General Certificate of Education
January 2007
Advanced Subsidiary Examination

SOCIOLOGY   **SCY2**
Unit 2

ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Wednesday 10 January 2007   1.30 pm to 2.45 pm

For this paper you must have:
  • an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions
  • Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
  • Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper
    is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is SCY2.
  • This paper is divided into **three** Sections. Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question
    from that Section. Do **not** answer questions from more than one Section.
  • Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information
  • The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
  • The marks for questions (or part questions) are shown in brackets.
  • You will be marked on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise
    relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate. The
    legibility of your handwriting and the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also
    be considered.

Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question from that Section.

SECTION A: EDUCATION

Total for this section: 60 marks

1 Read **Items 1A and 1B** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

Item 1A

Research reveals that the higher a child's social class, the higher the level of that child's educational achievement is likely to be. Children from higher social classes are more likely to achieve examination passes when at school, more likely to stay on into post-compulsory education, and more likely to gain admission to a 'higher status' university.

There are many reasons for such class differences in achievement. Subcultural theorists suggest that in some cases the child's cultural background fails to equip them to meet the demands of schooling. For example, Sugarman (1970) has suggested that a lack of deferred gratification decreases working-class pupils' chances of academic success.   5

There are also gender differences: boys tend to do less well than girls. One reason for this may be the existence of anti-school subcultures.   10

Item 1B

There are significant differences in average levels of educational achievement among groups from different ethnic backgrounds. For example, children from Chinese families have tended to obtain higher academic qualifications than whites.

A number of reasons have been put forward to explain these patterns. Some researchers suggest that the causes lie inside the school. For example, Taylor (1981) has argued that   5
some teachers have a negative view of black students. Institutional racism within the education system may also be part of the problem. However, other sociologists recognise the need to look for alternative explanations.

(a) Explain what is meant by 'deferred gratification' (**Item 1A**, line 8). *(2 marks)*

(b) Identify **two** features of 'anti-school subcultures' (**Item 1A**, line 10). *(4 marks)*

(c) Suggest **three** ways in which a child's cultural background may fail 'to equip them to meet the demands of schooling' (**Item 1A**, lines 6 – 7). *(6 marks)*

(d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons, **apart from** those referred to in **Item 1A**, which might explain why boys 'tend to do less well than girls' in school (**Item 1A**, line 9).
(8 marks)

(e) Examine some of the government policies that have been introduced since 1988 in order to raise achievement in education. *(20 marks)*

(f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess sociological explanations for the educational achievement of children from different minority ethnic groups. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section B

SECTION B: WEALTH, POVERTY AND WELFARE

Total for this section: 60 marks

2 Read **Items 2A and 2B** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

Item 2A

During the 1950s, it was thought that poverty in the UK had been abolished, largely due to the creation of the welfare state. However, the work of researchers such as Townsend and Abel-Smith in the 1960s, who focused upon relative rather than absolute poverty, led to the realisation that many people in Britain were still living with serious deprivation. Unskilled workers, the elderly and lone-parent families were at particular risk of poverty. However,   5 many sociologists are critical of the concept of relative poverty.

Townsend's ideas are supported by independent research and official government figures. These suggest that, in spite of the welfare state and the redistributive effect of taxation, the gap between the richest and the poorest sections of British society has actually become wider in the past thirty years.   10

Item 2B

Item 2B cannot be reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

(a) Explain what is meant by 'absolute poverty' (**Item 2A**, line 3). *(2 marks)*

(b) Suggest **two** reasons why lone-parent families are more likely to experience poverty (**Item 2A**, line 5). *(4 marks)*

(c) Suggest **three** criticisms of the concept of 'relative poverty' (**Item 2A**, line 6). *(6 marks)*

(d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why the gap between the rich and poor has widened during the past thirty years (**Item 2A**, lines 8 – 10). *(8 marks)*

(e) Examine some of the government policies that have been introduced since 1945 to reduce poverty in the UK. *(20 marks)*

(f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess subcultural explanations of poverty. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section C

SECTION C: WORK AND LEISURE

Total for this section: 60 marks

3 Read **Items 3A and 3B** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

Item 3A

Attitudes towards work can vary significantly between individuals and between social groups. As Goldthorpe (1965) pointed out, employees may have very different orientations towards their work. Some workers have a purely instrumental attitude to work. Others seek job satisfaction or self-realisation while, for some, work is valued for the social contact with others that it brings.   5

Marx suggested that most workers in capitalist economies feel a sense of alienation. C Wright Mills (1951) thought that this alienation could be just as much of a problem for white-collar office or service sector workers as it was for industrial workers on a production line. For a Marxist, this sense of alienation is not only an inevitable consequence of capitalism, it is also one of the causes of the industrial conflict between   10
management and employees.

Item 3B

Much has been written about the increased opportunities for leisure in present day society. Some sociologists have written about the coming of the 'leisure society', where more people's lives are organised around leisure opportunities rather than work obligations. They claim that technologies that replace human labour, together with legislation restricting workers' hours, have resulted in a shorter working week for most people.   5

Leisure opportunities are not equally distributed, however. Feminist writers such as Green (1990) point out that women may have fewer leisure opportunities than men. It is also clear that leisure patterns vary between different social classes, the result not only of work and economic pressures but also of class subcultures.

(a) Explain what is meant by an 'instrumental' attitude to work (**Item 3A**, line 3). *(2 marks)*

(b) Suggest **two** reasons why 'women may have fewer leisure opportunities than men' (**Item 3B**, line 7). *(4 marks)*

(c) Identify **three** forms of industrial conflict (**Item 3A**, line 10). *(6 marks)*

(d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why workers may suffer feelings of alienation in the workplace (**Item 3A**, line 6). *(8 marks)*

(e) Examine the effects on individuals and society of technological change in the workplace. *(20 marks)*

(f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the extent to which people's leisure is determined by their social class position. *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page