6.9 Explanations of and Solutions to Poverty: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8192 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. In extended questions write full sentences. Spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 State one way that high local unemployment rates can directly contribute to higher levels of poverty in a UK neighbourhood.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Explain two ways Marxist sociologists argue redistribution and stronger public services could reduce poverty more effectively than policies focused on changing poor people's attitudes.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Discuss how far sociologists would agree that the welfare state solves poverty in the UK.

(Total for Question 3 is 12 marks)

4 Define the 'culture of poverty' thesis as used by sociologists studying why poverty persists in society.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain one part of Sir Keith Joseph's cycle of deprivation idea about how poverty and related attitudes are passed between generations in poor communities.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.9 Explanations of and Solutions to Poverty: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies a direct way, e.g. unemployment reduces household income	**B1**
brief development, e.g. sustained unemployment increases reliance on benefits and reduces ability to afford basics	**B1**

Answer: High unemployment reduces household incomes, and sustained joblessness increases reliance on benefits and reduces households ability to afford basic needs, raising local poverty levels.

Question 2

identifies the first way, e.g. redistribution can reduce inequalities in income and wealth	**B1**
develops the first way, e.g. reducing income inequality raises living standards for the poorest and tackles material causes of poverty	**B1**
identifies the second way, e.g. stronger public services such as housing, health and education improve life chances	**B1**
develops the second way, e.g. better services reduce the barriers that stop people escaping poverty, rather than blaming cultural attitudes	**B1**

Answer: Marxists argue redistribution reduces income and wealth inequalities so the poorest gain higher living standards, and stronger public services in housing, health and education improve life chances and remove barriers to escaping poverty, addressing structural causes rather than blaming attitudes.

Question 3

Level 1 Basic statements about the welfare state with little sociological detail or undeveloped assertions about whether it solves poverty, limited use of perspectives and no clear conclusion.	**1-3**
Level 2 Some correct sociological points about how the welfare state helps reduce poverty, with reference to one or two perspectives and some supporting evidence, but limited evaluation or an unbalanced conclusion.	**4-6**
Level 3 Clear explanation of ways the welfare state can reduce poverty and why it may fail, with at least two perspectives used to support analysis and some evaluation, producing a sustained judgement.	**7-9**
Level 4 A well-developed, balanced discussion drawing on several sociological perspectives, including competing arguments and evidence, critically evaluating the welfare state's effectiveness and reaching a supported, clear conclusion.	**10-12**

Indicative content:

- Functionalist or social democratic views that the welfare state provides essential support, reduces absolute poverty through benefits and services and helps social cohesion
- New Right view that generous benefits can create dependency culture and reduce work incentives, limiting poverty reduction
- Marxist critique that the welfare state cushions but does not remove inequalities produced by capitalism, and that redistribution is limited by ruling class interests
- Feminist points about who benefits, for example how welfare and childcare provision affect mothers and gendered poverty
- Discussion of means-tested versus universal benefits: means-tested target resources but can stigmatise and create poverty traps, universal benefits reduce stigma and have higher take-up
- Practical limits: benefit levels, conditionality, administrative delays and insufficiently funded public services can mean the welfare state does not eliminate poverty
- Evidence that welfare reduces absolute poverty for some but relative poverty and in-work poverty persist due to low wages, insecure work and rising living costs
- A supported conclusion that while the welfare state reduces some forms of poverty, sociologists disagree about whether it can solve poverty entirely without wider structural economic changes

Question 4

identifies that the culture of poverty thesis argues poverty generates distinctive attitudes and behaviours that help people survive but can perpetuate poverty (oe)	**B1**
development, e.g. these attitudes and behaviours can be passed between generations, creating a cycle of deprivation	**B1**

Answer: The culture of poverty thesis argues poverty produces attitudes and behaviours that help people cope but can also perpetuate poverty, and these patterns can be passed between generations, creating a cycle of deprivation.

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Question 5

identifies a relevant element, e.g. parents with limited resources model coping behaviours to their children	**B1**
development, e.g. children learn attitudes such as fatalism or short-term planning	**B1**
further development, e.g. these attitudes reduce chances of educational or occupational mobility	**B1**
links this chain to the idea that poverty continues across generations	**B1**

Answer: Joseph argued that parents in poverty model coping behaviours to their children, who then adopt attitudes such as fatalism or short-term planning; these attitudes limit educational and occupational mobility, helping to reproduce poverty across generations.

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