3.1 Subcultural and Strain Theories of Crime and Deviance: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 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: 15 minutes for the whole pack.

1 Which of the following best describes Robert Merton's idea of 'strain' in explanations of crime and deviance?

- ☐ A) A mismatch between culturally approved goals and the socially approved means of achieving them
- ☐ B) The influence of peer groups on young people who reject adult values
- ☐ C) The availability of illegitimate opportunities in inner-city neighbourhoods
- ☐ D) Upper-class pressure to conform to strict moral codes

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Compare Merton's idea of 'innovation' with Cohen's idea of delinquent subcultures. Give two differences.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Describe Cohen's concept of status frustration and how it leads to delinquent subcultures among working-class boys.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Identify and explain two examples of Miller's focal concerns and how each might lead to delinquent behaviour.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.1 Subcultural and Strain Theories of Crime and Deviance: Test Pack

Question 1

A (a mismatch between culturally approved goals and the socially approved means)	**B1**

Answer: A

Question 2

identifies a valid difference, e.g. innovation is an individual adaptation while Cohen focuses on collective group responses	**B1**
development explaining the difference	**B1**
identifies a second valid difference, e.g. Merton links behaviour to goals and means, Cohen emphasises status and alternative values	**B1**
development explaining the difference	**B1**

Answer: Innovation is presented by Merton as an individual adaptation to blocked means, whereas Cohen emphasises collective delinquent subcultures formed by groups of boys. Merton links deviance to a goals-versus-means problem, while Cohen focuses on status frustration and alternative values that award status for nonconformity.

Question 3

identifies status frustration as working-class boys' frustration at inability to achieve middle-class success norms in school	**B1**
development, e.g. this frustration leads boys to reject middle-class values	**B1**
identifies that boys form delinquent subcultures offering alternative status and values	**B1**
development, e.g. subcultures value toughness, nonconformity and hostility to school authority, giving members status	**B1**

Answer: Status frustration is working-class boys' frustration at being unable to meet middle-class standards at school; they reject those values and create delinquent subcultures that offer alternative status based on toughness, nonconformity and hostility to authorities.

Question 4

identifies one focal concern correctly, e.g. toughness (oe)	**B1**
explains that valuing toughness can lead to violent behaviour to defend reputation	**B1**
identifies a second focal concern correctly, e.g. excitement or thrill seeking (oe)	**B1**
explains that seeking excitement can lead to risk taking such as vandalism or joyriding	**B1**

Answer: Toughness can lead young men to use violence to defend status or reputation. A focus on excitement can lead to risk taking such as vandalism or joyriding as ways to get thrills.

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