



GCSE Sociology Education Knowledge Organiser



Education knowledge organiser

The role of education in society.

1. The economic role-teaching skills for work.
Functionalists: Teaches skills and knowledge necessary for work. Preparation for real world.
Marxists: This is reinforcing the class system.

2. The selective role- Choosing the most able people for the most important jobs.
Functionalists: The system is a sieve. Meritocratic system, everyone has equal opportunities to succeed, those who work hard and achieve are rewarded with higher pay levels/status.
Marxists: Education does not provide equal opportunities. Designed to benefit the powerful. This is why working class children underperform.

3. Social Control- teaching acceptance of rules and authority
Functionalists: Society must be regulated by rules. Schools are an agency of social control.
Marxists: Social control reflects social control in the wider society which benefits those in power.

4. The political role- teaching people to be effective citizens and creating social cohesion.
Functionalists: Acceptance of the political system and will exercise their rights wisely (voting)
Marxists: Only certain political opinions and ideas are tolerated, radical ideas are rejected.



The Hidden Curriculum:

1. Hierarchy: The hierarchy in school can be seen to reflect the structure of society and in the workplace.
2. Competition: School encourages competition between students e.g. sports, exam results.
3. Social Control: Rules, regulations, obedience and respect for authority.
4. Gender role allocation: teacher expectations and subject choice
5. Lack of satisfaction: Preparing students for boring, meaningless and repetitive jobs is a similar experience to employees at work,



Social Control: Formal

Discipline, punishment, school rules.

Social Control: Informal

Peer-group pressure, learning to live and work with others.

Pre-School (3-5 years).
May be provided through the local authority or private.

Primary (5-11 years).
Refers to both infant & junior schools.

Secondary (11-16 years).
Most provided for by the state in comprehensive schools.

Further & Higher Education (16-18 years).
Sixth Form, college or apprenticeships.

Talcott Parsons (Functionalist)

- Schools prepare children for the same **universalistic standards**- the opposite of the **particularistic standards** from home life.
- Schools promote a **value consensus**: encouraged to achieve high and the rewards encourage them to maximise their potential. Students are also competing on equal terms in the classroom.
- **Meritocracy**: students achievements are based on their abilities and efforts, not on social class, gender or ethnicity,
- Role allocation: matched to the correct job based on skill/knowledge.

Arguments for vocational education

- It will lead to a more skilled, better-qualified workforce that will make Britain more competitive
- Functionalists believe it shows the importance the education system has to provide skills and expertise needed by industry & the economy.

Arguments against vocational education

- The emphasis on skills training disguises the fact that the problem is not that young people lack necessary skills for work it's that there is no work for skilled young people.
- Marxists argue it is viewed as lower status compared to purely academic qualifications.
- Seen as replicating the Tripartite system



Home education (home schooling):

Teaching children at home rather than in a state or independent school. Parents or tutors usually carry this out. It is a legal option for people who wish to provide a different learning environment or ethos to local schools. Recently raised issues around standards and impact on social development.



Functionalist

Marxist

Feminist

Education is an important agency of socialisation, it maintains social stability and social cohesion. Prepares young people for working life and adulthood. Teaches specialist skills for work. Education is meritocratic.

Prepares young people for a capitalist society. Education is not meritocratic. Encourages conformity and acceptance of social position. The hidden curriculum teaches young people the expectations of society.

There are inequalities in the education system between boys and girls. It plays a role in socialisation of boys and girls. Even though girls are outperforming boys, education still reinforces patriarchal views.

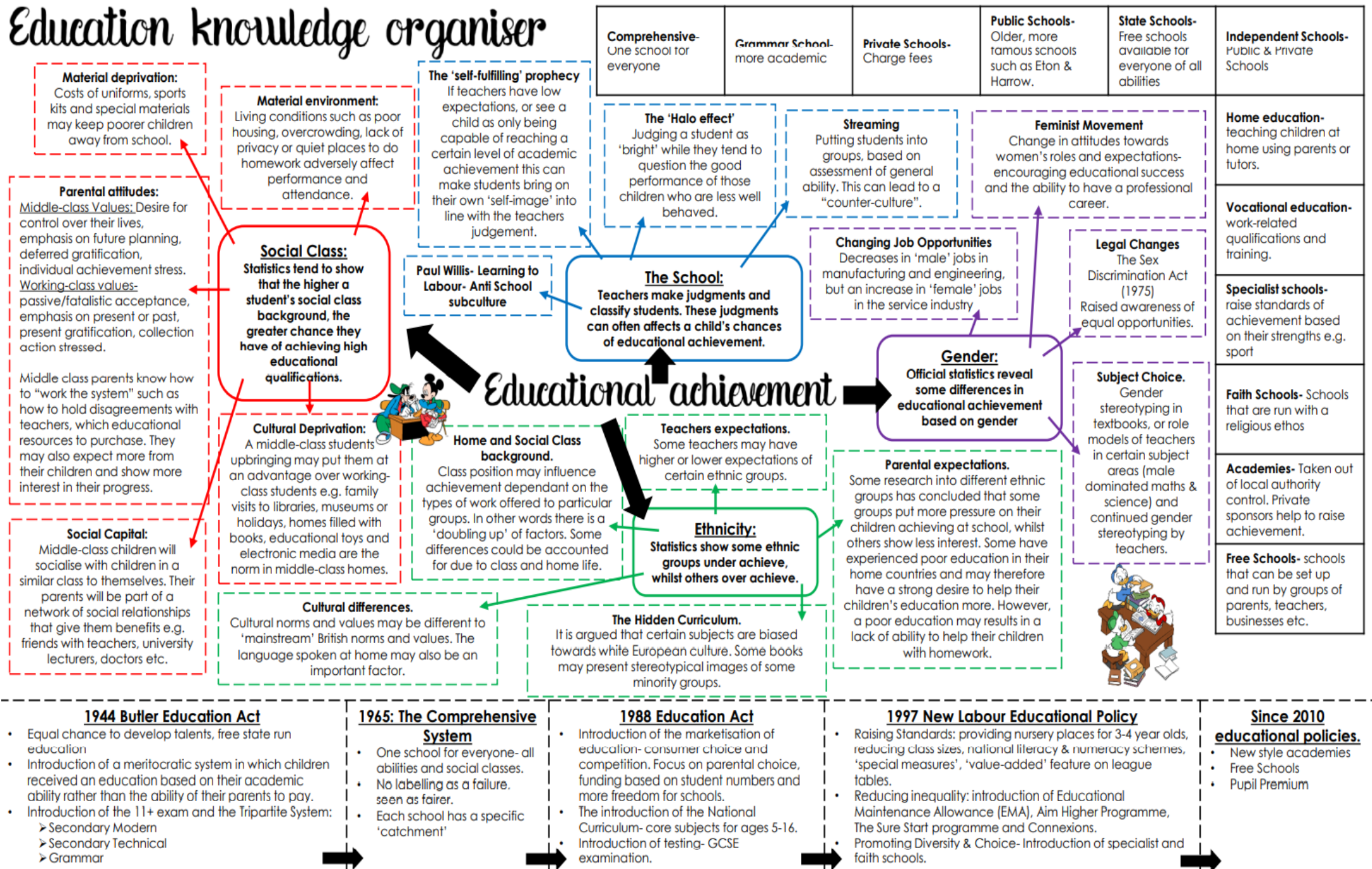
Why are independent schools favoured by some?

- Lower teacher-student ratio which means smaller classes so students receive more attention
- Resources/ facilities are better
- Academic culture
- Parental input, expectations and support tends to be higher

Why are state schools favoured by others?

- Free and not based on ability
- More socially mixed
- Upward social mobility
- Students do not have to travel far on a daily basis

Education knowledge organiser

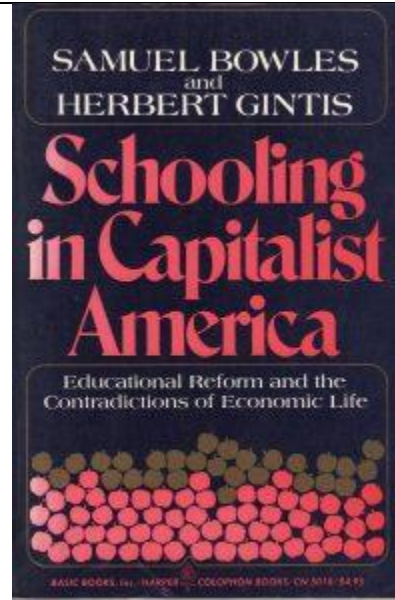


Emile Durkheim (Functionalist)

- In this classic text, Durkheim considers how education is able to perform the role of **socialisation**: teach children the norms and values of their society.
- Durkheim argued that, for society to work, there had to be a **value consensus**. People in society had to agree about what was important and how to behave. That way society functions (works) without everything having to be controlled and managed all the time. Education is a crucial agent of socialisation.
- Durkheim saw the teaching of History - in particular - as a key part of this socialisation process. He argued that, through learning the history of their country, people learnt to feel part of something bigger than themselves: part of a community. This helps to encourage children to understand that society is important: that they should be interested in other people, not just themselves.
- Also, outside the classroom, school encourages children to work together with all sorts of people - not just people they are related to or are particularly close friends with. Again, as with teaching history, this helps children learn to be a part of wider society.
- Durkheim was particularly interested in the teaching of morals: right and wrong. This was an important part of teaching values: it is important that there is broad agreement in society about what is right and what is wrong. Also, in school, behaviour can be strictly controlled. Durkheim thought it was important to have strict discipline in school. That way, children would learn what was acceptable or not. Through this, by the time children leave school, most will have learnt self-discipline and not need to be controlled. They should also have learned that misbehaviour has negative consequences, both for themselves and for society.
- Critics of Durkheim would suggest that these **lessons do not benefit the whole of society but only powerful groups**. Marxists would suggest it is the ruling class who benefits, and feminists would suggest it is men who benefit.



Bowles & Gintis (1976) (Marxist)



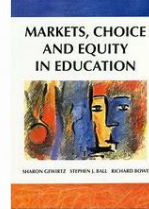
- A classic Marxist analysis of education which describes how school prepares workers for a life of **exploitation** in the capitalist system. Unlike functionalists like Parsons, Bowles & Gintis dismiss the idea that the education system is meritocratic, instead describing a system that **reproduces social class inequality**.
- A key aspect of Bowles & Gintis' famous study was the **correspondence principle**. That is, that school is deliberately made to be similar to work. Like in the workplace, school has a clear **hierarchy** (including some hierarchy among the pupils/workers to keep them divided). School work is **fragmented** into different subjects and disciplines, just as people have separate tasks on a production line. People work for extrinsic rewards (i.e. pay for workers in the capitalist system; grades and house points, etc. in school) rather than getting satisfaction from doing the work itself.
- Bowles & Gintis argue that the aim of this is to create **obedient, docile workers**, who will not question how things are arranged and will not work together to change things.

Separately, the children of the ruling class are taught in private schools or similar, to be confident and to expect to run things and be in charge. As such, for Bowles & Gintis the schooling system performs a vital function for capitalism: it keeps the children of working-class parents working class, and ensures the children of bourgeois parents remain bourgeois. And it ensure that those working-class children will continue to work hard and put up with low pay and poor conditions. It is the opposite of a meritocratic system. Bowles & Gintis talk about the myth of meritocracy.

- Bowles & Gintis also explore the idea of a **hidden curriculum** - i.e. the things that education teaches us that are not part of the formal curriculum (what we learn about the various subjects in the classroom). Functionalists also recognise that there is a hidden curriculum, but they see this is a positive thing: part of what teaches people the norms and values of society. Marxists like Bowles & Gintis think this only benefits the ruling class and capitalism. It is important to remember that Bowles & Gintis were Marxists; they were critics of capitalism. This is what they thought education was like, not what they thought it should be like.
- Critics would argue that school has changed a lot since the 1970s and so has the workplace. Others would point out that working-class pupils do not always seem "docile" and "obedient" and often seem quite the opposite! However, Willis (in Learning to Labour) suggests that poor behaviour at school still benefits the capitalist system.

Ball, Bowe & Gewirtz (1994)- Parental Choice & Competition

- A number of education policies and reforms, especially those brought in as part of the 1988 Educational Reform Act, looked to create a market in state education. The idea was that parents would have more choice and control over their children's education. Ball, Bowe & Gerwitz investigated to see what impact the policies were having.
- One of the key marketization policies introduced in 1988 was **league tables**. This was the publication of how schools compared with each other in terms of the results pupils were getting - not just A Levels and GCSEs but also the new SATs. The idea was that parents could look at the league tables and make an informed choice about which school their children should attend. While school locations and the number of places meant that parents did not have complete freedom of choice, the aim was to make schools compete for parents and strive to keep improving their standards and therefore improve their position on the league tables and attract more pupils (and with that, more funding).
- Ball, Bowe & Gerwitz identified a number of problems with this approach. First, they identified the pressure that league tables, and the associated **formula funding**, put on schools and how that pressure impacted on children's education. Some schools responded to the pressure by focusing their attention on the most able children, which arguably disadvantaged lower-ability pupils. Many schools reintroduced policies of **banding or streaming** in order to best identify the pupils who would achieve and help the league table positions. Ball, in his earlier research about **Beachside Comprehensive**, had concluded that streaming had a negative effect on working-class pupils.
- The researchers concluded that marketisation benefited middle-class children, whose parents took advantage of the system to reinforce their advantages. They found that schools contributed to this situation as they felt that becoming an increasingly middle-school would help them move up the league tables. Schools would also engage in **cream skinning and silt shifting** to try and get the best pupils in their school and pass on lower ability pupils elsewhere. As such, working-class pupils and some minority-ethnic groups found themselves in the undersubscribed and under-funded schools lower down the league tables. The class divide that existed under the old grammar school system was recreated in the comprehensive system.
- Supporters of marketisation would point out that it was parental attitudes at work here rather than the policies or system, and middle-class parents should not be penalised for (apparently) taking a greater interest in their children's education. Some would also point out that policies since 1994 have gone some way to resolving these issues, such as the Pupil Premium that ensures pupils from low-income households carry more funding and schools can invest that money into activities that benefit those pupils.

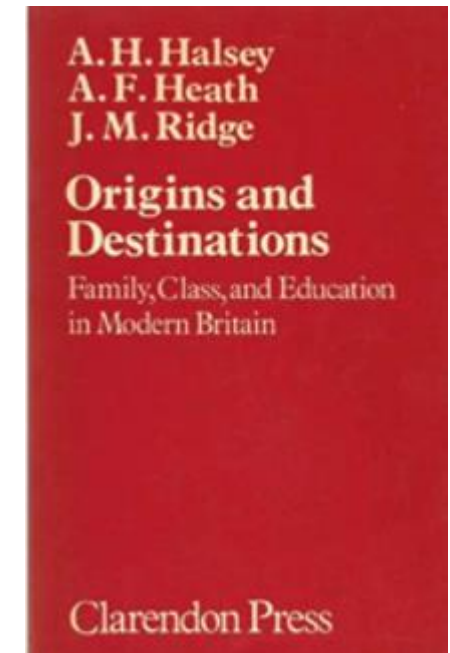


Halsey, Heath & Ridge (1980)- Social Class Inequality

- This was an extensive piece of research on the educational chances of schoolboys from different social classes.
- Halsey, Heath and Ridge accessed a large sample of 8000 men, to look at the extent to which social class had impacted their experience of education. He divided people up into three social classes:

1. The service class
2. The intermediate class
3. The working class

- The service class were professionals and managers, the intermediate class other "white-collar" workers and the working class included manual labourers.
- They found that the children born into the service class did much better at school than those from the intermediate class, and both did better than the working class.
- For example, people from the service class were 11 times more likely to attend university as those from the working class. The differences between the sons of service-class families and those from working-class families was found to be very great throughout, with service-class children four times more likely to still be at school at 16, eight times and 17 and ten times at 18. (The school leaving age was raised to 16 in 1972).
- While the differences described are very clear, there are a number of possible problems with the research. One, the research did not consider girls at all, which could have a significant impact on the findings. Second, there had been significant changes in both the education system and society since many of the sample had finished school. Also, some sociologists would question the way the study defined social classes.



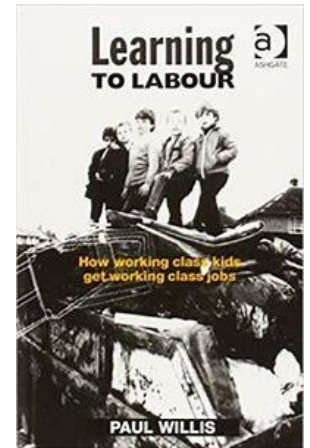
Ball (1981)- Banding & Teacher expectations

- This classic case study into secondary education sought to investigate why working-class pupils underperformed at school.
- The classic functionalist argument is that the **education system is meritocratic**: it helps sort people into the most appropriate jobs. And yet statistics show that people from lower-income families consistently underperform compared with those from wealthier families. Marxists think this is deliberate: that the role of the education system is to reproduce class inequality. But lots of policies have been put in place to try and support children from low-income families in school. If Marxists are wrong that schools deliberately fail working-class children, and functionalists are wrong that schools are meritocratic: what actually is going on?
- Ball spent three years in **Beachside Comprehensive**, carrying out a participant observation. He particularly focused on two groups of students, one who had been banded or streamed by ability, and another that was taught in mixed-ability classes. The banding was well intentioned. There was a concern among teachers that in **mixed-ability classes** the brightest pupils were held back and the weakest pupils were left behind, with a tendency that it was the middle swathe of pupils who were focused on. However, Ball found that the process tended to have a negative impact on working-class pupils.
- He found that pupils who started school with similar attitudes to study began to diverge when they were **banded/streamed**. That is when they were put in classes supposedly based on their ability. Streaming is when pupils of a similar ability are in the same, streamed class for all subjects whereas with setting pupils could be in a high set for Maths and a low set for English (for example).
- Working-class pupils gravitated towards the lower bands and then became increasingly disinterested in education and **"anti-school"**. The net effect of this was that children from lower income families left school with fewer qualifications, therefore reproducing class inequalities, apparently by accident. He describes a downward mobility - quite the opposite of what Parsons or Davis and Moore imagined - where attempts at differentiation damage working-class pupils' education and life chances.













Willis (1977)- Learning to Labour (Marxist)

- Paul Willis used a wide range of research methods - including observations and interviews - to really try and see education from the children's point of view. As a Marxist, he was interested in conflict in education and **why working-class children went on to do working-class jobs**. But he reached quite different conclusions from Bowles & Gintis
- Willis' study of working-class boys in a Midlands school has become a classic. His study focused on **"the lads"** - a group of working-class boys who were disruptive, misbehaved and had a very negative attitude to education. They had formed what Willis called an **antischool subculture**. Within this subculture it was "cool" to "mess about" and to fail. It really turned the values of the school on their head. From the perspective of this subculture, children who the school viewed positively were the "ear'oles" ("swots"). The last thing you wanted was praise from a teacher. Instead, children could get praise within the group for truancy, bad behaviour and discriminatory attitudes (there was a lot of racism, sexism and homophobia within the group).
- With these findings, Willis does not only undermine the arguments of Parsons or Durkheim, but also of his fellow Marxists, Bowles & Gintis. First, **he concluded that school was not working very well as an agent of socialisation**: there was no value consensus here: pupils were actively rejecting the norms and values of society. As such, they were a long way from the hard-working, docile, obedience workers suggested by Bowles & Gintis! And yet the outcome was much the same: the children of working-class parents going on to do working-class jobs. In this study they played an active role in this: they thought school was boring and pointless and was something they had to endure until they could go to work. They had a similar attitude to work, and got through it using similar techniques: "messaging about" and "having a laff".
- Willis used a wide range of research methods (known as **methodological pluralism**) to try and get as true a picture as possible. However, it has been suggested that the boys may have acted up more to "show off" to Willis. This might have occurred when they were being observed (the Hawthorne Effect - people behave differently when they know they're being watched) and when they were interviewed (an interviewer effect). While Willis was coming from a Marxist perspective, his study does suggest that working-class boys actively chose to fail, rather than the system being designed by the capitalist class to have this outcome. He did suggest that this ultimately benefited capitalism, because there wasn't a meritocracy and instead class inequality was reproduced, and there would not be a revolution because workers had learnt a coping strategy for doing boring, unfulfilling work ("having a laff"). However, it did not produce the productive, docile workers capitalists might ideally like to have working for them!

























EDUCATION – KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – TYPES OF EDUCATION AND PERSPECTIVES
















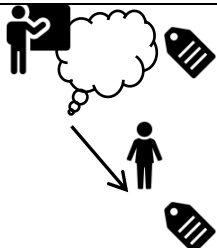

TYPES OF SCHOOL AND SCHOOLING

FORMAL EDUCATION		Takes places in educational establishments such as schools and universities.
INFORMAL EDUCATION		Takes place when people learn from their everyday life.
PRIMARY		Schools for children aged 5-11
SECONDARY		Schools for children aged 11-16. Includes comprehensive schools, free schools, special schools and academies.
INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS		Fee paying schools. These include private schools and public schools (older fee paying schools). Around 7% of English schoolchildren attend independent schools.
STATE SCHOOLS		State schools do not charge fees. Their intake is more socially mixed.
HOME SCHOOLING		Children are taught at home by parents or tutors.
DE-SCHOOLING		Illich argues that schools repress children and promote passive conformity. He argues that education should be abolished and that children should be able to decide what to learn based on their natural curiosity.
FORMAL CURRICULUM		The content of the planned lessons that learn at school.
HIDDEN CURRICULUM		The unintended lessons that children learn at school. These can be through the school rules, things that happen at break times etc.

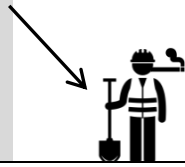
PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION

FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE		1. Education serves the needs of the economy. It gives people the knowledge and skills that people will need for work.
		2. Education facilitates social mobility. Gifted students from disadvantaged backgrounds can achieve qualifications and move up to a higher social class.
		3. Education fosters social cohesion. Schools help to reinforce the social bonds, norms and values that unite different people in society.
DURKHEIM'S FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE		The main function of education is socialisation ; teaching children the norms and values of their society. Through history, for example, children learn that they are part of a community. By following school rules, children learn the difference between right and wrong
PARSONS FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE		The education system helps society to be meritocratic . Children are successful because of their abilities and effort not their family background. Education acts like a sieve , grading students and allocating them to jobs based on their abilities (this is known as their achieved status).
MARXIST PERSPECTIVE		1. Education serves the interests of the ruling class. For example, it promotes the idea that capitalist society is fair and meritocratic.

		2. Education reproduces the class structure. Children from privileged backgrounds are more likely to leave with better qualifications and get better jobs.
		3. Education is a form of negative secondary socialisation. Children learn to accept hierarchy and obey rules which prepare them to accept their role in a capitalist society.
BOWLES AND GINTIS'S MARXIST PERSPECTIVE		Bowles and Gintis use the term correspondence principle to describe the way that education (through the hidden curriculum) trains children for life in the capitalist system and prevents rebellion or revolution. School and work, for example, both involve uniforms, strict time-keeping, hierarchy, rewards, punishments, boring tasks etc.
EDUCATION – KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – ACHIEVEMENT		
SOCIAL CLASS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT		
SOCIAL CLASS		In general, middle class students achieve better exam results than working class students.
HALSEY'S STUDY ON EDUCATIONAL DESTINATIONS	 	Halsey, Heath and Ridge researched the educational destinations of school children. They conducted a large, fact to face study that divided people into three social classes based on their father's occupation; service class (e.g. professionals such as doctors), intermediate class (e.g. office workers) and working class (e.g. manual labourers). Children born into the service class did much better at school and were more likely to go to university than the intermediate class and both did better than the working class.
EXPLANATIONS FOR CLASS DIFFERENCE		1. Economic circumstances: Students from affluent backgrounds usually have the facilities to help them study (space, PC etc), parents often employ tutors and live in the catchment areas of good schools.
		2. Parental values: Parents from the upper and middle classes often value education and expect their children to do well. Parents from the working class might be less interested or have lower expectations.
		3. Cultural Capital: Middle class parents often have the knowledge and skills to be able to help their children with school work and revision.
BALL'S STUDY ON PARENTAL CHOICE	 	Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz argue that the publication of league tables has led increased competition between schools. However, middle class parents have an advantage in this competition because they can afford to move to good schools or to pay for their children to travel further to those schools.
GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT		
GENDER		In general, girls do better than boys in both GCSEs and A levels than boys.
		Girls are more likely to study subjects such as English and Art at A level, whereas boys are more likely to study physics and maths.
EXPLANATIONS FOR GENDER DIFFERENCES		1. Women's rights: Changes to the law have made gender discrimination in education illegal. Feminism has meant that girls now are expecting to get a job and be financially independent.
		2. Anti-school sub-culture amongst boys: Peer pressure may encourage boys to see school and educational success as 'uncool'.
		3. Gendered curriculum: The hidden curriculum encourages the perception that some subjects are masculine whilst others are feminine.

ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT		
ETHNICITY		In general, students from some minority ethnic groups (e.g. Chinese) achieve better exam results than others (e.g. Black Caribbean).
EXPLANATIONS FOR ETHNICITY DIFFERENCES: HOME FACTORS		1. Economic circumstances: Students from some minority ethnic groups (e.g. Black Caribbean) are more likely to experience material deprivation than those from others.
		2. Parental values: Some ethnic minority parents (e.g. British Chinese) are more likely to value education and educational success.
		3. Cultural capital: White, middle class parents often have the knowledge and skills to be able to help their children with school work and revision.
EXPLANATIONS FOR ETHNICITY DIFFERENCES: SCHOOL FACTORS		1. Ethnocentric curriculum: The idea that the formal curriculum is biased towards white, European culture
		2. The hidden curriculum: The hidden curriculum emphasises white, mainstream norms and values (e.g. school uniform policy).
		3. Institutional racism: When the policies and procedures of an organisation result in discrimination. Some people argue that the high rate of fixed-term exclusions of Black Caribbean boys is evidence of institutional racism in schools.
EDUCATION – KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – PROCESSES WITHIN SCHOOLS		
STREAMING		Students are allocated to a band based on their overall ability and are taught in this band for most of their subjects.
THE EFFECTS OF STREAMING		1. Promotes class differences in achievement: A disproportionately high number of lower stream students are drawn from the working class.
		2. Creates an anti-school sub-culture: In response to being labelled as failures, some lower stream students reject the school's values and rules.
SETTING		Students are allocated to a class based on their achievement in that subject. They will be taught in different classes for different subjects.
THE EFFECTS OF SETTING		Students are often set because of their behaviour rather than their achievement. Students are often not moved up or down a class for practical reasons (e.g. class size).
MIXED ABILITY TEACHING		Students are taught in mixed ability classes .
LABELLING AND THE SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY		Negative labelling of students can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, students who are told that they are low ability in maths come to believe that and give up more easily in maths lessons.
THE INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE		Interactionism focuses on small-scale interactions between teachers and students. Research suggests that teachers label students based on factors such as their appearance, gender, ethnicity and how well they conform to the school's rules, norms and values.
BALL ON TEACHER EXPECTATIONS		Ball undertook a case study of streaming in a secondary school. Some students changed their behaviour over time as a result of teacher expectations. For example, teachers expected students in the 'top' band to be well-behaved and hard working and students in the 'bottom' band to be slow to complete work and poorly behaved. Over time, students' behaviour began to mirror these expectations.
THE KEY IDEAS OF WILLIS ON THE CREATION OF COUNTER SCHOOL CULTURES.		Willis carried out a study of 12 working class boys ('lads') in a single sex school. He used qualitative methods to explore their counter-school culture. They resisted the school and its rules and focussed on 'dossing' and 'having a laff.' They saw the more conformist boys as 'cissies.' They saw manual work as masculine and white collar work as effeminate. Willis

followed the 'lads' into their jobs and argues that the **anti-school culture** prepared them for working class jobs where they adopted similar attitudes.



The structure of the education section of Paper 1

1. Multiple choice (1 mark)
2. Multiple choice (1 mark)
3. Describe... (3 marks)
4. Identify and describe... (3 marks)
5. From Item A, identify... (RM strengths and weaknesses, 2 marks)
6. Identify and explain one... (related to item) (4 marks)
7. Identify and explain one... (RM, 4 marks)
8. From Item B, identify and describe the research method, and explain... (RM and F, 4 marks)
9. Identify one.... And explain how you would investigate it using... (RM and F, 4 marks)
10. Discuss how far sociologists agree... (12 marks)
11. Discuss how far sociologists agree... (12 marks)

Timings: 1 mark/ minute!

Practice questions

1 2 What term is commonly used by sociologists to describe the process of creating competition between schools? [1 mark]

- A Comprehensivisation ☐
- B Marketization ☐
- C Socialisation ☐
- D Vocationalism ☐

1 3 What term is commonly used by sociologists to describe the idea that the school system should be abolished? [1 mark]

- A De-schooling ☐
- B Hidden curriculum ☐
- C Meritocracy ☐
- D Privatisation ☐

1 2 What term is commonly used by sociologists to describe schools that charge fees for students to attend? [1 mark]

- A Academy ☐
- B Comprehensive ☐
- C Free ☐
- D Private ☐

1 3 What term is commonly used by sociologists to describe the close relationship between the education system and capitalism? [1 mark]

- A Correspondence principle ☐
- B De-schooling ☐
- C Mainstream education ☐
- D Meritocracy ☐

Describe one in-school factor that may influence the educational achievement of working class students. [3 marks]

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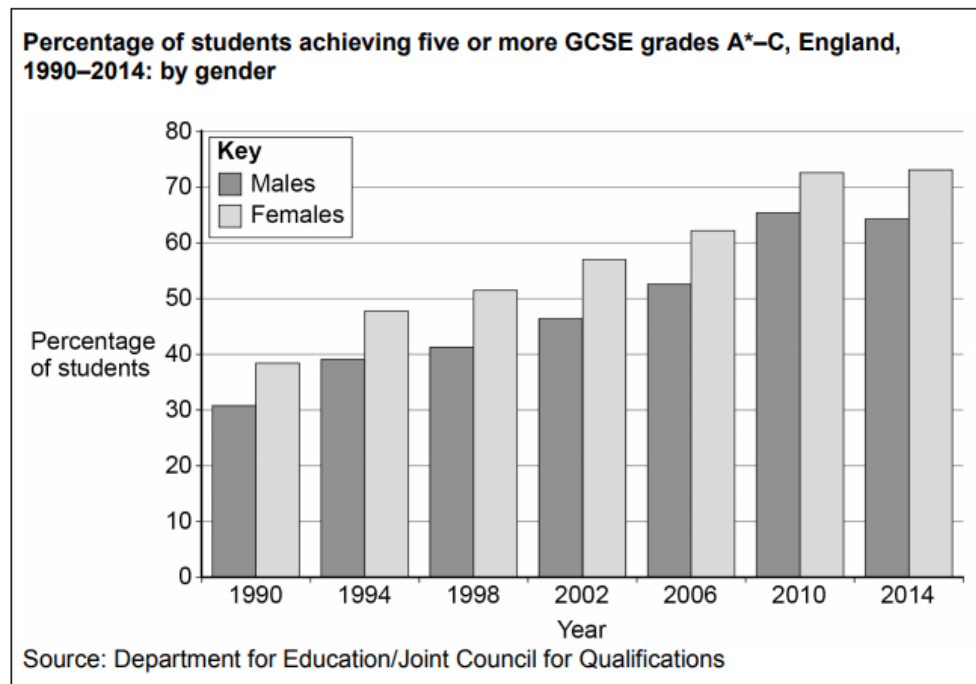
Identify and describe one way in which an ethnocentric curriculum might disadvantage certain groups of students. [3 marks]

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From Item C, examine one strength of the research. [2 marks]

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Identify and explain one out-of-school factor which might account for the differences in educational achievement shown in Item C. [4 marks]

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Identify and explain one disadvantage of using non-participant observation to investigate student behaviour. [4 marks]

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The marketization of schools

Between 1991 and 1994, Stephen Ball, Richard Bowe and Sharon Gerwitz conducted a study of 15 schools in three neighbouring local education authorities. They visited the schools, attended meetings, examined documents and interviewed a sample of teachers.

The study examined how competition between schools influenced school performance. Ball, Bowe and Gerwitz found that the publication of league tables led schools to focus on the introduction of various measures to improve their ranking in these tables.

Source: Educational Reform and its Consequences (1994)

From **Item D**, identify and describe **one** impact of the marketization of schools, including what you know of Ball, Bowe and Gerwitz's perspective on education.

[4 marks]

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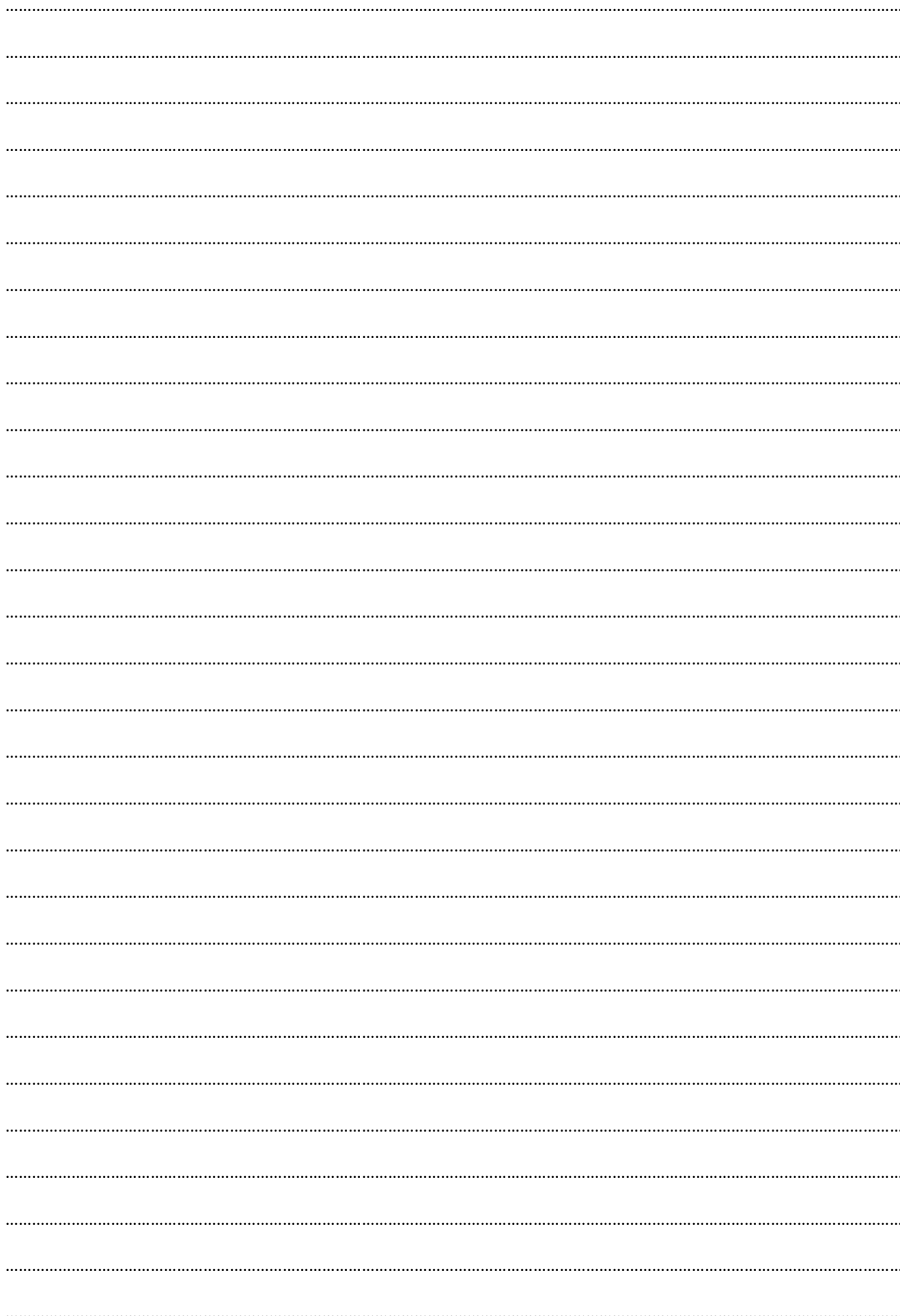
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Identify and explain one possible disadvantage of mixed ability teaching. [4 marks]

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Many sociologists are concerned about the relatively poor performance of working class pupils when compared to their middle class peers. According to a study by the universities of Leicester and Leeds middle class pupils do better because parents put more effort into their children's education. The researchers suggested that policies aimed at improving parental effort could be effective in increasing children's educational attainment. Effort was measured using indicators of a student's attitude, such as the answers given by 16-year-olds to questions including whether they think school is a "waste of time", and teachers' views about students' laziness. Other factors studied were the parents' interest in their children's education, measured by, for example, whether they read to their child.

The research, *Must Try Harder*, used the National Child Development Study, which follows individuals born in a given week in 1958 throughout their lives.

From **Item C**, examine **one** weakness in the research.

[2 marks]

Student response 1

They have only used a restricted sample size based on children in a longitudinal study. The research is not representative of all parents and children.

The student assumes a small and unrepresentative sample (the reference to the National Child Development Study should have alerted them to the fact that this was unlikely – the study actually involves over 17,000 people.) They may have confused the data with popular television programmes (the 'Up' series involves a sample of only 14 children).

0 marks

Student response 2

The research uses the opinions of students and teachers. Their views may be biased or inaccurate eg the teacher's opinions may not truly represent the student's behaviour (behaviour that appears to be laziness might be explained by tiredness or problems at home).

The student accurately identifies a potential weakness in the research (the use of subjective opinions that may be biased or inaccurate particularly when in relation to the behaviour of others). They then go on to provide clear evidence of evaluation (alternative explanations for apparent laziness) questioning the validity of findings.

2 marks

Identify and explain **one** alternative factor that may have led to the relatively poor performance of working class pupils referred to as a concern in **Item C**.

[4 marks]

Student response 1

One alternative factor is that working class pupils may receive less help financially for items such as textbooks and equipment. If the parents struggle with getting them adequate equipment working class children are more likely to perform poorly in school.

This is a level 3 response.

The student has selected an appropriate factor (lack of adequate financial resources) and provides sufficient detail (lack of textbooks and equipment) to meet the minimum requirement for a Level 3. However, the answer fails to meet the Level 4 requirement for a 'detailed and well-developed explanation'.

3 marks

Student response 2

One factor that may have led to the underperformance of working class pupils is material deprivation. This is when pupils lack the basic resources needed for educational achievement eg books, revision guides and other essential items of equipment. The parents of working class pupils may lack the financial resources to buy their children the equipment that they need. In comparison to middle class parents who are far more likely to be able to afford to purchase everything their child needs at school.

This is a level 4 response.

The student has selected an appropriate factor (material deprivation – note the correct use of the term). They have also provided sufficient detail to justify the requirement for a Level 4 award, including a direct comparison with the 'likely' financial advantages of middle class parents.

4 marks

Student response 3

Working class pupils are far more likely to live in disadvantaged areas eg 90% of failing schools are in disadvantaged areas. A student may not have the ability or money to be tutored in order to get into an independent or grammar school and therefore they may have to go to their local school. Extra support may not be given or teaching may not be of a good standard and this may affect exam results.

This is a level 2 response.

The student has identified a relevant factor (structural failings in the education system). However, much of the explanation offered is irrelevant or inaccurate eg the claim that 90% of failing schools are in 'disadvantaged' areas:

[The] strongest performing schools serving areas of disadvantage are concentrated in London and a few other large urban areas. By contrast, the weakest performing schools are spread widely across the country, often in towns rather than large urban areas, and with a large number located near to the coast. *Unseen Children*, Ofsted 2013.

Credit should be given for identifying failing schools and lack of extra support/poor teaching (structural failings in the education system).

2 marks

Question

Item D

In the 1970s sociologist Paul Willis observed a group of working class students who rejected school and all its values and who wanted to leave school as soon as they could. The students in this group were described by Willis as the 'lads' and their behaviour was compared to the conformist students or 'ear'oles' (referred to as such because they listened to the teacher):

'During films in the hall they tie the projector leads into impossible knots, make animal shapes on the screen with their fingers, and gratuitously dig and jab at the backs of the 'ear'oles' in front of them.'

'There is a continuous scraping of chairs, a bad tempered 'tut-tutting' at the simplest request from the teacher, and a continuous fidgeting which explores every permutation of sitting or lying on a chair.'

Willis used both non-participant and participant observation in class and around the school, in his attempt to understand the experience of schooling from the perspective of the students.

From **Item D**, identify and describe the research method used by Willis including what you know of his perspective on education.

[4 marks]

Student response 1

The research method used by Willis was observation, both participant and non-participant. Using this method Willis was able to see at first-hand what a badly behaved group of non-conformist working class boys thought of education and of those pupils who chose to conform to the rules of the school. Willis based his research on a secondary school in the Midlands. He wrote about education from a Marxist perspective.

This is a level 4 response.

The student correctly identifies the method used as observation and provides an appropriately developed description, including their awareness of where the research took place and that Willis wrote about education from a Marxist perspective.

4 marks

Student response 2

Willis used observation. He observed these boys with their knowledge and therefore no ethical issues were involved. Observation provides qualitative data – detailed information that is sometimes difficult to analyse. Willis writes about education from the perspective of anti-school subcultures and the impact of social class differences.

This is a level 2 response.

The student correctly identifies the research method used as observation, but their description is only weakly applied to the context and shows little awareness that Willis wrote about education from a Marxist perspective (the reference to social class differences is too vague to be worthy of credit).

2 marks

Student response 3

Willis used two types of observation – participant and non-participant. Participant observation involves the sociologist becoming involved in the research. Non-participant observation is where the sociologist does not become involved (possibly leading to the Hawthorne effect). Willis used this method in an attempt to collect high value qualitative data about students and to understand education from their perspective.

This is a level 2 response.

The student correctly identifies the research method used as observation but their description is only weakly applied to the context.

2 marks