Education with Methods in Context Question Bank

Education and Methods in Context is examined in both the AS and the A Level.

In the AS exam you will be asked you will be asked 3 short answer questions:
- 2 mark definition question
- 2 mark – using one example…..
- 6 mark – outline three…..

You will then be asked 2 extended answer questions:
- 10 marks – outline and explain two…..
- 20 marks – using the item and your own knowledge, evaluate / assess……

In the A Level exams you will be asked 2 short answer questions
- 4 marks – Outline two…..
- 6 marks – Outline three (same as AS)

You will then be asked 2 extended answer questions:
- 10 marks – Using the item outline and explain two…..
- 30 marks – using the item and your own knowledge, evaluate / assess……

Methods in Context is the same on both AS and A Level and require you to apply your knowledge of research methods to a specific area of education and is worth 20 marks.

This booklet contains multiple example questions for both the AS and the A Level exams, along with generic mark schemes which can be used for assessment or for private practice.

AS Question Type 1: Define the term….. – 2 marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Two marks for a satisfactory definition.
One mark for partial definition or only an example given.

This is not an exclusive list but some of the key terms that could come up.

Anti-school subculture

Banding

Collectivism

Colour-blind teachers

Compensatory education

Comprehensive schools

Conformists (Sewell)

Correspondence theory

Cream-skimming

Cultural capital

Cultural deprivation

Deferred gratification

Deviance

Educational triage

Elaborated code

Ethnocentric

Exam league tables

External

Fatalism

Feminisation of education

Feminism

Fordism

Funding formula

Gender

GIST

Globalisation

Hidden curriculum

Ideological state apparatus

Ideology

Immediate gratification

Individualism

Innovators (Sewell)

Intellectual development

Internal factors

Labelling

Legitimation

Liberal chauvinists teachers

Life chances

Marketization

Material deprivation

Meritocracy

Myth of Meritocracy

National curriculum

New vocationalism

Overt racist teachers

Parentocracy

Polarisation

Post-Fordism

Present-time orientation

Pro-school subculture

Pupil subcultures

Racism

Rebels (Sewell)

Repressive state apparatus

Restricted code

Retreatists (Sewell)

Role allocation

Selection

Self-fulfilling prophecy

Silt-shifting

Social class

Social control

Social solidarity

Stereotype

Stigma

Stratification

Streaming

Sub-culture

Tripartite system

Universalistic standards

Vocational training

AS Question Type 2:
Giving one example, briefly explain.. – 2 marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Two marks for a clearly explained example
one mark for a partially explained example

1. Using **one** example, briefly explain how cultural deprivation may affect educational achievement.

2. Using one example, briefly explain how the hidden curriculum in schools may prepare young people for working Life.

3. Using one example, briefly explain how teachers stereotyping may harm a pupils progress in school.

4. Using one example, briefly explain why there may be a culture clash between home and school for some pupils.

5. Using one example, briefly explain why some schools may try to select the pupils that attended their school

6. Using one example briefly explain how the self fulfilling prophecy may affect educational achievement.

7. Using one example, briefly explain how material deprivation may affect educational achievement.

8. Using one example, briefly explain how gender socialisation may affect subject choice.

9. Using one example, briefly explain how setting difference from streaming in schools.

10. Using one example, briefly explain how material deprivation may affect educational achievement.

11. Using one example, briefly explain how an ethnocentric curriculum may affect educational achievement.

12. Using one example, briefly explain how the introduction of the national curriculum may have affected levels of Educational achievement.

13. Using one example briefly explain how labelling can affect educational achievement.

14. Using one example briefly explain how material deprivation may affect educational achievement.

15. Using one example briefly explain how ethnocentrism may affect educational achievement.

16. Using one example briefly explain how ethnic differences may affect educational achievement.

17. Using one example briefly explain how gender may affect educational achievement.

18. Using one example, briefly explain how the restricted speech code may lead to underachievement.

19. Using one example, briefly explain how pupils identities may lead to underachievement.

20. Using one example, briefly explain how the male gaze may affect people's experience of schooling.

21. Using one example, briefly explain how multicultural education may reduce ethnic differences in achievement.

AS & A Level Question Type 3:
Outline three ways …. – 6 Marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Two marks for each of **three** appropriate reasons clearly outlined or **one mark** for appropriate reasons partially outlined

1. Outline **three** ways in which the organisation of schooling may be ethnocentric.

2. Outline three ways in which schooling might contribute to social stability.

3. Outline three ways what reasons why vocational education is often given lower status in schools compared to academic courses such as GCSE and as and A-levels.

4. Outline three reasons why labelling in schools may lead to the formation of anti school subcultures form

5. Outline three factors inside schools that may affect the educational progress that pupils make

6. Outline three reasons why girls generally achieve more highly in education than boys

7. Outline three reasons why some minority ethnic groups underachieving education

8. Outline three reasons why middle class parents are, in general, more successful in accessing better schools for their children than those from more disadvantaged backgrounds

9. Outline three ways in which privatisation has affected the educational system in Britain

10. Outline three reasons why some minority ethnic groups underachievement education.

11. Outline three ways in which Marxists see school as being similar to the workplace.

12. Outline three ways in which government educational policies have attempted to reduce inequality in achievement between social classes.

13. Outline three ways in which some sociologists have criticised the functionalist view of the role of education.

14. Outline three functions performed by education, according to functionalists sociologists.

15. Outline three ways but free reason why the labelling of pupils may lead to the underachieving

16. Outline three factors outside the education system that may affect gender differences in achievement

17. Outline three functions of education.

18. Outline three ways in which the organisation of schooling made disadvantage boys.

19. Outline three ways that school is similar to work.

20. Outline three functions of the education system

21. Outline three factors that affect working class children's chances of educational success

22. Outline three process within school that lead to some ethnic groups having lower educational outcomes.

23. Outline three reasons why girls now outperform boys in education

24. Outline three ways in which housing may affect achievements.

25. Outline three ways in which pupils may respond to labelling and streaming.

26. Outline three ways in which ethnicity curriculum may operate in education.

27. Outline three reasons why girls generally achieve more highly than boys in education.

28. Outline three ways in which the correspondence principle operates within school.

29. Outline three ways in which factors inside the education system may have contributed to the improvement of girls achievement.

30. Outline three ways that gender differences are reinforced in education.

A Level Question Type 1:
Outline two…. – 4 Marks

Generic Mark Scheme

> **Two** marks for each of two appropriate factors clearly outlined or **one** mark for appropriate factors partially outlined,

1. Outline two material factors that may affect social class differences in educational achievement.

2. Outline two cultural factors that may affect social class differences in Educational achievement.

3. Outline two ways in which globalisation has influenced educational policies.

4. Outline two ways in which education system reproduces social class inequalities from one generation to the next.

5. Outline two processes within schools that may lead to working class pupils underachieving.

6. Outline two ways in which postmodernist ideas are reflected in education.

7. Outline two problems with the interactionist view of education.

8. Outline and explain two educational policies that have contributed to the current patterns of attainment of goals.

9. Outline two criticisms of the comprehensive school system.

AS / A Level Question Type 4:
Outline and explain **two….** – 10 marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
8 – 10	Answers in this band will show very good knowledge and understanding of the topic in question. There will be two applications of relevant material. There will be appropriate analysis.
4 - 7	Answers in this band will show a reasonable to good knowledge and understanding of the topic in question. There will be one or two applications of relevant material and there will be some basic analysis.
1 – 3	Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and understanding of the question or the material. There will be limited focus on the question, and there will be limited or no analysis

Please note that these questions should not be marked in terms of 5 + 5 but as a response as a whole

1. Outline explained ways in which the education system may pass on values and ideas which are in the interests of dominant groups in society.

2. Outline and explain two factors inside schools that may contribute to the formation of an ideal pupil identity

3. Outline and explain two cultural factors that may contribute to the poorer educational progress of some social groups in schools

4. Outline and explain two ways in which globalisation has affected educational policies in the United Kingdom

5. Outline and explain two ways in which pupils home and family circumstances may affect the educational achievement.

6. Outline and explain two reasons why different pupil subcultures exist in schools

7. Outline and explain two ways in which the cultural factors may need to be under achievement of pupils in some ethnic minority groups.

8. Outline and explain two ways in which material deprivation can impact on educational achievement.

9. Outline and explain two ways in which marketization reinforces inequalities and educational outcomes.

10. Outline and explain two ways in which processes in school reinforce class differences in Educational outcomes

11. Outline and explain two ways in which Marxists argue that education reinforces capitalist Society.

12. Outline and explain two ways in which processes outside of school reinforce gender differences in Educational outcomes.

13. Outline and explain two ways in which educational policies reinforce inequalities in Educational outcomes.

14. Outline and explain two forms of pupil response to teachers racism and negative labelling.

15. Outline and explain two reasons why girls and boys often choose to study different subjects.

16. Outline and explain two roles that the education for Phil's according to functionalists

17. Outline and explain the effects of two marketization policies.

18. Outline and explain two reasons for gender differences in subject choice.

A Level Question Type 5:
Applying material from Item ? outline and explain TWO. – 10 marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
8 – 10	Answers in this band will show good knowledge and understanding of relevant material on the topic of the question. There will be two developed applications of material from the Item. There will be appropriate analysis/evaluation of two differences.
4 - 7	Answers in this band will show a basic to reasonable knowledge and understanding of one or two points on the topic of the question. There will be some successful application of material from the Item and there will be some analysis/evaluation
1 – 3	Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and understanding of one or two points on the topic of the question. There will be limited application of material from the Item. Some material may be at a tangent to the question and there will be limited or no analysis/evaluation.

Please note that these questions should not be marked in terms of 5 + 5 but as a response as a whole and only points from the item can be credited.

Item A1

Since the 1980s there has been a growing gender gap in achievement. In almost all subjects at GCSE level females have consistently outperform males. The impact of feminism has widely been acknowledged as a key Factor in the improved achievement of girls. However, despite gender differences in attitude and application, the educational performance of boys has also improved. What women are now more likely than men to go to university, a higher proportion of males get first class degrees.

Applying material from Item A1, analyse two reasons for gender differences in achievement

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Item A2

Some sociologists argue that a major role of the education system is that it should provide equal opportunities for all pupils to succeed so that they can be allocated to the most appropriate role in the economy. However, statistics on achievement suggest that school systemically fail the majority of working class pupils. Sociologist critical of this view have put forward a number of reasons why working class students end up in working class jobs.

Applying material from item A2, analyse two ways in which the education system legitimate or reproduces social inequalities.

Item A3

In the past boys did well at school and girls under achieved. It is widely believed that today that pattern that is reversed. However, while it is true that girls as a group tend to outperform boys in terms of Educational achievement, many boys achieve highly and conversely many girls underperform. Analysis of attainment data shows that the picture is not straightforward and that there are many factors that have a greater bearing on educational achievement than gender considered on its own.

Applying material from item A3, analyse two reasons why it is a myth that all boys after achieved and all girls now achieve well at school..

Item A4

On average, pupils from some ethnic groups achieve more highly at school than others. For example, Chinese and Indian pupils generally out-perform white pupils at GCSE. This is even true when we take into account whether pupils are from deprived backgrounds, as measured by whether they receive free school meals (FSM). For example, Chinese pupils on FSM do better than white pupils who are not on FSM.

Applying material from item A4, analyse two reasons why pupils from some minority ethnic groups achieve above average results in school.

Item A5

Some government education policies aim to introduce a market into the education system. This is done in part by creating competition among schools to attract people's and their parents to apply for places. Supporters believe that this competition for customers will drive up educational standards. Other educational policies include selection of pupil's for places and different types of school on the basis of their ability as measured through tests and examinations.

Applying material from item A5, analyse two effects of two government education policies on class differences in achievement.

Item A6

In general, middle class pupils achieve better examination results than working class pupils, many of whom are in receipt of free school meals. According to Feinstein, as early as 22 months, working class children are already lagging behind middle class children in their intellectual development. Many of these children have parents are also underachieved at school.

Applying material from item A6, analyse two factors outside school that contribute to working class underachievement.

Item A7

There are important differences in the experiences of different ethnic groups in the education system, for example in terms of examination entries and allocation to set source trains. Similarly, studies show that teaches may be quicker to discipline people from certain ethnic groups for apparently this behaviour. These differences can lead to educational failure for some groups.

Applying material from item A7, analyse two inside school that lead to ethnic differences in Educational achievement.

Item A8

Although achievement levels for both sexes have risen, boys examination performance has fallen behind that of girls since the 1980s. At the same time, there have been a number of major changes in wider Society. These include the decline of traditional jobs in manufacturing Industries, a big increase in divorce and more women in paid employment.

Applying material from item A8, analyse two reasons for boys underachievement compared to girls.

AS Question Type 6: Using material from the item and your own knowledge, evaluate the view…. – 20 marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
17 - 20	Answers in this band will show sound, conceptually detailed knowledge of a range of relevant material on the topic of the question. Sophisticated understanding of the question and of the presented material will be shown. Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the issues raised by the question. Analysis and evaluation will be explicit and relevant. Evaluation may be developed for example through a debate between different perspectives. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.
13 - 16	Answers in this band will show accurate, broad and/or deep but incomplete knowledge. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material. Application of material is largely explicitly relevant to the question, though some material may be inadequately focused. Some limited explicit evaluation, some appropriate analysis, e.g. clear explanations of some of the presented material.
9 - 12	Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material. Applying listed material from the general topic area but with limited regard for its relevance to the issues raised by the question, or applying a narrow range of more relevant material. Evaluation will take the form of a juxtaposition of competing positions or one to two isolated stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.
5 - 8	Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, e.g. two to three insubstantial points about the question topic. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material. Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question. Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis are thin and disjointed.
1 - 4	Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, e.g. one to two very insubstantial points about the topic in general. Very little/no understanding of the question and of the presented material. Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. No analysis or evaluation.

Item B1

Functionalists see education as an important agency of socialisation playing a key role in preparing young people for Adulthood and working life, and improving the life chances to upward social mobility. All those who have the ability and talent and put in the effort have an equal chance of success. The grading of pupils by test and exam results benefits the economy by ensuring that the most talented and qualified individuals are allocated to the most important jobs in a meritocratic Society.

Applying material from Item B1 and your knowledge, evaluate functionalist approaches to the role of education in society.

Item B2

Teachers expectations of their pupils are often based on stereotypes about people's ethnicity, gender and social class background. They may then subsequently judge and classify people's in various ways, for example as bright or slow learners, and troublemakers why do pupils, or as hardworking or lazy. This process of classification or labelling by Teachers has been shown to affect the performance of students, and the progress they make in school. This labelling and other processes within schools influence who succeeds and who fails in education.

Applying material from Item B2 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological explanations for help processes within school influence the educational achievement of pupils.

Item B3

There are major differences in levels of Educational achievement between pupils from different social class background. Social class inequality in education begins even before children enter primary school, and in general the higher the social class of the parents, the more successful that children will be in education. There are a variety of material and cultural factors explaining this, both inside and outside of schools, as well as features of the school in process.

Applying material from item B3 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological explanations of social class inequalities in Educational achievement.

Item B4

Marketization policies have created a free market in education. Parents now have some choice in their children's school, with Ofsted reports and school league tables to help them find the best schools. Schools have much more control of their own affairs and compete with one another to attract people's. These policies aims to improve standards of teaching and learning. Schools that produced good results would be popular with parents and pupils, and would thrive; failing schools would be forced to improve or risk being closed.

Applying material from item B4 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the marketization of education has not benefited all social groups equally.

Item B5

Recent changes have tried to create a free market in education. Schools have become more independent, free-standing institutions, with more control over their own affairs. Parents now have more choice in school the children attend, and Ofsted reports and school league tables help them find the best schools. In the educational Marketplace, schools compete with each other to attract students and income. Education policy makers thought this marketization policy would make schools more responsive to parents and students need, and rise raise standards of teaching and learning. Like supermarkets competing for customers, schools producing good results would be popular with parents and students, and thrive. Those that were failing to produce good quality 'products' would lose students and money, and would either improve or will be closed.

Applying material from item B5 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the marketization of education has mainly benefitted middle class parents and students.

Item B6

The education system is one of the most important institutions in society. Marxists have a very negative view of its role in capitalist Society, arguing that it serves the interests of The Ruling Class the variety of ways. For example, Althusser argues that the education system is an ideological state apparatus which helps to reproduce and legitimise existing class inequalities. While some sociologists claim that the education system is based on equal opportunities, Marxist would argue that the idea that education is a meritocracy is a myth.

Applying material from item B6 and your own knowledge, , evaluate the contribution that Marxism has made to our understanding of the role of education

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Item B7

Since the 1980s successive governments have implemented a range of policies including introducing market forces into the state education system. It is claimed that marketization policies, such as league tables and increasing diversity in the types of schools that parents that parents can send their children to, this would increase competition and so raise standards. However, some sociologists have been critical of such policies and have argued that the education market favours middle class parents.

Applying material from Item B7 and your own knowledge, evaluate the claim that marketization policies in education have increased inequality between social classes.

Item B8

Research suggest that Pro and anti school subcultures are a common feature in many schools. Such student subcultures can have a significant impact on the educational achievement of the members. Some research in the northeast of England, for example, sounds that members of a subculture known as 'Charvers' rejected the schools secondary school and deliberately aim to fail their GCSEs. Charvers were mainly from deprived backgrounds, that didn't lack confidence or self esteem. Rather, status within the subculture was dependent on a rejection of schooling and their social standing within the subculture was more important to them then gaining qualifications. Other pupils who did not belong to the subculture would never the less affected by it because they were afraid of being bullied is always seem to have done their homework or to be answering questions in class.

Applying material from Item B8 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that working class underachievement is a product of membership of an anti school subculture.

Item B9

Some sociologists regard the role of the education system positively, claiming that it offers every student equal chance of success. According to these sociologists, the education system also meets the demands of the economy and ensure that students have the correct skills for the world of work. However, others disagree and claim that the education system simply reinforces inequalities between different groups in society that already exists and make sure that those with more power maintain their position. This process, they claim, occurs through hidden messages sent to them throughout their education.

Applying material from item B9 and your own assess the view that the education system provides an equal opportunity for all students

Item B10

There are persistent differences in the achievement of girls and boys in education. In 2014 the performance gap between boys and girls treats its widest ever - 6.7 percentage points, at the top grades of A and A. Sociologists argue that a whole range of factors can explain this gap. There has been a huge shift in attitudes towards women in wider Society, for example, resulting in women having much higher aspirations educationally. Similarly, over 90% of women now participate in paid employment . However, sociologists also point out that other factors have greater impact on gender pattern, for example, labelling and student subcultures.*

Applying material from item B10 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that differences in Educational achievement between girls and boys are the result of factors and processes within school.

Item B11

Some social policies seek to reduce inequalities between different social groups through increasing funding for goes to experience poverty all those who have low aspirations. These policies focus on making education a level playing field and insuring that everyone has the opportunity for success in education. However, other social policies focus on driving up standards in education by introducing market forces into the system. These policies have the effect of widening the gap between High performing schools and schools that are less effective. This enables some parents to make choices about which school to send their child to what other parents have much more limited choices.

Applying material from item B11 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that differences in Educational achievement between different groups are the results of social policy.

Item B12

There are major social class differences in Educational achievement and some sociologists argue that these are the result of internal factors and processes within schools. These include teacher labelling, the self fulfilling prophecy, streaming and the creation of people subcultures. However, other sociologists claim that factors outside of school, such as parental attitudes and parental income, are the main causes of working-class underachievement.

Applying material from item B12 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that social class differences in achievement are the result of what goes on within schools.

Item B13

There are marked ethnic differences in Educational achievement. Some minority ethnic groups do much better than others. For example, Indian pupils on average achieve more highly than Pakistani or Bangladeshi. These differences may be due to factors outside of the school. For example, some sociologists suggest that cultural differences have an important influence on the achievement. Others claim that it is more to do with material circumstances of different ethnic groups.

Applying material from item B13 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that ethnic differences in Educational achievement are primarily the result of factors outside school.

Item B14

Some sociologists claim that education reproduces and legitimates social class inequality. They argue that it operates on the interests of The Ruling Class, preparing working class pupils for working class jobs and justifying this outcome of that. Other sociologists disagree. They claim the Education offers all pupils and equal opportunity to succeed.

Applying material from item B14 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that education reproduces and legitimates social class inequality.

A Level Question Type 7: Using material from the item and your own knowledge, evaluate the view…. – 30 marks

Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
25 – 30	Answers in this band will show sound, conceptually detailed knowledge of a range of relevant material. Sophisticated understanding of the question and of the presented material will be shown. Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the issues raised by the question. Analysis and evaluation will be explicit and relevant. Evaluation may be developed for example by locating the discussion within a debate between perspectives or considering methodological issues. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.
19 - 24	Answers in this band will show accurate, broad and/or deep but incomplete knowledge. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material. Application of material is largely explicitly relevant to the question, though some material may be inadequately focused. Some limited explicit evaluation, for example of strain theory and/or some appropriate analysis, e.g. clear explanations of some of the presented material.
13 – 18	Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth, e.g. an accurate account of strain theory. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material. Applying listed material from the general topic area but with limited regard for its relevance to the issues raised by the question, or applying a narrow range of more relevant material. Evaluation will take the form of juxtaposition of competing positions or one to two isolated stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive
7 - 12	Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, e.g. two to three insubstantial points about the question topic. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material. Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question. Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis are thin and disjointed.
1 - 6	Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, e.g. one to two very insubstantial points about the topic in general. Very little/no understanding of the question and of the presented material. Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. No analysis or evaluation.

Item C1

Until the 1980s, most education was provided by elected local education authorities, directed and funded by central government. However, the 1988 education Reform Act began the marketization of education, aimed at raising standards buying creasing parental choice and competition between schools. After 2010, there was a substantial move towards the privatisation of education through policies such as the growth of chains of academies run by private businesses. Some sociologists claims that the main impact of marketization and privatisation policies has not been to raise standards that to increase educational inequality.

Applying material from item C1 and your own knowledge, evaluate the claim that marketization and privatisation policies have increased educational inequality.

Item C2

Functionalist and Marxist sociologists are interested in similar aspects of the role of the education system. For example, both examine the relationship between education and work. Both perspectives also look at how norms and values are transmitted through education. However, while Marxists and functionalists focus on similar issues, they reach very different conclusions about the role of education.

Applying material from Item C2 and your knowledge, evaluate the view that while Marxist and functionalist approaches focus on similar issues, they reach very different conclusions about the role of education.

Item C3

Sociologists have investigated a number of aspects of gender and education. Although it is clear that in most subjects, girls achieve better examination results than boys, girls experience of schooling in other aspects may be less positive. For example, there is evidence of school and reinforces traditional gender identity. Some sociologists argue that this disadvantages of girls.

Applying material from item C3 and your own knowledge, evaluate the claim that although girls outperform boys in terms of achievement, the experience of schooling reinforces traditional gender identity.

Item C4

There are major social class differences in Educational achievement and some sociologists argue that these are the result of internal factors and processes within schools. These include teacher labelling, the self fulfilling prophecy, streaming and the creation of people subcultures. However, other sociologists claim that factors outside of school, such as parental attitudes and parental income, are the main causes of working-class underachievement.

Applying material from item C4 and your own knowledge, evaluate the claim that the factors outside of the school are the main cause in working class underachievement.

Item C5

There are clear social class differences in Educational achievement. Some sociologists argue that these are the result of factors outside of school. Some claim that working class parents place less value on education and so their children see it as less important than do middle class pupils. Differences in speech codes and in the level of the families material resources might also have an important impact. However, others suggest that what happens in school has a greater effect on social class differences in achievement.

Applying material from item C5 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that middle class pupils higher levels of achievement are the product of factors outside of school.

Item C6

The role of the education system is central to most sociological theories of education. For example, for conflict theories such as Marxist, education is a vital institution that both reproduces and legitimates social class inequality for capitalism. Not only is the Education of the working class pupils structured so as to produce the underachievement, but the system just justifies that failure by claiming to give everyone an equal opportunity to achieve. However, functionalists argue that the education system performs positive functions for Society as a whole, for example by generating social solidarity and preparing individuals for work that's it their abilities.

Applying material from item C6 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological explanations for the role of the education system.

Item C7

It is a fact that educational attainment varies with ethnicity, although it is not the case that white pupil's consistently perform better in school than black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. Instead, the picture it's more complicated, with children of Chinese and Indian origin as a group generally performing better than average and children a Pakistani and black Caribbean origin of them doing less well.

Applying material from Item C7 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that ethnic differences in Educational achievement are a product of factors inside School.

Item C8

Research suggests that social class, gender and ethnicity can all significantly influence educational achievement. Some sociologists argue that differences in education achievement are due to factors that take place in the home. For example, evidence suggests that family structure and levels of parental interest in education are crucial to a child's development. Linguistic skills that children have when they start school can vary significantly between different social groups. The amount of financial resources a family has can also have a major positive or negative effect on education success.

Applying material from Item C8 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that home factors are the main cause of differences in Educational achievement of different social groups.

Item C9

According to figures from the DFE, pupils from Chinese and Indian backgrounds consistently perform better than white comma Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black pupils at all stages of education. There are also important gender differences between ethnic groups in other areas within education. For example, permanent exclusion rates are usually highest for black Caribbean boys and lowest for Bangladeshi girls. Some sociologists argue that such differences can be explained by factors that are in school such as teacher racism and buyers in the school curriculum. However, other sociologists argue that factors outside of school are more important.

Applying material from item C9 and your own knowledge evaluate the view that ethnic differences in Educational achievement are primarily the result of factors inside of school.

Item C10

At each stage from pre-school through to university entrance, girls tend to do better than boys. For example, on entering primary school, girls are more likely to be able to write their own name. On the other hand, boys are more likely than girls to be assessed by their schools as having special educational needs. When it comes to subject choice at age 16, there are major gender differences in the popularity of different A-level subjects and even greater gender differences in vocational courses.

Applying material from item C10 and your own knowledge evaluate the view that gender differences in both subject choice and educational achievement are mainly the result of the influence of wider society.

As / A Level Question Type 8: Methods in Context

Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
17 - 20	Answers in this band will show accurate, conceptually detailed knowledge and sound understanding of a range of relevant material. Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the investigation of the specific issue. Students will apply knowledge of a range of relevant strengths and limitations to research issues and characteristics. Evaluation of the usefulness of the method in question will be explicit and relevant. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.
13 – 16	Answers in this band will show accurate, broad and/or deep but incomplete knowledge of the strengths and limitations of the research method. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material. Application of knowledge will be broadly appropriate but will tend to be applied in a more generalised way or a more restricted way. There will be some limited explicit evaluation, and/or some appropriate analysis.
9 - 12	Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth, including a broadly accurate if basic account of some of the strengths and/or limitations of the method in question. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material. Applying material (possibly in list-like fashion) on the method in question, but with very limited or non-existent application to the area of education. Evaluation limited to briefly stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.
5 - 8	Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material. Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question, e.g. perhaps drifting into an unfocused comparison of different methods. Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis, if any, are thin and disjointed.
1 - 4	Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, e.g. one to two very insubstantial points about methods in general. Very little or no understanding of the question and of the presented material. Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. Some material ineffectually recycled from the item, or some knowledge applied solely to the substantive issue of streaming, with very little or no reference to unstructured interviews. There will be no analysis or evaluation.

Item D1

Streaming involves teachers differentiating between pupils on the basis of their perceived ability, placing pupils whom they believe to be of similar overall ability in the same teaching group. This may result in working-class pupils and those from certain ethnic minorities being placed in lower streams. Lower-stream pupils may lose self-esteem, give up trying and even join an anti-school subculture. By contrast, higher-stream pupils may identify strongly with the school's values and goals. One way of studying streaming is to use unstructured interviews. These are often effective in exploring interviewees' personal feelings about sensitive subjects. However, for a variety of reasons, some pupils and teachers may refuse to participate in an unstructured interview.

Applying material from Item D1 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using unstructured interviews to investigate streaming.

Item D2

There is a close correlation between frequent unauthorised absence from school and educational underachievement. Those pupils who are not doing well at school are more likely to truant. Similarly, those who truant regularly are likely to finish their school career with poor qualifications. Pupils may be absent without authorisation for many reasons, from caring responsibilities at home or dislike of school, to parents arranging family holidays in term time.
Sociologists may use self-completion written questionnaires to study unauthorised absences. These can be distributed easily to large numbers of pupils, parents or teachers. The findings of the questionnaires can also be used to establish patterns and trends in relation to unauthorised absences. However, self-completion questionnaires often have very low response rates, especially when they ask about sensitive issues.

Applying material from Item D2 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using self-completion written questionnaires to investigate unauthorised absences from school.

Item D3

Gillborn was interested in exploring how teacher attitudes and expectations influence the opportunity for ethnic minority pupils to achieve success at school. He did this by observing interaction between teachers and pupils. His study of an inner-city Comprehensive School in the Midlands described help teachers perceived a threat to their authority and their daily interactions with African Caribbean pupils. When teachers actors on this perception, it created conflict with the Afro-Caribbean pupils. African Caribbean people's responded by setting the ethnic identity as young black people, which teaches interpreted as the wrestling attitude. Such research suggests that there is considerable gap between policies promoting equal opportunity in schools and the daily experiences of many black pupils.

Applying material from Item D3 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using structured interviews for investigating the study of teacher attitudes and ethnic minority achievement.

Item D4

Murphy and Whitelegg (2006) were interested in white girls chose not to start or continue to study physics. They found that at the beginning of secondary school girls have less interest in science than any other subject, and this declined further as they went through secondary school in. Both boys and girls have negative views regarding the relevance, appeal and interests of chemistry and physics, and those girls who chose to study physics so it as a means of doing good and helping people, and preferred science content related to social and human concern. Sociologist may use self completion written structured questionnaires to study girls attitudes to science. These can be distributed easily to large numbers of female secondary school students, enabling large representative samples, and can be used to identify whether there are patterns in girls attitudes to science in school.

Applying material from Item D4 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using self completion written structured questionnaires for investigating girls attitudes to science in school.

Item D5

Evidence suggests that there is a close correlation between parental involvement and pupils achievement. Sociologists have identified a range of cultural and material factors such as attitudes to school and the differences in parents income levels. In relation to class and ethnic differences, the language spoken in the home and access to educational resources may affect pupils achievement. Structured interviews can be carried out relatively easily using a large number of students and teachers. The findings can also be used in order to establish patterns and trends in achievement in relation to factors such as how much support parents give. However, there may be practical problems in gaining access and some parents may feel that questions are to personal and that they are being arched.

Applying material from Item D5 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using structured interviews to investigate the role of parents in pupils achievement.

Item D6

Some pupils in school belong to subcultures, meaning that they are they share a similar set of values and behaviour patterns. Through processes in schools such as labelling and streaming, pupils may be polarised into either pro- or anti- school subcultures. Sociologists have examined how these processes are often based on class, gender and ethnicity. For example, anti School subcultures, where pupils in bottom sets may lack self-esteem and sale, are often dominated by working class, male students from certain ethnic minority groups. One way to investigate pupil subcultures is to use self completion written questionnaires. These can allow respondents to answer anonymously on the reasons why pupils join subcultures. Students and teachers are used to filling in questionnaires in school and pupils can give them to their parents to complete at home. However, respondents may find questionnaires difficult to fill in on their own, particularly if the subject is a complex issue.

Applying material from Item D6 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using self completion questionnaires to investigate the impact of pupil subcultures on educational achievement.

Item D7

Many sociologists are interested in the ways in which teacher pupil interaction in the classroom can affect achievements. Negative teacher labelling has been found to have a negative impact on pupil's self image and lead to a self fulfilling prophecy of failure. This type of labelling may also result in certain pupils being placed in Lower sets. Research also suggests that pupils can respond to teacher labelling in a variety of ways such as developing both Pro and anti school subcultures. By using participant observation to study labelling, sociologists are able to see for themselves how teachers may label and how different groups of students reacts to his labels. However, as well as ethical problems, particularly with covert observation, the researcher has the issue of what role they should adopt within the school when conducting their research.

Applying material from Item D7 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using participant observation to investigate the impact of teacher labelling on achievement.

Item D8

It has been a growing concerns of the 1980's over the increasing gender gap in achievement. As well as knowing the nature and extent of patterns of gender achievement, sociologist have examined various changes both in society and in school that may account for these differences. Sociologist have also been interested in patterns of subject choice and why it is that certain subjects are chosen more by girls than boys. Sociologists may use official statistics to study differences in gender achievement and subject choice. The government collects educational statistics from every school in the country. Statistics on both subject choice and achievement could be used to examine the impact of Educational policies in these areas. However, whilst official statistics show patterns in gender achievement and subject choice, they do not offer an explanation as to why they occur.

Applying material from Item D8 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using official statistics to investigate differences in gender achievement and subject choice.

Item D9

There is considerable evidence to show that pupils from some ethnic minority backgrounds for behind in school, particularly during the secondary phase. These include black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils. By contrast, Indian and Chinese pupils do better than average. There are also class and gender differences in achievement within all of these groups, just as they were they are among white people's. One exclamation of these patterns of achievement lies in the school itself and the processes at work there. For example, black pupils are more likely to be excluded from school then members of other ethnic groups. Other factors within School include peer groups and subcultures. For example, see well sounds that a minority of black boys joined rebel subcultures. However, he also found that some teachers labelled it all back boys as rebels, regardless of the facts. One method used to study differential educational achievement is participant observation. This involves the researcher joining in with the activities of the group whose behaviour he/she wishes to understand, either openly (overt) or without revealing that he or she is a researcher (covert).

Applying material from Item D9 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using participant observation to investigate educational achievement among ethnic minority pupils.

Item D10

Research indicates that parental involvement in children's education from a young age has significant effect on educational achievement, and continues to do so into adolescence and adulthood. The attitudes and aspirations of parents and have children themselves predicts later educational achievement. Moreover, international evidence suggest that parents with high aspirations are also more involved in their children's education. One method that could be used to study this topic is unstructured interviews. Unstructured means that the interview does not involve working through a pre-set list of questions in a fixed sequence, the more closely resembles a natural conversation.

Applying material from Item D10 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using unstructured interviews to investigate the impact of parental involvement on children's educational achievement.

Item D11

There are pupil's from many different ethnic groups in UK schools today. Pupils from some ethnic groups achieve very highly on average, while those from other groups are often less successful. Pupils different experiences within school may play a part in this, as well as factors connected to with the home background. Sociologists may use unstructured interviews to investigate ethnic differences in Educational achievement. These make it easy for interviewer and interviewee to check that they understand each other's meaning. Unstructured interviews also allows the interviewee the opportunity to speak about the things they think are important. However, interviewers require good interpersonal skills in order to conduct successful interviews with different pupils.

Applying material from Item D11 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using unstructured interviews to study ethnic differences in achievement.

Item D12

Teachers consciously or subconsciously label students, positively or negatively, and this leads them to raise or lower the expectations of the students. This may result in a number of responses, with some students accepting read labels while others reject them. Negatively labelled students may include working class students, students from some ethnic groups and boys, who as a result of the labelling may be placed in Lower stream set. One way of investigating labelling if using unstructured interviews. These are high in validity and have a further advantage of allowing the researcher to build a trusting relationship with the respondents. However, unstructured interviews are generally very time Amy and can be hard to write up without revealing the identity of the person being interviewed.

Applying material from Item D12 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using interviews to investigate labelling.

Item D13

Investigating the effects of material deprivation on educational achievement. Some sociologists claim that material deprivation is the main cause of educational underachievement. Some sociologists use questionnaires, given to the students, order to find out the effects of material deprivation, claiming that they enabled large-scale research. Questionnaires are also useful because it is possible to identify the impact of different variables such as class and ethnicity. However, questionnaires are criticised by some sociologists who claim that they fail to uncover deeper meanings. For example, they may not explain the cause of the material deprivation. Also, students might also be unaware of their parents income, meaning that the results may be inaccurate.

Applying material from Item D13 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using questionnaires to investigate the effects of material deprivation.

Item D14

Using official statistics to investigate truancy. Official statistics on education are widely available to the public. However, there have been changes to the ways in which currency is measured over time. The government is currently focusing on persistent truancy, introducing penalties to parents if there is a pattern of missing school without a valid reason. Official statistics can show the impact of such policies. However some sociologists argue that official statistics are less useful for understanding true that they do not explain why students miss school. For example, some students may have genuine health reasons for not being at school while others may be choosing to truant.

Applying material from Item D14 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using official statistics to investigate truancy

Item D15

Using observation to investigate student subcultures. Student subcultures can tell sociologists a lot about students attitudes towards education. A subculture is a smaller group with values which are different to the wider group. These can be pro school or aunty school. Observation can be very useful way of understanding subcultures, as it means that you can see how these groups operate in a naturalistic setting. However, participant observation can be problematic as adult researches are going to have problem gaining access to and participation in student subcultures. This could be due to the differences in age and possibly social class and ethnic group.

Applying material from Item D15 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of using observation to investigate student subcultures.

Item D16

Some sociologists argue that even though teachers and have a professional duty to treat all people fairly, they often give negative labels to pupils based on the pupils social class, gender and ethnicity. Pupils may respond to these labels in a variety of ways, including forming anti-school subcultures. Sociologists may use experiments to investigate teachers labelling of pupils. One problem is that laboratory experiments are not naturalistic and this can affect the way teachers and pupils act. With covert field experiments, however, the rule purpose of the research is not known and this may help to overcome the Hawthorne effect. Another issue is whether a particular statement or action on the part of the teacher is actually an example of unfairly attaching a label to a pupil. This is very much open to Interpretation by researchers.

Applying material from Item D16 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of experiments for the study of teachers labelling pupils.

Item D17

Material deprivation is a widespread problem throughout the United Kingdom today. Some pupils experience material deprivation in the home background and this can have a negative effect on their educational achievement. For example, a lack of income with which to buy educational resources, or having to live in cramped conditions, can affect academic performance. Some parents may feel that they have failed if they cannot provide adequate income for their family. Sociologists may use questionnaires to investigate material deprivation in pupil's home backgrounds. To use questionnaires effectively, sociologists need to identify and gain responses from parents, but accessing a suitable database of contacts may prove difficult. Parents may also be unwilling to discuss such a sensitive issue as material deprivation. On the other hand, substantial quantitative data may be generated by using questionnaires, allowing sociologists to identify patterns and draw conclusions.

Applying material from Item D17 and your knowledge of research methods evaluate the strengths and limitations of questionnaires for the study of material deprivation.

Item D18

Supporters of marketization policies claim that an education market his parents greater choice over which school their children can attend. Sociologists are interested in investigating just how much parental choice they're actually is in the Education market. Some parents are much more aware than others of how to work the system comma even to the extent of manipulating the rules in their favour. Sociologists may use structured interviews to investigate the extent of parental choice in education. However, although structured interviews are useful for Gathering factual information, they are probably less effective when it comes to finding doubt parents attitudes and feelings. Also, how far to parents are likely to give honest answers to the questions put them in a structured interview may depend on whether they feel their role as a parent is being challenged by the questions asked.

Applying material from Item D18 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of structured interviews for the study of the extent of parental choice in education.

Item D19

Some sociologists have pointed out the ease with which traditional gender identities can be reinforced in classroom interaction. Verbal abuse and other more subtle processes such as the 'male gaze' can have an impact on gender identity. Sociologist have found that some male teachers me even collude with male pupils in putting down girls. Sociologist me use non participant observation to investigate the ways in which classroom interactions reinforce traditional gender identity. Observing classroom behaviour at first-hand enables researchers to see what actually goes on rather than getting a verbal account after the event. There is also the potential for Greater insight through Direct experience of classroom interaction. However, it is very difficult for the Observer to avoid being noticed and this can affect the behaviour of both teachers and of the pupils.

Applying material from Item D19 and your knowledge of research methods, evaluate the strengths and limitations of non-participant observation for the study of the ways in which classroom interactions reinforce traditional gender identities.

Item D20

Many sociologists have examined the relationship between social class and achievement and have found that there is a clear pattern of middle class pupils outperform in working-class pupils. However, sociologist also want to understand the reasons for this pattern. Sociologist may use official statistics to investigate social class differences in achievement. These allow researchers to see trends and patterns over time which can help to reveal cause and effect relationship. Official statistics can be highly representatives because they are often collected across a wide range of institution. However, it is very difficult for the researcher to be sure that official statistics have not been manipulated in some way by the organisations responsible for the collection.

Applying material from Item D20 and your knowledge of research methods evaluate the strengths and limitations of official statistics for the study of social class differences in achievement.