



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

Educating Women of the Future

Sociology Key Stage 5 Curriculum

	Topic/Big Question	Focus	Enrichment
Year 12	1. How do families and households shape our lives?	Students explore the structure, roles, and functions of families in contemporary society. They examine the nuclear, extended, lone-parent, reconstituted, and same-sex families, and the influence of social, economic, and cultural factors on family life. They analyse family functions including socialisation, emotional support, and economic provision, and consider debates over whether families primarily benefit individuals or maintain social inequality. Students link theory to practice, comparing Functionalist, Marxist, Feminist, and New Right perspectives, and discuss how social policy impacts family life.	Conduct a small-scale study on family structures locally or examine case studies of family diversity.
	2. How do childhood and socialisation affect family experiences?	Students study how socialisation occurs within families, the role of parents, peers, and other agencies, and the impact on gender roles, identity, and behaviour. They examine theories of socialisation and life course perspectives.	Observe children's interactions in families or schools and reflect on socialisation processes.
	3. How do changing family patterns affect society?	Students analyse trends such as declining marriage rates, rising cohabitation, delayed childbearing, divorce, single-parent families, stepfamilies, and same-sex families. They explore causes of these trends, including cultural shifts, economic factors, and policy changes, and assess consequences for individuals, communities, and wider society. They link these trends to demographic changes and debates on family stability.	Compare census or national statistics over time; discuss implications for policy.
	4. How does the family experience social inequality?	Students explore how social class, gender, and ethnicity affect family life, parenting styles, domestic labour, and access to resources. They study differences in family functioning, opportunities, and outcomes, linking to Marxist and Feminist perspectives. They evaluate how inequality within families can reproduce social stratification across generations.	Conduct interviews or surveys about family responsibilities and gender roles.
	5. How does the mass media influence our beliefs and behaviour?	Students examine how the media shapes perception of social norms, roles, and identity. They analyse theories including the Marxist view of media as ideological control, the Neo-Marxist view of audience interpretation, the Functionalist perspective of social integration, and Feminist critiques of gender representation. Students study examples in news, television, films, and social media, considering the influence on behaviour, attitudes, and consumption.	Analyse TV shows, newspapers, or social media content for representation of gender, ethnicity, and social class.
	6. How does media ownership and regulation affect society?	Students consider the concentration of media ownership, censorship, self-regulation, and government influence. They evaluate the impact of conglomerates on pluralism, bias, and diversity of viewpoints. Students explore the influence of globalisation and digital media on national cultures and discuss the implications for democracy, consumerism, and social control.	Debate current issues in media regulation and ownership

	7. How does the education system reproduce or reduce inequality?	Students examine educational achievement patterns across social class, gender, and ethnicity. They explore the role of schools in reproducing or challenging social inequality. Functionalist, Marxist, and Feminist perspectives are applied to understand meritocracy, social mobility, streaming, labelling, and the hidden curriculum. Students assess how policies such as league tables, academisation, and pupil premium affect outcomes.	Analyse Ofsted reports or education statistics for inequality patterns.
	8. How do sociological theories explain the purpose of education?	Students study Functionalist ideas of social cohesion and skills provision, Marxist views of reproducing class inequality, Feminist critiques of patriarchy, and the New Right focus on choice and competition. They evaluate how these perspectives explain the aims of education, considering debates on socialisation, selection, and societal control.	Compare real-world school policies to theoretical predictions.
	9. How do students experience school differently?	Students explore labelling, self-fulfilling prophecy, pupil subcultures, and the effects of teacher expectations on student achievement. They study the influence of streaming, setting, and mixed-ability teaching, alongside identity and cultural capital. Students link theory to practice, examining how experiences differ by social class, ethnicity, gender, or special educational needs.	Observe classroom dynamics or conduct surveys/interviews with students.
	10. How do social policies shape family, media, and education?	Students analyse the impact of policies on social behaviour and inequality. They consider welfare reforms, childcare support, education policies, and media regulation. Students evaluate intended vs unintended consequences of policies, linking to theoretical perspectives and debates about social control, equality, and diversity.	Students complete a project where they must care for an 'egg baby' for a week and research the various factors that could affect their attachment to it. They then write a report of their findings.
	11. How can sociologists study society in a valid and ethical way?	Students study research design, operationalisation of concepts, sampling, reliability, and validity. They examine the importance of clear aims and methods, and consider ethical dilemmas such as consent, privacy, harm, and deception. Students link methodological choices to the production of trustworthy knowledge.	Conduct a mini research project using ethical research practices.
	12. How do different research methods influence findings?	Students evaluate surveys, experiments, interviews, observations, and content analysis, considering how method choice affects validity, reliability, and generalisability. They explore the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative vs qualitative data and discuss situations where mixed-method approaches are appropriate.	Conduct a practical study using one or more methods.
	13. How does ethics shape sociological research?	Students consider ethical responsibilities to participants and society. They examine historic and contemporary case studies, considering trade-offs between methodological rigour and participant welfare. Students evaluate the role of the BSA guidelines in guiding ethical practice.	Review BSA ethical guidelines and analyse examples of ethical dilemmas.

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	14. How do sociologists analyse and present their data?	Students study techniques for analysing quantitative and qualitative data, including statistical analysis, coding, thematic analysis, and content analysis. They explore how data presentation affects interpretation and policy influence. They evaluate the importance of transparency, replication, and peer review.	Analyse and report findings from mini research project; create visual data presentations.
	Year 13 1. Why do people commit crime and how is deviance controlled?	Students examine the social construction of crime and deviance and explore explanations from Functionalist, Marxist, Interactionist, and Feminist perspectives. They analyse patterns and trends by class, gender, ethnicity, and age. Students discuss causes, societal reactions, and consequences, including labelling, moral panics, and media influence.	Analyse crime statistics and case studies of high-profile crimes.
	2. How is crime measured and reported in society?	Students investigate official statistics, victim surveys, self-report studies, and dark figure crime. They critically evaluate reliability, validity, and bias, considering how measurement affects understanding of crime patterns.	Compare data from multiple sources and discuss discrepancies.
	3. How do social factors influence criminal behaviour?	Students examine the influence of family, education, poverty, peer groups, subcultures, and socialisation on offending. They link sociological explanations to contemporary examples, considering the interplay between structure and agency.	Evaluate sociological studies linking social factors to crime.
	4. How do theories explain deviance and social control?	Students explore Functionalist, Marxist, Labelling, Subcultural, and Feminist theories. They discuss why some acts are defined as deviant, the role of social control agencies, and how power and inequality shape definitions of crime.	Apply theories to contemporary examples such as cybercrime or white-collar crime.
	5. How does the criminal justice system respond to deviance?	Students study policing, courts, sentencing, punishment, and alternatives like restorative justice. They evaluate effectiveness, fairness, and impact on different social groups, considering social control and societal reactions.	Examine case studies and policies on sentencing or prison reform.
	6. How do sociologists research society reliably and ethically?	Students study advanced research methodology, including representativeness, reliability, validity, and ethical responsibilities. They critically evaluate the methodological challenges of researching crime and sensitive topics.	Conduct an independent research project with careful ethical oversight.
	7. How do qualitative and quantitative methods contribute to knowledge?	Students evaluate surveys, interviews, experiments, ethnography, and secondary data in producing evidence. They discuss methodological strengths and weaknesses, and the influence of theory on method choice.	Design a research plan integrating qualitative and quantitative methods.
	8. How can sociological data be analysed	Students explore descriptive and inferential statistics, correlation, significance testing, and application to social research. They evaluate how analysis affects interpretation and policy.	Apply statistical tests to real or simulated data.

	statistically?		
	9. How do sociological theories influence research methods?	Students examine the link between theoretical perspectives and methodology, comparing positivist, interpretivist, and critical approaches. They assess how theory guides research questions, methods, and interpretation.	Debate which methods best fit which theory and topic.
	10. How do macro and micro approaches help explain society?	Students explore macro-sociology (structures, institutions, inequality) versus micro-sociology (individual action, agency, identity). They evaluate the usefulness of each perspective for understanding different phenomena.	Apply macro and micro approaches to case studies in crime, education, or family.
	11. How does social structure influence behaviour?	Students study the impact of institutions, social stratification, norms, and inequality on individual and group behaviour. They consider how structure and culture shape life chances and opportunities.	Analyse current events or historical examples using theory.
	12. How do individuals challenge social norms?	Students examine resistance, deviance, subcultures, and social movements. They explore how collective action challenges dominant norms and produces social change.	Investigate historical and contemporary movements such as suffrage, civil rights, or BLM.

The curriculum is designed to be flexible, allowing teachers to sequence topics in a way that best suits their students' interests, prior knowledge, and assessment needs. Teachers can begin with high-engagement topics, such as Crime & Deviance or Mass Media, to capture attention, and then move to foundational topics like Families or Education. Research Methods can be integrated alongside any substantive topic, enabling students to immediately apply methodological concepts in context. The connections between Year 12 and Year 13 content mean that early study of socialisation, inequality, family structures, and media influence provides a strong foundation for advanced topics in theory, research methods, and crime. This approach ensures continuity, reinforces learning, and allows adaptation to different teaching schedules or student needs without compromising coverage of the A-Level specification.