

Education as a social institution

Distinguish schooling from education and connect socialisation to unequal opportunity.

Core learning

- Education is wider than schooling: people learn norms, skills, identities and expectations in many settings.
- A social institution organises behaviour through roles, rules, routines, resources and sanctions.
- Educational opportunity is shaped before, inside and beyond the school gates.

Concepts, studies and perspectives

- Socialisation: Schools continue socialisation by teaching punctuality, authority, competition, cooperation and identity.
- Formal and hidden curriculum: Some learning is planned; some is communicated through routines, labels and expectations.
- Unequal opportunity: Family resources, locality, prior attainment and institutional practices can shape access and outcomes.
- Functionalism: Education can integrate individuals and allocate roles through shared standards.
- Marxism: Education can reproduce class inequality and prepare compliant workers.
- Feminism: Education can challenge or reproduce gendered expectations.
- Interactionism: Labels, identities and classroom interactions can shape educational action.

Before the lesson

Read the core terms and write a one-sentence definition for each. Bring one question about evidence quality.

C → B → A → A* development

- C: accurate definition and simple example.
- B: clear mechanism and some application.
- A: evidence and alternative explanation.
- A*: qualified judgement linked to group differences and evidence limits.

Source / accuracy note

Source note: This is original Reach for the Star material aligned to AQA Sociology 7192 Education with Theory and Methods.