1.5 Gender Differences in Educational Achievement: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Use sociological terms where appropriate.

1 Which one of the following statements best summarises Sue Sharpe's finding about girls' changing priorities between the 1970s and the 1990s in UK schools?

- ☐ A) In the 1970s girls prioritised careers over family life, while in the 1990s they prioritised marriage and motherhood
- ☐ B) In the 1970s girls prioritised education less and spoke of love and marriage; by the 1990s many girls prioritised careers and independence
- ☐ C) Girls in both decades showed no change in ambitions, focusing mainly on low-paid work
- ☐ D) Sharpe found boys rather than girls changed their priorities the most between the 1970s and 1990s

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Give one example of how teacher attention and classroom interaction can create gendered differences in achievement.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Compare two sociological explanations for boys' underachievement: the 'laddish culture' explanation and the material deprivation explanation.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Identify and explain one external factor that sociologists argue has contributed to girls improving their educational achievement in UK schools.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

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5 Item A: Research summary about GCSE attainment by subject in a fictitious coastal town school in 2025. In English, 85% of girls and 68% of boys achieved grade 4 or above. In Maths, 62% of girls and 70% of boys achieved grade 4 or above. In computing, 40% of girls and 66% of boys achieved grade 4 or above. The school reported active equal opportunities policies and teacher training on gender bias.

(a) Using Item A, identify two patterns visible in the 2025 GCSE subject attainment in this coastal town school. **(2)**

(b) Using Item A and your knowledge, explain one reason why equal opportunities policies might not completely remove gender differences in subject attainment. **(2)**

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 1.5 Gender Differences in Educational Achievement: Test Pack

Question 1

B (girls moved from prioritising love and marriage to valuing careers and independence) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

gives an example, e.g. teachers may give more detailed feedback and encouragement to girls in essay subjects **B1**

brief development, e.g. this can boost girls confidence and attainment in those subjects **B1**

Answer: Teachers may give more detailed feedback and encouragement to girls in essay subjects, which can boost girls confidence and attainment in those subjects.

Question 3

identifies a similarity, e.g. both try to explain why some boys underachieve rather than assuming all boys fail **B1**

explains laddish culture explanation, e.g. focuses on peer group values and masculinity that devalue school **B1**

explains material deprivation explanation, e.g. focuses on poverty, poor housing and lack of resources affecting boys schooling and support **B1**

development noting difference, e.g. one emphasises cultural/identity factors while the other emphasises economic/structural factors **B1**

Answer: Both explanations examine why particular groups of boys underachieve. The laddish culture view focuses on peer group values and forms of masculinity that devalue school, while the material deprivation view focuses on poverty, poor housing and lack of resources that disrupt schooling. The key difference is cultural identity versus economic structure.

Question 4

identifies one external factor, e.g. greater female participation in the labour market **B1**

explains how it helps, e.g. increased employment opportunities raise girls' aspirations and the value placed on qualifications **B1**

Answer: Greater female participation in the labour market: better job opportunities for women raise girls' aspirations and the perceived value of educational qualifications, encouraging higher attainment.

Question 5

(a) identifies one pattern, e.g. girls outperform boys in English **B1**

(a) identifies a second pattern, e.g. boys outperform girls in computing and slightly in maths **B1**

(a) Answer: Girls outperform boys in English; boys outperform girls in computing and slightly outperform in maths.

(b) identifies a reason, e.g. wider socialisation and peer expectations still influence subject choice and confidence **B1**

(b) develops the reason, e.g. even with school policies, gendered stereotypes and out-of-school influences can lead boys and girls to prefer different subjects **B1**

(b) Answer: Equal opportunities policies may be limited because wider socialisation and peer expectations continue to influence subject choice and confidence; out-of-school stereotypes can lead to gendered preferences despite school initiatives.

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