



SOCIOLOGY



By engaging in these activities, you are moving beyond studying sociology to actually becoming a sociologist. All the 'actions' below are deliberately presented as a verb because sociology is something you do; it is an active engagement with your environment and a constant process of reflecting on that relationship. And living in London gives us many additional opportunities to use our 'sociological imagination'. The list below is a tiny fragment of the vast possibilities open to you – look at the 'action' and create your own activity to live out that verb sociologically! This list is meant to help you expand your mind and become more inventive – move out of your comfort zone or habitus to create and explore new worlds!

- **READING**
Anything that interests you: books; websites; magazines. The sociology classroom has many books in it you can borrow covering issues of gender, class, poverty, inequality and romance. Check out the following list of 100 book suggestions specifically linked to sociology
- **LISTENING**
Anything that interests you: radio and podcasts. Check out radio 4 in particular – and this programme specifically on sociology called 'Thinking Allowed', BBC, Also Ted Talks are excellent, Also attend talks e.g. at Southbank Centre
- **WATCHING**
Anything that interests you: films online, in cinemas, documentaries and fiction. Try John Pilger for real-world-exposing documentaries or try Panorama on BBC. Do a search for films related to sociology and go to the BFI on Southbank where you get good discounts as students or try the Bertha DocHouse near Russell Square which is the 'home of documentary'
- **OBSERVING**
Develop your skills of observation both overtly and covertly. Write down some observational notes – keep a notebook on you. Observe people on public transport, on the streets, at school, in shops. How do people behave? What do they say? Read 'Black Like Me' by Griffin or 'Glasgow Gangs' by Patrick (available in the sociology classroom).
- **VISITING**
Visit some museums in London. Try the Museum of London or the V & A or the British Museum or consult a website with an overview of museums in London like this
- **INTERVIEWING**
Attend the lunchtime sixth form interviews! Interview your friends, relatives and anyone else you meet. You can conduct interviews formally or informally, in groups or one-to-one (Mrs Ferros's disclosure: interviews yield the most interesting conversations with people!) Watch Stacey Dooley documentaries to see how she interviews people; also John Pilger (as referenced above) and try this for famous interviewers in the US and read Mrs Ferros's book Eighteen which is a book of interviews with eighteen-year-olds.
- **EXPERIMENTING**
Try out 'experiments' for example change something about your appearance, what you eat, what exercise you do, what you read, what you do on social media, what you wear, how you work, what time you go to bed. Take a note of how you felt before and after (= the dependent variable). You can also make your own surveys using Forms in Teams (note: remember the ethical guidelines for respondents in any sociological research). Here are some examples specifically linked to professional sociology experiments There is also a strong overlap with psychology. Also the famous blue/brown eyes experiment by Jane Elliott
- **DECONSTRUCTING**
Don't take the norms and values around you as a given – remember, they are largely a social construct. Try the Gapminder website linked to Hans Rosling on global development themes Also for gender watch the Barbie film and check out the Movies that defy gender stereotypes list by Common Sense Media and watch some interviews by David Wengrow on his book The Dawn of Everything which uses anthropology and archaeology to understand the notion of inequality in prehistorical societies – this is a short summary Also try this programme 'From Savage to Self'
- **WRITING**
Keep a journal. Write down anything you want – don't feel you need to follow a certain formula. You will be creating a personal secondary document! This can be interesting to you later in life especially if you have children one day. You could also do some more public/political writing e.g. letter-writing – join Amnesty International or write to your local MP about issues you feel need to be raised. You could also write a blog or write about school/education issues for the St Anne's newsletter, social media accounts or website.
- **WALKING**
Visit London – walk around and look at the houses, the streets etc. Save up for a walking tour of London. Look at the architecture in your area: what type of houses/buildings are there? Create a 'cognitive map' of your area
- **DRAWING**
Keep a sketchbook on you - make a sketch of your observations – of people, objects, landscapes, buildings. This will train your eye and hence your mind to really see deeply and closely. You can also do this in a more quantitative way on any phenomenon you are interested in by making a Gantt Chart. Follow some websites on learning how to draw
- **THINKING**
The way our 'great sociologists' came up with their theories on society was through thinking. This is part of the process of 'doing sociology' so take some time out to think deeply about who you are, the family, country, society and era you have been born into and how these shape you. You could read a book like Factfulness by Hans Rosling to get you thinking or take a more literal approach by reading The Power of Thought by Henry Thomas Hamblin or take a more psychological approach and create a thinking map of your cognitive processes.