

Functionalism

Durkheim sees school as **society in miniature** and an agent of cultural reproduction. Education as a positive agent that influences and teaches the correct and expected norms and values of society. It teaches children how to interact and follow rules.

Parsons sees school as a **bridge between family and society** – preparing children for their later roles. Education uses universal standards i.e. rewards and punishments for good/bad behaviour, and achievement/underachievement.

Davis and Moore's role allocation – education sorts out children according to their talents and skills and those who succeed in school will more than likely succeed in life/society.

Meritocracy - Functionalists believe that education is meritocratic where all are given the same opportunities to achieve, and that hard work is rewarded.

Hidden Curriculum is what is learned in school, but that is not part of the formal/National Curriculum, e.g. punctuality, conformity and wearing a uniform.

Bowles and Gintis' study found that students who conformed and kept quiet were those who achieved higher grades compared to those who rebelled and/or misbehaved in class.

Hidden Curriculum teaches acceptance of authority and to learn that motivation by rewards such as good grades are beneficial to later life.

Hidden Curriculum illustrates how school and knowledge is 'compartmentalised' into many subjects that are taught separately as work would also be broken up into separate jobs.

Marxists are against the Hidden Curriculum, where as functionalists support it as it is a way of learning norms, values and skill required in later life.

Marxist: Paul Willis' study

Learning to labour

It argues that school does not prepare children for the world of work.

Research on the 'lads', an anti-school subculture that included boys from working-class background with no interest in education – only in 'having a laugh' and the 'ear'oles' – a pro-school subculture that included hard-working boys who wanted to succeed.

Marxism says that education is used by the hegemonic powers to justify, maintain, and reproduce class inequalities. **Meritocracy is a myth.**

Althusser states education is an **Ideological State Apparatus** that transmits ruling class ideologies as the norm with other classes seemingly inferior and must adopt ruling class ideologies without question and as fair – false consciousness.

Bourdieu: Cultural capital is that middle-class skills, language, knowledge, and attitudes ensure that they achieve and have a head start compared with children from working and/or underclass.

Bowles and Gintis' Correspondence Theory is that school corresponds with the workplace in every aspect and that students are taught hierarchy, authority, and conformity that they will require in the workplace.

Bernstein discusses **elaborate and restricted codes**.

Sugarman examines **immediate and deferred gratification**.

League tables and standardised tests

New Right favoured standardised tests and league tables as a way of marketing the school and its achievements to help parents decide which school to send their children.

However, Marxists argue that such policies only demotivated students and parents that did not have the same opportunities of choice. Therefore, once again, the students that succeeded were usually those from middle-class and upper-class backgrounds.

Don't forget criticism – this is important for the exam!

