1.6 Ethnic Differences in Educational Achievement: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For questions worth 4 marks or more, write in full sentences. Spend about 15 minutes in total.

1 Which one of the following best describes the term 'ethnic group' as used in sociology of education in the UK context?

- ☐ A) a group defined only by a shared religion
- ☐ B) people who share a common cultural origin, history or identity
- ☐ C) pupils with the same exam results
- ☐ D) a group defined only by skin colour

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Give one example of how the national testing and assessment system could disadvantage minority-ethnic pupils, and explain briefly why this could occur in the UK context.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Explain one way Gillborn's concept of 'institutional racism' in education can be shown in school admissions, with a UK example.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Identify and explain two external factors outside schools that sociologists say can affect ethnic differences in educational achievement in UK pupils.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 State one piece of evidence a sociologist might use to argue that material deprivation, rather than ethnicity alone, explains low achievement for some minority groups in UK schools.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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Mark scheme · 1.6 Ethnic Differences in Educational Achievement: Test Pack

Question 1

B (people who share a common cultural origin, history or identity) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

gives a correct example, e.g. tests biased towards cultural knowledge of majority group or language used that disadvantages EAL pupils **B1**

brief explanation, e.g. unfamiliar cultural references or complex language can reduce performance of pupils from different backgrounds **B1**

Answer: An example is national tests containing cultural references or language that favour the majority culture; unfamiliar references or complex language can reduce EAL pupils' ability to understand questions, lowering their scores.

Question 3

identifies an admissions mechanism that can systematically disadvantage an ethnic group, e.g. apparently neutral selection or oversubscription rules, rather than requiring openly prejudiced individuals, oe **B1**

explains this through a relevant UK example or illustration, e.g. an oversubscribed UK school prioritises a catchment area where housing segregation means some minority families are less likely to live, reducing their access; accept other valid admissions examples with a clear link to ethnic disadvantage, oe **B1**

Answer: Institutional racism can operate through apparently neutral admissions rules that systematically disadvantage an ethnic group. For example, if an oversubscribed UK school prioritises a catchment area shaped by ethnic housing segregation, minority families living outside it may have less access to places even without an openly prejudiced admissions officer.

Question 4

identifies one external factor, e.g. material deprivation linked to poverty **B1**

explains how it affects achievement, e.g. lack of resources, poor housing or limited private tuition can reduce attainment **B1**

identifies a second external factor, e.g. language barriers or limited English on entry **B1**

explains how it affects achievement, e.g. pupils with limited English may struggle with comprehension and exam language early on **B1**

Answer: One external factor is material deprivation linked to poverty, which can limit resources, study space and extra tuition and so reduce attainment. A second is language barriers, where limited English on entry can make understanding lessons and exam language harder, lowering early attainment.

Question 5

states a genuine piece of evidence, e.g. statistics showing higher rates of poverty and overcrowded housing among certain minority-ethnic groups **B1**

brief development, e.g. linking poverty to lack of resources and lower attainment **B1**

Answer: One piece of evidence is that some minority-ethnic groups have higher rates of poverty and overcrowded housing, which is linked to lack of study space, fewer resources and lower educational attainment.

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