

Summer Sociology observations

Read the overview of Sociology as a subject. Do it in the next week and not the day before you come back as you are about to learn a subject that will change the way you see the world around you. Once you've read it, starting looking at things around you and question why do we do them. They are not just 'common sense', but the result of complex social processes and interactions which shape the way we behave (re-read your *Sociological Imagination* sheet).

So as you observe the world around you, try and find examples of the terms listed below. Jot down your example. If you want to try and stretch yourself then try to explain how Functionalists, Marxists and Feminists (theoretical explanations) might explain why the example happens or why it leads to inequality in society.

Culture

Identity

Role

Status

Value

Norm

Informal social control

Social class

Gender

Ethnicity

Sociology research tasks

Complete two out of these three mini research tasks.

1. On an average day, keep a log of the types of media you use (TV, music, social media, internet, books, magazines, radio, etc) and for how long you use them. Ask an elderly relative (or another older family member) to do the same. Analyse the similarities and differences between them. Why do they happen? What do any differences in usage mean for individuals and society?

Create a comparative table between the two people's use of media.

2. On a day when you are in Witney or another place with a number of people, watch how they behave. What is making people behave in the way they are behaving? What stops people from stealing things? What stops people from jumping queues in shops? If you go abroad on holiday, do people behave in the same way? If not, why not?

Create a list of social rules you follow.

3. Watch 2/3 TV programmes on a TV channel with adverts, but note down what adverts are on during them. What roles do men and women play in the adverts? What relationship might there be between the advert and the programme? What time of day is the show in? What channel is it on? What are the adverts saying about men or women in modern society?

Create a list of the differences between the way men and women are portrayed in the media.

