



A-Level Sociology

Transition Tasks

Year 11 → Year 12

<u>Compulsory tasks</u> • These must be completed before you start your course in September. • Work preferably to be hand written but typed work is also acceptable (<i>this includes task 1 as some students will not have access to a printer</i>). • KS5 Preparation: AO1 is for me: In Sixth Form you are expected to arrive at your lessons having already learnt the key facts in advance. This will involve completing reading before the lesson and the completing a task or taking notes on it.	Minimum time needed to fully complete	Date
1. Watch each TED talk below and write 50- 100 words summarizing the key points made. This task will provide you with an insight into the “Family and Households” unit. Videos can be found by typing each title into YouTube. • The future of families. • Fusion families. • The Myth of broken families. • Uninventing the modern family. • I don’t want children, stop telling me I will change my mind. • Do kids think of sperm donors as family. • Marriage 2.0. • The real effects of single parents families.	10 hours	
2. Watch all 3 episodes of “The Great British School Swap” and answer the questions below. The episodes are available at https://www.channel4.com/programmes/the-great-british-school-swap/episode-guide/ • What happens in The Great British School Swap? • What did you expect to happen in the show after hearing the title but before watching the show? • How did your thoughts and opinions change whilst watching the show? • Would doing a similar school swap with Heston Community School work? Why or why not? What type of school should we swap with? • How much do you think ethnicity and culture affect a student’s school performance? What other factors can also be important?	5 hours	

Optional challenge tasks <i>These will help you to develop your understanding more quickly and look impressive on your UCAS Personal Statements.</i>	Date
1. Suggested reading • A Dictionary of Sociology (Oxford Quick Reference). • A Level Sociology Themes and Perspectives by Haralambos and Holborn. • Social class in the 21st Century by Mike Savage. • Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race by Reni- Eddo- Lodge. • Slay in Your Lane: The Black Girl Bible by Yomi Adegoke.	
2. Suggested videos/ lectures/ films • Introduction to Sociology #1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZv3a14weDA • What is Sociology? Crash Course Sociology #1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio • Instant family (2018). • Bend It Like Beckham (2002). • Love, Simon (2018). • Freedom writers (2007).	
3. Suggested online course • https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-gender-inequality	

In Year 12 Sociology you will focus on:

- Education
- Family and Households
- Sociological Theory
- Sociological Research Methods

Education:

Task 1: Read the article below: summarise what it says

It's official: class matters

A major new study shows that social background determines pupils' success. Does it mean that the government is heading in the wrong direction? Matthew Taylor reports

It is a familiar scene: mum and dad hunched at the kitchen table, poring over Ofsted reports and brochures, trying to fathom which is the best school for their child. But a new report, obtained by Education Guardian, suggests that these well-meaning parents, and thousands like them, are looking in the wrong place. Instead of trying to decode inspectors' reports or work out whether academies are better than voluntary-aided schools or trusts superior to community comprehensives, they need look no further than the average earnings among parents.

A study by academics at University College London (UCL) and Kings College London has given statistical backbone to the view that the overwhelming factor in how well children do is not what type of school they attend- but social class. It appears to show what has often been said but never proved: that the current league tables measure not the best, but the most middle-class schools; and that even the government's "value-added" tables fail to take account of the most crucial factor in educational outcomes - a pupil's address.

The report, which uses previously unreleased information from the Department for Education and Skills, matches almost 1 million pupils with their individual postcode and exam scores at 11 and 15.

This unprecedented project has revealed that a child's social background is the crucial factor in academic performance, and that a school's success is based not on its teachers, the way it is run, or what type of school it is, but, overwhelmingly, on the class background of its pupils.

"These are very important findings, which should change the way parents, pupils and politicians think about schools," says Richard Webber, professor at UCL. "This is the first time we have been able to measure the precise impact of a child's social background on their educational performance, as well as the importance of a school's intake on its standing in the league tables."

The study found that, whatever their background, children do better the more "middle-class" the school they attend, and also that more than 50% of a school's performance is accounted for by the social make-up of its pupils.

In affluent areas, such as Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, in north London, and Lammas Park Road, Ealing, west London, the study would expect 67% of 11-year-olds to achieve level 5 in the national English tests and 94% of 15-year-olds to get five or more passes at GCSE at grade C and above.

Meanwhile, of the children growing up in more deprived areas, such as Hillside Road, Dudley, or Laurel Road, Tipton (both in the West Midlands), just 13% are likely to get the top level 5 in the national English tests for 11-year-olds, while only 24% of 15-year-olds will be reckoned to achieve the benchmark five-plus GCSEs at grade C and above.

Put simply, the more middle-class the pupils, the better they do. The more middle-class children there are at the school, the better it does. It is proof that class still rules the classroom.

"The results show that the position of a school in published league tables, the criterion typically used by parents to select successful schools, depends more on the social profile of its pupils than the quality of the teachers," says Webber, who, along with Professor Tim Butler from Kings, has devised new school league tables from the data that take the social background of each pupil into account. "

As it stands, parents who want to do the best for their children should choose a school according to how middle-class its intake is, rather than on the type of school or the quality of the teaching.

"For schools the message is clear. Selecting children whose homes are in high-status neighbourhoods is one of the most effective ways of retaining a high position in the league table. For statisticians, meanwhile, it proves that the existing tables, which ignore the types of home from which a school draws its pupils, are necessarily an unfair and imprecise means of judging a school's achievements."

The study looked at 476,000 11-year olds and 482,000 15-year-olds. The data was analysed through Mosaic, a programme devised by the information company Experian, which divides the UK population by postcode into 11 main groups and 61 types, providing detailed insight into the socio-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour of UK citizens. It is being used in key policy areas, such as health and crime, but this is the first time it has been used to assess the link between education performance and social class.

The study revealed how pupils from each of the 61 socio-economic groups performed given their background, allowing statisticians to set a benchmark score and measure each school's performance against that, in light of its intake. For this research Mosaic was linked to the Pupil Level Annual Statistics Data (National Pupil Database), provided by the DfES, to enable more accurate and context-based benchmarking of educational attainment.

Task 2: Read both of the articles on bringing back grammar schools. Create a positive and negative table

Article 1

Why not bring back grammar schools?

Few intra-governmental memos have sparked more anger than one called Circular 10/65, a memorandum sent 51 years ago by Anthony Crosland, then the education secretary, to local authorities. The document instructed local officials to commence converting grammar schools into comprehensives. Only a few English counties, such as Kent and Lincolnshire, retained many.

Today, we learn, **we have a new education secretary - Justine Greening - and she went to a comp.** She is the first post-Crosland education secretary - and it has taken longer than one might have hoped for the new system to attain this position. But we also know, though, that Theresa May - and her advisers - are rather keen on a return to a world of grammars.

This might be an apt moment to quickly rattle through what we know about the grammar system. This is an argument that is, in truth, really about more than what is known, in the jargon, as "tracking" - the process of making pupils sit an academic test and separating the highest-performing from the rest.

That is because a lot of people think grammars mean high standards, neat school uniforms and strict discipline. For a lot of adults, the achievement of getting to a grammar still remains a source of pride. Lots credit their subsequent achievements to their schools in a way that presupposes (probably wrongly) they would have been crashing failures had they gone to a comprehensive.

The argument about grammar schools has also acquired a political edge: grammar schools are a shibboleth for lots on the right. Conversely, lots of people who regard themselves as "progressive" tend to support comprehensive schooling. But there are actual testable claims made for grammars and comprehensives. We can examine these schools on their real merits. So we should: do they raise standards, overall? And do poorer children tend to do better in selective areas?

On one hand, selection allows for specialisation. Classes may have a less varied ability range within them. On the other hand, grouping slower learners together, we know, slows them down. And non-grammars in selective areas often struggle to recruit staff. So which forces win?

Do grammars work?

The first claim is easy to check. There is no aggregate improvement in results in areas that are wholly selective. The most important change is a clear distributional shift in *who* does well. In short, the minority of children streamed into the grammars do better. The remaining majority of children - who are not educated in grammars - do slightly worse.

Perhaps, you might argue, this is good. You might argue we need a distribution where we educated a minority to a higher standard and reduce the educational attainment slightly for the remainder. But at a

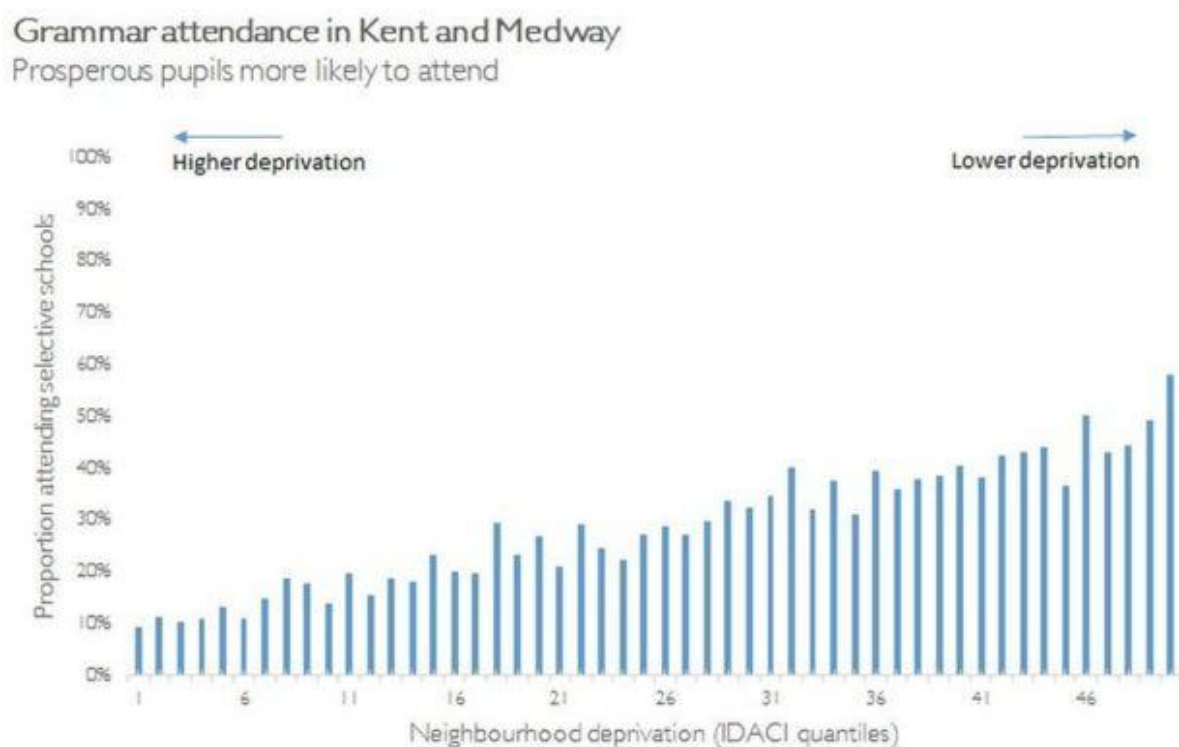
time when much of the developed world is rushing to increase the proportion of school-leavers with post-secondary education, it would be a radical departure from educational orthodoxy.

What about the argument that grammar schools are good for social mobility? They offer, the argument goes, a private-standard education to families who cannot afford fees. But there is a serious problem with this argument: it is children from poorer backgrounds who are most likely to be dropped by the selection process.

By the time that children take the test, there is already a large educational divide. In 2013, there were 1,591 16 year-olds in still-selective Kent eligible for free school meals. Of those children, only 2% had got key stage 2 results by the age of 11 that put them in the top tenth of results for the county. A Kentish child not on free school meals would be five times more likely to achieve that feat.

So a test at 11 should, by design, select out lots of poorer children. There is a further wrinkle: the tests can be gamed, too. Parents in Kent who can afford it pay a fortune for tutors, so they can coach their children over the line. The tests, therefore, are skewed even further in favour of the county's wealthier residents.

You can see that in this graph.



I ranked all the neighbourhoods in Kent and Medway - our biggest contiguous selective area - by their prosperity. At the left hand side of this graph is the proportion of 16 year-olds in the very poorest 50th of Kent and Medway neighbourhoods who attended grammars. Disadvantage is measured using an index called the income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI). The next point in the line is the 2nd poorest, then the 3rd poorest and so on. The right hand side of the graph is the least deprived.

What you can see is that the poorest children in Kent and Medway - at the left - have a less-than-10% chance of getting into a grammar. For children in the very richest neighbourhoods, it is over 50%. This means poorer children are pressed into the non-grammars.

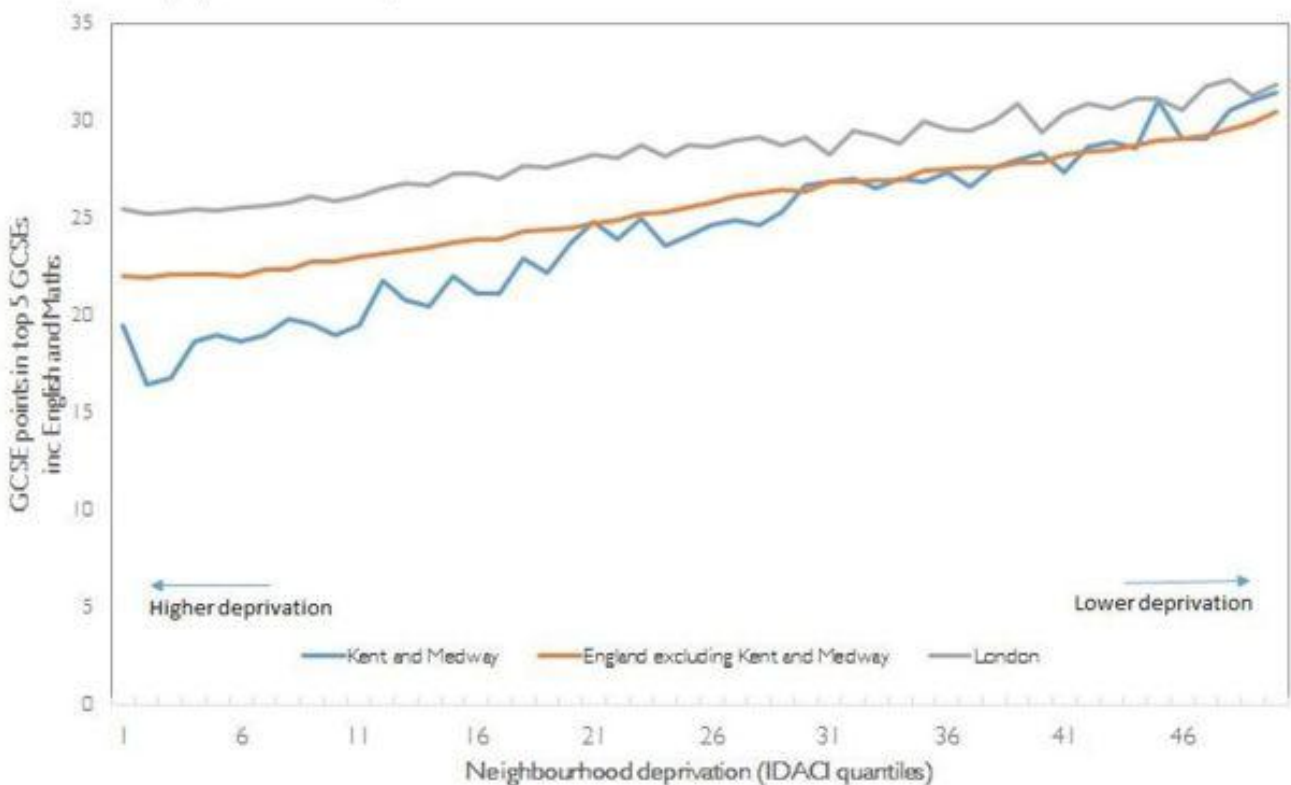
The end results

The overall effect of these decisions is visible in Kent's GCSE results. I have taken each child's top 5 GCSE results (from 2013), including English and maths, and turned that into a points score - from 0 points for no passes through to 40 points for 5 straight starred As. I've plotted the averages for a national scale using the same data. And, for contrast, I have included high-performing London and the rest of England.

In Kent and Medway, poorer children lag further behind, richer children move further ahead - and the losses at the bottom are much larger than the gains at the top. This is a feature of the wholly selective counties in England, as a whole. Even in the very best areas, it steepens the rich-poor gradient.

School results in selective Kent and Medway

Prosperous pupils more likely to do well



It is possible to imagine fixes to some of the problems: fixing the proportion of poorer children, for example, who get into the schools. You could also imagine a world of selective schools aimed just at the top tip of the distribution, which would in effect be special needs schools for children whose high academic attainment means they find conventional schooling difficult.

But be wary. These findings have been repeated formally time and again by researchers in different selective systems. Furthermore, the highest performing school systems in the world, according to the

PISA tests, are comprehensive. So are England's highest-performing boroughs and counties - especially when you look at results for poorer children.

We made a lot of mistakes, as a country, in how we abolished the grammars. There was a twenty-year period after Circular 10/65 did its work when the old system was being dismantled but mechanisms were not put in its place to make sure children from poorer families got a fair shake. We replaced academic selection with house-price selection.

But it is hard to argue from the evidence that social mobility would be boosted by the introduction of new grammars

Article 2

Grammar schools dominated by the wealthy, DfE's own data shows

Grammar schools are dominated by children from well-off and middle class families, according to figures released by the government in its effort to show that “ordinary working families” would benefit most.

Education experts said data published by the Department for Education (DfE) demonstrated that the children of the highest earners were more likely than not to win places at selective schools.

Rebecca Allen, the director of the Education Datalab thinktank, said new DfE figures only confirmed previous research that children in the top 10% of households in terms of income were the most likely group to gain entrance to grammar schools via academic selection.

“It is only the very wealthiest families that are more likely to find their children in a grammar school than in a secondary modern,” Allen said.

The paper attempted to define who “ordinary working families” were: households with incomes of up to £33,000 a year.

Allen added that the DfE statistics backed up academic research published earlier this year that found children from households in the top 1% of income enjoyed an 80% chance of admission to selective schools.

Education secretary to say she wants selective policy to benefit wide group of children, not just the well-off and very poor
[Read more](#)

Tables published in the DfE’s technical consultation paper showed that children from households above median income took more than half of existing grammar school places, despite accounting for only a third of the school-age population in England.

“I don’t think it is particularly helpful to use statistics as the government has, because it seems to imply that low income families stand as good a chance of gaining access to a grammar school as they do a comprehensive,” Allen said.

Analysts from the Education Policy Institute said: “Grammar schools are dominated by the most affluent, squeezing out the poorest. An expansion in selection is unlikely to benefit [ordinary working families] in the way that the government suggests.”

In a keynote speech on Thursday the education secretary, Justine Greening, used the analysis to justify removing the bar on opening new grammar schools in England, and warned that children from working class families had gone “off the radar” of politicians.

“We believe it’s not just disadvantaged children and young people that our education system can deliver much more for. This government will not lose sight of other children, from ordinary working families.

“This government believes we have not done enough to support them – partly because they do not qualify under our existing measures of disadvantage,” she said.

Responding to questions after her speech, Greening gave an “absolute assurance” that disadvantaged children would not be overlooked by the government.

But Allen warned the DfE figures showed that the starkest divide in school outcomes was in the exam results of those on free school meals, which were well behind those from “ordinary working class” households.

“Those who have not claimed benefits during secondary school typically do not have children who are struggling educationally, even if they themselves are on very low incomes,” Allen said.

The DfE analysis relied on parents’ tax and benefits data, linked to the national pupil database, and did not take into account a family’s self-employed earnings or capital assets, or the social or economic backgrounds of parents.

“If we want to create useful indicators that tell us how much the state should intervene to support a child at risk of falling behind at school then we’ll have to do better than simply matching tax records to the national pupil database,” Allen said.

For Labour, the shadow education secretary, Angela Rayner, said the government’s new definition of “ordinary working families” was a way of hiding the full picture. “In effect, they have not been able to find the evidence to back up their ideological policy, so they’ve created some themselves, they’ve cooked the books,” Rayner said.

“They are trying to fiddle the numbers – even in their own research they show 53% of the wealthier than average families are going into grammar schools, as opposed to 20% in the comprehensive system. So even [in] their own cooking of the books they cannot hide from the fact that grammar schools do not aid social mobility.”

Family:

Task 3: Explain what you think the ideal family structure is. If you do not think there is one explain why

Task 4: Read the article below. Explain what it tells you about equality in the family

Violence against women and girls is “usually” perpetrated by a partner or spouse and almost always by a family member, new analysis of cases of assault treated in Australian hospitals has found.

New findings from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) have shown that nearly 6,500 women and girls were admitted to hospital as a result of assault in 2013-14. In cases where the perpetrator was specified, 59% were caused by the victim’s spouse or domestic partner.

Parents and other family members accounted for nearly half of the remaining cases. In about one-quarter of hospitalised assaults, the perpetrator was not recorded.

Women and girls were hospitalised for assault at a rate that was less than half the equivalent for men, with 56 cases per 100,000 females, compared to 121 cases per 100,000 males.

But the patterns of injury seen for females were different to that seen for males, said Prof James Harrison, an injury epidemiologist for the AIHW.

He singled out the “distressingly high proportion of cases” in which the assailant was the spouse or family member of the female victim.

“For males, it’s much more often an acquaintance or somebody they don’t know.”

The rate was highest for women aged between 20 and 34, at a little over 100 cases per 100,000 women.

In the 15 years and older age group, 8% of victims – **217 cases** – were pregnant at the time of the assault.

Though many records did not specify where the assault took place, of those that did, 69% took place in the home. Assault was hard to avoid for women, said Harrison.

“If it’s your family member or spouse and it’s happening at home, where’s your refuge? That’s what’s particularly distressing about this, I think.”

A found that more than 40% of the 479 homicide events recorded between 2010 and 2012 occurred in a domestic context, with almost 60% of those deaths cases of intimate partner homicide.

Task 5: Explain what you think it means to be a child and describe how children behave.

Task 6: Read the article and explain if you agree that being a child today is toxic

A 'toxic childhood' of cyberbullying, social media and hypersexualised culture is leading one in five teenagers to self-harm, according to experts.

According to a new study by the World Health Organisation, the number of teenagers in England who self-harm has trebled in the last 12 years.

The Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) report, which is due to be published this autumn, revealed that 20 percent of the 15-year-olds questioned said they had harmed themselves within the last 12 months.

When a similar study of self-harm in England was published by the British Medical Journal in 2002 it revealed that 6.9 percent of the 6,000 15 and 16-year-olds questioned said they had self-harmed in the previous year.

Some experts have put the worrying trend down to pressures put on children who are increasingly living a higher proportion of their lives online, frequently using social networks which can put added pressure on youngsters.

Children, especially girls, are also increasingly coming under pressure from cyberbullying, and an apparent heightening of sexualisation in childhood.

Lucie Russell, director of campaigns at the Young Minds charity, told The Times: 'Add that to bullying on and offline, the stresses of school and exams, uncertainty about their future and increasing sexual pressures, and it is a very bleak picture,' she told newspaper.

As part of the HBSC report, 6,000 children aged 11, 13, and 15 living in England were asked if they had self-harmed. The question was included in the study, carried out every four years, after a number of teachers reported seeing an increase in instances of self-harm, which encompasses actions such as cutting, burning and even biting.

Professor Fiona Brooks, the head of adolescent and child health at the University of Hertfordshire, has been helping to put together the WHO report.

She said that boys and girls aged 11 had displayed a good level of emotional wellbeing, but at 15 a gap had emerged between the sexes, with 45 per cent of girls reporting that they felt unhappy once a week. The same was true of 23 per cent of boys.

She told The Guardian: 'We don't yet know enough about why this [poor mental health] is but parents are busy and stressed, and children's lives are becoming more pressurised. They know they need better grades to get to university, but there's no guarantee of a job at the end of it all.'

She added that teenagers are 'turning to strategies such as self-harm to manage stress in the short term'.

News of the WHO study comes after government health advisers warned last week that overuse of the internet is causing mental health problems for children.

Public Health England, which issues guidance on good health to the NHS, says there is a clear relationship between the amount of time spent on social media sites such as Facebook and 'lower levels of well-being'.

The link becomes particularly striking when children spend more than four hours a day in front of a screen – but it kicks in even at very low levels of use, according to the report.

The report also notes that the number of calls to ChildLine about online bullying, suicidal thoughts and self-harm have soared in recent years.

In a separate report, the Children's Commissioner for England said social media sites were 'targeting' vulnerable young people and exposing them to the dangers of sexual exploitation.

Dr Maggie Atkinson also highlighted a surge in the number of under-18s being admitted to adult psychiatric wards

Task 7: Watch the documentary: Britain's broken families and take notes on what you watch

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJ8ALyvulSM>

Research methods

Task 8: Create a glossary with definitions for the following key terms:

1. Research
2. Research method
3. Aim
4. Hypothesis
5. Pilot study
6. Procedure
7. Findings
8. Experiment
9. Questionnaire
10. Interview
11. Observation
12. Document

13. Official statistics

Task 9: Watch and make notes on the following video

Sociology Research Methods: Crash Course Sociology #4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwhK-iEyXYA>

Tasks 10: Write one question you would like to investigate for each of the following areas of Sociology. Then explain why you find that topic interesting and what you might expect to find out.

1. Families and Households
2. Education
3. Beliefs/ Religion
4. Crime
5. The media
6. The government

Important notes

Please also have a look at these external links to support your understanding of Sociology:

- Textbooks:
 - AQA A Level Sociology Book One Including AS Level: Book one
 - AQA A Level Sociology Book Two
- <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level/sociology-7191-7192/assessment-resources>
- <https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/topics/group/family-households-key-terms>
- <https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology/videos>
- <https://www.britsoc.co.uk/>