Sociology A Level

1. What is sociology?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnCJU6PaCio
- How does society affect all of the things you have bought, your taste in music etc.? 
- Which social science is considered the broadest social science and why?
- Sociologists are interested in studying patterns of human behaviour. Can you give any examples?
- What does it mean to ‘see the strange and the familiar’?
- What is the difference between common sense and sociology?
- What ideas in the past were considered common sense but are widely rejected today?
- What is a ‘social location’?
- What is marginalisation? Which groups feel marginalised in society?
- Can you think of some examples of power inequality?
- How can sociology help to improve social issues?

2. Why do sociologists and historians study youth cultures?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5Ohxn1pJH8
Matt Worley is interested in whether young people, since the 1960s, joined youth subcultures like the punks in order to articulate political values. Do you agree? Was this about politics, style, identity or anything else you could consider?

· You could also consider how youth cultures have changed over recent generations. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvvFE1fj88Q

The Young Blood short documentary captures how youths today really think, feel and act. Do you agree with the ideas expressed in this documentary? Have the old youth subcultures like punks ceased to exist?

3. What are the issues that affect students in education today?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Bak3k_efBs
Watch ‘Educating Yorkshire’ or any other documentaries that go inside of schools and capture the experiences young people and teachers have in education today. Consider how similar or different your school is from the one you see in this documentary.

In sociology we also debate the purpose of education. Why do you think schools exist?
4. How much inequality exists in the UK today?

https://vimeo.com/133760539
Watch Fraser Nelson’s documentary on social inequality and social mobility. Listen out for the statistics on social inequality that he cites from the Centre for Social Justice. It may surprise you how much inequality exists between the nation’s richest and poorest.

5. How do the different sociological theories (feminism, realism, Marxism etc.) help us to understand crime and deviance?

The above link will allow you to explore the key sociological perspectives that we teach. Functionalists, Marxists, Feminists, Interactionists, Realists and Postmodernists all offer different theories and research that will help to organise the way you think about crime.

· Is prison effective?
https://revisesociology.com/tag/crime-control/
Another reading task. This will cover the issues of using prison as a means of rehabilitation. You could think about/research some other ways we can deal with crime, other than using prisons? Research other prison designs around the world. Norway use a significantly different approach to prison design and have more success with reducing reoffending.

6. Are there any textbooks that would help me prepare for studying sociology?

You do not need to purchase any textbooks as we will give you the materials you need when you start the course. However, the textbooks for both years and the revision guide would be a useful tool in getting a head start!

7. What can I watch/read to help me prepare for studying sociology?

You are going to study youth culture, education, social inequality and crime throughout your two-year course. Pay attention to anything in the news about young people protesting, racism, sexism, education, gangs, the economy, crime rates etc. We recommend you use BBC news and other news sources that tend to be more reliable. Pay close attention to the sources of information when reading news articles.