3.1 Subcultural and Strain Theories of Crime and Deviance: 10-minute Pack

AQA 7192 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For short answer questions, one or two sentences is usually enough; for the 12-mark evaluation write in full sentences and include a brief conclusion. Time guidance: 10 minutes for the whole pack.

1 Using your knowledge of Merton's adaptations and Item A, explain two reasons why some young people in the town might adopt innovation, and two reasons why some might adopt retreatism.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

2 Explain one strength of using strain theory to explain working-class crime.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 State one criticism of subcultural theories such as Cohen's or Miller's explanations of delinquency.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.1 Subcultural and Strain Theories of Crime and Deviance: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies reason for innovation from Item A or knowledge, e.g. organised ring provides illegitimate means to achieve wealth	**B1**
development linking item to Merton, e.g. blocked legitimate means but available illegitimate routes encourage innovation	**B1**
identifies reason for retreatism from Item A or knowledge, e.g. school failure and unemployment leading some to withdraw	**B1**
development linking item to Merton, e.g. retreatism involves rejecting both goals and means, shown by drug use, vagrancy or withdrawal from community	**B1**

Answer: Innovation: the organised ring selling stolen goods offers an illegitimate route to wealth, so young people blocked from jobs or good qualifications may use crime to reach goals. Retreatism: persistent school failure and long-term unemployment can lead some to give up on society's goals and means, withdrawing into drug use or aimlessness rather than seeking status.

Question 2

identifies a strength, e.g. explains link between structural inequality and individual deviance (oe)	**B1**
development, e.g. shows how social structure creates pressure to deviate rather than assuming individual moral failure	**B1**

Answer: Strain theory links structural inequality to individual deviance, showing how lack of legitimate opportunities creates pressure to break rules rather than blaming individual moral failure.

Question 3

identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. they may stereotype working-class values and over-generalise from small, local samples	**B1**
brief development, e.g. this risks blaming culture when material or individual factors may be more important	**B1**

Answer: One criticism is that subcultural theories can stereotype working-class values and over-generalise from small local studies, risking cultural blame when wider material or individual factors may better explain crime.

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