

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.

Concept	Meaning	Exam use
Institution	Organised pattern of roles, rules and resources	Use to explain schooling
Mechanism	Process connecting cause and outcome	Use for AO3
Solidarity	Sense of shared belonging	Use in Durkheim
Evaluation	Testing the strength of an explanation	Use in paragraph endings

Source / accuracy note

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