**A-level Sociology**

**Bridging Course – Week 4**

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****St Mary’s Catholic School

A-level Sociology

**Last week, you began to think a little bit about feminism, and the potential feminist perspective of the role of education.**

**Summarise the ideas you learnt last week in 10 words.**

**This week you will begin to learn a little bit about Marxism, and the Marxist view of the education system.**

**Before you begin to look at Marxism. Can you think of any reasons to get rid of schools completely? Note your ideas here:**

**We’ll come back to this.**

**So what is Marxism? Watch the following video and make detailed notes.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0GFSUu5UzA>

So what do Marxists say about Education?

Learn the following facts.

* Marxists believe that Education prepares children for the world of work by giving them skills and values they’d need.
* They believe education justifies inequality.
* Education passes on ideas that there is a ruling class that supports capitalism.
* The Marxist Althusser believes that education produces a “docile and obedient workforce”.
* Bowles and Gintis theorising in 1976 say there is a close link between school and work. For example
  + pupils are taught to accept hierarchy at school. Work also has a hierarchy.
  + Pupils are motivated by grades to do work that might be seen as uninspiring and tedious. Workers are rewarded with pay to do jobs that are dull.
  + Both the school day and working day are split into working units: before lunch, after lunch. At school and at work, subservience is rewarded.

There are some very radical Marxists who believe that school should be abolished completely. Look up the Marxist Illich who was theorising in 1971. Why did Illich want to get rid of school completely?

Can you think of any criticisms of the Marxist perspective of the education system?

Compare your ideas with those on the next page.

* Marxists assume people are passive victims.
* It exaggerates how much people are socialised into obedience. There is actually a lot of rebellion and disobedience in some schools.
* Most people are aware of social inequality in education. Most people – Marxist or not – people that society is not fair.

**Class and Achievement in Education**

You are going to conduct some research to find out a little bit about the difference in achievement between social classes.

You can present your research in any way you like: a mind-map, continuous prose, detailed notes, a pod-cast or recording. But your research should use the following subheadings / questions as a prompts:

1) Does social class tend to affect educational achievement? What is the evidence for / against?

2) How is economic poverty linked to underachievement in school?

3) What is cultural capital? How is the concept of ‘cultural capital’ an issue of social class?

4) What are the views of sociologists Bernstein and Bourdieu?

You will hand this work in in the first Sociology lesson you have in Year 12.