

# A-LEVEL SOCIOLOGY

## Summer Homework Check List

Task	Tick when completed
<b>To bring to your first lesson</b> - lever arch folder, dividers, pens and paper	
<b>Task 1</b> Completed table of statistics	
<b>Task 2</b> Completed paragraphs summarising your findings	
<b>Task 3</b> Reading and a completed activity on the sociological imagination	

## Useful information

**Exam board** – AQA

**Assessment** – 3 x 2 hour long examinations (June 2020)

### Recommended Text Book Year 1 -

- Webb et al AQA A Level Sociology Book One ISBN-13: 978-0954007911

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### Task 1

As sociologists, we must consider the differences and inequalities between existing social groups in our society e.g. the differences between men and women.

Find statistics and fill in each box of the table.

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Social class</b>	<b>Age</b>
<b>Crime</b>	e.g. 92% of the first 500 offenders in the 2011 London riots were male			
<b>Education</b>		e.g. Only 22% of Pakistani/Bangladeshi boys gained 5 A*-C in their GCSEs in 2000		
<b>Employment</b>				
<b>Religious Participation</b>				
<b>Family life</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• domestic roles</li><li>• experiences of children</li><li>• types of families that people live in</li></ul>				
<b>Politics</b>				

Write a brief paragraph explaining how you think sociologists might use the information that you have collected?

Write a paragraph explaining why **family life is unequal** in the UK. Use your research to support your answer.

Write a paragraph explaining why the **education system is unequal** in the UK. Use your research to support your answer

# Using your sociological imagination

## What is the Sociological Imagination?

*“Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.”*

C. Wright Mills.

Are you aware of how your personal situation is linked to the forces of history and the society you live in? The sociological imagination is a concept used by the American sociologist C. Wright Mills to describe the ability to “think yourself away from the familiar routines of everyday life” **and look at them from an entirely new perspective.** In order to develop such skills, you must be able to free yourself from one context and look at things from an alternative point of view.

## Examples of Sociological Imagination

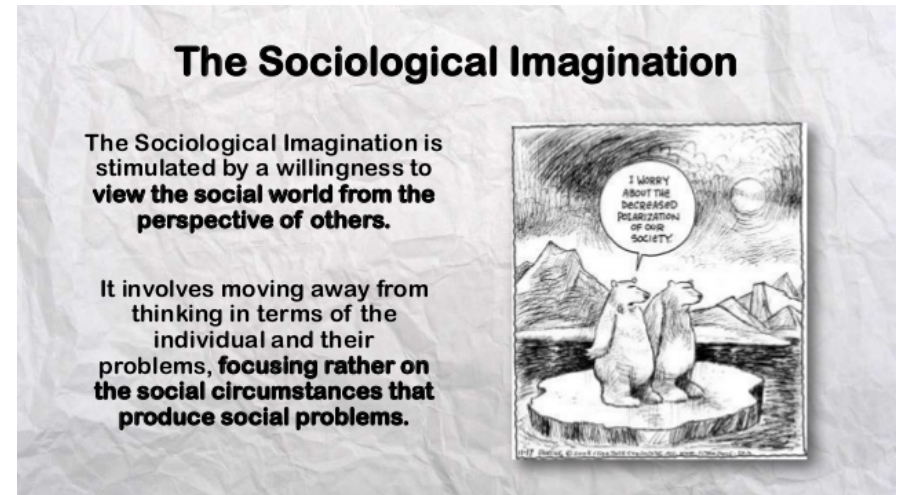
Written by sociologist C. Wright Mills in 1959, *The Sociological Imagination* is a book about a concept by the same name. Within the book, Mills challenges the trends of sociological thinking of his time and encourages sociologists to use sociological imagination in order to alter their perspectives. His theories discouraged specialization; but, instead, urged sociologists to be broad based in their study and application of sociology.

### Understanding the Sociological Imagination

The definition of sociological imagination by Mills, is

*“the vivid awareness of the relationship between experience and the wider society.”*

In effect, Mills is stating that sociological imagination is the ability to perceive situations and circumstances in a wide social context and observe how interactions and actions are influential upon other individuals and situations.



## Tea Drinking and Sociological Imagination

Virtually any behaviour can have sociological imagination applied to it. An example of the application of the sociological imagination is the drinking of tea. The perception of drinking tea can be examined from several different perspectives rather than just the simple act of drinking tea.

### For example -

- It can be seen as a means of maintaining good health in the way that one might take daily vitamins, because the benefits of tea have been touted by health researchers.
- It could be considered a tradition or ritual as many people choose to drink tea ritualistically each day at a certain time.
- It could be considered a type of drug because it contains caffeine, and therefore the drinker of the tea may have a type of an addiction.
- It can be seen from the perspective of being a social activity such as “meeting for tea,” an activity that actually focuses less on the beverage and more on the actual activity of meeting with another person.

## Behaviours that Are Sociological Imagination Techniques

In any case where you think about these issues or activities from different perspectives from your customary approach, this is an example of the sociological imagination.

### List of possible examples to practice using your sociological imagination on...

- Exercising, e.g. running, going the gym, bike riding etc.
- Cooking or baking
- Reading and/or Writing
- Public speaking
- Going to college
- Dropping out of school
- Working
- Owning a pet
- Volunteering
- Competing in athletic competitions
- Travelling
- Painting
- Driving a car
- Becoming a parent
- Getting married
- Criminal behaviour
- Giving to charity
- Spending money
- Watching television

#### TASK:

**Aim:** Practice using your sociological imagination.

**What do I need to do:** Read and understand the above example of drinking tea.

**NOW, choose one of the examples from the list. Produce bullet points showing the different ways that the simple act can be viewed.**

**How:** Display your work on a piece of A4 (written or typed). Remember to check your spelling and take care of the presentation.

**By when:** Deadline: YOUR FIRST SOCIOLOGY LESSON

