

A Rough Guide to some Real Reading!

Mark Kirby et al (1997) ***Sociology in Perspective*** Heinemann

This book is extremely thorough, but has rather an off-putting design. There is a lot of solid text and a heavy style of writing. It is up to date and concentrates on debates which makes it useful for examination but it needs to be read carefully to get the ideas.
ISBN 0435331566

Paul Stephens et al (1998) ***Think Sociology*** Stanley Thorne

This is my least favourite book on the market. It refers to up-to-date debates and research, but uses informal and unacademic writing styles. There are useful bullet points and lots of subheadings. Students like it for the reasons that I dislike it - so take your pick!
ISBN 0748725636

Marcus and Ducklin (1998) ***Success in Sociology*** John Murray

Lots of students like this book, but it is not a big seller in terms of being a leading text. It is well set out and clearly designed. There is space for making notes on the pages. The writing style is simple and clear and there are a lot of tables and facts.
ISBN 0719553709

Ian Marsh ed. (1999) ***Sociology: Dealing with Data*** Longman

This book is not a textbook, but is intended to train students to answer stimulus questions. The language level is more 2nd Year 'A' level, but there is also information in it about study skills and examination techniques.
ISBN 0582299306

Haralambos and Holborn (2000) ***Sociology: Themes and Perspective 5th Edition*** Collins

This book has everything in it. It is by far the most popular textbook on the market and most students love it because there is so much information about studies and texts. The main problem is that it has a heavy style of writing and there is too much information to absorb easily. It concentrates on sociology and does not actually apply the theory to our society.
ISBN 0003223167

Anthony Giddens (1997) ***Sociology 3rd Edition*** Polity Press

Giddens is one of the best known academics in Britain. I like his style, because he is lively and controversial, even if I do not agree with what he says. He looks at a variety of debates but does not cover the 'A' level syllabus very well!
ISBN 0745618030

Ken Browne (1998) ***An Introduction to Sociology 2nd Edition*** Polity Press

This is a really good book. It is well written, clear, and entertaining. It is not really detailed enough for 'A' level because it lacks theory, but might be a good one to begin your studies with.
ISBN 0745620213

Nik Jorgensen *et al* (1997) ***Sociology: An Interactive Approach*** Collins

I love this one but last year's students were less keen. It is patchy in that some areas are covered very well indeed, but that other areas are very much thinner in content. The style of writing is accessible. There are lots of tables and some excellent activities and the theory section is helpful and detailed.
ISBN 0003224430

Ivor Morgan (1998) ***'A' Level Revision Notes Sociology*** Letts Educational

These are just notes. They are cheap, simple clear and easy. Highly recommended.
ISBN 1840851066

Paul Taylor (1996) ***Sociology in Focus*** Causeway Press

Teachers tend to love this book because it covers theory and there are lots of exercises and activities to develop your understanding. It is clearly set out, there are illustrations, tables and sub headings. The exercises are very good indeed. Some areas are a little thin, especially the theory and methods sections if you are doing the practical coursework option. This should have more because it is the key to sociology.
ISBN 1873929218

In addition there are two series of textbooks, which deal with individual topics, one per book. The ***Sociology in Action*** series of books by Collins are detailed and interesting, but they probably have too much information to deal with easily. The ***Access to Sociology*** series by Hodder and Stoughton is smaller, cheaper and probably more to the point for most of your work.