

Sociology Project for A level

Sociology is a discipline which is concerned with the way people interact with each other and behave in groups – from small-scale groups right through to whole societies and the world itself. The first Unit in AS sociology is about families and households and so is interested in how individual families work as well as how families fit in and make up wider society. In this way you will be something of an expert on families as we all have one of some kind or another.

However, we must distinguish between this ‘common sense’ idea of families and their study through the discipline of sociology. So while your experience of families is important, it has to be explored through sociological perspectives using appropriate theories and methods of gathering and interpreting data – how much housework do men and women do in the house for example? What type of work is it? Is it the ‘job’ of women to care?

There are several main theoretical perspectives in sociology:

1. Functionalism (sees society as based on shared norms and values).
2. Related to this approach is the political ideological viewpoint of the New Right (sees dysfunctional families as a threat to society).
3. Marxism (sees society as being structured by class and exploited for the benefit of capitalism).
4. Feminism (sees society organised where men dominate women).
5. Social action theory (sees individual’s actions as the way to study society).
6. Post-modernists (sees society as changed to a completely different form within the last thirty or forty so years).

For your introductory project find out the basic ideas of each theoretical perspective: how they see society? What their main arguments concerning the family are? Aim to write at least a side on each of the main perspectives and include some evaluation. This should give you a good head start for September as unlike other subjects you would not have studied sociology before. We will be using the book below as the key text which you will also need to purchase:

The ISBN: 978-0-9540079-1-1

Webb et al (2015) AQA A Level Sociology Book 1, Including AS Level, Napier Press 3rd edition.