6.4 Power and Authority: Test Pack

AQA 8192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Show your understanding by using sociological vocabulary and, where asked, your own examples.

1 Which term describes power that is widely accepted by those it is used over as right and legitimate?

- ☐ A) Coercion
- ☐ B) Authority
- ☐ C) Status
- ☐ D) Meritocracy

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Explain two examples of organisations or groups in the UK today that pluralists would point to as evidence that power is spread across society.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Explain two reasons why the type of authority a leader holds (traditional, charismatic or legal-rational) might affect how stable their power is over time.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Marxist sociologists have offered different explanations of how the state operates in capitalist society.

(a) Explain Ralph Miliband's Marxist view of how the state operates in capitalist society. **(2)**

(b) Explain how Nicos Poulantzas' Marxist view of the state differs from Miliband's. **(2)**

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.4 Power and Authority: Test Pack

Question 1

B (authority) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies one example, e.g. trade unions, which can represent workers' interests and influence employers or government **B1**

development **B1**

identifies a second, different example, e.g. pressure groups or charities that campaign on specific issues and can influence public policy or public opinion **B1**

development **B1**

Answer: Trade unions can represent workers' interests and influence employers or government; pressure groups or charities that campaign on specific issues can influence public policy or opinion.

Question 3

identifies one reason, e.g. traditional authority may be very stable as long as customs are respected, but can be challenged if traditions are questioned or if there is no clear traditional line of succession **B1**

development **B1**

identifies a second, different reason, e.g. charismatic authority depends heavily on one individual's personal qualities, so it can be less stable in the long term and difficult to pass on to a successor without formal rules **B1**

development **B1**

Answer: Traditional authority can be stable while customs are respected but is vulnerable if traditions are questioned; charismatic authority depends on one individual, making it harder to pass on without formal rules.

Question 4

(a) identifies that Miliband (1969) argued the state tends to act in the interests of the capitalist ruling class because of shared social backgrounds, education and social ties between state officials and business elites **B1**

(a) development, e.g. this is sometimes called an 'instrumentalist' view, seeing the state as effectively an instrument used by the ruling class **B1**

(a) Answer: Miliband (1969) argued the state acts in the interests of the capitalist ruling class due to shared backgrounds and ties between state officials and business elites, an 'instrumentalist' view.

(b) identifies that Poulantzas argued the state serves capitalist interests mainly because of its structural position within a capitalist economy, not because of the personal backgrounds or connections of the people running it **B1**

(b) development, e.g. this means, for Poulantzas, the state would tend to act in the interests of capitalism even if the individuals running it had different personal backgrounds, unlike Miliband's emphasis on shared elite ties **B1**

(b) Answer: Poulantzas argued the state serves capitalism because of its structural position in a capitalist economy, not because of the personal backgrounds of officials, unlike Miliband's emphasis on shared elite ties.

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