

Introduction Module

Is sociology a science?

Name and date begun:

Time allocation:
4 lessons

Learning objectives:

- Students should understand that there is a debate about the nature of sociology as a discipline and that they should learn to have a view of that debate.
- Students should learn to understand that there could not be a right or wrong answer in sociology. It is the quality of the argument that is important.
- In our society we have a mode of thought which is based on scientific understandings and even if one rejects the idea that sociology is a science, the thought process is still important.
- It is possible that sciences do not measure up to the standards that they set themselves.

Key Concepts and vocabulary

- Science
- Objective
- Value free
- Subjective
- Value laden
- Ideology
- Universal values

Additional reading and references

Taylor *et al.* (1996) *Sociology in Focus* p 636 - 41
Giddens (1997) *Sociology 3rd edition* p 413 - 419

Make a note of any additional sources that you have used below

Personal Development ideas

- Ask science teachers in school what they think defines a subject as a science.
- Speak to other adults and ask them to tell you what makes a subject scientific.

Overview of the debate

- What is a science?
- Why is scientific method so important?
- Is sociology a science?
- Does the question even matter?

Revision tips

- Be sure that you have a definition of science.
- Is sociology a science?
- Why is the debate so important to sociologists?

What you should have in your folder when this work has been completed correctly:

- A clear explanation of each of the glossary terms
- Acceptable lesson notes.
- Evidence that you have looked at least two textbooks **other** than those on the list to see if they have anything to offer to you on this debate.
- Evidence that you have conducted a simple interview with a scientist or an adult about the nature of science.
- Rough notes on what you feel are the main points of the debate.
- Evidence that you have talked through the ideas with someone on the course and have made a note of their ideas