4.3 Gender and Educational Achievement: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8192 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Where a question refers to Item C, use both the Item and your own knowledge of sociological explanations in your answer.

1 State one criticism of explanations that focus mainly on the changing job market to explain boys' underachievement.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Sociologists use the phrase 'gender gap in achievement' to describe patterns like those discussed in this pack.

(a) Define the 'gender gap in achievement'. **(2)**

(b) Explain one criticism of treating 'boys' and 'girls' as two uniform groups when discussing achievement. **(2)**

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 Wider changes in family life and the workplace have also been linked to girls' rising aspirations. Explain how wider changes in family life and the workplace have been linked to girls' rising aspirations.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 State one criticism that is often made of feminist explanations of girls' rising achievement.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Schools sometimes introduce specific measures aimed at addressing boys' underachievement. Explain two specific measures schools may use to address boys' underachievement.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

6 State one equal-opportunities measure, other than GIST, that has been used to promote gender equality in UK education.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

7 Sociologists sometimes explain boys' underachievement in terms of a 'laddish subculture'. Define laddish subculture.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

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8 The sociologist Sue Sharpe studied girls' attitudes towards their futures.

(a) Explain what Sharpe's 1976 research found about girls' priorities at that time. **(2)**

(b) Explain how Sharpe found girls' priorities had changed by the time of her later research. **(2)**

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

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9 The feminist movement has been linked to changes in girls' educational achievement. Explain how the feminist movement has been linked to changes in girls' educational achievement.

(Total for Question 9 is 4 marks)

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10 Which of these is a genuine UK initiative aimed at encouraging girls into subjects they were traditionally underrepresented in?

- ☐ A) GIST (Girls into Science and Technology)
- ☐ B) SATs
- ☐ C) OFSTED
- ☐ D) The Pupil Premium

(Total for Question 10 is 1 mark)

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Mark scheme · 4.3 Gender and Educational Achievement: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. it cannot explain why the gender gap in achievement appears across areas and social classes, not just where traditional manual jobs have declined **B1**

brief development **B1**

Answer: This explanation cannot account for the gender gap appearing across many different areas and social classes, not only where traditional manual jobs have declined.

Question 2

(a) a measurable difference in average educational achievement between boys and girls as groups (oe) **B1**

(a) development noting the current direction, e.g. girls have on average been ahead of boys for several decades **B1**

(a) Answer: A measurable difference in average educational achievement between boys and girls as groups; currently, girls have on average been ahead of boys for several decades.

(b) identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. treating boys and girls as uniform groups can hide large differences within each group, for instance by social class or ethnicity **B1**

(b) development, e.g. some sociologists argue gender interacts with class and ethnicity rather than acting as a single, separate cause of achievement **B1**

(b) Answer: Treating boys and girls as uniform groups can hide large differences within each group, for instance by social class or ethnicity; gender is likely to interact with these factors rather than act alone.

Question 3

identifies a relevant change, e.g. seeing more women, including mothers, in paid work and a wider range of careers **B1**

development linking this to raised aspirations or motivation in education, e.g. showing girls a wider range of possible futures **B1**

Answer: Seeing more women, including mothers, in paid work and varied careers may show girls a wider range of possible futures, raising their aspirations and motivation in education.

Question 4

identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. it cannot fully explain the continuing underachievement of some groups of girls, such as those facing poverty **B1**

brief development, e.g. or that focusing on achievement at school can overlook inequalities girls still face after leaving education, such as in the world of work **B1**

Answer: Feminist explanations cannot fully explain continuing underachievement among some groups of girls, such as those facing poverty, and may overlook inequalities girls still face after leaving education.

Question 5

identifies a practical measure, e.g. mentoring schemes that check in on boys' progress and homework completion **B1**

brief development of that measure's intended effect **B1**

identifies a second, different practical measure, e.g. using male role models or reading material to engage boys with subjects such as English **B1**

brief development of that second measure's intended effect **B1**

Answer: Schools may use mentoring schemes that monitor boys' homework and progress, and use male role models or engaging reading material to build interest in subjects such as English, aiming to counter laddish disengagement.

Question 6

identifies a genuine measure, e.g. monitoring and publishing exam results by gender to track the gap, or providing gender-neutral careers advice and subject-choice guidance **B1**

brief accurate development **B1**

Answer: Providing gender-neutral careers advice and subject-choice guidance, so pupils are not steered towards subjects based on stereotypes about their sex.

Question 7

a peer-group culture, often among boys, in which trying hard academically is seen as uncool or a threat to masculine status (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. boys within this subculture may act up, disrupt lessons or avoid appearing to try, to gain status among their peers instead **B1**

Answer: A peer-group culture, often among boys, in which trying hard academically is seen as uncool; boys within it may disrupt lessons or avoid appearing to try, to gain status among peers instead.

Question 8

(a) identifies that Sharpe's 1976 study found many girls' priorities centred on love, marriage and family, rather than careers **B1**

(a) development, e.g. this reflected wider expectations about women's roles in society at the time **B1**

(a) Answer: Sharpe's 1976 study found many girls' priorities centred on love, marriage and family rather than careers, reflecting wider expectations about women's roles at the time.

(b) identifies that Sharpe's later research found girls increasingly prioritised jobs, careers and financial independence **B1**

(b) development, e.g. reflecting a wider cultural shift linked to feminism and changing expectations about women's roles at work **B1**

(b) Answer: Sharpe's later research found girls increasingly prioritised jobs, careers and financial independence, reflecting a wider cultural shift linked to feminism and changing expectations about women's roles.

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Question 9

identifies the impact of the feminist movement in raising awareness of gender inequality and encouraging girls to aim for careers, not just family roles	**B1**
development linked to legal change, e.g. the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 made it illegal to treat pupils differently in education on the basis of sex	**B1**
development linked to policy, e.g. initiatives such as GIST (Girls into Science and Technology) in the 1980s encouraged girls into subjects they were traditionally underrepresented in	**B1**
further development, e.g. these changes may have raised girls' confidence and ambition, contributing to their rising achievement	**B1**

Answer: The feminist movement raised awareness of gender inequality; the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 banned unequal treatment of pupils by sex, and initiatives such as GIST encouraged girls into underrepresented subjects, raising girls' confidence and ambition over time.

Question 10

A (GIST)	**B1**

Answer: A

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