6.8 Classifying Social Class and the Growth of an Underclass: Test Pack

AQA 8192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For extended answers write in full sentences. Time guidance: 15 minutes for the whole pack.

1 Which of the following is true about the historical Registrar General's social class scale used in Britain?

- ☐ A) It classified people by income bands only
- ☐ B) It used occupation to assign people to six broad classes often labelled I to V
- ☐ C) It measured attitudes and values rather than occupation
- ☐ D) It was created as part of the NS-SEC system

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 State one claim made by New Right writers who argue Britain has an underclass.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Explain one reason why reliance on occupational class measures alone might miss an emerging underclass in certain local areas.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Define what sociologists mean by the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) in the study of class in Britain.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain two findings from Goldthorpe's Affluent Worker studies in Luton that challenged the embourgeoisement thesis.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.8 Classifying Social Class and the Growth of an Underclass: Test Pack

Question 1

B (it used occupation to assign people to six broad classes, often labelled I to V) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies claim, e.g. existence of a culture of welfare dependency and absent work ethic in some groups **B1**

brief development, e.g. the claim links benefits, single parenthood and crime as self-reinforcing behaviours **B1**

Answer: One New Right claim is that an underclass exists characterised by a culture of welfare dependency and a weak work ethic, with benefits, lone parenthood and criminal behaviour seen as mutually reinforcing.

Question 3

identifies limitation, e.g. occupational measures exclude those who are long-term unemployed or detached from the labour market **B1**

development, e.g. this can hide concentrations of worklessness and social exclusion in particular neighbourhoods **B1**

Answer: Occupational class measures can miss people who are long-term unemployed or detached from the labour market, so they can hide concentrations of worklessness and social exclusion in particular neighbourhoods where an underclass might form.

Question 4

identifies that NS-SEC is an occupation-based classification used by statisticians and sociologists (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. it groups people into eight categories from higher managerial and professional down to long-term unemployed, reflecting employment relations and status **B1**

Answer: The NS-SEC is an occupation-based classification used by statisticians and sociologists; it groups people into eight categories, from higher managerial and professional down to long-term unemployed, reflecting employment relations and status.

Question 5

identifies a finding, e.g. manual workers did not adopt middle-class political values as expected **B1**

development, e.g. many retained working-class identities and voting patterns despite higher pay **B1**

identifies a second finding, e.g. differences in leisure and lifestyle often reflected occupational culture rather than convergence **B1**

development, e.g. Goldthorpe argued class divisions persisted in attitudes and social relations **B1**

Answer: Goldthorpe found manual workers often retained working-class political values and identities despite higher pay, and that leisure and lifestyle differences usually reflected occupational culture rather than a clear convergence with middle-class norms, so class divisions persisted.

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