Unit 1: Foundations of Sociology & Sociological Research

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **7-10 Classes**
Status: **Published**

Summary

The Sociology course is designed to engage students in critical thought about the different aspects of the society they operate in, including culture, socialization, social order, deviance, race, gender, age, ethnicity, class, and stratification. By exploring various course topics, students are able to evaluate the ways in which society has changed and remained the same overtime and the impact that they can have, both as individuals and in groups. An intergenerational studies program is also included in the course allowing students to meet with members of their community from different demographic groups and apply course topics directly.

This unit is part of the larger aforementioned course sequence and specifically focuses on the Foundations of Sociology where students will be introduced to the sociological paradigms and key contributors to the science of sociology, as well as the applications of sociology in society. By the end of this unit, students will be able to identify and apply sociological theories in a variety of settings, identify the work of the core sociologists, and understand the principles of sociological data collection, which is the basis of research and theory.

Revised: August 2023

Standards

This unit is aligned to the English Language Development (ELD) standards for kindergarten through grade 12 since multilingual learners develop content and language concurrently, with academic content in a classroom where the language of instruction is English. As a result, language learning and language as a means for learning academic content are interchangeable. The following ELD standards are relevant for this unit and course of study:

- Standard 1: Language for Social and Instructional Purposes: English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.
- Standard 5: Language for Social Studies: English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies.

9.4.12.CT.2	Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving (e.g., 1.3E.12profCR3.a).
9.4.12.CT.3	Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field)

	to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).
9.4.12.GCA.1	Collaborate with individuals to analyze a variety of potential solutions to climate change effects and determine why some solutions (e.g., political. economic, cultural) may work better than others (e.g., SL.11-12.1., HS-ETS1-1, HS-ETS1-2, HS-ETS1-4, 6.3.12.GeoGI.1, 7.1.IH.IPERS.6, 7.1.IL.IPERS.7, 8.2.12.ETW.3).
LA.RI.11-12.10a	By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above with scaffolding as needed.
LA.W.11-12.1.A	Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
9.4.12.IML.5	Evaluate, synthesize, and apply information on climate change from various sources appropriately (e.g., 2.1.12.CHSS.6, S.IC.B.4, S.IC.B.6, 8.1.12.DA.1, 6.1.12.GeoHE.14.a, 7.1.AL.PRSNT.2).
9.4.12.TL.3	Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.
9.4.12.TL.4	Collaborate in online learning communities or social networks or virtual worlds to analyze and propose a resolution to a real-world problem (e.g., 7.1.AL.IPERS.6).
LA.W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
LA.W.11-12.8	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation. (MLA or APA Style Manuals).
6.1.12.CivicsDP.14.a	Draw from multiple perspectives and cite evidence to determine the extent to which nongovernmental organizations, special interest groups, third party political groups, and the media affect public policy.
6.1.12.HistoryCA.14.a	Analyze campaign speeches and debates and other sources to determine the extent to which presidential candidates' rhetoric was inclusive, expansive, stereotypical or biased.
6.1.12.HistoryCA.14.b	Create an evidence-based argument that assesses the effectiveness of actions taken to address the causes of continuing racial tensions and violence.
6.1.12.HistoryCA.14.c	Determine the influence of multicultural beliefs, products (i.e., art, food, music, and literature), and practices in shaping contemporary American culture.
6.1.12.HistorySE.14.a	Explore the various ways women, racial and ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ community, and individuals with disabilities have contributed to the American economy, politics and society.
6.1.12.HistoryCC.14.d	Evaluate the role of religion on cultural and social norms, public opinion, and political decisions.
6.1.12.CivicsPD.16.a	Construct a claim to describe how media and technology has impacted civic participation and deliberation.
6.1.12.EconNE.16.b	Evaluate the economic, political, and social impact of new and emerging technologies on individuals and nations.
6.1.12.HistoryUP.16.a	Analyze the impact of American culture on other world cultures and determine the impact of social media on the dissemination of American culture.
6.3.12.HistoryCA.12	Analyze a current foreign policy issue by considering current and historical perspectives, examining strategies, and presenting possible actions.

Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions:

- What is sociology?
- What are the characteristics of the three major sociological paradigms
- How do sociologists use research methods to create change?

Enduring Understandings:

- Sociological imagination is the ability to look beyond the individual as the cause for success or failure and see how one's society influences outcomes in our lives; to do this, sociologists view societal issues through three theoretical paradigms (functionalism, conflict theory and symbolic interactionism).
- Community learning occurs when individuals and groups work together to identify and address issues of public concern.

Objectives

Students will know:

- Social and economic change in the 19th century industrialization prompted scientists to better understand society through scientific research.
- Sociology emerged in order to better and advance society through observation and careful study of social behavior using the scientific method.
- Functionalist perspective asserts that society is relatively stable, aspects of society occur for a specific function and those functions help maintain stability.
- Conflict theory is a framework that views society in a struggle for scarce resources in an unequal system focusing on control of wealth and power.
- Symbolic interactionists approach sociological studies by examining how individuals interact, communicate and impact society.
- Sociological studies have been applied to address issues in society and within our communities to improve the quality of life.

Students will be skilled at:

- Analyzing data to produce a claim and substantiate an argument

- Interpreting data from sociological studies and lenses
- Researching evidence to support a sociological theory
- Contextualizing data in accordance with the theoretical perspectives
- Creating service learning projects that demonstrate understanding of sociological theory and apply the spirit of community learning.
- Utilizing 21st century skills to enact community learning programs
- Developing interpersonal skills through their participation in the Intergenerational Studies program.

Learning Plan

This unit includes, but is not limited to, the following learning strategies:

Intro: TED Talk Activity "The Danger of a Single Story" - Students write about how they want to be perceived by their peers versus how they think they are perceived. Then they will write about whether or not how they think they are perceived by their teachers and other adults matches or differs from their peers and how they feel about those perceptions. After students watch "The Danger of a Single Story" TED Talk, discuss how people are more than a "single camera perspective" which will lead into the concept of different perspectives of sociological thought.

"Which Sociologist are You?" Quiz - Students will take the online quiz (gotoquiz.com/what_sociologist_are_you) and to discover which sociologist they match up with. They then will create a short presentation to the class to introduce the sociologist and their concepts to the class.

Create a Sociological Theory Infographic - Using Canva.com, students will create infographics to demonstrate their understanding of the three sociological theoretical perspectives. Each infographic must clearly define the theory, provide examples of issues that it has or can address and specifically highlight at least one sociologist for each perspective.

Sociological Imagination Activity - Students will apply the concepts of the sociological imagination, the three sociological perspectives, applied science and social problems by exploring Max Weber's concept of "inconvenient facts". Students will analyze three facts, determine who would find the information shocking and why, then analyze each fact from each of the three theoretical perspectives.

Three Sociological Perspectives Gallery Walk & Analysis - Students will use controversial topics of critical and societal importance to be guided through debate and applied science protocols to show the kind of work

sociologists do when trying to understand a social problem, such as gender or racial discrimination, gun control, poverty, or marriage equality. Students will analyze and reflect on various statistics on a specific topic by annotating and evaluating various editorial essays that take the position of the three sociological perspectives. They will record their findings from each perspective and share their findings.

"Meet the Need" Activity - Students will analyze the role, norms, values and sociological perspectives of six key social institutions (such as family, religion, education, etc.)

"Why do People" - Students will ask and research the answers to the "silly" and the "serious" for social influences on why people do what they do.

Film Study- Angels & Demons - Students will watch the film and take notes from the perspective of a symbolic interactionist. At the conclusion of the film, they will complete a reflection where they will be required to apply their knowledge of the symbolic interactionist perspective to the film and demonstrate their understanding of manifest and latent functions of symbols throughout. Students will also apply the concept of sociological imagination as seen throughout the film.

Functionalist Perspectives Interactive Notebook - Students will summarize the key concepts associated with functionalism in a digital format in which they select their personal favorite functionalist, describe their theories and make connections to their research.

Conflict Theorist Perspective Interactive Notebook - Students will summarize the key concepts associated with conflict theory in a digital format in which they select their personal favorite conflict theorist, describe their theories and make connections to their research.

Symbolic Interactionist Perspective Interactive Notebook - Students will summarize the key concepts associated with symbolic interactionist in a digital format in which they select their personal favorite symbolic interactionist, describe their theories and make connections to their research.

Community Learning Activity: Food Insecurity at Home - Students will watch a video on food insecurity: "10% of US families were food insecure at some point in the last year" (YouTube Clip). Students will then connect with a local based charity that provides for the community (such as Cranford Family Cares). Guest speakers will be invited to discuss how our community is impacted by food insecurity and how individuals and groups within the community utilize community learning to address this social problem. Students will then create a social project for CFC, develop the project, and complete the project to benefit CFC.

Note: Other strategies to address the learning objectives may include, but are not limited to direct instruction, think-pair-share activities, creating visual representations, debates, video analysis, Socratic seminars, small

group discussions, simulations, jigsaw activities, web quests, and/or inquiry or problem based learning projects.

Assessment

When taking a Social Studies course, students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Many of the performance tasks below can be implemented as formative and/or summative assessments. As teachers strive for students to demonstrate proficiency, they will need to create additional or alternative assessments based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Formative Assessments:

- Bell Ringer Activities
- Functionalist Perspectives Interactive Notebook
- Conflict Theorist Perspective Interactive Notebook
- Symbolic Interactionist Perspective Interactive Notebook
- Sociological Imagination Activity

Summative Assessments:

- Film Study- “Angels & Demons”
- Key Concepts Quiz
- Community Learning Activity: Food Insecurity at Home

Benchmark Assessments:

- Create a Sociological Theory Infographic
- Intergenerational Studies Program- Students meet with local Senior Citizens and discuss topics we are learning about in class that correlate to perspectives of both generations. Students can write reflections or create a podcast during the Intergenerational Studies with the school’s mobile podcast equipment.

Alternative Assessments:

- Sociological Concepts Curation Project - Throughout the course, students can select key artifacts from various forms of media to highlight key sociological concepts. For each artifact, they must compose a narrative explaining how the curated piece reflects the assigned sociological concept.

Materials

The design of this course allows for the integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available In addition to the materials below, the following link connects to district approved textbooks and resources utilized in this course: Core Book List .

The following are approved resources that teachers can include to further unit related objectives:

Videos:

- The wisdom of sociology: Sam Richards at TEDxLacador-
- What Is Sociology?: Crash Course Sociology #1
- Major Sociological Paradigms: Crash Course Sociology #2
- Sociology & the Scientific Method: Crash Course Sociology #3
- Karl Marx & Conflict Theory: Crash Course Sociology #6
- Max Weber & Modernity: Crash Course Sociology #9
- TED Talk: The Danger of a Single Story (YouTube)
- Angels & Demons film
- SOCIOLOGY - Auguste Comte
- SOCIOLOGY - Émile Durkheim
- 10% of US families were food insecure at some point in the last year

Articles:

- The War in Ukraine: A Process Sociological Perspective on How We Got Here by Alexandros Koutsoukis (A functionalist perspective of the war)

- Sociological Perspectives on Mental Health by Sada

Any additional resources that are not included in this list will be presented to and reviewed by the supervisor before being included in lesson plans. This ensures resources are reviewed and vetted for relevance and appropriateness prior to implementation.

Suggested Strategies for Modification

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Pp6EJOCsFz5o4-opzsXpQDQoa6aClW-bkRGPDRHXVrk/edit?usp=s

These additional strategies are helpful when learning Sociology content and skills:

- Modify reading levels of articles
- Adjust duration of direct instruction as needed
- Provide time for students to process their responses before asking for contributions during class.
- Model expectations for assignments and provide clear rubrics with detailed instructions