



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

Educating Women of the Future

Sociology Key Stage 4 Curriculum

| | Topic/Big Question | Focus | Enrichment |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year 10 | 1. What are the main sociological approaches and how do they explain society? | Students learn about the key sociological approaches—Functionalism, Marxism, Feminism, Interactionism, and Postmodernism. They explore how each theory explains social order, inequality, and change, and consider how the same social phenomena can be interpreted differently depending on the perspective. Understanding these approaches gives students the tools to analyse all other topics in Sociology and to critically evaluate evidence. | Watch a video introduction to the major sociological perspectives and discuss examples in everyday life. |
| | 2. How do sociologists study society reliably and ethically? | Students explore the main sociological research methods, including surveys, interviews, observations, experiments, and case studies. They learn how to ensure reliability, validity, and ethical practice, and consider the strengths and limitations of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Students also reflect on how theoretical perspectives influence research design and interpretation. | Conduct a mini research project using ethical research practices and present findings. |
| | 3. How can sociologists analyse data and draw conclusions? | Students study data analysis techniques for both quantitative and qualitative research, including coding, thematic analysis, and statistical measures. They learn to evaluate data critically, draw conclusions, and consider how findings influence understanding of society. | Analyse survey or observation data collected in class. |
| | 4. How do families shape individuals and society? | Students examine different family types, including nuclear, extended, lone-parent, same-sex, and stepfamilies, and their roles in socialisation, emotional support, and economic provision. They evaluate how families reflect and reproduce social norms, values, and inequalities, and consider the impact of social change on family life. | Analyse case studies or census data on family structures and diversity. |
| | 5. How do families experience social inequality? | Students explore how social class, gender, and ethnicity influence family life, including parenting styles, domestic labour, access to resources, and opportunities. They study how inequalities are reproduced or challenged within families, drawing on Marxist and Feminist perspectives. | Conduct interviews or surveys on family roles and responsibilities. |
| | 6. How does the education system shape life chances? | Students examine how schools can reinforce or reduce social inequalities. They study patterns of achievement by social class, gender, and ethnicity, and consider the impact of meritocracy, streaming, labelling, and the hidden curriculum. Functionalism, Marxist, and Feminist theories are applied to understand the role of education in society. | Analyse Ofsted reports or education statistics for inequality patterns. |
| | 7. How do students experience school differently? | Students explore how labelling, teacher expectations, pupil subcultures, and peer groups affect behaviour and outcomes. They evaluate the role of streaming, setting, and mixed-ability teaching in shaping educational experiences, and consider differences by social class, gender, and ethnicity. | Conduct classroom observations or surveys of student experiences |
| | 8. How does the media | Students study the role of mass media in shaping beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. They examine | Analyse newspapers, TV, or |

| | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | influence society and individuals? | theories such as the Marxist view of ideology, the Functionalist perspective of social integration, Feminist critiques of representation, and the role of media in reinforcing or challenging stereotypes. | social media content for representation of gender, class, and ethnicity. |
| | 9. How and why do people commit crime and deviance? | Students explore social definitions of crime and deviance, and how these vary across culture, time, and social groups. They examine causes of offending, including strain theory, subcultural theory, and labelling theory, and study patterns of crime by social class, gender, and ethnicity. | Analyse crime statistics and case studies of different types of crime |
| | 10. How does society respond to crime and deviance? | Students study social control through formal institutions (police, courts, prisons) and informal sanctions (family, peers). They examine why some groups are more likely to be labelled or punished and explore theories of social control from different sociological perspectives. | Case studies of policing, court cases, or restorative justice programmes. |
| | 11. What is social stratification and why does it matter? | Students learn about social inequality and the hierarchy of class, gender, ethnicity, age, and disability. They examine how social structures and institutions create unequal life chances, and study the impact of stratification on education, employment, and health. Students apply sociological theories to explain why inequalities persist. | Research local or national examples of inequality and discuss their causes and effects. |
| | 12. How do social policies influence inequality? | Students explore how government policies affect families, education, employment, and social welfare. They evaluate whether policies reinforce or reduce social inequalities, using theoretical perspectives to analyse effectiveness and consequences. | Case studies on policies such as welfare reforms, the Equality Act, or educational initiatives. |
| | 13. How does society change over time? | Students study the role of social change, including demographic shifts, technological advancements, and movements for social justice. They consider how individuals and groups can challenge norms and influence policy, and link historical trends to contemporary society. | Examine social campaigns, historical reforms, and media coverage of social change. |
| | 14. How can sociological theories help us understand society as a whole? | Students revisit key perspectives (Functionism, Marxism, Feminism, Interactionism, Postmodernism) and apply them to families, education, crime, media, and inequality. They evaluate the strengths and limitations of each approach and consider how multiple perspectives provide a more complete understanding of social life. | Debate contemporary social issues using different theoretical perspectives. |

The sequencing of this GCSE Sociology curriculum is designed to build students' understanding in a logical and cumulative way. Starting with sociological approaches gives students a strong theoretical foundation, helping them to interpret society and apply different perspectives to later topics. Research Methods follow, allowing students to understand how sociologists study social behaviour and gather evidence, which they can then apply when exploring substantive areas. Families and Education are taught next, as these are familiar, relatable institutions that allow students to connect theory and methods to everyday life. Crime and Deviance is sequenced after this to extend students' understanding of social control, inequality, and the consequences of behaviour, before Social Stratification examines how social hierarchies and inequalities are reproduced across society. This careful ordering helps students build confidence, develop analytical and evaluative skills step by step, and make clear links between theory, research, and real-world examples, ultimately enhancing their ability to achieve in exams and apply sociological knowledge beyond the classroom.