

SOCIOLOGY SHORT CUTS 2

CORE CONCEPTS

Activities And Web Links



Socialisation

2. Socialisation

Activity 1: Instincts

Sociologists generally favour cultural explanations of human behaviour over genetic / biological explanations and one way to get this idea across to students is to ask them to identify any form of human behaviour they believe is instinctive rather than culturally influenced.

This Activity illustrates how little human behaviour is purely instinctual and can consequently be used to lead into a discussion of learned behaviour and socialisation.

1. Define the concepts of *instinct* and *biological drives* and make sure the students understand how they differ.
2. Head-up a white board (or similar) in the following way:

Behaviour	Instinctive?	Biological Drive?	Culturally Influenced?

3. Ask the students – either as a whole class or in small groups - to identify any form of behaviour they think could conceivably be based exclusively on instinct (for example, eating, sleeping, crime, looking after children...). Write each suggestion in the “Behaviour” column.

When there are no more suggestions discuss with the students the behaviours they have identified and:

- a. Tick any behaviour that falls into the “Biological Drive” category (this will include things like breathing, bodily functions, etc.).
- b. Tick any behaviour that falls into the “Culturally Influenced” category (that is, any behaviour where we can decide whether or not we do it – this will put paid to things like crime (many people never break the law) and looking after children (many people choose to remain childless, or they employ other people to look after their children).

Once complete you’re likely to find lots of ticks in the culture category, a few ticks in the biological drive category and very few, if any, in the instinct category...

Activity 2. The Socialisation Game

This is a simple board game activity that can be used to illustrate the idea of gender socialisation.

If played as a class, photocopy the game board onto an OHP acetate and project it onto a white board.

Split the class into two groups – males and females.

Each group takes it in turn to role the die and their counter moves around the board accordingly. following the instructions printed on whatever square they finally land on (respective positions on the board can be noted using a marker pen if using an acetate, otherwise team counters will be needed).

The first team to reach the Finish square wins...



[Socialisation Game Board.pdf](#)

Activity 3. Agencies of Socialisation

In this Activity students are required to apply concepts like values, norms and sanctions to a number of different agencies of socialisation. If the class is large, divide them into small groups and give each a specific agency to research (**Family**; **Peer group**; **Education**; **Work**; **Media** and **Religion** gives a good spread of agencies). If the class is small, either individually or in pairs, get them to choose an agency. Ask each group to head-up a sheet a sheet of A4 paper (Landscape orientation works best) in the following way:

Agency of Socialisation: [Agency]				
Roles	Values	Norms	Positive Sanctions	Negative Sanctions

Each group should identify, for their chosen agency, examples of the *roles* people play, *values* they might develop, *norms* they're expected to obey and examples of positive and negative sanctions they employ.

Once each group has completed the activity the information can be shared in a range of ways, such as in-class presentations by each group, photocopying and sharing the information each has collected and so forth.

Web Links

2. Socialisation

<http://www.feralchildren.com/en/index.php>

If you want to explore the idea of feral children further this site has a huge database of examples.

<http://core.ecu.edu/soci/juskaa/SOCI2110/soci1.htm>

This site has an extensive range of online PowerPoint slides (in the “Lecture Notes” section) covering a number of concepts and theorists related to culture and socialisation.

<http://www.delmar.edu/socsci/rlong/intro/social.htm>

Introductory lecture notes that identify and explain a number of key concepts related to socialisation.

