



Pre-entry Preparation, Requirements and Recommendations

Welcome to A-Level Sociology at Comberton Sixth Form.

Preparation

You will no doubt have lots of free time on your hands at the moment! The Sociology Department has thought of a range of different activities that you could do to help you prepare for your course at CVSF, however, please do not feel that you have to complete everything listed below.

Reading:

As a sociologist you will be doing lots of reading and notetaking over the next two years (and beyond if you decide to continue your studies). These are some recommended books that you might want to read (We have tried to find books that you can get on an e-reader such as a Kindle to help you get easy access):

- Sociology: a very short introduction by Steve Bruce – gives you the basic concepts in sociology
- Introducing Sociology: A graphic guide by John Nagel and Piero – this is free if you have an Amazon Prime account and can be read on a kindle
- Heads Up Sociology by DK : covers lots of the topics that we will study over the next two years.

If you would like a longer read we would highly recommend Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari (this is also available as an audiobook which might help keep you distracted whilst doing chores and helping around the house!).

Films and Television programmes

There are lots of great documentaries and television programmes that might help you to get thinking sociologically. You do not have to watch these but they might help you to keep busy!:

BBC iPlayer:

- Adam Curtis HyperNormalisation – this is very long! I would recommend watching in three 1 hour chunks. It explores modern society and why it is like it is.
- Britain's forgotten men – explores masculinity and the ideas of maleness in society today
- The Home that 2 built – an interesting collection of clips looking at how British lifestyles have changed over the last 50 years.
- How To Break into the Elite – exploring the role and importance of social class in Britain today
- Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends – a spot of light relief! See how Louis uses approaches exploring different groups in society.
- Young, Welsh and Pretty Religious – an interesting look at religion in modern society

Netflix

- Wild Wild Country – looking at the experiences of a sect/cult in America
- RBG – Looking at how the role of women has changed in society by following the story of Ruth Bader Ginsberg
- Louis Theroux – again, lots to choose from!

TedTalks

There are so many excellent Ted Talks you can find them at [exploring some interesting topics](#). Some suggested talks to watch include:

- Do Schools kill creativity
- Why open a school? To Close a prison
- I don't want children, stop telling me to change my mind

Slightly off-topic but fascinating is: [How pig parts make the world turn](#) – exploring our relationship with the common pig!

Podcasts

Podcasts can be a great way to think sociologically and are easily accessible. Some recommendations include:

- Serial series 3: exploring crime and justice in America
- Thinking Allowed: this is a long running BBC radio programme and there are loads of really interesting topics, choose something that you find fascinating!
- SAGE sociology: short programmes exploring recent research
- Getting curious with Jonathan Van Ness – exploring a range of topics with lots of 'Yass'es!

Seneca

You can sign up to Seneca for free and you could do some pre-learning looking at Education and Families and households. There is also a podcast but it is a bit dry! The course we are doing is Sociology AQA A level – you could look at Education, Families and households or research methods.

Requirements

- 2 x A4 folder (with dividers) – one for sociology of the family, one for sociology of education
- Lined paper – please buy some and bring it with you.
- There will also be some reading packs available at certain points throughout the course which will cost no more than £1.50 each.
- You need to buy yourself a course textbook. You can either purchase the older edition second hand (AS Level Sociology: The Complete Course for the AQA Specification by Rob Webb published by Napier Press) or the newer edition (AQA A level Sociology Book One including AS Level ISBN: 9780954007911 by Rob Webb) from <https://napierpress.com/buybooks> (these are harder to find second hand but you might be able to find it on Ebay or World of Books). Either book is entirely fine. You can read the introductory chapter if you would like to get started on your studies

Recommendations

We would recommend you try to:

- Read one of the listed books
- Watch one of the docs on BBC iPlayer/Netflix and write a brief review, what did it tell you about living in society today?
- Watch one Tedtalk, what did it tell you about life in society today?
- Listen to at least 3 podcasts (either from the same provider or 3 different ones)
- Sign up for Seneca and complete one of the modules (education, families or research methods).

If you have any queries about your course preparation please contact Zach Beamish (Head of Sociology) zbeamish@combertonvc.org