

**Miss Shea's transition work - What is Sociology?**



Sociology is the study of society and of people and their behaviour. Sociology is evidence-based, not just about opinions, but backed up by research carried out by sociologists.

Sociologists argue that much of human behaviour is learned, and not instinctive. Much of this learning occurs in our early years and has a huge influence on our behaviour and development.

Please complete the tasks below in order to prepare for the start of your Sociology course in September. I have included very basic definitions, you may need to use the internet to find out further detail to support your understanding.

**Culture, Norms & Values**

First watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LK5J0-cM-HE>

Write a summary of what sociology is:

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Find a sociological definition of culture and write it below;

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Brainstorm what you think of when you think of British culture:



Members of society share norm and values. Values are general principles or beliefs. They tell us what is good, what is important and what we should aim for. Write down three British values below;

1.....

2.....

3.....

Norms are specific rules that govern behaviour in certain situations. They tell us how we should conduct ourselves. Each culture has detailed norms governing different aspects of behaviour such as food, dress, jobs etc. Write down three social norms below;

1.....

2.....

3.....



Different cultures will have very different norms and values. Write down three norms or values from other cultures that differ from British culture;

1.....

2.....

3.....

Groups that have their own culture, apart from the mainstream culture, are called subcultures. Write down three examples of subcultures and a norm or value associated with each one;

1.....

2.....

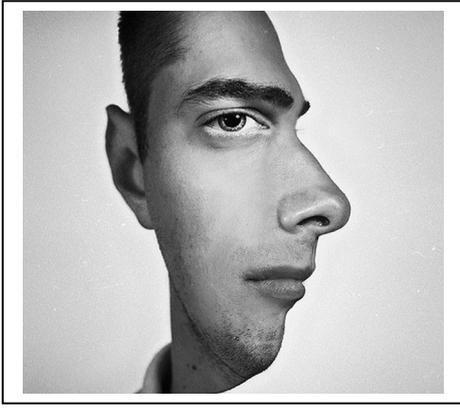
3.....

Cultures and their norms and values change over time. For example, attitudes to smoking have changed in the recent past. Give three examples of norms and values that have changed significantly in British culture in the recent past;

1.....

2.....

3.....



**Culture and identity**

Look at this photograph; not everything is as it seems!

There is usually another way of looking at things – and that is what we do as sociologists.

We take normal, taken-for-granted life and turn it upside down, looking for meanings. And very often we end up seeing things very differently.

**Social Change**

The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing; others say it is shrinking. The important point to grasp is: society does not remain static over time; it constantly changes - through decades and centuries and across countries, societies.

**Task 1**

Think of 3 different ways society has changed over the last 100 years. Try to be specific about the change eg. homosexuality is no longer illegal.

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Now, name 3 ways in which British society is different to another (America, Italy etc.)

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**Task 2**

Why do you think has society changed? Why are societies different?

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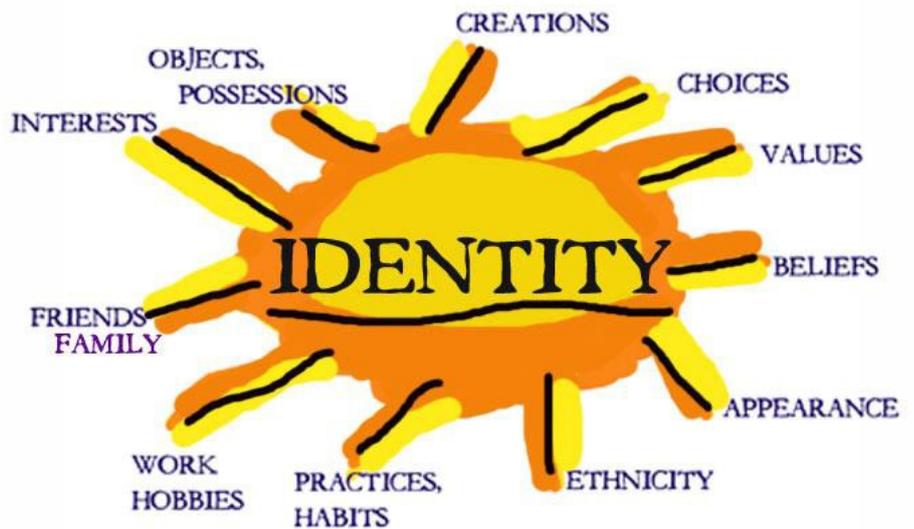
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**Identity**

Who are you? Are you part of a group, an individual, a student, a sister, a brother, a friend?

**Identity** is about how we see and define ourselves – our personalities – and how

other people see and define us. Many aspects of our individual identity are influenced by **agencies of socialisation**. These are structures, or groups of people. Eg Family.



**Task 3**

Suggest four examples of structures, or groups of people, that impact upon you. Explain how they influence you:

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