

GCSE
SOCIOLOGY



**SOCIAL
STRATIFICATION**

How To Use This Workbook...



Welcome! This workbook will support your learning in GCSE Sociology outside of lessons.

After completing your initial progress-check and the Personal Learning Checklist (PLC) you should work your way through the activities. Each one should take roughly one hour: your teacher will give you a timeframe for completing the workbook.

Social Stratification

The Big Questions

- Why is there inequality in our society?
- Is a society in which all people have equal amounts of power possible?
- What is the fundamental nature of power?
- Where does authority come from and how do people gain authority?
- Who are the main benefactors of the power imbalances in society?
- To what extent are men and women treated as equals in our society?
- What is the relationship between the different social classes?
- Why are some people wealthy whilst others are poor?
- What is the best way to distribute power?
- What factors determine how successful a given individual will be?
- Is poverty a fixable problem or an unfortunate necessity?
- Do we need to overthrow our capitalist masters?



Get the most out of this booklet by...

- Using your own initiative as much as possible
- Using the internet for research and developing your independent learning skills
- Returning to the Personal Learning Checklist to check progress regularly
- Pushing yourself further by completing the extension tasks at the end

Evaluate Your Progress So Far...

As an independent learner, it's essential that you learn to monitor and evaluate your own progress. That way you can regulate your learning effectively: building on strengths and compensating for weaknesses. Complete the reflection tasks below, then complete the personal learning checklist for this unit.



	Agree	Disagree
So far I have made good progress in this unit		
I need to learn to motivate myself more effectively outside of lessons		
I am genuinely interested in this topic		
I have weak independent research skills: I need to develop them		
I like to watch videos and documentaries online that are relevant to this unit		
I tend to learn a lot in lessons, but I am too dependent on the teacher		
Most of what we have studied so far I have found easy to understand		
I need to remind myself of what will be expected of me in the exams		
I think sociology is an important subject: I'm highly motivated to succeed		
I am good at evaluating my own work: my self-assessments are usually accurate		
I know a number of good websites for researching sociological theories		
There are some topics I need to revisit: my understanding of them is unclear		
I understand the four main sociological perspectives (Marxism, Feminism, etc.)		
I know how to improve in this subject and have a clear grasp of my targets		
Whilst I understand my targets, I don't know how to actually reach them		
I'm a reflective learner: I reflect on how to improve and learn more effectively		

For each factor give yourself a score out of ten...

Attitude to Learning

Effort

Subject Knowledge

Exam Technique

Clarity of Targets

Motivation

Interest in Subject

Ability to Self-Assess

Research Skills

Quality of Work

Clarity of Understanding

Overall Confidence

To improve my work in Sociology I need to...

To improve my rate of progress in Sociology I need to...

This is a checklist of every topic you need to know about for the 'Crime & Deviance' section of your exam. For each topic indicate your level of understanding in both columns.

Topic/Ability	Shade RED/AMBER/ GREEN	Confidence Rating 1-10
Different views of the functionalist theory of social stratification		
I can describe and explain the functionalist theory of stratification (effective role allocation and performance linked to the promise of rewards)		
I can describe the work of Davis and Moore on social stratification from a functionalist perspective		
Different views of socio-economic class		
I can identify, describe and explain socio-economic class divisions in society		
I can describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on socio-economic class (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)		
I can describe the key ideas of Marx on socio-economic class		
I can describe the key ideas of Webber on socio-economic class		
Different views on factors affecting life chances		
I can identify, describe and explain factors affecting life chances including social class, gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality, age, disability, religion and belief		
I can describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on life chances (functionalist, feminist, Marxist and New Right)		
The work of Devine revisiting the idea of the affluent worker.		
Different interpretations of poverty as a social issue.		
I can identify, describe and explain different interpretations of poverty as a social issue including, the culture of poverty, material deprivation, the way in which governments have attempted to alleviate poverty and unemployment, the impact of globalisation		
I can describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on poverty (functionalist, feminist, Marxist and New Right)		
I can describe the key ideas of Townsend on relative deprivation		
I can describe the key ideas of Murray on the underclass		
Different forms of power and authority		
I can identify, describe and explain different forms of power and authority including traditional, charismatic, rational-legal, formal and informal sources of power		
I can describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on power and authority (functionalist, feminist, Marxist and New Right)		
I can describe the key ideas of Weber on power and authority		

1

Create a Mind-Map Overview of the Unit

Date: _____



Using the learning checklist as a guide, create a mind-map overview of this unit. Mind-maps help to organise ideas try to include: central debates and relevant points, your own research, potential exam questions. Indicate areas of strength and weakness in terms of your confidence and subject knowledge.

Life-chances are the opportunities each individual has to improve their quality of life; many people argue that in an ideal society all individuals would have equal life-chances - regardless of race, sex or the wealth of one's parents. Such a society might be described as a meritocracy in that wealth, power and social standing are determined by an individual's merit - that is to say their skills, abilities and willingness to work hard.

Britain faces a number of obstacles before it can claim to be such a society. People are not born with equal access to opportunities to improve their life or gain power, authority and wealth. Factors such as race, sex, age, sexuality, religion, disability and social-class correlate with success in Britain: this suggests that some have easier access to the means of improving their life-chances.

One's sex (or gender) seems to impact one's life-chances in the UK. On the one-hand women seem to out-perform men in the education system: girls do better than boys at most levels of education and Britain has 30,000 more women in university than men. Moreover, men receive different treatment by the police (e.g. they are fifteen times more likely to be stopped and searched by the police) and the judiciary - receiving harsher punishments and longer prison-sentences than women for comparable crimes. On the other hand there is a substantial pay-gap between full-time male and female workers (of around 9%), most high-paid business leaders are men and most offices of political power are men. This suggests that, in various ways, men and women are not being given the same opportunities and both are subject to systematic discrimination as well as systematic privilege.

Likewise one's race and ethnicity can impact one's life-chances in modern Britain. According to The Office of National Statistics: "In 2018, on average, employees from the Chinese ethnic group earned 30.9% more than White British employees; while employees from the Bangladeshi ethnic group, on average, earned 20.2% less than White British employees.". Meanwhile there are substantial gaps in performance in schools that correlate with ethnicity: white working-class boys are one of the most underachieving demographics in Britain with those of Chinese ethnicity tending to outperform others.

In Britain, perhaps the biggest predictor of success in life is the wealth of one's parents. 'Social mobility' describes the ability for a person born into poverty to lift themselves out of it: in a country with high levels of social mobility a child born to poor parents will be just as likely as a child born to wealthy parents to succeed in life. Marxist sociologists believe that society is intentionally structured to prevent social-mobility so that working-class people are destined to remain working-class so that they can be more readily exploited by wealthy elites. Wealthy parents can ensure that their children are given additional opportunities, privileges, securities and advantages that poorer parents cannot: this reduces social mobility and creates a cycle of 'intergenerational poverty' whereby a person born into 'the underclass' doesn't have the opportunity to escape it.

Britain has relatively low levels of social mobility and relatively high levels of economic inequality when compared to other countries.

Read the text above and reflect deeply on its meaning. Answer the questions about the text using full sentences on the opposite page.

One important sociological question raised by this text is...



1. What factors influence a person's life-chances in Britain?

2. In what ways do women face systematic discrimination in the U.K.?

3. What is a meritocracy?

4. What factors that influence life-chances were not mentioned in the article?

5. How might you explain the favourable pay-gap enjoyed by those of Chinese ethnicity?

6. State one way in which social mobility could be increased in Britain.

• Which topics from the personal learning checklist can you connect this text to?



Match the key-words with the correct definitions and explanations!
Use a pencil and, if you're stuck, use the internet to research & check your answers...

1 Socio-economic class

2 Social Stratification

3 Underclass

4 Life-Chances

5 Globalisation

6 Absolute Poverty

7 Relative Poverty

8 Authority

9 Power

10 Bourgeoisie

A

Marx's term for the ruling capitalist elite.

B

An income of less than \$2/day. Extreme poverty, abject poverty, destitution.

C

Legitimacy. The legitimate power which one person or a group possesses and practices over another.

D

The lowest social stratum in a country or community, consisting of the poor and unemployed.

E

Poverty within a given society: where people cannot maintain an average standard of living in the society in which they live.

F

How society orders social standing, power and authority. How society categorises people within a hierarchy.

G

An entity or individual's ability to control, influence or direct others

H

The process by which businesses or other organisations develop international influence or start operating on an international scale.

I

The opportunities each individual has to improve his or her quality of life

J

One's status in society based on social, economic and educational factors.

Complete the lists, adding as many ideas as you can...

Factors that influence how successful a person becomes

Lined area for writing factors influencing success.

Examples of Power

Lined area for writing examples of power.

Examples of Authority

Lined area for writing examples of authority.

Examples of "classism" and class-based discrimination

Lined area for writing examples of classism and discrimination.

Different forms and types of government (e.g. democracy)

Lined area for writing different forms and types of government.

Things that prevent a person born into poverty from becoming wealthy

Lined area for writing factors preventing wealth for those born in poverty.

Possible essay questions for this unit in the exam...

Discuss how far sociologists agree that _____

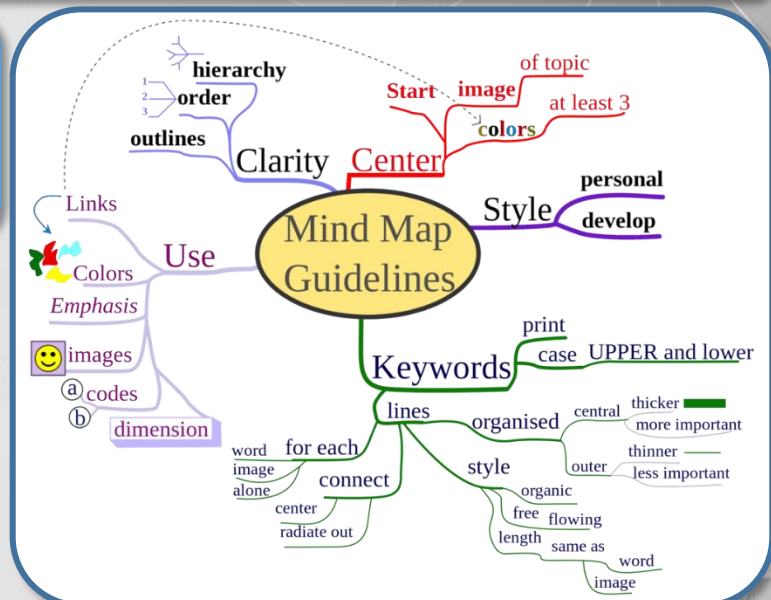
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Using the internet for research, create a detailed mind-map answering each question! Be ready to explain your mind-map to the class or your teacher in case you are asked to do so...



Describe the work of Townsend on relative deprivation



Describe Murray's ideas about 'the underclass'



Explain the Marxist perspective on the relationship between the working classes (proletariat) and ruling classes (bourgeoisie) in a capitalist society.



1 What is one alternative to the capitalist system?

2 What term describes discrimination against a person based on age?

3 What term describes discrimination against a person based on sexuality?

4 Which country has the lowest levels of inequality in the world?

5 Which country has the highest levels of inequality in the world?

6 What system of government existed in Britain prior to democracy?

7 State one feature of a theocracy

8 State one feature of feudalism

9 Our electoral system is described as first past the _____

10 What term describes systems of power arranged around merit?

11 State one thing that tends to be absent in an autocracy

12 Give one example of a present day monarchy

13 A cycle of poverty that passes between generations is _____ poverty

14 What form of government was in place in the U.S.S.R.?

15 What term did Marx use to refer to the working classes?

Answer each of the above questions with a single word!
You will need to use the internet to research the correct answers!!

What was the single most important thing you learned in your research?

Topics I need to research further...



Functionalists believe that social stratification and various forms of inequality all serve an important, perhaps essential, social function. They argue that inequality is a "functional prerequisite" for society: in other words - inequality is required to have a functioning society and a society where everyone is equal cannot possibly work.


The most significant inequalities of social status in capitalist societies are related to inequalities of income and both types of inequalities reflect the functional importance of different occupations. That is: a doctor is well paid and is accorded high status in the community because the functional importance of his/her work is widely recognised. Therefore these social status differences are also functional for societies because they provide another incentive for individuals to opt for difficult but functionally important occupations. Higher-paid jobs tend to require more training and taking on greater responsibility: without incentives (such as better pay) people would not do these jobs.

Functionalists consider that social stratification has important consequences for the operation of society. Davis and Moore argue that this system is both functional and inevitable. They make the following points:

1. Society must see to it that all positions are filled.
2. Some positions are more important than others are.
3. Most important positions must be filled by the most qualified individuals.
4. Society must offer greater rewards to motivate qualified individuals to occupy top positions. In general, the greater the functional importance of an occupation, the greater should be the reward attached to it.

Hence, the social stratification system allocates individuals to jobs and rewards them according to the functional importance of the job. This thesis implies that societies become more productive as they approach meritocracy.

Functionalist views are in sharp contrast with both feminist and Marxist views. Both feminism and Marxism hold that inequality is not essential or useful but artificially maintained and harmful to the bulk of society. Feminists focus on the power-relations between men and women, viewing society as a 'patriarchy' where power is organised around men and masculinity: this is evidenced by imbalances both in the political and economic spheres. Marxists, however, focus on the power-relations between different social classes: the working-classes (the proletariat) and the ruling-classes (the bourgeoisie). The fundamental difference between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, according to Marx, is that the bourgeoisie own 'the means of producing wealth' (e.g. land, factories, offices and places of employment) whereas the proletariat do not. According to Marxist sociologists this results in an exploitative dynamic that benefits the wealthy ruling classes who strive to maintain the system and the class-distinction.



Read the text above and reflect deeply on its meaning. Answer the questions about the text using full sentences on the opposite page.

One important sociological question raised by this text is...

1. Why do functionalists believe inequality is inevitable?

2. According to functionalists, what would happen if all jobs paid the same wages?

3. What is the main difference between feminism and Marxism?

4. How do Marxist sociologists view the relationship between the classes?

5. What is the fundamental difference between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie?

6. What evidence supports the feminist view that we live in a patriarchal society?

• Which topics from the personal learning checklist can you connect this text to?



Add arguments, evidence and reasons **for (supporting)** and **against (opposing)** each of the claims! Add at least two good arguments on both sides and then write your considered final conclusion.



FOR

"No society can function without inequality"

AGAINST



Moreover _____

Furthermore _____

In conclusion _____



FOR

"The Marxist analysis of society is accurate"

AGAINST



Moreover _____

Furthermore _____

In conclusion _____



FOR

"There are no obstacles to social mobility in Britain"

AGAINST



Moreover _____

Furthermore _____

In conclusion _____



FOR

"We live in a patriarchal society where women are oppressed"

AGAINST



Moreover _____

Furthermore _____

In conclusion _____

Create a list of statements that represent some of the other central debates of this unit...



In the space below, create a poster design about one of the following topics:

- *Feminist perspectives on power, authority and patriarchy*
- *Factors that influence life-chances*
- *Functionalist theories of social stratification*

You may download, print and glue images below in order to enhance your design.

A large, empty white rectangular area with rounded corners, intended for creating a poster design.

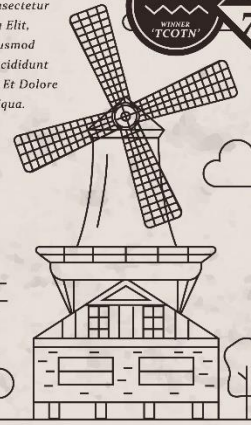
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RECIPES & RATINGS

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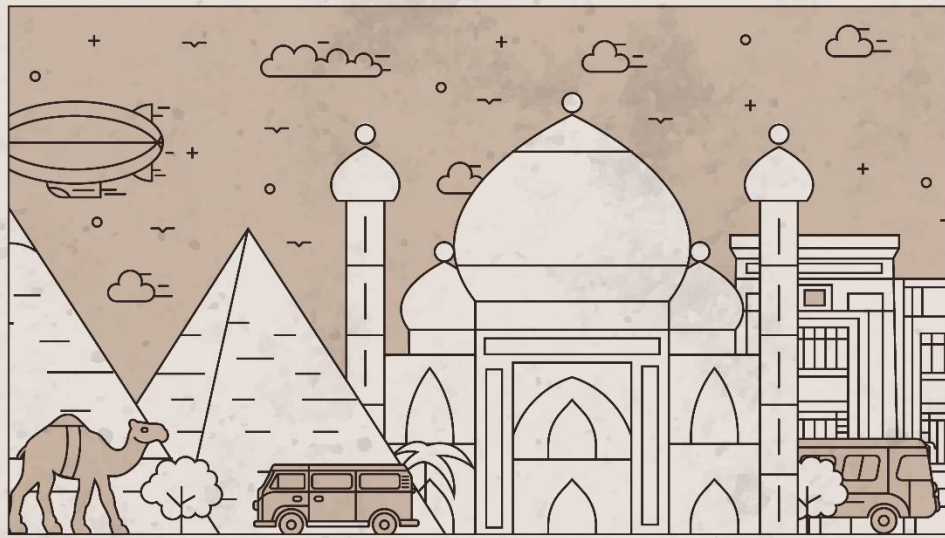
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For SALE or RENT BUY YOUR HOMELAND

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Write short newspaper articles relevant to this unit of study in sociology in the blank spaces. You may wish to research relevant topics online and put articles into your own words or write original articles based on statistics and research you have found. Make sure to include a pithy headline!

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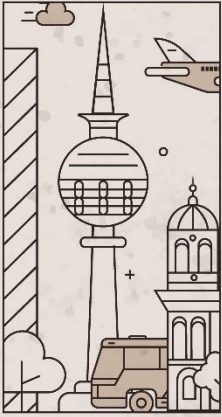
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abc.

NEWS

355 532 35



WE KNOW WHAT you're need

white & color PAPER

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TOWELS

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g. T. Vail & Co

88 X 88

EST. 1732

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MAGIC IS NOW

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RaBBiT

For Everyone Kid

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SMASH OF CONVENTION WITH AXES



AIRSHIP

THEME of the DAY

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DUIS AUTE IRURE

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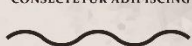
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STEREO PTIC



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TRAVEL with OUR STEEL AIR PLANES

HIGH SPIRITS

selections

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NOTICE! EVERY WOMEN & CHILDREN USED OUR GOODS EVERYDAY

SMASH OF CONVENTION WITH AXES

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BURT & FULLER

NO.5 CENTRE BLOCK

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RECIPES & RATINGS

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METRO SPACE

tickets

WITH DISCOUNTS

5% 10% 15%

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WIND & SUN

DISCOUNT 15%

BEAUTY MILLS FOR FARMERS

IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET, CONSETETUR ADIPISCING ELIT, SED DO EIUSMOD TEMPOR INCIDIDUNT UT LABORE ET DOLORE MAGNA ALIQUA.

FREE CONCERT IN THE CENTER OF THE CITY

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WELL TO TELL YOU THE TRURH, I FORGOT MYSELF IN ALL THIS

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Author: Duis Aute Irure. Date 10/22/1547

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IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET, CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT



TIP OF THE DAY

enjoy

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Author: Duis Aute Irure. Date 10/22/1547

Writing from a feminist perspective Walby (1990) argues that the concept of patriarchy is central to our understanding of society. She described six patriarchal structures which restrict women and help to maintain male domination of society:

1. Paid work: whilst in theory the state supports equality between men and women (the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts) women continue to be disadvantaged in the labour market with their opportunities restricted by cultural values (eg expectations regarding the roles of wives and mothers).
2. Patriarchal relations of production: men exploit women by gaining benefit from their unpaid labour in the home.
3. Patriarchal culture: whilst women have gained more freedom they continue to be subject to social expectations which apply different standards to the behaviour of men and women.
4. Sexuality: whilst women have greater freedom to express their sexuality they do so whilst subject to double standards (for example men with multiple partners are often admired by other men whilst women with multiple partners are frequently condemned).
5. Male violence towards women: the use or threat of violence discourages women from challenging patriarchal authority.
6. The state: whilst the state is not as patriarchal as it used to be it continues to do relatively little to protect women from patriarchal power in society eg. women still generally receive lower wages than men and equal opportunities laws are seldom enforced.

Walby argued that the nature of patriarchy in Western society has changed, in the past private patriarchy involved the direct control of women by their fathers or husbands. Whilst in contemporary Western society a form of public patriarchy exists, women have access to public life but they are generally segregated into low paid, low status jobs where they are collectively exploited by male-dominated society.

'Patriarchy' is a concept at the heart of feminist sociological literature; in this context the term refers to a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. This perspective can be criticised in Marxist terms: a Marxist sociologists might argue that whilst most power is in the hands of men - most men (being members of the working-classes) are excluded from power. Pay-gaps between men and women are often failing to account for the different career-choices made by men and women and ignore the realities that stem from those choices. For example, men often work more dangerous jobs - in 2019 the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) reported that, in Britain, men are 23 times more likely to die in a workplace accident than women. Moreover, it could be argued wealth and class are far-better predictors of life-chances than gender: a woman born into a very wealthy family is likely to have significantly better life-chances than a working-class man.

Read the text above and reflect deeply on its meaning. Answer the questions about the text using full sentences on the opposite page.

One important sociological question raised by this text is...



1. Why does Walby's theory constitute a 'feminist' theory?

2. How might a functionalist criticise Walby's theory?

3. What does the term 'patriarchy' mean?

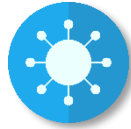
4. According to Walby, how has the nature of the patriarchy changed?

5. Which of Walby's six points is the strongest and why?

6. Aside from sexism: what might explain the gender pay-gap?

• Which topics from the personal learning checklist can you connect this text to?

Discuss how far sociologists agree that Britain is a land of equal opportunities for all.



Discuss how far sociologists agree that, in the fight for social justice in modern Britain, Marxism is more important than feminism.



Discuss how far sociologists agree that capitalist societies are meritocratic.



Discuss how far sociologists agree that high levels of economic inequality lead to social dysfunction



Discuss how far sociologists would agree that the functionalist account of social stratification is, ultimately, accurate and correct.

Lined writing area for the answer.



A blank sheet of white lined paper with horizontal ruling lines. The paper is set against a dark blue background that features a network of white lines and circular nodes, resembling a digital or scientific theme. The paper has rounded corners and is surrounded by several white circular markers, some of which are connected to the background network lines. The lines on the paper are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.

Complete this workbook: adding as much detail as you can to all sections and activities.

Update the Personal Learning Checklist so as to show the progress you have made on this unit

Create a ten question quiz about topics from this unit: exchange your quiz with your peers

Create a comprehensive list of potential essay-questions that might arise in the exams

Looking at your list of potential essay-questions: rank each question from easiest to most difficult

Choose the most difficult potential essay-question: create a leaflet or poster than answers it

Use your internet research skills to find a copy of the exam specification online

Referring to this unit in the specification as a guide: create a glossary of key-words

Choose on big debate from this unit: design a large poster exploring both sides of the debate

Write ten haikus: each one should refer to a different component of the Personal Learning Checklist

Write a paragraph for each of the Sociologists referred to in this unit: summarise their main ideas

Create a free website (e.g. using Wordpress or Wix) all about this topic

YouTube has lots of useful videos on this topic: find the best one and send it to your peers

Use social media to start (and try to win) a relevant sociological debate about a topic from this unit

Create a revision plan: it should precisely outline the steps you need to take to reach your target

Using key-words and an online crossword maker to create a puzzle: exchange it with your peers

**Congratulations on reaching the
end of your workbook!**

**Use separate paper to work your way
through the extension tasks above...**





Find more *GCSE Sociology Teaching Resources* at [gcsesociology.com](https://www.gcsesociology.com)

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