



A Level Sociology

BELIEFS IN SOCIETY

Bridging Task

Part 1: Defining Religion

- Before doing any research, write down your own definition of religion
- Research and summarise these three different definitions of religion:
 - A **substantive definition**
 - A **functional definition**
 - A **social constructionist definition**
- For each definition, answer:
 - What are the strengths of this definition?
 - What are the limitations or criticisms?
- Look at your original definition and consider which sociological definition it is most like. Do you still agree with your definition? If so, why and if not, how would you change it?

Part 2: Is Religion Still Important Today?

- Conduct a mini-survey: Ask a minimum of 5 people the following questions:
 - Do you consider yourself religious or spiritual?
 - Do you think religion is still important in society? Why or why not?
- Summarise your findings in a short paragraph. Look for patterns or differences in views.

Part 3: Wider Reading

- Watch a video (such as a TED Talk or a documentary) or read an article related to religion, spirituality and/or secularisation.
- Write a short summary and be prepared to talk about what you found out.



A Level Sociology Education Bridging Task

Part 1: Examples of Educational Social Policy

Research and summarise the following three types of educational policies in the UK:

- Tripartite System (1944 Education Act)
- Comprehensive System (1965 onwards)
- Marketisation Policies (from 1988 onwards, e.g. league tables, OFSTED, parental choice)

For each policy, answer:

1. What were the main aims of the policy?
2. What were the strengths or intended benefits of this policy?
3. What are the criticisms or limitations of this policy?

Extension: Can you link any of these policies to sociological perspectives (e.g. Marxism, Functionalism, New Right)?

Part 2: Is Education Equal?

Conduct a mini-survey: Ask a minimum of 5 people (students, teachers, parents, etc.) the following questions:

1. Do you think the UK education system gives all students equal opportunities to succeed?
2. What do you think is the biggest barrier to educational success (e.g. class, ethnicity, gender, school type)?

Summarise your findings in a short paragraph. Look for patterns or differences in views.

Part 3: Wider Reading

Watch a video (such as a TED Talk, short documentary, or news report) or read an article or blog post related to education, educational inequality or government policy (e.g. on the Sutton Trust, BBC Bitesize, or Guardian Education).

Write a short summary (5–7 sentences) of what you learned and be prepared to share your views in discussion.