

EDU009 - Cultural explanations of class differences

Objective: Evaluate language and parental-knowledge explanations without deficit assumptions.

Enquiry question: When does a cultural explanation become a deficit assumption?

Teacher mark guidance

Award credit for accurate sociological knowledge, direct application, clear mechanism and supported evaluation. Do not reward unsupported assertions or deterministic/blaming language.

Indicative content

- Culture is not a simple cause: Family practices can influence school navigation, but they are interpreted through school expectations and power.
- Bernstein is often oversimplified: Restricted code is not inferior everyday speech. The issue is whether schools reward one code more strongly.
- Deficit thinking blames families: A deficit claim turns difference into failure and ignores how institutions define success.
- Ask what evidence would test the claim: A strong sociological explanation shows a mechanism and considers competing material or school-based explanations.

Level guidance

C: simple description; B: relevant explanation; A: developed mechanism and applied evidence; A*: integrated evaluation and qualified judgement.