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Revision

Revision practice

Joan Garrod

This issue asks you to find ways that you could use the information from some articles in the print copy to help answer essay or exam questions. You can do this alone, or with a classmate or, if your teacher is willing, as a class exercise, with groups competing with each other to think of useful ways of using the material. If it's just a few of you, you can just bounce ideas off each other, but if it is a whole class, each team can present their ideas to the rest of the class, who could decide to allocate points for the perceived usefulness of the suggestions. Some guidance is given, but the aim is to make you develop your sociological imagination, so that whenever you come across an article, a news story or an official report, you are automatically thinking of whether and how it could be relevant to your course.

The next issue will look at the remaining articles from the print version. The PowerPoint presentation looks at a recent report from the Centre for Social Justice around the issue of pupil absences from school.

Whatever happened to globalisation?

You may not be studying this as one of your topics, but globalisation is important to all aspects of society, so you will be able to find something of use in this article. It gives you information about a sociological debate, an important reminder that sociologists, as people from other academic disciplines, do not always agree with each other, and can interpret the same evidence in different ways. It also shows how the same concept can be defined in different ways — this is often useful when you are evaluating something, as sometimes whether one viewpoint or piece of evidence is more helpful, or more accurate, than another can depend on how a concept is defined. The section headed 'Why is globalisation so important to sociologists?' will give you further ideas. A recent article in *SOCIOLOGY REVIEW* looked at globalisation and education — think of how globalisation can impact on aspects of UK life such as family structure, cultural diversity, religion, social inequality, crime, the media and so on.

British Social Attitudes Survey

A lot of the work has been done for you here, but you should be able to think of other ways that the findings can be used. Try to think of the kind of question for which the material could be used — for example, the findings about non-traditional family forms and sexual relationships could be used in a question about contemporary families, or about changes to the family over time.

Sex, patriarchy and religion

There are many aspects of religion that could form the basis of questions for which this article could be helpful. The material could be used to help you demonstrate your knowledge of different religions

and religious customs. The central theme is, of course, religion and gender, and you might get a question, such as that posed in the article, about whether all religions are patriarchal in nature. The issue of religion as a means of control is also covered, particularly with regard to women. There is much here to help you answer questions about how religions change over time — and why some of them do not, with established traditions, beliefs and practices becoming more entrenched within certain groups. Also covered are religious differences between the Global North and South, and differences within, as well as between, religious faiths.

Oxbridge, social mobility and student vloggers

This article has relevance for several topic areas. There is the issue of 'elite' universities and their selective intake, reminding us that education is far from being a level playing field. Cultural differences between social groups is another area, with people from some social backgrounds feeling that they do not 'fit in' in certain locations and groups. There is plenty of material here for questions about education and its role in social mobility. Some material could be used in questions about the use of new social media and how it can be deployed in innovative ways. Note too the interesting concepts of 'hot' and 'cold' knowledge — always useful to demonstrate your grasp of a range of concepts, especially if they are relatively new.

Watching television as a nation

While the focus here is obviously the media, there are useful links to other topic areas. There are indications of changes in how, when and where families interact, for example. The list of the 'most watched' programmes links to aspects of culture and identity, and shows where values and interests are still shared. Ask yourself what it might be about these particular broadcasts that made them so popular. What are they telling us about our society?

Exercise

Over the course of a few weeks, go through as many past papers as you can. Look at the questions on those topics that you are studying, and see whether any of the material in the articles above could be used to help answer them. This will not always be the case, but it might surprise you how much material could be used. It might be just a phrase, or a statistic, a more details piece of knowledge, an example of something, or some evidence to support or refute a particular argument. The more you do this, the more you will be able to develop your skills. Of course, don't restrict yourself to just one issue of the magazine — get into the habit of looking back through past issues and doing the same thing.