7.1 Health: Concepts of Health, Illness and the Medicalisation of Society: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. The two final longer questions must be answered in full sentences. Use sociological terms and, where asked, examples.

1 Which one of the following is a key feature of the biomedical model of illness in a healthcare context?

- ☐ A) It locates illness mainly in social relationships and living conditions
- ☐ B) It treats disease as a malfunction of the body that can be cured medically
- ☐ C) It argues that illness is mainly a label applied by powerful groups
- ☐ D) It prefers folk remedies and religious healing over clinical treatment

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

---

2 Explain Szasz's critique that some forms of mental illness are 'myths' or socially constructed labels rather than objective disease, using one clear point.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

3 Identify and explain two features of Parsons' functionalist concept of the 'sick role' in the study of illness in modern societies.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Describe Parsons' view of the obligations a sick person has under the sick role in modern societies.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Mark scheme · 7.1 Health: Concepts of Health, Illness and the Medicalisation of Society: Test Pack

Question 1

B (disease as biological malfunction treated medically) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies a correct element of Szasz's critique, e.g. that psychiatric labels can be moral or social judgments not medical diagnoses **B1**

explains why this supports the idea of social construction, e.g. behaviours may be defined as illness because they deviate from social norms **B1**

identifies an implication, e.g. psychiatric diagnosis can be used to control or exclude certain people **B1**

explains the implication briefly, e.g. committing someone to treatment can remove social dissent or unwanted behaviour from view **B1**

Answer: Szasz argued psychiatric labels are sometimes moral or social judgments rather than objective disease; behaviours are defined as illness when they deviate from norms, and diagnosis can be used to control or exclude people by committing them to treatment rather than addressing social causes.

Question 3

identifies a valid feature of the sick role, e.g. the sick person is exempted from normal social roles **B1**

explains how this feature works, e.g. exemption allows recovery without normal role obligations, but it is conditional on seeking help **B1**

identifies a second element where applicable, e.g. the sick person must try to get well and seek professional help **B1**

explains the second element, e.g. obligation to seek competent help means the medical profession mediates return to normal roles **B1**

Answer: One feature is that the sick person is exempted from normal social roles, allowing time to recover, but this is conditional on trying to get well and cooperating with medical advice; another is the obligation to seek professional help so doctors can mediate the return to normal roles.

Question 4

identifies an obligation, e.g. to try to get well **B1**

develops the point, e.g. seeking and cooperating with medical professionals **B1**

identifies a second obligation, e.g. to follow medical advice **B1**

develops the second, e.g. compliance helps restore the person to normal social roles **B1**

Answer: Parsons saw obligations such as the duty to try to get well by seeking and cooperating with medical professionals, and to follow medical advice so the sick person can be returned to normal social roles as soon as possible.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk