
and KinshipEgyptian family riding on a donkey-drawn cart in 2019. Familial relationships are one of the most important organizing principles in many societies. The division of norms, practices, dress, behavior, rights, duties, privileges, status, and
power. Some argue that gender roles arise naturally from sex differences, which lead to a division of labor where women take on reproductive labor and other domestic roles. [68] Gender roles have varied historically, and challenges to predominant gender norms have recurred in many societies.
classify types of social relationships based on relations between parents, children and other descendants (consanguinity), and relationship applied to godparents or adoptive children (fictive). These culturally defined relationships are referred to as kinship. In many societies, it is
one of the most important social organizing principles and plays a role in transmitting status and inheritance. [71] All societies have rules of preferential marriage with certain other kin relations. [72] Main article:
EthnicityHuman ethnic groups are a social category that identify together as a group based on shared attributes that distinguish them from other groups. These shared attributes can be a common set of traditions, ancestry, language, history, society, culture, nation, religion, or social treatment within their residing area.[73][74] There is no generally
accepted definition of what constitutes an ethnic group, [75] and humans have evolved the ability to change affiliation with social groups relatively easily, including leaving groups with previously strong alliances, if doing so is seen as providing personal advantages. [76] Ethnicity is separate from the concept of race, which is based on physical
characteristics, although both are socially constructed. [77] Assigning ethnicity to a certain population is complicated, as even within common ethnic designations there can be a diverse range of subgroups, and the makeup of these ethnic groups can play a powerful
political organizationsGovernments create laws and policies that affect the people that they govern. There have been many forms of government throughout human history, with various ways of allocating power, and with different levels and means of control over the population. [82] In early history, distribution of political power was determined by the
availability of fresh water, fertile soil, and temperate climate of different locations. [83] As farming populations gathered in larger and denser communities, interactions between different groups increased, leading to the further development of governance within and between communities. [84] As of 2022 [update], according to The Economist, 43% of
national governments were democracies, 35% autocracies, and 22% containing elements of both.[85] Many countries have formed international political organizations and alliances, the largest being the United Nations with 193 member states.[86][87]Main articles: Trade and EconomicsLong-distance spice trade routes along the Silk Road (green)
and other routes (red) circa 1st century ADTrade, the voluntary exchange of goods and services, has long been an aspect of human societies, and it is seen as a characteristic that differentiates humans from other animals.[88] Trade has even been cited as a practice that gave Homo sapiens a major advantage over other hominids; evidence suggests
early H. sapiens made use of long-distance trade routes to exchange goods and ideas, leading to cultural explosions and providing additional food sources when hunting was sparse. Such trade networks did not exist for the now-extinct Neanderthals.[88][89] Early trade involved materials for creating tools, like obsidian, exchanged over short
distances.[90] In contrast, throughout antiquity and the medieval period, some of the most influential long-distance routes carried food and luxury goods, such as the spice trade.[91] Early money consisted of commodities; the oldest being in the form
of cattle and the most widely used being cowrie shells.[93][94] Money has since evolved into governmental issued coins, paper and electronic money.[95][96] Human study of economics is a social science that looks at how societies distribute scarce resources among different people.[97] There are massive inequalities in the division of wealth among
humans; as of 2018 in China, Europe, and the United States, the richest tenth of humans hold more than seven-tenths of those regions' total wealth. [98] See also: War and Violence Napoleon's retreat after his failed invasion of Russia in 1812 (oil painting by Adolph Northen, 1851) The willingness of humans to kill other members of their species en
masse through organized conflict (i.e. war) has long been the subject of debate. One school of thought is that war evolved as a means to eliminate competitors, and that violence against other primates (although humans kill adults at a relatively high rate
and have a relatively low rate of infanticide). [99] Another school of thought suggests that war is a relatively recent phenomenon and appeared due to changing social conditions. [100] While not settled, the current evidence suggests warlike behavior only became common about 10,000 years ago, and in many regions even more recently.
[100]Phylogenetic analysis predicts 2% of human deaths to be caused by homicide in band societies that have legal systems and strong cultural attitudes against violence stand at
about 0.01%.[102]Society portalCivil societyConsumerismGroup cohesivenessHigh societyProfessional associationReciprocal altruismSecret societyOpen soc
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