

# Sociology

## Education

## **Specification**

- The role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure
- Differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society
- Relationships and processes within schools, with particular reference to teacher/pupil relationships, pupil identities and subcultures, the hidden curriculum, and the organisation of teaching and learning
- The significance of educational policies, including policies of selection, marketisation and privatisation, and policies to achieve greater equality of opportunity or outcome, for an understanding of the structure, role, impact and experience of and access to education; the impact of globalisation on educational policy

**Education will be on Paper 1**

# TOPIC 1: THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN SOCIETY

## The Functionalist Perspective on Education

- Education performs functions that help maintain society as a whole



## Emile Durkheim: Solidarity and Skills

- Durkheim identified 2 main functions of education: creating social solidarity and teaching specialist skills.

### 1) Social Solidarity:

Durkheim argues society needs a sense of solidarity (people need to feel they are part of a community). He believes that without social solidarity, social life and cooperation would be impossible because each individual would pursue their own selfish desires.

The education system helps to create social solidarity by transmitting society's culture- its shared beliefs and values- from one generation to the next. For example, teaching of a country's history, instils in children a sense of shared heritage and a commitment to the wider social group.

School also acts a 'society in miniature', preparing us for life in wider society to help promote social solidarity. For example, both in school and at work we have to cooperate with people who are neither family nor friends. Similarly, both in school and at work we have to interact with others according to a set of impersonal rules that apply to everyone.

### 2) Specialist Skills:

Modern industrial economies have a complex division of labour, where production of items often involve the cooperation of many different specialists. This cooperation promotes social solidarity, but for it to be successful education must play a role in teaching the specialist skills required for an efficient labour force. For example, doctors need to be trained with specialist skills in medicine and plumbers need to be trained with specialist skills in plumbing.

### **Talcott Parsons: Meritocracy**

Parsons sees the school as the 'focal socialising agency' in modern society, acting as a bridge between the family and wider society. This bridge is needed, because family and society operate on different principles, so children need to learn a new way of living if they are to cope with the wider world.

Within the family, the child is judged by particularistic standards (rules that only apply to that particular child). Similarly, in the family the child's status is ascribed (fixed by birth- e.g. an elder son and a younger daughter may be given different rights or duties because of differences of age and sex).

However, in school and wider society, we all get judged by the same set of universalistic and impersonal standards. For example, the same laws apply to everyone in society and all children are judged at school by taking the same exams and the pass marks are the same for everyone. Likewise, in school and wider society a person's status is largely achieved, not ascribed. For example, we pass or fail an exam through our own efforts or we get a promotion at work by earning it through hard work.



Parsons sees school as preparing us to move from the family to wider society, because the school and society are both based on meritocratic principles. In a meritocracy everyone is given an equal opportunity and individuals achieve rewards through their own effort and ability.

### **Davis and Moore: Role Allocation**

Schools perform the function of selecting and allocating pupils to their future work roles by assessing pupils' abilities and 'sifting and sorting' pupils so that the most able students get the functionally more important jobs.

### **Evaluation of the Functionalist Perspective of Education**

- ✗ Education does not teach specialist skills adequately as Durkheim claims. For example, the Wolf review of vocational education (2011) claims that high-quality apprenticeships are rare and up to a third of 16-19 year olds are on courses that do not lead to higher education or good jobs.
- ✗ Equal opportunity in education does not exist. For example, achievement is greatly influenced by class background rather than ability. Marxists would argue that those from middle and upper class backgrounds will have the most educational opportunities as the family has the income to send their children to the best schools, pay for extra-curricular activities and also pay for tutors, so they achieve the best education compared to other children from working class families who can't afford these advantages. Therefore, middle and upper class children will come out of the education system with the best grades and thus acquire the most important and high rewarding jobs in society.
- ✗ Marxists disagree with Functionalists in their view that education serves to instil a shared value of society as a whole. Marxists instead believe that education socialises us into simply accepting the values of a capitalist system in order to maintain the hierarchy of the classes.

- ✖ Wrong (1961) argues that functionalists have an 'over-simplified 'view' of people as mere puppets of society. Functionalists wrongly imply that pupils passively accept all they are taught and never reject the school's values.
- ✖ New Right Sociologists argue that the state education system fails to prepare young people adequately for work and that they are not taught the specialist skills needed for certain professions.

## **Neoliberalism and the New Right Perspective on Education**

### **Neoliberalism**

- Argue that the state (government) should not provide services such as education, health and welfare and their ideas have had strong influence on all governments since 1979.
- Neoliberalism is based on the idea that the state must not dictate to individuals how to dispose of their own property, and should not try to regulate a free market economy (prices for goods/services are set by businesses depending on supply and demand, and the government does not interfere). So governments should encourage competition, privatise state run businesses and deregulate markets (reduction of government control).
- They argue that the value of education lies in how well it enables the country to compete in the global marketplace. They claim that this can only be achieved if schools become more like businesses, empowering parents and pupils as consumers and using competition to drive up standards.

### **The New Right**

- The New Right is a conservative political view that incorporates neoliberal economic (the factors that determine the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services) ideas. They favour the marketization of education.
- There are similarities between the *New Right* and *Functionalists* views:
  - Both believe that some are naturally more talented than others.
  - Both favour an education system run on meritocratic principles of open competition, and one that serves the needs of the economy by preparing young people for work.
  - Both believe that education should socialise pupils into shared values, such as competition, and instil a sense of national identity.
- However, a key difference between New Right and Functionalist ideas is that the New Right do not believe that the current education system is achieving these goals. The reason for its failure, they believe, is because it is run by the state.

- They argue that state education systems take on a one size fits all approach, imposing uniformity (being the same) and disregarding local needs. The local consumers who use the schools-pupils, parents and employers- have no say. State education systems are therefore unresponsive and inefficient to consumer needs. Schools that waste money or get poor results are not answerable to consumers. This means lower standard of achievement for pupils, a less qualified workforce and a less prosperous economy.
- Competition between schools and empowering consumers will bring greater diversity, choice and efficiency to schools and increase schools ability to meet the needs of pupils, parents and employers.

### **Chubb and Moe: Consumer Choice**

- Chubb and Moe (1990) demonstrated the New Right perspective on education. They argue that state-run education in the US has failed because:
  - It has not created equal opportunity and has failed the needs of disadvantaged groups.
  - It is inefficient because it fails to produce pupils with the skills needed by the economy.
  - Private schools deliver higher quality education because unlike state schools, they are answerable to paying consumers- the parents.
- These findings were based on a comparison of the achievements of 60,000 pupils from low income families in 1,015 state and private high schools, together with the findings of a parent survey and case studies of 'failing' schools apparently being 'turned around'. Their evidence shows that pupils from low-income families consistently do about 5% better in private schools than in state schools.
- Chubb and Moe propose an education system in which each family would be given a voucher to spend on buying education from a school of their choice. This would force schools to become more responsive to parents' wishes, since the vouchers would be the schools main source of income. Like private businesses, schools would have to compete to attract customers (parents) by improving their schools.
- However, whilst they believe the control over education should be given over to the consumer- they believe the state has some roles in the education system:
  - The state should impose a framework on schools within which they have to compete, e.g. by publishing Ofsted inspection reports and league tables of school's exam results. The state therefore is giving the parents the information to make an informed choice over which school to pick for their children.



- The state should ensure that schools transmit a shared culture. By imposing a single National Curriculum (what pupils have to be taught in every school), it seeks to guarantee that schools socialise pupils into a single cultural heritage. New Rights believe the curriculum should serve to: emphasise Britain's positive role in World History; teach British literature; there should be a Christian act of Worship everyday (as the main religion in the UK is Christianity) and to integrate pupils into a single set of traditions and cultural values. The New Right therefore oppose multi-cultural education that reflects cultures of different minority groups in Britain.

### Evaluation of the New Right Perspective on Education

- ✗ Competition between schools benefits the middle class more as they have the knowledge and finances to make informed choices and access the more desirable schools.
- ✗ Marxists would argue that education does not socialise us into a shared culture, but a culture that is dominated by the ruling class.
- ✗ Critics argue that the real cause of low educational standards is not state control, but social inequality and inadequate funding of state schools.



### The Marxist Perspective on Education

- Marxists see education as based on class division and capitalist exploitation. Karl Marx (1818-1883) described capitalism as a two class system:
  - 1) **The capitalist/ruling class (bourgeoisie)** are the minority class. They are the employers who own the means of production (land, factories, machines, offices). They make their profits by exploiting the labour of the working class.
  - 2) **The working class (proletariat)** are forced to sell their labour power to the capitalists since they own no means of production of their own and so have no other source of income. As a result, work under capitalism is poorly paid, alienating, unsatisfying, and something over which workers have no control.
- This creates the potential for class conflict. For example, if workers realise they are being exploited, they may demand higher wages, better working conditions or even the abolition of capitalism itself. Marx believed and hoped for a revolution where the working class would overthrow the capitalist system and create a classless, equal society.

- However, despite this potential for revolution, capitalism is able to continue because the capitalist class control the state, including the education system and so Marxists see education as functioning to prevent revolution and maintain capitalism.

### Althusser: the ideological state apparatus

Althusser (1971) believed that no class could stay in power just by force, but ideology is a much more effective form of social control. He suggested the state consisted of two elements/'apparatuses' which serve to keep the ruling class in power:

- 1) **The repressive state apparatuses (RSAs)**, which maintain ruling class power by force, eg police/army.
- 2) **The ideological state apparatuses (ISAs)**, which maintain ruling class power by controlling people's ideas, values and beliefs, including through religion, media and education.

Althusser believed the education system was an important ISA and that it performs two functions:

- 1) Education reproduces class inequality by failing each successive generation of working class pupils.
- 2) Education legitimates (justifies) class inequality by producing ideologies (sets of ideas and beliefs) that disguise its true cause. The function of ideology is to persuade workers to accept that inequality is inevitable and that they deserve their subordinate position in society. If they are taught to accept these ideas then they are less likely to challenge or threaten capitalism.

### Bowles and Gintis: Schooling in Capitalist America

- Bowles and Gintis (1976) conducted a study of 237 New York students and found that schools reward the kind of personality traits that make for a submissive, compliant worker. For example, they found that students who showed independence and creativity tended to get low grades, while those who showed characteristics linked to obedience and discipline (eg punctuality) tended to get higher grades.
- Bowles and Gintis concluded that the capitalist system creates an education system which stunts student's development.





### **Bowles and Gintis: The Correspondence Principle and the Hidden Curriculum**

- They believe that there is a close relationship between social relationships in the workplace and in education. This relationship is known as correspondence theory.
- Capitalism requires a hardworking and obedient workforce that is too divided to challenge the authority of the ruling class- this is achieved through the hidden curriculum.
- The hidden curriculum consists of those things that pupils learn through the experience of attending school, rather than what they are specifically taught through the formal curriculum.

<b><u>School</u></b>	<b><u>Work</u></b>
Hierarchy of authority among teachers (e.g. head, deputy, classroom teacher) and between teachers and students	
Alienation through students' lack of control over education (e.g. what to study/timetable)	
Extrinsic satisfaction (rewards external to self) e.g. grades, rather than interest in the subject itself	
Fragmentation and compartmentalisation of knowledge into unconnected subjects	
Competition and divisions among students eg to come top of class, to be in higher set	
Levels of education: lower school- lots of supervision, fewer choices whereas upper school- more independence	

### **The Myth of Meritocracy: The legitimisation of class inequality**

- The education system helps hide and legitimise class inequalities through the 'myth of meritocracy'. Meritocracy means that everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve, that rewards are based on efforts and ability.
- Marxists believe that by promoting this ideology, it will make it appear the ruling class have deserved the success they have got and the working class are poor, because they did not work hard at school.

### **Willis**

- Willis (1977) believed schooling serves capitalism, but argues that some working class pupils who resist such attempts to indoctrinate them into this myth of meritocracy.



### **Willis' Study**

The 'lads' formed a friendship group with a particular attitude towards school. Willis called this a counter-school culture. This involved the following features:

- The lads felt superior to teachers and conformist pupils who they called 'ear 'oles (because unlike the lads they listen to what the teachers tell them).
  - They saw no value in gaining qualifications and that school was a 'con' that working class pupils can achieve middle class jobs.
  - They found school boring and tried to identify with the adult world by smoking and drinking.
  - They were sexist and racist.
  - Manual labour was seen as more worthy than non-manual jobs
  - Ironically, the lads counter culture, due to their rejection of the state education system, ended up slotting into the unskilled manual jobs that the capitalist system needs someone to perform.
- 
- Willis conducted a study, using qualitative research methods, including observation, to study a group of 12 working class boys during their last year at school and their first few months of work.

### **Evaluation of Marxist Approaches**

- ✗ Marxist approaches contrast with each other about how legitimatisation of inequality take place: Bowles and Gintis take on a deterministic point of view (pupils have no free will and accept their fate) whilst Willis argues pupils can resist school, but yet it still leads them into working class jobs.
- ✗ Willis study only used 12 boys and so is not representative of all similar school boys and critics argue that his study romanticises their anti-social and sexist behaviour.
- ✗ Morrow & Torres (1998) criticise Marxists for taking a 'class first' approach that sees class as the key inequality and ignores other kinds e.g. gender, race and so argue that Marxists must explain how education legitimises all forms of inequality.
- However, Willis' work led onto other research about how education leads to other inequalities. For example, Conneley (1998) explored how education reproduces both ethnic and gender inequality.

### The Role/Functions of Education: Summary

Functionalism	New Right/Neo-Liberalism	Marxism
<p>Durkheim: <i>Teaches social solidarity &amp; specialist skills</i></p> <p>Parsons: <i>Acts as bridge</i></p> <p>Davis &amp; Moore: <i>Role allocation</i></p>	<p>Want privatisation &amp; competition</p> <p>Chubb &amp; Moe: <i>Voucher system</i></p>	<p>Class division</p> <p>Althusser: <i>ISA</i></p> <p>Bowles &amp; Gintis: <i>produces compliant/submissive workers. Hidden curriculum.</i></p> <p>Willis: <i>schools serve capitalism. 'The Lads'.</i></p>

## TOPIC 2: CLASS DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**Middle class or non-manual occupations** include professionals such as doctors and teachers as well as managers and other 'white collar' office workers and owners of businesses.

**Working Class or manual occupations** include skilled workers such as plumbers, semi-skilled workers such as lorry drivers and unskilled workers such as cleaners.



- Social class background has a powerful influence on a child's success in the education system. Children from middle class families on average perform better than working class children, and the class gap in achievement grows as the children get older. Children from middle class backgrounds do better at GCSE, stay longer in full time education and take the great majority of university places.
- Middle class parents can afford to send their children to private schools, which many believe provide a higher standard of education. For example, average class sizes are less than half of those in state schools. Although private schools educate only 7% of Britain's children, they account for nearly half of all students entering the elite universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Sutton Trust (2011) found that over a 3 year period, Eton sent 211 pupils to Oxbridge, while over 1300 state schools sent no pupils to these universities.
- However, the existence of private education does not account for class differences within state education and sociological research has focused on why middle-class pupils do better than working class pupils within the state sector.

### Internal and External Factors

**Internal Factors-** factors within schools and the education system, such as interactions between pupils and teachers, and inequalities in schools.

**External Factors-** factors outside of the education system, such as the influence of home and family background.

**EXTERNAL FACTORS**

**INTERNAL FACTORS**

- Cultural Deprivation (*language/parent's education/working class subculture*)
- Material Deprivation (*housing, diet, financial support; fear of debt*)
- Cultural Capital

- Labelling
- The self-fulfilling Prophecy
- Streaming
- Pupil subculture & identities

## **External Factors Explaining Class Differences**

### **1) EXTERNAL FACTOR: CULTURAL DEPRIVATION**

- Cultural deprivation theorists suggest that many working class families fail to socialise their children adequately and so these children grow up 'culturally deprived', i.e. they lack the cultural equipment needed to do well at school and so they underachieve.

#### **What is culture? Write your own definition?**

- *There are 3 main aspects of cultural deprivation: language, parent's education and working class subculture.*

- 1) *Cultural Deprivation: Language*** is an essential part of education and the way parents communicate with their children affects their cognitive development and their ability to benefit from the process of schooling.

Hubbs-Tait et al (2002) found that educated parents (usually middle class) would use language which challenged their children, for example using open questions, such as 'what do you think?', which would improve their children's cognitive performance. Conversely, less educated parents (usually working class) would tend to use single words, disjointed phrases and close ended questions, such as 'name this animal', which resulted in lower educational performance. Fernstein also found that educated parents are more likely to use praise, which encourages their children to develop a sense of their own competence.

Berstein (1975) identified a difference between working class and middle class language.

Restricted Code (Working Class)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short, unfinished, grammatically simple sentences</li> <li>- Use of single words and gestures</li> <li>- Context Bound</li> </ul>

Elaborated Code (Middle class)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longer, grammatically complex sentences</li> <li>- Communicates varied and abstract ideas</li> <li>- Context free</li> </ul>

Teachers, textbooks and exams use elaborated code and so middle class children are already at an educational advantage before they even attend school.

**2) Cultural Deprivation: Parents' Education** and their attitude towards education can affect a child's achievement. Douglas (1964) found that working class families place less value on education and as a result were less ambitious for their children, gave them less encouragement, took less interest in their education, visited schools less often and less likely to discuss children's progress with teachers. Feinstein (2008) similarly found that parent's education was the most important factor in affecting children's achievement, and since middle class parents usually have a better education, they are able to give their children an advantage by how they socialise them. This occurs in a number of ways:

a. Parenting Style

Educated parents' parenting style emphasises consistent discipline and high expectations of their children, and this supports achievement by encouraging active learning and exploration.

However, less educated parents' parenting style is marked by harsh or inconsistent discipline that emphasises 'doing as you're told' and 'behaving yourself'. This prevents the child from learning independence and self-control, leading to poorer motivation at school and problems interacting with teachers.

b. Parents' Educational Behaviours

Educated parents are more aware of what is needed to assist their children's educational progress. As a result they engage in behaviour such as: reading, teaching their children letters, numbers, songs, poems, nursery rhymes, painting and drawing, helping with homework and being actively involved in schooling.

Educated parents are also better able to get expert advice on childrearing, more successful in establishing good relationships with teachers and better at guiding their children's interactions with school. These parents also recognise the value in educational trips to places such as the museum or library.



### c. Use of Income

Better educated parents have higher incomes and so may spend their income in ways that promote their child's educational success. For example Bernstein and Young (1967) found middle class mothers are more likely to buy educational toys, books and activities that encourage reasoning skills and stimulate intellectual development. Working class homes are more likely to lack these resources, thus working class children start school often without the intellectual skills needed to make progress.

Educated parents have a better understanding about nutrition and have the income to buy nutritious food to support the child's development.

Feinstein notes that parental education has an influence on a child's educational achievement regardless of social class and children with educated parents in working class families still can do just as well, but usually it is the case that middle class parents are the more educated and higher earners.

- 3) *Cultural Deprivation: Working Class Sub-Culture:*** Large sections of the working class have different goals, beliefs, attitudes and values from the rest of society and this is why their children fail at school.

Sugarman (1970) argues the working class sub-culture has 4 key features that act as a barrier to educational achievement:

- a) Fatalism:** a belief in fate- 'whatever will be, will be.' And there is nothing you can do to change your status. This contrasts with middle class values that hard work and effort can change your position.
- b) Collectivism:** valuing being part of a group more than succeeding as an individual. This contrasts with the middle class view that an individual should not be held back by group loyalties.
- c) Immediate Gratification:** seeking pleasure now rather than making sacrifices in order to get rewards in the future. By contrast, middle class values delayed gratification.
- d) Present Time orientation:** seeing the present as more important than the future and so not having any long term goals/plans. Middle classes place high value on future planning.

Working class children internalise the beliefs and values of their subculture through the socialisation process and this results in them under achieving at school.

### Compensatory Education

Compensatory educational programmes aim to tackle the problem of cultural deprivation by providing extra resources to schools and communities in deprived areas. They intervene early in the socialisation process to compensate children for the deprivation they experience at home. Examples of compensatory educational schemes are:

- 1) Operation Head Start (60s)- this was a pre-school scheme set up in poor areas of the USA to provide nursery classes, home visits by health visitors and improving parenting skills. The TV programme Sesame Street was part of the programme and hoped to pass on a positive educational message to young children.
- 2) Educational Action Zone (90s)- set up in deprived inner city areas of the UK and involved local businesses providing cash for resources (e.g. computers) and work experience placement for children in the poorest areas of the country.
- 3) Sure Start (2000s)- By 2010 all children living in the most disadvantaged areas of the UK will have access to a Sure Start centre. They aim to provide education, support and health care to both parents and children.

### Criticisms of Cultural Deprivation Theory

- ✗ Keddie- believes this is a victim-blaming explanation. She claims that working class culture is not deprived, it is just different. It is the education system which is dominated by middle class values which is the problem. Keddie argues rather than seeing the working class culture as deficient, schools should recognise and build on its strengths and should challenge teachers' anti-working class prejudices.
- ✗ Troyna & Williams- argue that it is not the language of the working class that is a problem, but schools' attitudes towards it. Schools have a hierarchy of what is acceptable and the language codes of working class children, especially black working class children is at the bottom.
- ✗ Blackstone- disagrees with the proposal that working class parents are not as interested in their children's education. They may attend fewer parent's evenings, but this is due to longer and more irregular working hours or the fact that they are put off by a middle class attitude of teachers.



"As you know, we've put Billy in the slow class...."

## 2) External Factor: MATERIAL DEPRIVATION

- Other Sociologists disagree that cultural deprivation is the main cause of underachievement, but believe the cause is a lack of material necessities, such as adequate housing and income.
- Poverty is closely linked to educational underachievement. For example:
  - Department of Education (2012) found that barely a 1/3 of pupils on free school meals achieve 5 or more GCSEs at A\*-C including English and Maths, as against nearly 2/3 of other pupils.
  - Flaherty (2004)- money problems in the family are significant factor in younger children's non-attendance at school.
  - Children from poorer families are more likely to truant and be excluded.
  - Nearly 90% of 'failing' schools are located in deprived areas.

### 1) Material Deprivation: Housing:

Poor housing can affect pupils' achievement both directly and indirectly. For example, overcrowding can have a direct effect by making it harder for a child to study. Overcrowding means less room for educational activities, nowhere to do homework, disturbed sleep from sharing bedrooms.



For young children, development can be impaired through lack of space to play and explore.

Families living in b&bs may find themselves having to move frequently, resulting in constant changes of school and disrupted education.

Poor housing can also have indirect effects such as, children in overcrowded homes often run greater risk of accidents and the cold or damp in some housing may cause ill health and thus absence from school. Also, families in temporary accommodation suffer more psychological distress.

### 2) Material Deprivation: Diet & Health

Howard (2001) notes that young people from poorer homes have lower intakes of vitamins and minerals. Poor nutrition affects health and leads to absences from school.



Children from poorer homes are also more likely to have emotional or behavioural problems, which can have a negative effect on education. Wilkinson (1996) found that among ten year olds, the lower the social class, the higher the rate of hyperactivity, anxiety and conduct disorders.

### 3) Material Deprivation: Financial Support/Costs of Education

Tanner (2003) found that the cost of computers, books, calculators, uniform, sports, music equipment, trips, food and art equipment put a heavy burden on poorer families and often children have to go without this equipment and any extra-curricular activities or trips, putting them at an educational disadvantage.

Children who make do with hand me downs often get bullied and feel isolated. Flaherty (2004) found that 20% of those eligible for free school meals did not take up their entitlement for fear of being teased.

Smith & Noble (1995) add that poverty acts as barrier to education in other ways, such as the inability to afford private schooling or tuition.

Lack of money often means children from low income families need to work in jobs such as babysitting, paper rounds or cleaning and thus has a negative impact on their education.

### 4) Material Deprivation: Fear of Debt

Attitudes towards debt may deter working class students from going to university. Callander and Jackson (2005) found in their survey that working class students are more debt averse (saw debt negatively) than middle class students. They also saw more costs than benefits in going to university and so are 5 times less likely to apply for university.

Increases in tuition fees in 2012 to £9000 per year means increased debt and may deter working class students even more from applying to university. UCAS (2012) found the number of applicants for university dropped by 8.6%.

Furthermore, working class students who do go to university are less likely to receive financial support from their families and so were more likely to go to local universities so they could live at home, which means they miss the opportunity to go to the higher status universities and also they may have to work part time to fund their studies, making it more difficult to gain higher class degrees.

- ✖ While material factors clearly play a part in achievement, the fact that some children from poor backgrounds do succeed suggests that material deprivation is only part of the explanation. For example the cultural, religious or political values of the family may play a part in creating and sustaining the child's motivation, despite poverty.

- ✗ Similarly, Feinstein shows that parents can make a positive contribution to a child's achievement, regardless of their income level. However, Mortimore and Whitty (1997) argue that material inequalities have the greatest effect on achievement and so they argue that tackling child poverty would be the most effective way to boost achievement.

### **3) External Factors Explaining Class Differences: CULTURAL CAPITAL**

- Bordieu (1984) argues that both cultural and material factors contribute to educational achievement and are not separate but interrelated. He uses the concept of 'capital' to explain why the middle class are more successful.
- Capital usually refers to wealth, but Bordieu identifies two further types of capital: 'educational' (qualifications) and 'cultural' (knowledge, attitudes, values, language, tastes, abilities). He argues the middle class generally possess more of all three types of capital.
- The middle class culture gives an advantage to children's education, as through their socialisation, middle class children acquire the ability to grasp, analyse and express abstract ideas. They are more likely to develop intellectual interests and an understanding of what the education system requires for success. Bordieu argues that the education system is not neutral, but favours and transmits the dominant middle class culture.
- By contrast, working class children find that school devalues their culture as 'rough' and inferior. Their lack of cultural capital leads to exam failure. Many working class pupils 'get the message' that education is not for them and respond by truanting, early leaving or just not trying.
- Wealthier parents also have the advantage of being able to send their children to private schools and to employ tutors. Studies also show that middle class parents buy/move houses closer to the catchment area of good schools in order to get their children into the best schools. This is called 'selection by mortgage'.
- Sullivan (2001) used questionnaires to conduct a survey of 465 pupils in four schools. She assessed their cultural capital by asking participants about their reading and TV habits and whether they visited art galleries, museums and theatres. She also tested their vocabulary and knowledge of cultural figures. She found those who read complex fiction and watched serious TV documentaries developed a wider vocabulary and greater cultural knowledge, indicating greater cultural capital. The pupils with the greatest cultural capital were children of graduates and these pupils were more likely to be successful at GCSE. However, although successful pupils with greater cultural capital tended to be middle class, Sullivan found that cultural capital only accounted for part of the class difference in achievement. Where pupils of different classes had the same level of cultural capital, middle class pupils still did better. Sullivan concludes that the greater resources and aspirations of middle class families explain the remainder of the class gap in achievement.



## Internal Factors Explaining Class Differences

### **1) Internal factor: Labelling**

To label someone is to attach a meaning/definition to them. For example teachers may label a pupil as bright, thick, a troublemaker or hardworking. Studies show teachers often attach labels regardless of the pupil's ability/attitude. Instead they label based on the stereotyped assumptions about their classes background, labelling working class pupils more negatively than middle class pupils.

#### **Supporting Studies**

<b><u>Researcher</u></b>	<b><u>Where?</u></b>	<b><u>Sample?</u></b>	<b><u>What was being studied?</u></b>	<b><u>Findings?</u></b>
<b><u>Becker</u></b>				
<b><u>Hempel-Jorgensen</u></b>				
<b><u>Dunne &amp; Gazeley</u></b>				
<b><u>Rist</u></b>				

## **2) Internal Factor: Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**

SFP= A prediction that comes true just by the virtue of it having been made.

**Step 1:** The teacher labels a pupil and makes predictions about the pupil based on the label.

*Eg/ He is very intelligent so he will make outstanding academic progress.*

**Step 2:** The teacher treats the pupil accordingly, acting as if the prediction is already true

*Eg/ By giving him more attention and expecting a higher standard of work.*

**Step 3:** The pupil internalises the teacher's expectation, which becomes part of his self-concept or self-image, so that he now actually becomes the kind of pupil the teacher believed him to be in the first place.

*Eg/ He gains confidence, tries harder and is successful. The prediction is fulfilled.*

### **Supporting Study- Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968)**

### **3) Internal Factor: Streaming**

- Streaming involves separating children into different ability groups. Each ability group is then taught separately. Studies show the SFP is more likely to happen when children are streamed.
- Working class pupils more likely to be put in lower streams as teachers tend to see them as lacking ability and have low expectations of them. Once streamed it is usually hard to move up to a higher stream. Children in lower sets often 'get the message' that their teachers have written them off as 'no hoppers'. This creates a self-fulfilling in which pupils live up to teachers expectations. For example, Douglas found that children placed in a lower stream at age 8 had suffered a decline in their IQ score by age 11.
- By contrast, middle class pupils tend to benefit from streaming. They are likely to be placed in higher streams, reflecting teachers' views of them as ideal pupils. As a result they develop a more positive self-concept, gain confidence, work harder and improve their grades. Douglas found that children placed in a higher stream at age 8 had improved their IQ score by age 11.

**Gillborn & Youdell (2001): A\*-C economy & Educational Triage of Sorting**

#### **4) Internal Factors: Pupil Subcultures**

- A pupil subculture is a group of students who have similar values and behaviour patterns. They often emerge as a response to the way pupils are labelled, and in particular as a reaction to streaming.

<b>Differentiation</b>	
<b>Polarisation</b>	

##### **The pro-school subculture**

Pupils placed in high streams tend to remain committed to the values of school. They gain their status through academic success.

##### **The anti-school subculture**

Those placed in low streams suffer a loss of self-esteem: the school undermined their self-worth by placing them in a position of inferior status.

This label of failure pushes them to search for alternative ways of gaining status, usually amongst their peers, eg going against the school's values of obedience, hard work and punctuality.

Joining an anti-school subculture may make the pupil feel like they have gained status amongst peers, but it creates further problems for the pupil by making their work suffer progressively. In other words, joining an anti-school subculture is often a SFP of educational failure.

**Hargreaves (1967)** found a similar response to labelling and streaming in secondary school. Boys in lower streams were seen as triple fails: failed 11+ exams; they had been placed in low stream; and they had been labelled as worthless louts. One solution to this problem was for these pupils to seek each other out and form a group within which high status went to those who messed around and broke schools rules. In this way, they formed a delinquent subculture that helped guarantee their educational failure.

**Ball (1981)- Abolishing Streaming:** Ball studied a school which abolished streaming and taught mixed ability groups. This caused pupil polarisation into anti school subcultures to disappear, however teacher differentiation continued and still were more likely to label middle class students as more able and thus

still creating a SFP effect as middle class pupils got better exam results. This shows that even without streaming, SFP, as a result of labelling, can still occur.

**Pupil responses- Woods (1979):** Pro and anti-school subcultures are 2 responses. Others include:

- **Ingratiation:** being the teacher's pet
- **Ritualism:** Going through the motions and staying out of trouble
- **Retreatism:** Daydreaming and mucking about
- **Rebellion:** Outright rejection of everything the school stands for

Furlong (1984) points out that pupils are not permanently committed to any one response and can move between responses depending on lessons and teachers.

### **Criticisms of Labelling Theory/SFP/Subculture**

- ✗ **Determinism:** Assumes pupils who are labelled have no choice but to fulfil the prophecy and will inevitably fail. However, studies such as Mary Fuller's where black girls rejected their negative label and succeeded, show that this is not always true.
- ✗ **Marxists:** Criticise labelling theory for ignoring the wider structures of power within which labelling takes place. Labelling theory tends to blame teachers for labelling pupils, but fails to explain why they do so.

### **Pupils' Class Identities and education**

Pupil's class identities that are formed outside school can interact with the school and its values to produce educational success and failure. Archer et al (2010) focus on the interaction between working class pupil's identities and school, and how this produces underachievement.

### **Habitus**

To understand this relationship, they draw on Bourdieu's (1984) concept of habitus. Habitus refers to the dispositions or learned, taken for granted ways of thinking, being and acting that are shared by a particular class. It includes their tastes and preferences about lifestyles and consumption (eg fashion/leisure pursuits), their outlook on life and their expectations about what is normal or realistic for 'people like us.' A group's habitus is formed as a response to its position in the class structure.

Although one class's habitus is not intrinsically better than another's, the middle class has the power to define its habitus as superior and to impose it on the education system. As a result, the school puts a higher value on middle class tastes and preferences. They have 'symbolic capital.' Therefore, the school's middle class habitus puts middle class students at an advantage, whereas working class habitus (clothing, appearance, accent) are deemed tasteless and worthless.

Bourdieu calls this withholding of symbolic capital from the working class as 'symbolic violence'. By defining the working class and their tastes and lifestyles as inferior, symbolic violence reproduces the class structure and keeps the lower class in their place. There is a clash between the working class habitus and the school's middle class habitus. As a result, working class students may experience the world of education as alien and unnatural.

Archer found that working class pupils felt that to be educationally successful, they would have to change how they talked and presented themselves. They felt unable to access 'posh', middle class places at university and professional careers.

### **'Nike' Identities**

Many pupils were conscious that society and school looked down on them. This symbolic violence led them to seek alternative ways of creating self-worth, status and value. They did so by constructing meaningful class identities for themselves by investing heavily in 'styles', such as through branded clothing for example, Nike. Girls adopted hyper heterosexual, feminine style.

Styles were heavily policed by peer groups and not conforming was 'social suicide'. The right appearance brought symbolic capital within the peer group and brought safety from bullying. However, these styles went against the school's dress code and so pupils were labelled as 'rebels'.

'Nike' styles also play a part in working class pupils' rejection of higher education, which they saw as unrealistic (because it was for middle class people, unaffordable and a risky investment) and undesirable (because they would not be able to afford their lifestyle and street styles that gave them their identity on a student loan).

### **Class Identity and Self-exclusion**

- Despite the class inequalities in education, many more working class young people now go on to university. However, the clash between the habitus of working class identity and higher education is a barrier to success. This is partly due to a process of self-exclusion.
- Evans (2009) found A level students who were working class were reluctant to apply for elite universities (Oxbridge) as would not fit in. Such thinking formed part of their identity and so excluded them from the top universities.
- Research shows working class pupils often would rather stay local for university. Reay et al (2005) points out that self-exclusion from elite/distant universities narrows the options for working class pupils, limiting their success.



### **TOPIC 3: ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN ACHIEVEMENT**

- White and Asian students do better than Black students although there is differences amongst Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians (Indians do best).
- Among all groups other than Gypsy/Roma and Traveller children, girls do much better than boys and within all ethnic groups middle class do better than working class.
- (Hastings, 2006)- Working white class white pupils perform at a lower level than that of other ethnic groups and make less progress between 11-16 years. Only 23% of white boys on FSM gained 5 a\*-C.
- Sociologists are interested in external (outside school) and internal factors (inside school) as to why this is the case.

<b><u>EXTERNAL FACTORS</u></b>	<b><u>INTERNAL FACTORS</u></b>
Cultural Deprivation	Labelling & Teacher Racism
Material Deprivation	Pupil Identities
Racism in Wider Society	Pupil Responses & Subcultures
	Institutional Racism

#### **External Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

##### **1) Cultural Deprivation**

Underachievement in some ethnic groups is due to inadequate socialisation at home. The explanation has 3 main aspects:

- a) Intellectual and linguistic skills
- b) Attitudes and values
- c) Family Structure and parental support

##### **a) Cultural Deprivation: Intellectual and Linguistic Skills**

- Lack of these skills are a major cause of underachievement for many minority children.
- Many children from low income black families lack intellectual stimulation and enriching experiences. This leaves them poorly equipped for school because they have not been able to develop reasoning and problem solving skills.
- The language spoken by low-income black families is inadequate for educational success as it is ungrammatical, disjointed and incapable of expressing abstract ideas. Children who do not speak English at home may be held back educationally, although official statistics show this is not a major factor (In 2010, EAL pupils only 3.2 points behind in gaining 5 A\*-Cs). Also, Indian children do very well despite often not having English as their first language.

**b) Cultural deprivation: Attitudes and Values**

- Cultural deprivation theorists see lack of motivation as a major cause of the failure of many black children. Most children are socialised into the mainstream culture, which instils ambition, competitiveness and willingness to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve long term goals. This equips them for success in education. By contrast, some black children are socialised into a subculture that instils a fatalistic 'live for today' attitude that does not value education and leaves them unequipped for success.

**c) Cultural Deprivation: Family Structure and Parental Support**

- Cultural deprivation theorists argue that failure to socialise children adequately is the result of a dysfunctional family structure.
- Moynihan (1965)-argues because many black families are headed by a lone mother, their children are deprived of adequate care because she has to struggle financially in the absence of a male breadwinner. The father's absence also means that boys lack an adequate role model of male achievement. He sees cultural deprivation as a cycle where inadequately socialised children from unstable families go on to fail at school and become inadequate parents themselves.
- New Right argue that a high rate of lone parenthood and a lack of positive male role models lead to the underachievement of some minorities.
- Scruton (1986)-failure is due to not embracing British culture.
- Pyrcie (1979)-Family structure contributes to the underachievement of black Caribbean pupils in Britain. From a comparison of black and Asian pupils, he claims that Asians are higher achievers because their culture is more resistant to racism and gives them a greater sense of self-worth. BY contrast, he argues that Black Caribbean culture is less cohesive and less resistant to racism. As a result many black pupils have low self-esteem and underachieve. He argues the reason for this is the differing impact of colonialism on the two groups. He argues the experience of slavery was culturally devastating for blacks. Being transported and sold into slavery meant that they lost their language, religion and entire family system. By contrast Asian family structures, languages and religions were not destroyed by colonial rule.
- Alternatively, Sewell (2009) argues that it is not the absence of fathers as role models that leads to black boys underachieving. Instead, he sees the problem as a lack of father nurturing (tough love- firm, fair, respectful, discipline). This results in black boys finding it hard to overcome the emotional and behavioural difficulties of adolescence.



- Street gangs of other fatherless boys offer black boys 'perverse loyalty and love'. These present boys with a media inspired role model of anti-school black masculinity, who's ideal is an 'ultra tough ghetto superstar reinforced through rap lyrics and music videos'.
- Sewell, 'The biggest barrier facing black boys is actually black peer pressure. Black students discourage their peers. Black boys need to have greater expectations placed on them to raise their aspirations.'
- Critical race theorists such as Gillborn (2008), argue that it is not peer pressure but institutional racism within the educational system itself that systematically produces the failure of large numbers of black boys.

### **Asian Families**

- Indian/Chinese pupils benefit from supportive families that have an 'Asian work ethic' and place a high value on education.
- Adult authority in families is similar to the model that operates in schools. She found that respectful behaviour towards adults was expected from children. This had a knock on effect in school, since parents were more likely to be supportive of school behaviour policies.

### **White Working Class Families**

- White w/c pupils can often underachieve and have lower aspirations.
- A survey of 16000 pupils found that ethnic minority pupils are more likely to aspire to go to university than white British pupils (McCulloch, 2014). This low level of aspiration and achievement may be the result of a lack of parental support.
- For example, Lupton studied four mainly working-class schools- two predominantly white, one serving a largely Pakistani community and the fourth drawing pupils from an ethnically mixed community. She found that teachers reported poorer levels of behaviour and discipline in the white working-class schools despite the fact that they had fewer children on FSMs. Teachers blamed this on lower levels of parental support and the negative attitude that white working class parents had towards education. By contrast, ethnic minority parents were more likely to see education as a "way up in society".
- Similarly, Evans (2006) argues that street culture in white working class areas can be brutal and so young people have to learn how to withstand intimidation and intimate others. In this context, school can become a place where the power games that young people engage in on the street are played out again, bringing disruption and making it hard for pupils to succeed.

### **Compensatory Education**

- The main policy that has been adopted to tackle deprivation is compensatory education. For example, the aim of Operation Head Start in the USA was to compensate children for the cultural deficit they are said to suffer because of deprived backgrounds.

### **Criticisms of Cultural Deprivation Theory**

## **External Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

### **2) Material Deprivation**

- Material deprivation means a lack of those physical necessities that are seen as essential or normal for life in today's society. Generally, working class people are more likely to face poverty and material deprivation. Material deprivation explanations see educational failure as resulting from factors such as substandard housing and low income and ethnic minorities are more likely to face these problems.

For example Palmer (2012) found:

- Almost half of all ethnic minority children live in low-income households, as against a quarter of white children.
- Ethnic minorities are almost twice as likely to be unemployed compared with whites.
- Ethnic minority households are around three times as likely to be homeless.
- Almost half of Bangladeshi and Pakistani workers earned under £7 an hour, compared with only a quarter of white British workers earning under £7 an hour.
- Ethnic minority workers are more likely to be engaged in shift work, and Bangladeshi and Pakistani women are more likely than others to be engaged in low paid house-working.

There are several reasons why some ethnic minorities may be at greater risk of the material deprivation that results from unemployment, low pay and overcrowding:

- Many live in economically deprived areas with high unemployment and low wage rates.
- Cultural factors such as the tradition of purdah in some Muslim households, which prevents women from working outside the home.
- A lack of language skills, and foreign qualifications not being recognised by UK employers. These are more likely to affect recently arrived groups, many of whom are refugees. Most members of established minority groups speak fluent English.
- Asylum seekers may not be allowed to take work.
- Racial discrimination in the labour and housing markets.

Such inequalities are reflected in the proportion of children from different ethnic groups who are eligible for free school meals, which explains why Pakistani pupils tend to do worse than Indian and white pupils.

Indian pupils- whose achievements are generally above average- are likely to be from better off backgrounds. For example, they are the ethnic group most likely to attend private schools- at twice the rate of whites and five times the rate of blacks.

## **External Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

### **3) Racism in Wider Society**

- Some argue that poverty in ethnic groups is a result of racism.
- Racial discrimination leads to social exclusion, which worsens poverty in ethnic minorities.
- Wood (2010)- sent 3 job applications to 1000 job vacancies using names associated with different ethnic groups (1 from a white person, 2 from minority groups). Found only 1 in 16 ethnic minority applications were offered an interview compared to 1 in 9 white applications. This helps to explain why members of ethnic minorities are more likely to face unemployment and low pay, and this in turn has a negative effect on their children's educational prospects.

## **Internal Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

### **1) Labelling and Teacher racism**

- Teachers may label a pupil as a troublemaker or cooperative or bright or stupid etc. Interactionist sociologists study the face to face interactions in which such labelling occurs and look at the different labels teachers give to children from ethnic backgrounds.
- Teachers often see black and Asian pupils as being far from the 'ideal pupil'. Black pupils are often seen as disruptive and Asians as passive. Negative labels may lead teachers to treat ethnic minority pupils differently- this disadvantages them and may result in their failure.

## **Black Pupils and Discipline**

- Gillborn & Youdell (2000) found that teachers were quicker to discipline black pupils than others for the same behaviour. They argue that this is a result of teacher's 'racialised expectations'. They found that teachers expected black pupils to present more discipline problems and misinterpreted their behaviour as threatening or as a challenge to authority. When teachers acted on this misperception, the pupils responded negatively and further conflict resulted. In turn, black pupils felt teachers underestimated their ability and picked on them. Much of the conflict between white teachers and black pupils stems from racial stereotypes rather than pupils actual behaviour.
- Bourne (1994) found Black pupils receive more exclusions which leads to underachievement (1 in 5 excluded pupils receive GCSEs).

## **Black Pupils and Streaming**

- Gillborn & Youdell found that in the A\*-C economy, teachers focus on those students who they believe are most likely to achieve a grade C at GCSE. As a result, negative stereotypes of black pupils' ability that some teachers hold means they are more likely to be placed in lower sets/streams.
- Similarly, Foster (1990) found that teachers' stereotypes of black pupils as badly behaved could result in them being placed in lower sets than other pupils of similar ability. Streaming black pupils on the basis of negative stereotypes about their ability or behaviour can result in a self-fulfilling prophecy of underachievement.

## **Asian Pupils**

- Wright (1992) studied a multi-ethnic primary school and found Asian pupils can also be victims of teachers' labelling. She found that despite the school's apparent commitment to equal opportunities, teachers held ethnocentric views; that is they took for granted that British culture and Standard English were superior. This affected how they related to Asian pupils. For example, teachers assumed they would have a poor grasp of English and left them out of class discussions or used simplistic, childish language when speaking to them. Asian pupils felt isolated when teachers expressed disapproval of their customs or mispronounced their names and teachers saw them as problems they could ignore and so this marginalised Asian pupils.

## **Internal Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

### **2) Pupil Identities**

- Teachers often define pupils as having stereotypical ethnic identities. According to Archer (2008) teacher's dominant discourse (way of seeing something) defines ethnic minority pupils' identities as lacking the favoured identity of the ideal pupil. The dominant discourse constructs 3 different pupil identities:

1)

2)

3)

- Archer argues ethnic minority pupils are likely to be seen as either demonised or pathologised pupils. For example, from interviews she shows how teachers demonise black pupils as 'loud, challenging, excessively sexual and with un-inspirational home cultures'. Teachers stereotype

Asian girls as quiet, passive or docile. When Asian girls challenge this stereotype by misbehaving, they are often dealt with more severely than other pupils.

- Even those minority pupils who perform well can be pathologised (seen as abnormal). For example, Chinese students were simultaneously praised and viewed negatively by their teachers, who saw Chinese girls as passive, quiet and repressed, whereas boys were seen as effeminate and subordinate. While hardworking Chinese students were seen as having achieved success in the wrong way through hardworking, passive conformism than through individual ability. Teachers also tended wrongly to stereotype their Chinese students as middle-class. This meant they could never legitimately occupy the identity of 'ideal pupil'.

### **Internal Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

#### **3) Pupil Responses and Subcultures**

- Pupils can respond to teacher racism and negative labelling in a number of ways- they may become withdrawn or disruptive or may refuse to accept the label and work hard to prove them wrong.



### Fuller & Mac an Ghail (1984/1992)- Rejecting negative labels

### Mirza- Failed Strategies for Avoiding Racism

Mirza studied ambitious black girls who faced teacher racism. Mirza found that racist teachers discouraged black pupils from being ambitious through the kind of advice they gave them about careers and option choices. For example, teachers discouraged them from aspiring to professional careers. A large majority of teachers in the study held racist views:

- ***The colour blind:*** teachers who believe all pupils are equal but in practice allow racism to go unchallenged.

- ***The Liberal Chauvinists:*** teachers who believe black pupils are culturally deprived and who have low expectations of them.
- ***The overt racists:*** teachers who believe blacks are inferior and actively discriminate against them.

Much of the girls' time at school was spent trying to avoid the effects of teachers' negative attitudes. The strategies they employed to do this included being selective about which staff to ask for help; getting on with their own work in lessons without taking part and not choosing certain options so as to avoid teachers with racist attitudes.

However, although the girls had high self-esteem, these strategies put them at a disadvantage by restricting their opportunities. Unlike the girls in Fuller's study, their strategies were unsuccessful.

### **Sewell- Boy's responses to labelling and teacher racism**

Sewell focuses on the absence of fathers and the influence of peer groups and street culture to explain the underachievement of black boys. However, he also notes that their responses to schooling, including racist stereotyping by teachers, can affect their achievement. He identifies four such responses:

<b>1) The Rebels</b>	
<b>2) The Conformists</b>	
<b>3) The Retreatists</b>	
<b>4) The Innovators</b>	

Sewell shows that only a small minority fit the stereotype of the 'black macho lad' (the rebels in Sewell's study). Nevertheless, teachers tend to see all black boys in this way and this contributes to the underachievement of many boys, whatever their attitude to school. Furthermore, many of the boys' negative attitudes are themselves a response to this racism.

However, while Sewell recognises that teachers' racist stereotyping of black boys disadvantages them and can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, he argues that factors external to school, such as the role of peer

groups, street culture and the lack of a nurturing father, are more important in producing underachievement.

### **Evaluation of labelling and pupil responses in explaining ethnic differences**

- ✓ Rather than blaming the child's home background, as cultural deprivation theory does, labelling theory shows how teacher's stereotypes can be a cause of failure.
- ✗ However, there is a danger of seeing these stereotypes as simply the product of individual teachers' prejudice, rather than racism in a way that the education system as a whole operates. For example, the policy of producing an A\*-C economy and leads to large numbers of black and working class pupils being placed in lower streams or entered for lower tier exams.
- ✗ There is also the danger of assuming that once labelled, pupils automatically fall victim to the self-fulfilling prophecy and fail. Nevertheless, as Mirza shows, although pupils may devise strategies to try to avoid teachers' racism, these too can limit their opportunities.

### **Internal Factors Explaining Ethnic Differences**

#### **4) Institutional Racism**

##### **Individual Racism:**

## Institutional Racism:

Critical race theory sees racism as an ingrained feature of society and argues that institutional racism is a 'locked in inequality', where institutional racism is so deep rooted and so large that it is a practically inevitable feature of the education system. Critical race theorists see education as racist in several ways as follows:

### **a) Marketisation and Segregation**

- Gillborn (1997) argues that because marketization gives schools more scope to select pupils, it allows negative stereotypes to influence decisions about school admissions.
- Moore & Davenport (1990)- selection procedures lead to ethnic segregation, with minority pupils failing to get into better secondary schools due to discrimination. For example, they found that primary school reports were used to screen out pupils with language difficulties, while the application process was difficult for non-English speaking parents to understand. These procedures favoured white pupils and disadvantaged those from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- The commission for Racial Equality (1993) identified similar biases in Britain. It noted that racism in school admissions procedures are more likely to end up in unpopular schools. The report identifies the following reasons:
  - Reports from primary schools that stereotype minority pupils.
  - Racist bias in interviews for school places.
  - Lack of information and application forms in minority languages.
  - Ethnic minority parents are often unaware of how the waiting list system works and the importance of deadlines.

### **b) Ethnocentric Curriculum**

- Ethnocentric: giving priority to the culture and viewpoint of one ethnic group while disregarding others.
- Coard (2005): believes the image of black people in the curriculum can produce underachievement. In history, the British are portrayed as bringing civilisation to the 'primitive' people they colonised.
- David (1993): believes that the British curriculum ignores non-European literature and music and focuses almost exclusively on white culture. Critics would argue however that things have got better in recent years and point to the fact that Indian and Chinese pupils do well in the education system without much priority given to these cultures in the curriculum.

- Ball (1994): criticises the National Curriculum for ignoring ethnic diversity and for promoting an attitude of 'little Englandism'. For example, in History the British may be presented as bringing civilisation to the 'primitive' peoples they are colonised. He argues that this image of black people as inferior undermines black children's self-esteem and leads to their failure.

### **c) Assessment**

- Gillborn (2008) argues that assessments are rigged to favour the dominant culture's superiority. If black children succeed as a group then, 'the rules' will be changed to re-engineer failure.' For example, in the past, primary schools used baseline assessments which tested pupils when they started compulsory schooling. However, these were replaced in 2003 by a new way of measuring pupil's abilities- the Foundation Stage Profile (FSP).
- The result of this change was that overnight, black pupils now appeared to be doing worse than white pupils. For example, in one local authority, where black children in 2000 had been the highest achievers on entry to school (20% above average), by 2003 the new FSP had black children ranked lower than whites across all six developmental areas that it measured.
- Also, most examinations are argued to favour white children, and students with English as an additional language struggle to understand what is being asked of them in the exam and convey an appropriate answer.

### **d) Access to Opportunities**

- The 'Gifted and Talented' Programme was created with the aim of meeting the needs of more able pupils in inner city schools. While this might seem to benefit bright pupils from minority groups, official statistics show that whites are over twice as likely as Black Caribbeans to be identified as G&T and five times more likely than Black Africans.
- Exam Tiers- In 30 schools that used to Aim Higher initiative (to help raise achievement of Black Caribbean pupils), blacks were more likely than whites to be entered for lower tier GCSE exams. This was often because black pupils had been placed in lower sets. The effect of this means they can only come out with at most a grade C. Strand (2012) suggests the reason for this is because of teacher's low expectations of black pupils which leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy.

### **e) The 'new IQism'**

- Access to opportunities such as higher sets or the Gifted and Talented programme depend heavily on teachers' assessments of pupils' ability. This works against black pupils because,

as Gillborn notes: 'When teachers are asked to judge the 'potential' and/or 'motivation' of their students, they tend to place disproportionate numbers of Black students in low ranked groups.'

- Furthermore, teachers place black students in lower sets based on racialized expectations that black pupils would pose more discipline problems. In what Gillborn calls the new IQism, he argues that teachers make false assumptions about the nature of pupils' ability or potential. Teachers see potential as fixed and use IQ tests to stream pupils, However, Gillborn says there is no genuine measure of 'potential'. All a test can do is tell us what a person has learnt already or can do now, not what a person may be able to do in the future.
- Gillborn concludes that the education system is institutionally racist, creating an environment in which ethnic minority pupils are routinely disadvantaged.

### **Evaluation of ethnic differences being due to institutional racism**

- ✗ Sewell argues that although he does not believe that racism has disappeared in schools, he argues that it is not powerful enough to prevent black individuals from succeeding. Rather, in Sewell's view, we need to focus on external factors such as boy's anti school sub culture, the peer group and the nurturing role of the father.
- ✗ Indian and Chinese students often outperform the white majority. If these two groups do so well, how can there be institutional racism in education as critical race theorists claim? Gillborn responds by arguing that the image of Indians and Chinese as hardworking 'model minorities; performs an ideological function. It conceals the fact that the education system is institutionally racist. It makes the system appear fair and meritocratic- that Indians and Chinese succeed because they make the effort and take advantage of the opportunities offered them. It justifies the failure of other minorities, such as blacks- that they fail because they are unable or unwilling to make effort, due to their unaspirational home culture. It ignores the fact that model minorities still suffer racism in schools. For example, Indian and Chinese pupils report similar levels of harassment to Black Caribbeans.

## **TOPIC 4: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ACHIEVEMENT**



<b><u>EXTERNAL FACTORS</u></b>	<b><u>INTERNAL FACTORS</u></b>
Impact of Feminism	Equal Opportunities Policies
Changes in the Family	Positive Role Models in Schools
Changes in Women's Employment	GCSE and Coursework
Girls' Changing Ambitions	Teacher Attention
	Challenging Stereotypes in the Curriculum
	Selection and League Tables

### **EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ACHIEVEMENT**

#### **1) The Impact of Feminism**

Feminism is a social movement that strived for equal rights for women in all areas of life. Feminism has challenged the traditional gender roles of women (housewife/mother) and has raised women's expectations and self-esteem. These changes are reflected in the media with many examples of strong, independent women. This may have affected girls' self-image and ambitions with regard to family and careers, and has led to their educational achievement.

#### **2) Changes in the Family**

There have been major changes in the family since 1970. These include:

- An increase in divorce rate
- An increase in cohabitation and a decrease in the number of first marriages
- An increase in the number of lone parent families
- Smaller families.

These changes are affecting girl's attitudes towards education in a number of ways. For example, increased numbers of female-headed lone parent families may mean more women need to take on a breadwinner role. This in turn creates a new adult role model for girls- the financially independent woman. To achieve this women need well-paid jobs and therefore good qualifications. Likewise, increases in divorce rates may suggest to girls that it is unwise to rely on their husband to be their provider. Again, this may encourage girls to get the qualifications they need to provide for themselves.



### **3) Changes in Women's Employment**

There have been important changes in women's employment in recent decades. These include the following:

- The 1970 Equal Pay Act makes it illegal to pay women less than men for work of equal value, and the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act outlaws discrimination at work.
- Since 1975, the pay gap between men and women has halved from 30% to 15%.
- The proportion of women in employment has risen from 53% in 1971 to 67% in 2013. The growth of the service sector and flexible part-time work has offered opportunities for women.
- Some women are now breaking through the glass ceiling- the invisible barrier that keeps them out of high-level professional and managerial jobs.

These changes have encouraged girls to see their future in terms of paid work rather than housewives. Greater pay and career opportunities, and the role models that successful career women offer, provide an incentive for girls to gain qualifications.

### **4) Girl's Changing Ambitions**

Changes in family and employment are producing changes in girls' ambitions. For example, Sharpe (1994) interviewed girls in the 1970s and 1990s and found a major shift in the way girls see their future. In 1974, the girls had low aspirations; they believed educational success was unfeminine and that appearing ambitious would be considered unattractive. They gave their priorities as 'love, marriage, husbands, children, jobs and careers' more or less in that order. By the 1990s, girls' ambitions had changed and they had a different order of priorities, with careers and being able to support themselves being most important. The girls were more likely to see their future as an independent woman with a career rather than as dependant on their husband and his income.

Likewise O'Connor (2006) found 14-17 year olds did not have marriage and children as a major part of their life plans. Beck & Beck- Gernsheim (2001) link this to the trend of individualisation in modern society, where independence is valued much more strongly than in the past. A career has become part of a



woman's life project because it promises recognition and economic self-sufficiency. In order to achieve independence and self-sufficiency, many girls now recognise that they need a good education. For some girls in Fuller's (2011) study, educational success was a central aspect of their identity. They saw themselves as creators of their own future. They believed in meritocracy and aimed for a professional career that would enable them to support themselves, thus meaning they tried hard at school.

## **INTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ACHIEVEMENT**

### **1) Equal Opportunities Policies**

- Equal opportunities for both genders is now part of mainstream thinking and it influences educational policies. For example, GIST (Girls into science and technology) and WISE (women into science and engineering) encourage girls to pursue careers in these non-traditional areas. Female scientists have visited schools, acting as role models; efforts have been made to raise science teachers' awareness of gender issues; non-sexist careers advice has been provided and learning materials in science reflecting girls' interests have been developed.
- The introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 removed one source of gender inequality by making girls and boys study mostly the same subjects, which was often not the case previously.

### **2) Positive Role Models in Schools**

- Increase in female teachers/head teachers have led to more role models for girls to see that the top positions can go to women. Women teachers are likely to be particularly important role models as far as girls' educational achievement is concerned since, to become a teacher, the individual must undertake a lengthy and successful education herself.

### **3) GCSE and Coursework**

- Changes in the way students are assessed have favoured girls and disadvantaged boys. Gorard (2005) found that the gender gap in achievement was fairly constant from 1975 until 1989, when it increased sharply. This was the year in which GCSEs were introduced, bringing with it coursework as a major part of nearly all subjects. Gorard concludes that the gender gap in achievement is a product of the changed system of assessment rather than any more general failing of boys.
- Mitsos and Browne (1998) support this view as they believe girls are more conscientious and organised so do better with coursework. They spend more time on their work, take more care with presentation, are better at meeting deadlines and bring the right equipment and materials to lessons.
- Also, with GCSE came more oral exams, which is said to favour girls as generally they are better in their developed language skills.

- Sociologists argue that these characteristics and skills are the result of early gender role socialisation in the family. For example, girls are more likely to be encouraged to be neat, tidy and patient. These qualities become an advantage in today's assessment system, helping girls achieve greater success than boys.

#### **4) Teacher Attention**

- Boys receive more attention for their poor behaviour. But despite getting more attention, they were also disciplined more harshly and felt picked on by teachers. , who tended to have lower expectations of them.
- Girls and boys have different communication styles. Girls are better at listening and cooperating whilst boys' speech often involved hostile interruptions. This may explain why teachers respond more positively to girls, whom they see as cooperative, than to boys whom they see as disruptive. This may lead to a SFP in which successful interactions with teachers promote girls' self-esteem and raise their achievement levels.

#### **5) Challenging Stereotypes in the Curriculum**

- Some sociologists argue that the removal of gender stereotypes from textbooks, reading schemes and other learning materials in recent years has removed a barrier to girl's achievement. Research in the 70s/80s found that reading schemes portrayed women as mainly housewives and mothers. Physics books showed them as frightened by science and maths books depicted boys as more incentive. This may have helped to raise girl's achievement by presenting positive images of what women can do.

#### **6) Selection and League Tables**

- Marketisation policies have created a more competitive climate in which schools see girls as desirable recruits because they achieve better exam results.
- Jackson (1998) notes that the introduction of exam league tables has improved opportunities for girls: high achieving girls are attractive to schools, whereas low achieving boys are not. This tends to create a SFP- because girls are more likely to be recruited by good schools, they are more likely to do well.
- Slee (1998) argues that boys are less attractive to schools because they are more likely to suffer from behavioural difficulties and are four times more likely to be excluded. As a result, boys may be seen as 'liability students'- obstacles to the school improving its league table position.

### **Two Views of Girl's Achievement**

While there have clearly been changes in gender and educational achievement, sociologists differ in their interpretation of the importance of these changes.

***Liberal Feminists:*** celebrate the progress made so far in improving achievement. They believe that further progress will be made by the continuing development of equal opportunity policies, encouraging positive role models and overcoming sexist attitudes and stereotypes.

***Radical Feminists:*** take a more critical view. While they recognise that girls are achieving more, they emphasise that the system remains patriarchal (male dominated) and conveys the clear message that this is still a man's world.

### **IDENTITY, CLASS AND GIRLS' ACHIEVEMENT**

Whilst girls on average achieve more highly than they did in the past, this does not mean that all girls are successful. In particular, there are social class differences. (In 2013, 40.6% A\*-Cs from poor background, 67.5% from more wealthy backgrounds).

**Symbolic Capital:** The status, recognition and sense of worth that we are able to obtain from others.



	<u>Archer (2010)</u>	<u>Evans (2009)</u>
<u>Findings of Study</u>		
<u>How did it affect achievement?</u>		

## **BOYS AND ACHIEVEMENT**

There are now trends to show that boys are starting to fall behind in schools.

Reasons for this include:

### **Boys and Literacy**

The gender gap in achievement is mainly a result of boys' poorer literacy and language skills. One reason for this may be that parents spend less time reading to their sons. Another may be that it is mothers who do most of the reading to young children, who thus come to see reading as feminine activity.

In addition, boys' leisure pursuits, such as football, do little to help develop their language and communication skills. By contrast, girls tend to have a 'bedroom culture' centred on staying in and talking with friends.

Poor language and literacy skills are likely to affect boys' performance across a wide range of subjects. In response to this problem, the government has introduced a range of policies to improve boys' skills including:

### **Policies**



### **Globalisation and the decline of traditional men's jobs**

Since the 1980s, there has been a significant decline in heavy industries such as iron and steel, shipbuilding, mining and engineering. This has been partly the result of the globalisation of the economy, which has led to much manufacturing industry relocating to developing countries such as China to take advantage of cheap labour.

Traditionally these sectors of the economy employed men. This has led to a 'crisis of masculinity' as men are starting to become confused with traditional gender roles. Many boys now believe that they have little prospect of getting a proper job. This undermines their motivation and self-esteem and so they give up trying to get qualifications.

Although, many of the jobs that disappeared required few qualifications in the first place- thus other factors must be playing a part on the gender gap of achievement.

### **Feminisation of Education**

Sewell argues that boys fall behind because education has become feminised. Schools do not nurture 'masculine' traits such as competitiveness and leadership. Instead they celebrate more 'feminine' traits such as methodological working and attentiveness.

Coursework suits girl's learning style better and so boys have struggled to achieve since coursework was introduced to GCSEs.

### **Shortage of Male Primary School Teachers**

The lack of male role models both at home and at school is said to be a cause of boys' underachievement. (1.5 million Female headed lone parent families in the UK).

Only 14% of primary school teachers are male and 39% of 8-11 year old boys have no lessons whatsoever with a male teacher. Yet most boys surveyed said the presence of a male teacher made them behave better and 42% said it made them work harder.

### **Laddish Subcultures**

Some sociologists argue that the growth of 'laddish' subcultures has contributed to boys' underachievement. Working class boys are likely to be harassed, labelled as sissies and subjected to homophobic, verbal abuse if they appear to be swots.

Boys were more concerned than girls about being labelled by peers as swots because this label is more of a threat to their masculinity than it is to girls' femininity. This is because with working-class subculture masculinity is equated with being tough and doing manual work. Non manual work and schoolwork is seen as effeminate and inferior. As a result, working class boys tend to reject school work to avoid being called 'gay'.

## **The Moral Panic about Boys**

Critics of feminism argue that policies to promote girl's education and encouraging them to succeed and take the top jobs have disadvantaged boys. This has led to a moral panic about failing boys. This moral panic reflects a fear that underachieving working class boys will grow up to become a dangerous, unemployable underclass that threatens social stability.

This has caused a major shift in educational policy, which is now preoccupied with raising boys' achievements. This policy has had two negative effects.

- 1) By narrowing equal opportunities policy down simply to 'failing boys', it ignores the problem of disadvantaged working-class and minority ethnic students.
- 2) By narrowing gender policy down solely to the issues of achievement gaps, it ignores other problems faced by girls in school. These include sexual harassment and bullying, self-esteem and identity issues, and stereotyped subject choices.

Osler (2006) notes that the focus on underachieving boys has led to a neglect of girls. This is partly because girls often disengage from school quietly. By contrast, boys' disengagement often takes the form of public displays of 'laddish' masculinity that attract attention from teachers and policymakers.

Osler gives the example of mentoring schemes aimed at reducing school exclusions among black boys. She points out that these ignore the problem of exclusions among girls, which are increasing more rapidly. Furthermore, girls who are excluded are less likely to obtain places in pupil referral units. Official exclusion rates also mask a wider, hidden problem of exclusion among girls, including self-exclusion (truancy) and internal exclusion (removal from class).

## **Gender, class and ethnicity**

However, it would be wrong to conclude that boys are a 'lost cause'. In fact, the performance of both sexes has actually improved considerably in recent years. Boys may now be lagging behind girls, but boys today are achieving more than they did in the past.

Furthermore, the similarities in girl's and boy's achievement are far greater than the differences, especially when compared with class or ethnic differences. For example, the class gap in achievement at GCSE is 3 times wider than the gender gap.

As a result, girls and boys of the same social class tend to achieve fairly similar results. For example, at GCSE in a typical year, the gender gap within any given social class is rarely greater than 12 percentage points. By contrast, pupils of the same gender, but different social classes achieve widely different results. For example, girls from the highest social class can be as much as 44 points ahead of the girls from the lowest class. These figures show that class is a more important influence on a pupil's achievement than gender.

Also, the extent to which gender influences achievement itself varies depending on a pupil's class and ethnic group. For example, the gender gap among black Caribbean pupils is greater than among other ethnic groups. As Fuller shows, many black girls are successful at school because they define their femininity in terms of educational achievement and independence. By contrast, as Sewell found, some black boys fail at school because they define their masculinity in opposition to education, which they see as effeminate.

These examples show that we need to take the interplay of class, gender and ethnicity into account in order to gain a better understanding of differences in achievement. Certain combinations of gender, class and ethnicity have more

effect than others. For example, being female raises performance more when 'added to' being black Caribbean than it does when 'added to' being white.

## **Gender and Subject Choice**



There continues to be a fairly traditional pattern of 'boys' subjects' and 'girls' subjects'. Boys still tend to adopt subjects such as maths and physics, whilst girls are more likely to choose modern languages.

The National Curriculum gives pupils little freedom to choose or drop their subjects by making most subjects compulsory until 16. However, where choice is possible, boys and girls tend to follow these gender routes of subjects. For example, although design and technology is compulsory: boys tend to go for resistant materials and girls go for food tech.

In FE, this is even more apparent with girls picking subjects such as sociology and English language and boys picking maths and physics.

In vocational courses, only 1 in 100 childcare apprentices are boys.

## **EXPLANATIONS FOR GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SUBJECT CHOICE**

### **1) Gender Role Socialisation**

Gender role socialisation is the process of learning the behaviour expected of males and females in society. Early socialisation shapes gender identity. Boys and girls are dressed differently and encouraged to take part in different activities.

Also, teachers encourage boys to be tough and show initiative and not be weak, whereas girls are expected to be quiet, helpful, clean and tidy.

As a result of differences in socialisation, boys and girls develop different tastes in reading, which can lead to different subject choices. Boys read hobby books and information texts, while girls are more likely to read stories about people. This helps to explain why boys prefer science subjects and why girls prefer subjects such as English.

Children's beliefs about 'gender domains' are shaped by their early experiences and expectations of adults. Gender domains refer to the tasks and activities that boys and girls see as either male or female 'territory' and therefore as relevant to themselves or not. For example, mending a car is seen as falling within the male gender domain, but looking after a sick child is not. Children are more confident in engaging with tasks that they see as being part of their gender domain. This can lead to subjects being chosen that the child sees fits their gender domain, such as girls picking food tech, whereas boys pick mechanics.



## **2) Gendered Subject Images**

The gender image of a subject affects who will want to choose it. Science is seen as a boys' subject for several reasons:

- Science teachers are more likely to be men.
- Examples teachers or textbooks use often exemplify boys' interests rather than girls' interests.
- In science lessons boys dominate the equipment and treat it as if it is 'theirs'.

Computer Studies is seen as a masculine subject because:

- It involves working with machines- part of the male gender domain.
- The way it is taught is off putting to females as tasks tend to be abstract, teaching styles formal, with few opportunities for group work, which girls favour.

## **3) Gender Identity and Peer Pressure**

Subject choice may be due to peer pressure. For example, boys tend to opt out of subjects like music and dance, because such activities fall out of their gender domain and so are likely to attract a negative response from peers. Likewise, girls who opt for sport have to opt up with an image that contradicts female stereotypes and so would have to put with negative comments from male students such as 'butch' or 'lesbian' (Dewar, 1990).

By contrast, an absence of peer pressure from the opposite sex may explain why girls in single sex schools are more likely to choose traditional boys' subjects. The absence of boys may mean there is less pressure on girls to conform to restrictive stereotypes of what subjects they can study.

## **4) Gendered Career Opportunities**

Careers tend to be highly sex-typed as male or female. Women's jobs often involve work similar to that performed by housewives, such as childcare and nursing.

Over half of all women's employment falls within only 4 categories: clerical, secretarial, personal services and occupations such as cleaning.

This sex typing of jobs affects what boys and girls think is available to them career wise then they are picking their subjects at GCSES/A-level/degree level.

### **Gender, vocational choice and class**

- There is a social class dimension to choice of vocational course. Working class pupils in particular may make decisions about vocational courses that are based on a traditional sense of gender identity. For example, most of the working class girls studied by Fuller had ambitions to go into jobs such as child care of hair and beauty. This reflected their working class habitus- their sense of what is a realistic expectation for 'people like us'.
- These ambitions may arise out of work experience placements, which are often gendered and classed. For example, Fuller found that placements in feminine, working class jobs such as nursery nursing and retail work were overwhelmingly the norm for the girls in her study. Fuller concludes that the school was implicitly steering girls towards certain types of job- and hence certain types of vocational course- through the work experience placements it offered them.



### **Pupil's Sexual and Gender Identities**

- Pupils experiences in schools can help construct and reinforce their gender and sexual identities.
- These experiences may all contribute to reinforcing what Connell (1995) calls 'hegemonic masculinity'- the dominance of heterosexual masculine identity and the subordination of female and gay identities.

Reasons for construction and reinforcement of gender and sexual identities in school:

#### **1) Double Standards**

A double standard exists when we apply one set of moral standards to one group, but a different set to another group. In the case of gender identity, Lees (1993) identifies a double standard of sexual morality in which boys boast about their own sexual exploits, but call a girl a 'slag' if she doesn't have a steady boyfriend or if she dresses and speaks in a certain way.

## **2) Verbal Abuse**

Connell says a 'rich vocabulary of abuse' is one of the ways in which dominant gender and sexual identities are reinforced. For example, boys use name calling to put girls down if they behave or dress in certain ways eg 'slags' or 'drags'. Paethcer sees name-calling as helping to shape gender identity and maintain male power. The use of negative labels, such as 'gay' or 'lezzie' are ways in which pupils police each other's sexual identities. For example, Parker (1996) found that boys were labelled as 'gay' simply for being friendly with girls or female teachers. Both Paethcer and Parker note that these labels often bear no relation to pupils' actual sexual behaviour. Their function is simply to reinforce gender norms and identities.

## **3) The Male Gaze**

There is also a visual aspect to the way pupils control each other's identities. Mac and Ghail refer to this as the 'male gaze': the way teachers and pupils look girls up and down, seeing them as sexual objects and making judgements about their appearance. Mac and Ghail sees the male gaze as a form of surveillance through which dominant heterosexual masculinity is reinforced and femininity devalued. It is one of the ways boys prove their masculinity to peers and is often combined with constant telling and retelling of stories about their sexual conquests. Boys who do not display their masculinity in this way run the risk of being labelled 'gay'.

## **4) Male Peer Groups**

Male peer groups use verbal abuse also to reinforce their definitions about masculinity. For example, as studies by Willis and Epstein show, boys in anti-school sub cultures often accuse boys who want to do well at school as 'gay' of effeminate.

Mac an Ghail's study of Parnell school examines how peer groups reproduce a range of different class based masculine gender identities. For example, the working class 'macho lads' were dismissive of other working-class boys who worked hard and aspired to middle class careers, referring to them as the 'dickhead achievers'. By contrast, middle class 'real Englishmen' projected an image of 'effortless achievement'- of succeeding without trying (though in some cases actually worked hard behind the scenes).

Redman & Mac an Ghail found that the dominant definition of masculine identity changes from that of the macho lads in the lower school to that of real Englishmen in the sixth form. This represents a shift away from a working class definition based on toughness to a middle class one based on intellectual ability. This reflects the more middle class composition and atmosphere of the sixth form.

## **5) Female Peer Groups: policing identity**

Archer shows how working class girls gain symbolic capital (status and popularity) from their female peers by performing a hyper-heterosexual feminine identity. This involves constructing a glamorous or 'sexy' Nike appearance using particular brands and styles. Female peers police this identity and girls risk making themselves unpopular and being called a tramp if they fail to conform.

Ringrose's (2013) small-scale study of 13-14 year old working class girls' peer groups in a South Wales school found that being popular was crucial to the girls' identity. As the girls made a transition from a girls' friendship culture into a heterosexual dating culture, they faced a tension between:

- **An idealised feminine identity:** of showing loyalty to the female peer group, being non-competitive and getting along with everybody in the friendship culture.
- **A sexualised identity:** that involved competing for boys in the dating culture.

While relationships with boys can give symbolic capital, this is a high risk game. This is because girls are forced to perform a balancing act between these two identities.

- Girls who are too competitive and/or think themselves better than their peers risk 'slut shaming'- being labelled as sluts and excluded from the friendship culture.
- On the other hand, girls who don't compete for boyfriends may face 'frigid shaming' by the other girls.

Shaming is thus a social control device by which school girls police, regulate and discipline each other's identities.

Girls who want to be successful educationally may feel the need to conform to the school's notion of the ideal feminine pupil identity. This involved girls having to perform an asexual identity, presenting themselves as lacking interest in boyfriends or popular fashion. As a result they risk being given the identity of 'boffin' and excluded by other girls (as well as boys). However, as Francis found, middle class boffins may respond by defining working class girls as chavs.

## 6) Teachers and Discipline

Research also shows that teachers also play a part in reinforcing dominant definitions of gender identity. Male teachers tend to tell boys off for behaving 'like girls', and teased them when they gained lower marks in tests than girls. Teachers tended to ignore boys verbal abuse of girls and even blamed girls for attracting it.

Male teacher's behaviour can subtly reinforce messages about gender. For example, male teachers often have a protective attitude towards female colleagues, coming into their classes to 'rescue' them from threatening pupils who are being disruptive. However, this reinforces the idea that women can't cope.

## Topic 5: Educational Policy and Inequality

Educational policy refers to the plans and strategies for education introduced by government, for example the 2010 Academies Act, which made it possible for all state schools to become academies.

Most educational policy is a response to the following issues:

- Equal Opportunities

- Selection and Choice
- Control of Education
- Marketisation and Privatisation

## **Educational Policy before 1988**

Late 1800s/early 1900s there was no state schools- there was just fee paying schools for the well off, or by churches and charities for the poor. Before 1833, the state spent no public money on education.

Industrialisation increased the need for an educated workforce, and from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the state began to become more involved in education and the state made schooling compulsory from ages 5-13 in 1880. The type of education children received depended on their class background: middle class pupils were given an academic curriculum to prepare them for careers, whereas working class pupils were given schooling to equip them with basic numeracy and literacy skills needed for routine factory work and to instil in them an obedient attitude to superiors.

Since WW2 the aims of educational policies have been to:

- Widen access and participation (through raising the school leaving age and expanding higher education)
- Promote equality of opportunity (through the introduction of the comprehensive system).

### **Selection: The Tripartite System**

Rather than promoting meritocracy, the tripartite system and 11+ reproduced class inequality by channelling the two social classes into two different types of school that offered unequal opportunities. The system also reproduced gender inequality by requiring girls to gain higher marks than boys in the 11+ exam to obtain a grammar school place.

The tripartite system also legitimated (justified) inequality through the ideology that ability is innate. It was thus argued that that ability could be measured early on in life through the 11+. However in reality children's environment greatly affects their chances of success.

## **The Comprehensive School System**

The comprehensive school system was introduced in many areas from 1965 onwards. It aimed to overcome the class divide of the tripartite system and make education more meritocratic. The 11+ exam was to be abolished along with grammars and secondary moderns, to be replaced by comprehensive schools that all pupils within the area would attend.

However, it was left to the local education authority to decide whether to go fully comprehensive and not all did so. As a result, the grammar-secondary modern divide still exists in many areas.

Marxists and Functionalists see the role of education very differently. Functionalists see it as fulfilling essential functions such as social integration and meritocratic selection for future job roles and so see comprehensives as bringing children of different social classes together in one school. However, studies show that little mixing occurs in comprehensives between middle and working class children, largely because of streaming. Functionalists also see the comprehensive school system as more meritocratic, because it gives pupils a longer period in which to develop and show their abilities, unlike the tripartite system, which sought to select the most able pupils at the age of eleven.

By contrast, Marxists see education as serving the interests of capitalism by reproducing and legitimating class inequality. Marxists argue comprehensives are not meritocratic, but they instead reproduce class inequality from one generation to the next through the continuation of the practice of streaming and labelling. These continue to deny working class children equal opportunity. Yet by not selecting children at eleven, comprehensives may appear to offer equal chances to all. This 'myth of meritocracy' legitimates class inequality by making unequal achievement seem fair and just, because failure looks like it is the fault of the individual rather than the system.

## **Education Policy in Britain 1979-1997: The Conservative Years**

The 1988 Educational Reform Act (ERA) introduced by the Conservative government of Mrs Thatcher established the principle of Marketisation in education which has been favoured by New Right sociologists.

Marketisation refers to the process of introducing market forces of consumer choice and competition between suppliers into areas run by the state, such as education.

Marketisation has created an 'education market' by:

- Reducing direct state control over education
- Increasing both competition between schools and parental choice of schools.



New Right sociologists believe that marketisation means that schools are run more like businesses that they have to attract consumers (parents) by competing with each other in the market. Schools provide the customers with what they want (success in exams) and if they don't they go out of business (close down). David (1993) describes this approach as parentocracy (rule by parents).

**Marketisation policies include:**

**Do Marketisation Policies Reproduce Inequality?**

Ball (1994) and Whitty (1998) both believe that they reproduce and legitimate inequalities. They believe this happens in 3 ways:

- 1) **Exam League Tables:** Publishing exam results in a league table ensures that schools that achieve good results are more in demand. This allows those schools to be more selective and recruit high achieving m/c students, who as a result get the better education. For schools with low league table results the opposite happens. These schools will be unattractive to m/c parents, will attract mainly w/c pupils and so there end up being a class divide in education due to league tables. League tables produce inequality.
- 2) **The Funding Formula:** Schools are given funds based on a formula of how many pupils they attract. More funds mean better facilities and better qualified teachers. Popular schools (more m/c pupils) get better funding and better results. The opposite is true for unpopular schools. Again the class divide is reproduced.
- 3) **The Myth of Parentocracy:** Not only does marketisation reproduce inequality, it legitimises it by concealing its true causes and by justifying its existence. Marketisation appears to give parents more choice. In reality, it is only some parents (m/c) who have that choice, even in some cases moving house to be in a more desirable catchment area. The myth of parentocracy makes inequality in education appear to be fair and inevitable.

#### **Gerwitz: Parental Choice**

Not only do marketisation policies benefit the middle class by creating inequalities between schools. By increasing parental choice, marketisation also advantages middle class parents, whose economic and cultural capital puts them in a better position to choose good schools for their children.

Gerwitz studied 14 London secondary schools and found differences in parents' economic and cultural capital lead to class differences in how far they could exercise choice of secondary schools. She identifies 3 main types of parents whom she calls privileged-skilled choosers, disconnected local choosers and semi-skilled choosers.

1) *Privileged Skilled Chooser:*

2) *Disconnected Local Chooser:*

3) *Semi-skilled Chooser:*

#### **Educational Policy in Britain 1997-2010: The New Labour Years**



The aims of educational policy during this period were to:

- Reduce inequality in achievements
- Promote greater diversity, choice and competition

It was believed that this would make Britain more competitive in the global economy and turn the nation into a high skill, high waged economy.



**Policies included:**

- However, critics, such as Benn (2012) argue that Labour had contradictory policies, e.g. they introduced EMA to encourage some w/c pupils to stay in education, but increased university tuition fees which may have deterred them from going to university.
- Also, despite the Labour Party's opposition to selective grammar schools and private fee paying schools they have not abolished them.

**Coalition Government Policies from 2010-2015**



The Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government elected in 2010 accelerated the move away from an education system based largely on comprehensive schools run by local authorities. Its policies have been strongly influenced by New Right and neoliberal ideas about reducing the role of the state in education, through marketisation and privatisation.

David Cameron stated that the aim of the Coalition's education policy was to encourage, 'excellence, competition and innovation', by freeing schools from the 'dead hand of the state', through policies such as academies and free schools. Furthermore, cuts were made to the education budget, as part of the government's general policy of reducing state spending.

### **Academies**

From 2010, all schools were encouraged to leave local authority control and become academies. Funding was taken from local authority budgets and given directly to academies by central government, and academies were given control over their curriculum. By 2012, over half of all secondary schools had converted to academy status. Some academies are run by private educational businesses and funded directly by the state.

However, whereas Labour's original city academies targeted disadvantaged schools and areas, the Coalition government, by allowing any school to become an academy, removed the focus on reducing inequality.

### **Free Schools**

Although funded directly and run by the state, free schools are set up and run by parents, teachers, faith organisations or businesses rather than the local authority. Supporters of free schools claim that they improve educational standards by taking control away from the state and giving power to the parents. Free schools, it is claimed, give parents and teachers the opportunity to create a new school if they are unhappy with the state schools in their area.

However, Allen (2010) argues that research from Sweden, where 20% of schools are free schools, shows that they only benefit children from highly educated families.

Other critics claim that free schools socially divisive and that they lower standards- Sweden's international educational ranking has fallen since free schools were introduced. In England, evidence shows that free schools take fewer disadvantaged pupils than nearby schools. For example, in 2011 only 6.4% of pupils at Bristol Free School were eligible for free school means, compared with 22.5% of pupils across the city as a whole.

### **Fragmented Centralisation**

Ball (2011) argues that promoting academies and free schools has led to both increased fragmentation and increased centralisation of control over educational provision in England.

***Fragmentation:***

***Centralisation of Control:***

**Coalition Policies to Reduce Inequality**

- ***Free School Meals:*** for all children in reception, year 1 and year 2
- ***Pupil Premium:*** money that schools receive for each pupil from a disadvantaged background

However, Ofsted (2012) found that in many cases the PP is not spent effectively to target disadvantage students.

Furthermore, spending in many areas of education has been cut, including on buildings by 60%, Sure Start centres were closed and EMA was abolished. University tuition fees also tripled to £9000 a year. These have all reduced opportunities for w/c pupils and discouraged them from higher education.



**The Privatisation of Education**

Privatisation involves the transfer of public assets (such as schools) to private companies.

In recent years, there has been a trend towards the privatisation of important aspects of education, both in the UK and globally. In the process, education becomes a source of profit for capitalists. Ball calls this the education services industry (ESI).

Private companies in the ESI are involved in an ever increasing range of activities in education, including building schools, providing supply teachers, work-based learning, careers advice and Ofsted inspection services, and even running entire local education authorities.

Many head teachers are now leaving the public sector to work in the private sector to set up or work for private businesses. Head teachers can use their insider knowledge of the education system to gain an advantage in winning contracts and side stepping local authority democracy.

### **The globalisation of education policy**

Many private companies in the education services industry are foreign-owned.

For example,

- The exam board Edexcel is owned by the US educational publishing and testing giant Pearson, and some Pearson GCSE exam answers are now marked in Sydney and Iowa.
- The UK's four leading educational software companies are all owned by multinationals (Disney, Mattel and Hambro & Vivendi).

### **The cola-isation of schools**

The private sector is also penetrating education indirectly, for example through vending machines on school premises and the development of brand loyalty through displays of logos and sponsorships. This process has been called the cola-isation of schools.

Schools are targeted by private companies because schools by their nature carry enormous goodwill and can thus confer legitimacy on anything associated with them. In other words, they are a kind of product endorsement.

However, the benefits to schools and pupils of this private sector involvement are often very limited. For example, UK families spent £110,000 in Tesco supermarkets in return for a single computer for schools.



### **Education as a commodity**

Ball concludes that a fundamental change is taking place in which privatisation is becoming the key factor shaping educational policy. Policy is increasingly focused on moving educational services out of the public sector controlled by the nation state, to be provided by private companies instead. In the process, education is being turned into a 'legitimate object of private profit-making'; a commodity to be bought and sold in an education market.

### **Educational Policies on Gender and Ethnicity**

## Gender

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, females were largely excluded from higher education. More recently, under the tripartite system, girls often had to achieve a higher mark than boys in the 11+ exam in order to obtain a grammar school place.

Since the 1970s, however, policies such as GIST and WISE have been introduced to try and reduce gender differences in subject choice.

## Ethnicity

Policies aimed at raising children from ethnic minority backgrounds have gone through several phases:

- Assimilation: 1960s/1970s- focused on need for pupils to assimilate into mainstream British culture as a way of raising achievement, especially by helping those who were EAL. For example, compensatory education policies.
  - ✗ Critics argue that minority groups who are underachieving already speak English and the real reason for underachievement is racism or poverty.
- Multicultural education (MCE): 1980s/1990s- Policies aimed to promote the achievements of children from minority ethnic groups by valuing all cultures in the school curriculum, thereby raising minority pupils' self-esteem and achievements.
  - ✗ Stone: argues that black pupils do not fail for lack of self-esteem.
  - ✗ Critical Race Theorists: Fails to tackle institutional racism.
- Social Inclusion: late 1990s- Social inclusion of ethnic minority children and raising their achievement became a focus. For example, policies included: detailed monitoring of exam results by ethnicity; amending the Race Relations Act to place a legal duty on schools to promote racial equality; help for voluntary 'Saturday schools' in the black community; and English as an Additional Language programmes.
  - ✗ Still a 'soft' approach in attempting to raise achievement- need to focus on institutional racism through amending institutionally racist policies such as the ethnocentric curriculum, assessment and streaming.

Information to complete  
relevant in the booklet.



# Supporting studies

## Page 19 in the booklet

Fill in the information from the next 4 slides into your booklet:

**Name:** Becker

**Where:** Chicago high schools

**Sample:** 60 teachers

**What was being studied:** Teachers view of children from middle-class backgrounds and working-class backgrounds

**Findings:** The teachers viewed middle-class children as being the closest to the ideal and working-class children as furthest away from the idea because they regarded them as badly behaved.

# Supporting studies

**Name:** Hempel-jorgensen

**Where:** England

**Sample:** Two primary schools – Aspen and Rowan primary schools.

**What was being studied:** Ideal pupil personality

**Findings:** In largely working-class Aspen, where staff said discipline was a major problem the ideal pupil was quiet, passive and obedient. In Rowan, where the primary school have few discipline problems the ideal pupil was defined instead in terms of academic ability – rather than misbehaving.



# Supporting studies

**Name:** Dunne and Gazeley

**Where:** State secondary schools

**Sample:** Children in the 9 schools

**What was being studied:** Teachers who normalised the underachievement of working class pupils, seemed unconcerned by it and felt they could do nothing about it – and the belief that they could overcome the underachievement of middle-class pupils.

**Findings:** Reasons for this were teachers belief in the role of pupils' home backgrounds – they labelled working class parents as uninterested in their children's education and middle class children's parents as supportive.

# Supporting studies

**Name:** Rist

**Where:** America

**Sample:** Kindergarten

**What was being studied:** Children's home background

**Findings:** Those who were considered fast learners, whom the teacher labelled 'tigers' tended to be middle-class and of neat and clean appearance. They were seated nearest her. The other two groups named the 'cardinals' and 'clowns' were seated further away. They were given lower level books.

# Supporting Study- Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968)

## Page 20 in the booklet

### **Copy the following information into your booklet on page 21:**

In their study of a California primary school, Robert Rosenthal and Leonora Jacobson show the SFP at work. They told the school that they had a new test specifically designed to identify those pupils who would get further ahead in their studies. This was untrue as the test was in fact a standard IQ test. However, the important point was that the teachers believed what they had been told. The researchers tested all the pupils, but then picked 20% of them randomly and told the school again falsely, that the test had identified these students as more academically able.

**Continued on the next slide...**

# Supporting Study- Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968)

## Copy the following information into your booklet on page 21:

On returning to the school a year later, they found that almost half 47% of those identified had indeed made significant progress.

Rosenthal and Jacobson suggest that the teachers' beliefs about the pupils had been influenced by the test results and that they had changed the way in which they interacted with these students, giving more encouragement etc. This demonstrates self-fulfilling prophecy – the acceptance of the prediction that some children would do better than others resulted in teachers giving those students more attention.

Gillborn and Youdell (2001)

Triage of sorting – Page 21 in the booklet

Copy the following information into your booklets

A study of two London secondary schools shows how teachers use stereotypical notions of 'ability' to stream pupils. They found that teachers are less likely to see working-class and black pupils as having ability. As a result these pupils are more likely to be placed in lower streams and entered for lower-tier GCSEs. This denies them the knowledge and opportunity needed to gain good grades and widens the class gap in achievement.

Continued on next slide....

# Gillborn and Youdell (2001)

## Triage of sorting

### Copy the following information into your booklets

They link this streaming to the policy of publishing exam league tables. Youdell and Gillborn argue that schools need to achieve a good league table position if they are to attract pupils and funding.

Publishing league tables creates what Gillborn and Youdell call an A-C economy in schools. This is a system in which schools focus their time, effort and resources on those pupils they see as having the potential to get five grade Cs to boost the school's league table position.

Continued on next slide....

# Gillborn and Youdell (2001)

## Triage of sorting

### Copy the following information into your booklets

Gillborn and Youdell call this process 'educational triage' meaning 'sorting'. Schools categorise pupils into three groups:

- 1) Those who will pass anyway and can be left to get on with it
- 2) Those with potential, who will be helped to get a grade C or better
- 3) Hopeless cases, who are doomed to fail

# Pupil Subcultures

## Page 22 in the booklet

- A pupil subculture is a group of students who have similar values and behaviour patterns. They often emerge as a response to the way pupils are labelled, and in particular as a reaction to streaming.
- **Differentiation:** process of teachers categorising pupils according to how they perceive their ability, attitudes or behaviour.
- **Polarisation:** process in which pupils respond to streaming by moving towards one of two opposites- a pro or anti school subculture.



# Criticisms of Cultural Deprivation Theory

## Page 28 in the booklet

- **Keddie-** believes this is a victim-blaming explanation. She claims that working class culture is not deprived, it is just different. It is the education system which is dominated by middle class values which is the problem. Rather than seeing the working class culture as deficient, schools should recognise and build on its strengths and should challenge teachers' anti-working class prejudices.
- **Troya & Williams-** argue that it is not the language of the working class that is a problem, but schools' attitudes towards it. Schools have a hierarchy of what is acceptable and the language codes of working class children, especially black working class children is at the bottom.
- **Blackstone-** disagrees with the proposal that working class parents are not as interested in their children's education. They may attend fewer parent's evenings, but this is due to longer and more irregular working hours or the fact that they are put off by a middle class attitude of teachers.

# Pupil Identities

## Page 31 in the booklet

- Archer (2008)
- Ethnic minority pupils are more likely to be seen as either demonised or pathologised pupils.

Teachers label:

Black pupils- **'loud, challenging, excessively sexual and with inspirational home cultures'**

Asian girls- **'quiet, passive and docile'**

Chinese- **girls seen as passive, repressed Chinese boys effeminate and subordinate.**

## Pupil Responses & Subcultures:

When a label is attributed to someone, it does not necessarily mean that there is one set-response to it. On the contrary there are many different responses....



Fuller & Mac an Ghaill (1984): 'Rejection of Labels':

Fuller studied a group of black girls in year 11 in a London Comprehensive who were in lower streams yet were achieving highly.

These girls did not conform to all the values of school (e.g. respect for teachers) but did value educational success enough to push themselves.

Mac an Ghaill discovered similar findings in his study of Black & Asian A-Level pupils. Each of these studies show how labelling does not always follow the same negative pattern.

Both of these studies show how negative labelling can be challenged as long as the pupils are able to produce adequate coping strategies....

....There is evidence however that labelling can & does have a negative impact on pupils.....

Page 33 in  
the booklet



### Sewell (1998) 'Loose Cannons':

Examined the different strategies that Black boys used to cope with racism. One of Sewell's conclusions was that teachers hold a stereotype of 'Black Machismo' - seeing Black pupils as rebellious & anti-authority.

Sewell argues that there are 4 main responses to teacher racism (Link to Crime & deviance - Merton & Strain Theory):

#### > Conformity:

The majority of Black pupils accepted the values of the school & were eager to succeed.

#### > Rebellion:

The most influential group but still a minority. These rejected the values of the school & opposed the school by joining a peer group. These reinforced the negative stereotypes of 'Black Machismo'.

#### > Retreatism:

A small minority who isolated & disconnected with peer group subcultures & the school. These kept a low profile.

#### > Innovation:

Second largest group who were pro-education but anti-school (like the girls in Fuller's study). They distanced themselves from 'Conformists' enough to keep credibility with the 'Rebels' whilst valuing education success.

Page 34 in  
the booklet

# Key Terms

## Page 35 and 36 in your booklet

- **Individual racism:** that results from the prejudiced views of individual teachers and others
- **Institutional racism:** discrimination that is built into the way institutions such as schools and colleges operate

# Archer

## Page 44 in the booklet

- **Findings**
- **One reason for these differences is the conflict between working class girl's feminine identities and the values and ethos of the school.**
- **Archer found that by performing their w/c feminine identities, the girls gained symbolic capital from their peers, but this brought about conflict with the school, preventing them from acquiring educational capital (GCSEs) and economic capital (m/c jobs).**

# Archer

- **How did it affect achievement?**
- The girls identities included adopting a hyper-heterosexual feminine identity, having a boyfriend and being loud. They spent their income on their appearance to ensure they didn't get labelled a tramp by their peers. The girls were also interested in having a boyfriend, leading them to have low aspirations and just want to 'settle down'.
- The school often punished them for having the wrong appearance, which distracted them from education. This led the school to believing the girls were incapable of educational success and gave them less respect.

# Archer

- W/C girls are thus faced with a dilemma:
  - Either gaining symbolic capital from their peers and being rejected by the school.
  - Or gaining educational capital and being rejected by their peers.



# Evans

## Findings

**Some w/c girls do go on to achieve well and go to HE.**

**Studied 21 w/c sixth form girls in London. Girls wanted to go to university to increase their earning power to care for their family.**

**Caring for the family and being around the familiar are also part of w/c identity.**

## How did it affect achievement?

**Thus, they stayed at home to save on cost, which limits their success, but makes HE accessible.**

**This demonstrates that w/c identity plays a significant role in w/c girls relative lack of success in comparison to m/c girls.**

# Policies to improve Achievement

## Page 45 in the booklet

- The Raising Boys Achievement project
- The National Literacy Strategy
- The Reading Champions
- Playing for Success

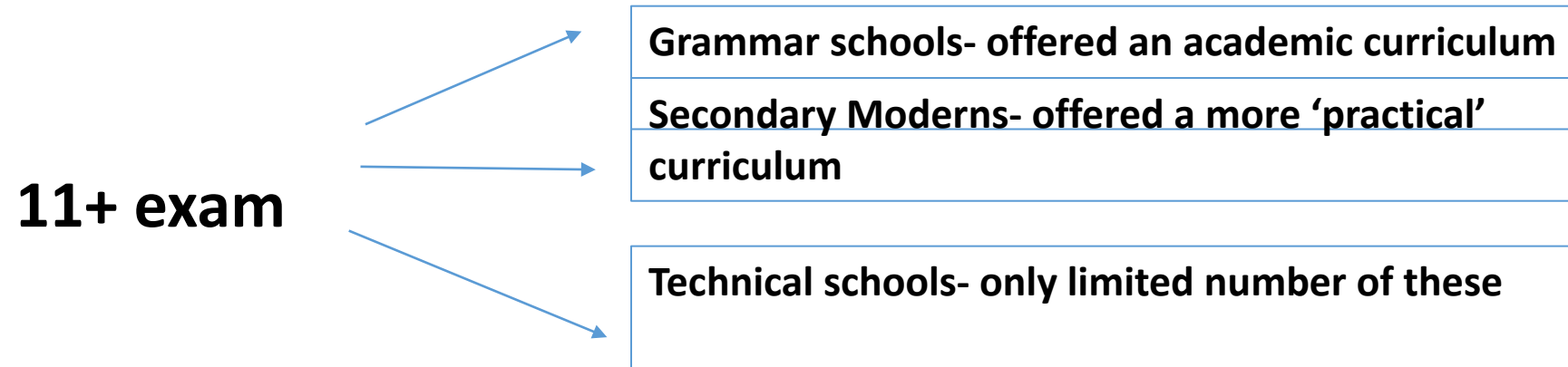
The Dads and Sons Campaign

- **Research two of the campaigns and how they tried to improve boys' achievement**

# Selection: The Tripartite System

## Page 53 in the booklet

**This came about as a result of the 1944 Education Act and involved children at the age of 11 being selected through testing to attend one of three different types of school:**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xmwcF8AiZQ>

# Educational Policy in Britain 1989-1997 The Conservative Years Page 55 in the booklet

## Marketisation policies include:

- Exam League Tables/Ofsted reports giving information for parents and creating competition
- Business sponsorship of schools ie city technology colleges
- Schools being allowed to opt out of LEA control ie GMS
- Open enrolment, allowing successful schools to recruit more pupils.



# Educational Policy in Britain 1989-1997 The

## Conservative Years

### Page 56 in the booklet

#### 1) Privileged-skilled choosers-

Professional m/c, who use their economic and cultural capital to gain educational capital for their children. Being prosperous, confident and well educated, and also knowing how the admissions system worked they were able to take full advantage of the choice open to them.

#### 2) Disconnected local choosers-

w/c parents whose choices were restricted by their lack of cultural and economic capital. They were less confident in knowing how admissions worked and distance and cost of travel were restrictions on choice of school.

#### 3) Semi-skilled choosers-

w/c parents who were ambitious for their children, but lacked cultural capital and found it difficult to make sense of the education market

# Educational Policy in Britain 1997-2010- The New Labour Years

## Page 57 in the booklet

### Policies included:

- Designating some deprived areas as Education Action Zones and providing them with additional resources
- The Aim Higher Programme to raise the aspirations of groups who are under-represented in higher education
- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)- payments to students from low income families to encourage them to stay on in education post 16
- Introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, literacy and numeracy hours, and reducing primary school class sizes
- City academies were created to give a fresh start to struggling inner-city schools with mainly w/c pupils
- Increased funding for state education

# Coalition Government Policies from 2010

## Page 59 in the booklet

### Fragmented Centralisation

Ball (2011) argues that promoting academies and free schools has led to both increased fragmentation and increased centralisation of control over educational provision in England.

#### *Fragmentation:*

*The comprehensive system is being replaced by a patchwork of diverse provision, much of it involving private providers, that leads to greater inequality in opportunities.*

#### *Centralisation of Control:*

*Central government alone has the power to allow or require schools to become academies or allow free schools to be set up. These schools are directly funded by central government. Their rapid growth has greatly reduced the role of elected local authorities in education.*