

# Education knowledge organiser

## The role of education in society.

### 1. The economic role-teaching skills for work.

**Functionalists:** Teaches skills and knowledge necessary for work. Preparation for real world.

**Marxists:** This is reinforcing the class system.

### 2. The selective role- Choosing the most able people for the most important jobs.

**Functionalists:** The system is a sieve. Meritocratic system, everyone has equal opportunities to succeed, those who work hard and achieve are rewarded with higher pay levels/status.

**Marxists:** Education does not provide equal opportunities. Designed to benefit the powerful. This is why working-class children underperform.

### 3. Social Control- teaching acceptance of rules and authority

**Functionalists:** Society must be regulated by rules. Schools are an agency of social control.

**Marxists:** Social control reflects social control in the wider society which benefits those in power.

### 4. The political role- teaching people to be effective citizens and creating social cohesion.

**Functionalists:** Acceptance of the political system and will exercise their rights wisely (voting)

**Marxists:** Only certain political opinions and ideas are tolerated, radical ideas are rejected.



## The Hidden Curriculum:

1. Hierarchy: The hierarchy in school can be seen to reflect the structure of society and in the workplace.
2. Competition: School encourages competition between students e.g. sports, exam results.
3. Social Control: Rules, regulations, obedience and respect for authority.
4. Gender role allocation: teacher expectations and subject choice
5. Lack of satisfaction: Preparing students for boring, meaningless and repetitive jobs is a similar experience to employees at work,



### Social Control: Formal

Discipline, punishment, school rules.

### Social Control: Informal

Peer-group pressure, learning to live and work with others.

**Pre-School** (3-5 years). May be provided through the local authority or private.

**Primary** (5-11 years). Refers to both infant & junior schools.

**Secondary** (11-16 years). Most provided for by the state in comprehensive schools.

**Further & Higher Education** (16-18 years). Sixth Form, college or apprenticeships.

**De-schooling:** Illich (1995) argues that schools repress children and promotes passive conformity rather than developing creative individuals. He argues for de-schooling. School should be abolished and people should pursue knowledge and skills with like-minded individuals

### Home education (home schooling):

Teaching children at home rather than in a state or independent school. Parents or tutors usually carry this out. It is a legal option for people who wish to provide a different learning environment or ethos to local schools. Recently raised issues around standards and impact on social development.

## Talcott Parsons (Functionalist)

- Schools prepare children for the same **universalistic standards**- the opposite of the **particularistic standards** from homelife.
- Schools promote a **value consensus**: encouraged to achieve high and the rewards encourage them to maximise their potential. Students are also competing on equal terms in the classroom.
- **Meritocracy**: students achievements are based on their abilities and efforts, not on social class, gender or ethnicity,
- Role allocation: matched to the correct job based on skill/knowledge.

### Arguments for vocational education

- It will lead to a more skilled, better-qualified workforce that will make Britain more competitive
- Functionalists believe it shows the importance the education system has to provide skills and expertise needed by industry & the economy.

### Arguments against vocational education

- The emphasis on skills training disguises the fact that the problem is not that young people lack necessary skills for work it's that there is no work for skilled young people.
- Marxists argue it is viewed as lower status compared to purely academic qualifications.
- Seen as replicating the Tripartite system



Functionalist

Marxist

Feminist

Education is an important agency of socialisation, it maintains social stability and social cohesion. Prepares young people for working life and adulthood. Teaches specialist skills for work. Education is meritocratic.

Prepares young people for a capitalist society. Education is not meritocratic. Encourages conformity and acceptance of social position. The hidden curriculum teaches young people the expectations of society.

There are inequalities in the education system between boys and girls. It plays a role in socialisation of boys and girls. Even though girls are outperforming boys, education still reinforces patriarchal views.

### Why are independent schools favoured by some?

- Lower teacher-student ratio which means smaller classes so students receive more attention
- Resources/ facilities are better
- Academic culture
- Parental input, expectations and support tends to be higher

### Why are state schools favoured by others?

- Free and not based on ability
- More socially mixed
- Upward social mobility
- Students do not have to travel far on a daily basis

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## Keythinkers

Emile Durkheim (Functionalist)	Bowles & Gintis (1976) (Marxist)	Ball, Bowe & Gewirtz (1994)- Parental Choice & Competition	Halsey, Heath & Ridge (1980)- Social Class Inequality	Ball (1981)- Banding & Teacher expectations	Willis (1977)- Learning to Labour (Marxist)
<p>In this classic text, Durkheim considers how education is able to perform the role of <b>socialisation</b>: teach children the <b>norms and values</b> of their society.</p>	<p>A classic Marxist analysis of education which describes how school prepares workers for a life of exploitation in the capitalist system. Unlike functionalists like Parsons, Bowles &amp; Gintis dismiss the idea that the education system is meritocratic, instead describing a system that reproduces social class inequality.</p>	<p>A number of education policies and reforms, especially those brought in as part of the 1988 Educational Reform Act, looked to create a market in state education. The idea was that parents would have more choice and control over their children's education. Ball, Bowe &amp; Gewirtz investigated to see what impact the policies were having.</p>	<p>This was an extensive piece of research on the educational chances of schoolboys from different social classes.</p>	<p>This classic case study into secondary education sought to investigate why working-class pupils underperformed at school.</p>	<p>Paul Willis used a wide range of research methods - including observations and interviews - to really try and see education from the children's point of view. As a Marxist, he was interested in conflict in education and why working-class children went on to do working-class jobs. But he reached quite different conclusions from Bowles &amp; Gintis.</p>
<p>Durkheim argued that, for society to work, there had to be a <b>value consensus</b>. People in society had to agree about what was important and how to behave. That way society functions (works) without everything having to be controlled and managed all the time. Education is a crucial <b>agent of socialisation</b>.</p>	<p>A key aspect of Bowles &amp; Gintis' famous study was the <b>correspondence principle</b>. That is, that school is deliberately made to be similar to work. Like in the workplace, school has a clear hierarchy (including some hierarchy among the pupils/workers to keep them divided). School work is fragmented into different subjects and disciplines, just as people have separate tasks on a production line. People work for <b>extrinsic rewards</b> (i.e. pay for workers in the capitalist system; grades and house points, etc. in school) rather than getting satisfaction from doing the work itself.</p>	<p>One of the key <b>marketization</b> policies introduced in 1988 was <b>league tables</b>. This was the publication of how schools compared with each other in terms of the results pupils were getting - not just A Levels and GCSEs but also the new SATs. The idea was that parents could look at the league tables and make an informed choice about which school their children should attend. While school locations and the number of places meant that parents did not have complete freedom of choice, the aim was to make schools compete for parents and strive to keep improving their standards and therefore improve their position on the league tables and attract more pupils (and with that, more funding).</p>	<p>Halsey, Heath and Ridge accessed a large sample of 8000 men, to look at the extent to which social class had impacted their experience of education. He divided people up into three social classes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The service class</li> <li>2. The intermediate class</li> <li>3. The working class</li> </ol>	<p>The classic functionalist argument is that the education system is meritocratic: it helps sort people into the most appropriate jobs. And yet statistics show that people from lower-income families consistently underperform compared with those from wealthier families. Marxists think this is deliberate: that the role of the education system is to reproduce class inequality. But lots of policies have been put in place to try and support children from low-income families in school. If Marxists are wrong that schools deliberately fail working-class children, and functionalists are wrong that schools are meritocratic: what actually is going on?</p>	<p>Willis' study of working-class boys in a Midlands school has become a classic. His study focused on "the lads" - a group of working-class boys who were disruptive, misbehaved and had a very negative attitude to education. They had formed what Willis called an <b>anti-school subculture</b>. Within this subculture it was "cool" to "mess about" and to fail. It really turned the values of the school on their head. From the perspective of this subculture, children who the school viewed positively were the "ear'oles" ("swots"). The last thing you wanted was praise within the group for truancy, bad behaviour and discriminatory attitudes (there was a lot of racism, sexism and homophobia within the group).</p>
<p>Durkheim saw the teaching of History - in particular - as a key part of this socialisation process. He argued that, through learning the history of their country, people learnt to feel part of something bigger than themselves: part of a community. This helps to encourage children to understand that society is important: that they should be interested in other people, not just themselves.</p>	<p>Bowles &amp; Gintis argue that the aim of this is to create obedient, docile workers, who will not question how things are arranged and will not work together to change things. Separately, the children of the ruling class are taught in private schools or similar, to be confident and to expect to run things and be in charge. As such, for Bowles &amp; Gintis the schooling system performs a vital function for capitalism: it keeps the children of working-class parents working class, and ensures the children of bourgeois parents remain bourgeois. And it ensure that those working-class children will continue to work hard and put up with low pay and poor conditions. It is the opposite of a meritocratic system. Bowles &amp; Gintis talk about the <b>myth of meritocracy</b>.</p>	<p>Ball, Bowe &amp; Gewirtz identified a number of problems with this approach. First, they identified the pressure that league tables, and the associated <b>formula funding</b>, put on schools and how that pressure impacted on children's education. Some schools responded to the pressure by focusing their attention on the most able children, which arguably disadvantaged lower-ability pupils. Many schools reintroduced policies of banding or streaming in order to best identify the pupils who would achieve and help the league table positions. Ball, in his earlier research about Beachside Comprehensive, had concluded that streaming had a negative effect on working-class pupils.</p>	<p>The service class were professionals and managers, the intermediate class other "white-collar" workers and the working class included manual labourers.</p>	<p>Ball spent three years in Beachside Comprehensive, carrying out a <b>participant observation</b>. He particularly focused on two groups of students, one who had been banded or streamed by ability, and another that was taught in mixed-ability classes. The banding was well-intentioned. There was a concern among teachers that in mixed-ability classes the brightest pupils were held back and the weakest pupils were left behind, with a tendency that it was the middle swathe of pupils who were focused on. However, Ball found that the process tended to have a negative impact on working-class pupils.</p>	<p>With these findings, Willis does not only undermine the arguments of Parsons or Durkheim, but also of his fellow Marxists, Bowles &amp; Gintis. First, he concluded that school was not working very well as an agent of socialisation: there was no value consensus here: pupils were actively rejecting the norms and values of society. As such, they were a long way from the hard-working, docile, obedience workers suggested by Bowles &amp; Gintis! And yet the outcome was much the same: the children of working-class parents going on to do working-class jobs. In this study they played an active role in this: they thought school was boring and pointless and was something they had to endure until they could go to work. They had a similar attitude to work, and got through it using similar techniques: "messaging about" and "having a laff".</p>
<p>Also, outside the classroom, school encourages children to work together with all sorts of people - not just people they are related to or are particularly close friends with. Again, as with teaching history, this helps children learn to be a part of wider society.</p>	<p>Bowles &amp; Gintis also explore the idea of a <b>hidden curriculum</b> - i.e. the things that education teaches us that are not part of the formal curriculum (what we learn about the various subjects in the classroom). Functionalists also recognise that there is a hidden curriculum, but they see this is a positive thing: part of what teaches people the norms and values of society. Marxists like Bowles &amp; Gintis think this only benefits the ruling class and capitalism. It is important to remember that Bowles &amp; Gintis were Marxists: they were critics of capitalism. This is what they thought education <b>was</b> like, not what they thought it <b>should be</b> like.</p>	<p>The researchers concluded that marketisation benefited middle-class children, whose parents took advantage of the system to reinforce their advantages. They found that schools contributed to this situation as they felt that becoming an increasingly middle-school would help them move up the league tables. Schools would also engage in <b>cream skimming</b> and <b>slit shifting</b> to try and get the best pupils in their school and pass on lower ability pupils elsewhere. As such, working-class pupils and some minority-ethnic groups found themselves in the undersubscribed and under-funded schools lower down the league tables. The class divide that existed under the old grammar school system was recreated in the comprehensive system.</p>	<p>They found that the children born into the service class did much better at school than those from the intermediate class, and both did better than the working class.</p>	<p>He found that pupils who started school with similar attitudes to study began to diverge when they were banded/streamed. That is when they were put in classes supposedly based on their ability. Streaming is when pupils of a similar ability are in the same, streamed class for all subjects whereas with setting pupils could be in a high set for Maths and a low set for English (for example).</p>	<p>Willis used a wide range of research methods (known as <b>methodological pluralism</b>) to try and get as true a picture as possible. However, it has been suggested that the boys may have acted up more to "show off" to Willis. This might have occurred when they were being observed (the <b>Hawthorne Effect</b> - people behave differently when they know they're being watched) and when they were interviewed (an <b>interviewer effect</b>).</p>
<p>Durkheim was particularly interested in the teaching of morals: right and wrong. This was an important part of teaching values: it is important that there is broad agreement in society about what is right and what is wrong. Also, in school, behaviour can be strictly controlled. Durkheim thought it was important to have strict discipline in school. That way, children would learn what was acceptable or not. Through this, by the time children leave school, most will have learnt self-discipline and not need to be controlled. They should also have learned that misbehaviour has negative consequences, both for themselves and for society.</p>	<p>Critics would argue that school has changed a lot since the 1970s and so has the workplace. Others would point out that working-class pupils do not always seem "docile" and "obedient" and often seem quite the opposite! However, Willis (in <b>Learning to Labour</b>) suggests that poor behaviour at school still benefits the capitalist system.</p>	<p>Supporters of marketisation would point out that it was parental attitudes at work here rather than the policies or system, and middle-class parents should not be penalised for (apparently) taking a greater interest in their children's education. Some would also point out that policies since 1994 have gone some way to resolving these issues, such as the <b>Pupil Premium</b> that ensures pupils from low-income households carry more funding and schools can invest that money into activities that benefit those pupils.</p>	<p>While the differences described are very clear, there are a number of possible problems with the research. One, the research did not consider girls at all, which could have a significant impact on the findings. Second, there had been significant changes in both the education system and society since many of the sample had finished school. Also, some sociologists would question the way the study defined social classes.</p>	<p>Working-class pupils gravitated towards the lower bands and then became increasingly disinterested in education and "anti-school". The net effect of this was that children from lower-income families left school with fewer qualifications, therefore reproducing class inequalities, apparently by accident. He describes a downward mobility - quite the opposite of what Parsons or Davis and Moore imagined - where attempts at <b>differentiation</b> damage working-class pupils' education and life chances.</p>	<p>While Willis was coming from a Marxist perspective, his study does suggest that working-class boys actively chose to fail, rather than the system being designed by the capitalist class to have this outcome. He did suggest that this ultimately benefited capitalism, because there wasn't a meritocracy and instead class inequality was reproduced, and there would not be a revolution because workers had learnt a coping strategy for doing boring, unfulfilling work ("having a laff"). However, it did not produce the productive, docile workers capitalists might ideally like to have working for them!</p>

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<b>Comprehensive-</b> One school for everyone	<b>Grammar School-</b> more academic	<b>Private Schools-</b> Charge fees	<b>Public Schools-</b> Older, more famous schools such as Eton & Harrow.	<b>State Schools-</b> Free schools available for everyone of all abilities	<b>Independent Schools-</b> Public & Private Schools
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**Material deprivation:**  
Costs of uniforms, sports kits and special materials may keep poorer children away from school.

**Material environment:**  
Living conditions such as poor housing, overcrowding, lack of privacy or quiet places to do homework adversely affect performance and attendance.

**The 'self-fulfilling' prophecy**  
If teachers have low expectations, or see a child as only being capable of reaching a certain level of academic achievement this can make students bring on their own 'self-image' into line with the teachers judgement.

**The 'Halo effect'**  
Judging a student as 'bright' while they tend to question the good performance of those children who are less well behaved.

**Streaming**  
Putting students into groups, based on assessment of general ability. This can lead to a "counter-culture".

**Feminist Movement**  
Change in attitudes towards women's roles and expectations-encouraging educational success and the ability to have a professional career.

**Parental attitudes:**  
Middle-class Values: Desire for control over their lives, emphasis on future planning, deferred gratification, individual achievement stress.  
Working-class values- passive/fatalistic acceptance, emphasis on present or past, present gratification, collection action stressed.

**Social Class:**  
Statistics tend to show that the higher a student's social class background, the greater chance they have of achieving high educational qualifications.

**Paul Willis- Learning to Labour- Anti School subculture**

**The School:**  
Teachers make judgments and classify students. These judgments can often affects a child's chances of educational achievement.

**Changing Job Opportunities**  
Decreases in 'male' jobs in manufacturing and engineering, but an increase in 'female' jobs in the service industry

**Legal Changes**  
The Sex Discrimination Act (1975)  
Raised awareness of equal opportunities.

Middle class parents know how to "work the system" such as how to hold disagreements with teachers, which educational resources to purchase. They may also expect more from their children and show more interest in their progress.

**Cultural Deprivation:**  
A middle-class students upbringing may put them at an advantage over working-class students e.g. family visits to libraries, museums or holidays, homes filled with books, educational toys and electronic media are the norm in middle-class homes.

**Home and Social Class background.**  
Class position may influence achievement dependant on the types of work offered to particular groups. In other words there is a 'doubling up' of factors. Some differences could be accounted for due to class and home life.

**Teachers expectations.**  
Some teachers may have higher or lower expectations of certain ethnic groups.

**Gender:**  
Official statistics reveal some differences in educational achievement based on gender

**Subject Choice.**  
Gender stereotyping in textbooks, or role models of teachers in certain subject areas (male dominated maths & science) and continued gender stereotyping by teachers.

**Social Capital:**  
Middle-class children will socialise with children in a similar class to themselves. Their parents will be part of a network of social relationships that give them benefits e.g. friends with teachers, university lecturers, doctors etc.

**Cultural differences.**  
Cultural norms and values may be different to 'mainstream' British norms and values. The language spoken at home may also be an important factor.

**Ethnicity:**  
Statistics show some ethnic groups under achieve, whilst others over achieve.

**Parental expectations.**  
Some research into different ethnic groups has concluded that some groups put more pressure on their children achieving at school, whilst others show less interest. Some have experienced poor education in their home countries and may therefore have a strong desire to help their children's education more. However, a poor education may results in a lack of ability to help their children with homework.

**The Hidden Curriculum.**  
It is argued that certain subjects are biased towards white European culture. Some books may present stereotypical images of some minority groups.



## Educational achievement

**1944 Butler Education Act**

- Equal chance to develop talents, free state run education
- Introduction of a meritocratic system in which children received an education based on their academic ability rather than the ability of their parents to pay.
- Introduction of the 11+ exam and the Tripartite System:
  - > Secondary Modern
  - > Secondary Technical
  - > Grammar

**1965: The Comprehensive System**

- One school for everyone- all abilities and social classes.
- No labelling as a failure, seen as fairer.
- Each school has a specific 'catchment'

**1988 Education Act**

- Introduction of the marketisation of education- consumer choice and competition. Focus on parental choice, funding based on student numbers and more freedom for schools.
- The introduction of the National Curriculum- core subjects for ages 5-16.
- Introduction of testing- GCSE examination.

**1997 New Labour Educational Policy**

- Raising Standards: providing nursery places for 3-4 year olds, reducing class sizes, national literacy & numeracy schemes, 'special measures', 'value-added' feature on league tables.
- Reducing inequality: introduction of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Aim Higher Programme, The Sure Start programme and Connexions.
- Promoting Diversity & Choice- Introduction of specialist and faith schools.

**Since 2010 educational policies.**

- New style academies
- Free Schools
- Pupil Premium