Education:

**Class differences in achievement – EXTERNAL FACTORS:**

* Even when compared to Middle Class children with the same IQ, working-class children are:
* Less likely to be found in nursery schools
* More likely to be poor readers when they start school
* More likely to be in low sets and streams in secondary school
* More likely to underachieve at GCSE and A Level
* Less likely to go to university
* More likely to leave school early
* More likely to be excluded and suspended

**Explanations: Intelligence**

* **EYSENK**: suggests that working class children have lower innate intelligence than m/c children
* Intelligence is inherited from parents which explains the child’s educational performance and the lowly social status of their parents

*Problems:*

* Intelligence is a cultural construct
* Most regard factors such as poverty and time spent in school as far more meaningful than raw IQ scores

**Explaining class differences:**

* A popular explanation for class differences is that better off parents can send their child to private school
* Although these schools only educate 7% of Britain’s children, nearly all (over 90%) go on to university and account for over half of all Oxford/Cambridge students.

***BUT…****this does not explain difference with STATE education.*

**Cultural deprivation:**

* A number of studies have argued that the values, attitudes and aspirations of parents have an important effect on their children's educational success
* ***Cultural deprivation is the theory that many w/c and black children are inadequately socialised and therefore lack the ‘right’ culture needed for educational success***
* There are three main aspects of cultural deprivation:
* **Intellectual Development**
* The development of thinking an reasoning skills (e.g. – to solve problems and use concepts)
* Cultural deprivation theorists argue that many W/C homes lack the books, educational toys and activities that are needed to stimulate and develop intellectual skills
* **DOUGLAS:** W/C pupils scored lower on tests of ability than M/C pupils because their parents were less likely to support their intellectual development through reading or other educational activities in the home.
* **BERNSTEIN AND YOUNG:** M/C mothers are more likely to choose toys that encourage thinking and reasoning skills to prepare them for school
* **Language**
* **BEREITER AND ENGELMANN:** claim that the language used in lower-class homes is deficient: communicate by gestures, single words and disjointed phrases
* As a result, children fail to develop the necessary language skills, growing up to be incapable of abstract thinking or use language to compare, describe and explain. And so cannot take advantage of the opportunities that school offers.
* **BERNSTEIN:** two types of speech code that differ between classes. These differences in speech code give the m/c an advantage over w/c pupils because at school, elaborated code is used by teachers, textbooks and exams.
* *Restricted code:* typically used by the w/c. Limited vocabulary, and is based on the use of short, grammatically unfinished and simple sentences. It is context-bound.
* *Elaborated code:* typically used by the m/c. wider vocabulary and is based on the use of longer, more complex sentences. Speech is more varied and communicates abstract ideas. It is context-free.

*HOWEVER:* Critics argue that Bernstein is a cultural deprivation theorist because he describes w/c speech as inadequate (does however recognise that the school, and not just the home influences children’s achievement)

* **Attitudes and values**
* **DOUGLAS:** w/c parents placed less value on education were less ambitious for their children and gave them less encouragement. As a result, their children had lower levels of achievement motivation
* **FEINSTEIN:** w/c parents’ lack of interest was the main reason for their children’s underachievement and was even more important that financial hardship factors within school. – m/c children are more successful being their parents provide them with the necessary motivation, discipline and support.
* Cultural deprivation theorists argue that lack of parental interest in their children’s education reflects the sub cultural values of the w/c
* **HYMAN:** believes that the values and beliefs of lower-class subculture are a ‘self-imposed barrier’ to educational and career success – their sub cultural beliefs and values ensure that they neither want nor know how to get educational success
* **SUGARMAN:** argues that w/c children internalise the beliefs and values of their subculture through socialisation which leads them to underachieving at school. w/c subculture has 4 key features that act as a barrier to educational achievement:

1) ***Fatalism*** *–* a belief in fate

2) ***Collectivism*** *–* valuing being part of a group more than succeeding as an individual

3) ***Immediate gratification*** *–* seeking pleasure now rather than making sacrifices in order to get rewards in the future

4) ***Present-time orientation*** *–* seeing the present as more important than the future, so have no long term goals or plans

**Compensatory education:**

* ***A policy designed to tackle the problem of cultural deprivation by providing extra resources to schools and communities in deprives areas***
* Compensatory education programmes attempt to intervene early in the socialisation process to compensate children for the deprivation they experience at home.
* *Examples:*
* **Operation Head Start:** Multibillion dollar scheme of pre-school education in poor areas introduces in the 1960s in the US. Its **aim** was ‘planned enrichment’ of the deprived child’s environment to develop learning skills and instil achievement motivation. It **included** improving parenting skills, setting up nursery classes, home visits by health visitors and educational psychologists and intensive learning programmes
* **Sure Start Programme:** a British government policy introduced in 2000 aimed at pre-school children and their parents. Its **aim** was to tackle poverty and social exclusion. It **included** the promotion of physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children in order to break the cycle of disadvantage

**The myth of cultural deprivation?**

* The cultural deprivation theory has been widely criticised as an explanation of class differences in achievement…
* **KEDDIE:** Cultural deprivation is a ‘myth’ and is a victim-blaming explanation
* Failure at school cannot be blamed on a culturally deprived background – a child cannot be deprived of its own culture
* w/c children are simply culturally different, not culturally deprived – they fail because they are put at a disadvantage by an education system that is dominated by m/c values
* rather than seeing w/c culture as deficient, schools should recognise and build on its strengths and should challenge teachers’ anti-working class prejudices
* **TROYNA AND WILLIAMS:** problem is the schools attitude towards a child’s language – teachers have a ‘speech hierarchy’, labelling m/c highest, w/c, then Black speech
* Some critics argue that compensatory education schemes act as a smoke screen, concealing the real cause of under-achievement, namely social inequality and poverty – the real problem isn’t cultural deprivation but poverty and material deprivation.

**Material Deprivation:**

* ***Material deprivation refers to poverty and a lack of material necessities such as adequate housing and income***
* Poverty is closely linked to education under-achievement:
* in 2006, only 33% of children on free school meals gained 5+ A\*-C at GCSE (*vs. 61% not receiving)*
* **FLAHERTY:** money problems in the family were a significant factor in younger children’s non-attendance at school
* Nearly 90% of ‘failing’ schools are located in deprived areas
* Close link between poverty and social class. w/c families are much more likely to have low incomes and inadequate housing
* Numerous factors can affect a child’s education:
* **Diet and health:**
  + **HOWARD:** young people from poorer homes have lower intakes of energy, vitamins & minerals
  + Poor nutrition affects health (e.g. – if a child has poor nutrition = weak immune system = more absences)
  + Children from poorer homes are more likely to have emotional or behaviour problems: **WILKINSON:** researched 10 year olds – the lower the social class, the higher rates of hyperactivity, anxiety and conduct disorders (*all likely to have a negative effect on child’s education)*
* **Housing:**
* poor housing can affect pupils’ achievement both directly and indirectly
* young children especially affected – development can be impaired through lack of space for safe play and exploration (**direct**)
* families living in temporary accommodation may move more frequently, and therefore children will change schools more often, disrupting their education (**direct**)
* it may affect the child’s health and welfare – crowded homes create a greater risk of accidents and temporary accommodation may cause psychological distress, infections and accidents, leading to more absences (**indirect**)
* **Financial support and the costs of education:**
* Lack of financial support means that children from poor families have to do without equipment and miss out on experiences which would enhance their educational achievement (**BULL:** ‘the costs of free schooling’)
* **TANNER et al:** cost of items such as uniform, transport and books places a heavy burden on poor families
* as a result of this burden, children may have to do with hand-me-downs and may be stigmatised against or bullied for this – **FLAHERTY:** fear of stigmatisation may help explain why 20% of those eligible for free school meals do not take up their entitlement
* Lack of funds also means that children from low-income families also need to work – **RIDGE:** found that children in poverty take on jobs such as baby sitting and this often has a negative impact on their school work. (*these financial restrictions help to explain why many w/c pupils leave school at 16, and few go to university)*
* Evidence that fear of debt deters poor students from applying to university
* Dropout rates are higher among poor students
* The National Audit Office 2002 found that w/c students spent 2 times as much time in paid work to reduce debts as m/c students

**Cultural or material factors?**

* The fact that some children from poor families do succeed suggests that material deprivation is only part of the explanation
* Cultural, religious and political values may play a part in creating and sustaining the child’s motivation
* **MORTIMORE AND WHITTY:** material inequalities have a greater affect on achievement than school factors
* **ROBINSON:** tackling child poverty would be the best/most effective way to boost achievement

**Cultural capital:**

* ***the knowledge, attitudes, values, language, tastes and abilities of the middle class***
* **BOURDIEU:** cultural and material factors contribute to educational achievement and are interrelated – uses concept of ‘capital’ to explain why the m/c are more successful…
* **Cultural capital:**
* Sees m/c culture as a type of capital because like wealth, it gives an advantage to those who possess it
* Argues that through their socialisation, m/c children acquire the ability to grasp, analyse and express abstract ideas and are more likely to develop intellectual interests and an understanding of what is needed for success
* Gives m/c children advantages in school – these abilities are valued and rewarded with qualifications (*education system favours and transmits m/c values – w/c children find school devalues their culture as inferior so their lack of cultural capital leads to failure. Many w/c pupils ‘get the message’ that education is not for them, and so respond by truanting, early leaving or not trying)*
* **Educational and economic capital:**
* **BOURDIEU:** educational, economic and cultural capital can be converted into one another (e.g. – m/c children with cultural capital are better equipped to meet demands of curriculum and gain qualifications. Wealthier parents can convert economic capital into educational capital, sending kids to private schools and extra tuition)
* **LEECH AND CAMPOS:** m/c parents are more likely to be able to afford a house in the catchment area of a school that is highly placed in the exam league tables – ‘*selection mortgage’:* drives up demand for houses near to successful schools and excludes w/c families
* **A test of Bourdieu’s ideas:**
* **SULLIVAN:** used questionnaires to conduct a survey of 465 pupils in 4 schools, to assess their cultural capital: asked them about a range of activities and tested their vocabulary and knowledge of cultural figures – found that those who read complex fiction and watched serious TV documentaries developed a wider vocab and greater cultural knowledge – indicating greater cultural capital. (*the pupils with the greatest cultural capital were children of graduates and were more likely to be successful at GCSE)*
* **HOWEVER**… **SULLIVAN** found that cultural capital only accounted for part of the class difference in achievement: greater resources and aspirations of m/c families explain remainder of class gap in achievement
* **GERWITZ:** researched whether great parental choice of school has benefitted one social class more than the other and the impact of marketisation and parental choice on the difference in educational achievement:
* Study of 14 London schools based on interviews with teachers and parents, and on secondary data such as school documents
* Uses Bourdieu’s ideas to explain findings: found that differences in economic and cultural capital lead to class differences in how far parents can exercise choice in secondary school
* m/c families with cultural and economic capital are better placed to take advantage of the available opportunities for a good education
* Identifies three main types of parents: *privileged-skilled choosers, disconnected-local choosers and semi-skilled choosers.*

* **PRIVILEGED-SKILLED CHOOSERS:**
* Mainly professional m/c parents who used their economic and cultural capital to gain educational capital for their children
* Able to take full advantage of the choices open to them due to their own well-educated and confident background
* Possessed cultural capital: knew how school admissions systems work, ‘how to approach schools, present and mount a case, maintain pressure, make an impact and be remembered’.
* Understood the importance of putting particular school as first choice, meeting deadlines and using appeals procedures and waiting lists to get what they wanted
* Saw choosing school as part of the process of planning their child’s future, and had the time to visit schools and the skills to research the options available
* Economic capital also meant that they could afford to move their children around the education system to get the best deal out of it (e.g.- travel costs)
* **DISCONNECTED-LOCAL CHOOSERS:**
* w/c parents whose choices were restricted by their lack of economic and cultural capital
* Found it difficult to understand school admissions procedures
* Many attached more importance to the safety and quality of school facilities rather than league tables or long-term ambitions
* Distance and cost of travel were major restriction on their choice of school
* Funds were limited and a place at a local comprehensive school was often the only realistic option for their children
* **SEMI-SKILLED CHOOSERS:**
* Mainly w/c
* More ambitious for their children than disconnected-local choosers
* Lacked cultural capital – found it difficult to make sense of the education market
* Often frustrated at their inability to get their children the school they wanted

**Class differences in achievement – INTERNAL FACTORS:**

**Labelling:**

* To label someone meant to attach a meaning or definition to them, often based on stereotyped assumptions about them
* **BECKER:** carried out an interactionist study of labelling based on interviews in 60 Chicago high school teachers - found that they judged pupils according to how closely they fitted the image of an ‘ideal pupil’. (Pupils work, conduct and appearance were key factors influencing teachers’ judgements)
* **CICOUREL AND KITSUSE: -** carried out a study of educational counsellors in an American high school - Found inconsistencies in the way the counsellors assessed students’ suitability for courses.
  + They claimed they judged students on their ability but largely judged them on the basis of their social class or race. (m/c students were more likely to be labelled as students with the potential to get onto the higher level courses and go to college)
* **RIST:** found that labelling occurs from the very start of a child's education – studied American Kindergartens.
  + The teacher used information about the child's social background and appearance to place them in separate groups, seated at different tables.
  + Fast learners were labelled as ‘*tigers*’, often middle-class and of neat appearance – seated at the table nearest to her and encouraged them more
  + The other two groups were labelled as ‘*cardinals*’ and ‘*the clowns’*. Seated further away and were more likely to be w/c – these children were also given lower-level books to read and few opportunities to demonstrate their abilities (had to read in groups, and not as individuals)
* **KEDDIE:** found that both pupils and knowledge can be labelled as high or low status
* Comprehensive school classes were streamed by ability – teachers found to be adapting their teaching to the A stream, giving them a more complex and theoretical, high status knowledge
* The ‘*less able’* C stream pupils were given a more descriptive common sense, low status knowledge – these streams often had more w/c pupils, and this holding back of high status knowledge therefore meant that an increase in class differences in achievement was more likely
* **GILLBORN AND YOUDELL:** found that working-class and black pupils are less likely to be believed to have ability and so are more likely to be entered into lower-tier GCSEs, and placed in lower sets - shows how teachers use own perception of ‘ability’ to decide which pupils have the potential to achieve 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE(This denial of knowledge and opportunity further widens the class gap in achievement)

**The self-fulfilling prophecy:**

* A self-fulfilling prophecy is a prediction that comes true simply by virtue of it having been made
* Interactionists argue that labelling can affect pupils’ achievement by creating a self-fulfilling prophecy
* **ROSENTHAL AND JACOBSON:** studied Californian primary school – told the school that they had designed a test designed to identify those who would ‘spurt’ ahead.
* was actually a standard IQ test
* Fabricated results – picked 20% of pupils at random, telling the school that the test had identified these students as spurters.
* Returned to the school a year later and found that 47% of those identified as spurters had made significant progress
* They suggest that the teachers’ beliefs about the pupils have been influence by the supposed results and had consequently resulted in teachers conveying these beliefs through the way they interacted with the children
* This demonstrates self-fulfilling prophecy because the school accepted the prediction that some would spurt ahead and so the teachers brought it about
* If teachers believe a pupil to be of a certain type, the can actually make the pupil into that type
* The self-fulfilling prophecy can also produce under-achievement – if teachers have low expectations of their students and convey these expectations, then a child may feel like a failure, and give up trying
* Streaming can also create a self-fulfilling prophecy – students may live up to the expectations of the teacher of whose stream they are in
* However, m/c children tend to benefit for streaming, likely to be placed in higher streams, reflecting their teachers view of them as ideal pupils

**Pupil subcultures:**

* a pupil subculture is a group of people who share similar values and behaviour patterns – they often emerge as a result of the way people have been labelled and streaming
* **LACEY:** uses concept of differentiation and polarisation to explain how pupil subcultures develop:
* **Differentiation –** the process of teachers categorising pupils according to how they perceive their ability, behaviour and/or attitude. Those who are deemed ‘more able’ by the school are given high status by being placed in a high stream, whereas those who are deemed ‘less able’ and placed in a low streams are given an inferior status
* **Polarisation –** the process in which pupils respond to streaming by moving towards one of two opposite ‘poles’ or extremes
* Pupils placed in higher streams tend to remain committed to the values of the school and gain their status through academic success – tend to form a ***pro-school subculture***
* **LACEY** found that those placed in low streams suffer a loss of self-esteem, because the school has undermined their self-worth. Consequently, this label pushes them to find other ways to gain status; inverting the schools values of hard work, obedience and punctuality –form an ***anti-school subculture***
* Joining an anti-school subculture is likely to become a self-fulfilling prophecy of educational failure
* **HARGREAVES:** the main reason subcultures form is so that pupils who achieve little status within the school can gain status by forming or belonging to a subculture, in which they are valued (triple failures)
* **BALL:** studied Beachside comprehensive which was in the process of abolishing a type of streaming system.
* Found that when the school abolished banding, the basis for pupils to polarise into subcultures was largely removed and the influence of the anti-school subculture declined (*however, teachers continued to categorise pupils differently)*
* Positive labelling was reflected in better exam results – suggesting that a self-fulfilling prophecy had occurred.
* Class inequalities can continue as a result of teachers’ labelling, even without the effect of subcultures or streaming
* Since Ball’s study, especially since the Education Reform Act 1988, there has been a trend towards more streaming and towards a variety of types of school – this has created new opportunities for schools and teachers to differentiate between pupils on the basis of class ethnicity or gender and treat them unequally
* **WOODS:** suggests other responses apart from forming anti/pro-school subcultures include:
* **Ingratiation:** being the ‘teacher’s pet’
* **Ritualism:** going through the motions and staying out of trouble
* **Retreatism:** daydreaming and mucking about
* **Rebellion:** outright rejection of everything the school stands for
* **FURLONG:** pupils are not committed to any one response, they may move between different types of responses acting differently in different lessons
* There are limitations of the labelling theory – it has been accused of determinism
* **MARXISTS: -**tends to blame teachers for labelling pupils, but fails to explain why they do so **-**Labels are not merely the result of teachers’ individual prejudices but stem from the fact that teachers work in a system that reproduces class divisions

**Marketisation and selection policies:**

* A funding formula, exam league tables and completion means that schools are under pressure to stream and select pupils (in order to attract pupils and therefore funding they need to achieve a good league table position)
* **GILBORN AND YOUNDELL:** Process of Marketisation can widen the class gap in achievement within a school
  + Exam league tables lead to ‘A-C economy’ – because of this, teachers focus time, effort and resources on those pupils they perceive as having potential to gain A-C – ***educational triage***

**Educational triage:**

PUPILS

**Educational Triage**

Those who will pass anyway Borderline C/D pupils – Hopeless cases

targeted for extra help (potential to do well)

***Who gets left behind?***

>teachers notions of ‘ability’ to sort pupils and usually its w/c and Black pupils who are labelled as lacking ability

* *As a result, they are labelled as ‘hopeless cases’ and are often ignored – producing a self –fulfilling prophecy and failure*

>this idea is closely linked with streaming, however they are looking at the wider picture by linking it with marketisation

**Competition and selection:**

* While popular schools can afford to screen out less able or difficult pupils, unpopular schools are obliged to take them
* Results get worse and schools become less popular
* **BARTLETT:** marketisation has led to popular schools **‘cream skimming’** – selecting higher ability
* **‘Silt shifting’** - off loading pupils with learning difficulties
* **The right image:**
* An image to attract the ‘right kind of parents’
* m/c parents respond to a traditional image
* **WALFORD:** researched City Technologies and found that although they intended to offer vocational education and recruit all types of children, in practice they became attractive to m/c parents who see them as the next best after Grammar schools
* **BALL:** schools have to spend more money marketing themselves to parents, often at the expense of spending on other more needed areas

(Some argue that this has led to the polarisation of the education system)

**Ethnic differences in achievement – EXTERNAL FACTORS:**

* All ethnic groups are improving in terms of educational attainment
* Indian students have the highest improvement figures
* There are persistent differences within ethnic groups
* Chinese girls do much better

**Explaining it:**

* Some sociologists look towards factors within a school whilst others look outside of the school

But be aware...

* Explaining the ethnic differences in attainment is difficult
* This is because of changes over time
* Changes at different levels of the education system – e.g. – many African boys attainment dips during secondary education but improves after compulsory school (higher and further education)

**Cultural deprivation:**

* **BOWKER:** lack of SE is a major barrier to progress in education and integration into wider society. Children who do not speak English at home may be held back educationally **HOWEVER** the SWANN REPORT 1985 found that language was not a major factor in under-achievement
* A lack of socialisation into values such as ambition and competiveness to achieve long-term goals can leave some pupils (especially black children) unequipped with the right attitude needed to succeed
* Family structure can play a heavy role in a child’s educational success
* **FLEW:** ethnic differences in achievement stem from cultural differences outside of the education system
* **SCRUTON:** sees low achievement levels of some ethnic minorities as resulting from a failure to embrace mainstream British culture
* Asian families
* **DRIVER AND BALLARD:** Asian family structures bring educational benefits because Asian parents have more positive attitudes towards education and higher aspirations for their child’s future – as a result, are more supportive
* **LUPTON:** adult authority in Asian families is similar to the model that operates in schools which has a knock-on effect in school as Asian parents are more likely to be supportive of school behaviour policies
* Some sociologists see the Asian family as an obstacle to success – **KHAN** describes Asian families as ‘stress ridden’, bound by tradition and with a controlling attitude towards children
* White working class
* A survey of state schools for the Sutton Trust (**MORI 2004**) found that 80% of 11-16 year old ethnic minority pupils aspired to go to university, as against only 68% of white pupils
* Lower levels of aspiration and achievement may be the result of lack of parental support
* **LUPTON:** teachers reported lower levels of behaviour and discipline in white w/c schools – teachers blamed this on lower levels of parental support and the negative attitude that white w/c parents have towards education
* **EVANS:** street culture in white w/c areas can be brutal and so young people have to learn how to withstand intimidation and intimidate others – school can become a place where the power games that young people engage in on the street can be played out again bringing disruption and making it hard for pupils to succeed.
* Criticisms
* **DRIVER:** cultural deprivation theory ignores the positive aspects of ethnicity on achievement. Shows that black Caribbean family is far from dysfunctional and provides girls with positive role models of strong independent women – this is why black girls tend to be more successful than boys
* **LAWRENCE:** challenges PYRCE’S view that black pupils fail because their culture is weak and they lack self-esteem/ Instead, he argues that black pupils under achieve because of racism
* **KEDDIE:** cultural deprivation is a victim-blaming explanation – children under achieve because of an ethnocentric curriculum, biased in favour of white culture and against minorities
* Critics oppose compensatory education because they see it as an attempt to impose the dominant white culture on children who already have a coherent culture of their own

**Material deprivation and class:**

* Material deprivation explanations see educational failure as resulting from factors such as substandard housing and low income
* Ethnic minorities are more likely to face these problems
* **FLAHERTY:**  unemployment is 3 times higher for African and Bangladeshi/Pakistani people than for whites (reflect the proportion of ethnic groups who are eligible for free school meals)
* Inequalities are parallel to those seen in educational achievement. Class differences can explain why Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils tend to do worse than Indian and white pupils
* **However, GILLBORN AND MIRZA** argue that social class factors do not override the influence of ethnicity – comparing pupils of the same social class but of different ethnic origin, we still find differences in achievement

**Racism in wider society:**

* Some sociologists argue that poverty is the product of racism, as well as material deprivation
* **REX:** shows how racial discrimination leads to social exclusions and then worsens poverty faced by ethnic minorities. (e.g. – in housing, discrimination means that minorities are more likely to be forced into substandard accommodation than white people of the same class)
* **NOON:** found evidence of direct and deliberate discrimination in employment too – sent letters to top 100 UK companies about employment opportunities, signed by two fictitious applicants called ‘Evans’ and ‘Patel’ – the companies were more encouraging to the ‘white’ candidate in terms of the number of replies and the helpfulness of the replies

(*Helps to explain why members of ethnic minorities are more likely to face unemployment and low pay – consequently having a negative effect on their children’s educational prospects)*

**Ethnic differences in achievement – INTERNAL FACTORS:**

**Labelling and teacher racism:**

* Negative labels may lead teachers to treat ethnic minority pupils differently, thus putting them at a disadvantage
* **GILLBORN AND YOUDELL:** teachers were quicker to discipline black pupils than others for the same behaviour – this is the result of teachers ‘racialised expectations’ (expecting black pupils to present more discipline problems). When students responded negatively, further conflict arose. Much of the conflict between white teachers and black pupils stems from the racial stereotypes teachers hold
* **FOSTER:** teachers’ stereotypes of black pupils as badly behaved could result in them being placed in lower sets than other pupils of similar ability – likely to lead to lower levels of achievement
* **WRIGHT:** found Asian pupils being the victim of teachers’ labelling – teachers held ethnocentric views, seeing British culture and SE as superior – this affected how they related to the Asian pupils, assuming they had a poor grasp on English meant they often left them out of class discussions or used simplistic language when talking to them – making them feel marginalised
* **COARD:**

**Pupil responses and subcultures:**

* **FULLER:** describes how high achieving ‘untypical’ black girls did not accept the negatives stereotypes of them, and instead channelled anger into the pursuit of educational success – regarded their teachers as racist and as far as conforming, they only conformed as far as schoolwork was concerned – worked conscientiously, but gave off the appearance of not doing so.
* Sees this behaviour as a way of dealing with contradictory demands of succeeding at school while remaining friends with black girls in lower streams and avoiding ridicule of anti-school black boys
* Pupils may succeed even if they do not conform
* Negative labelling does not always lead to failure
* **MAC an GHAILL:** study of black and Asian A level students
* Students who believed had labelled them negatively did not necessarily accept the label – how they responded depended on factors such as their ethnic group and gender and the nature of their former schools
* Labelling does not inevitably produce a self-fulfilling prophecy
* **MIRZA:** racist teachers discouraged black pupils from being ambitious through the kind of advice they gave them about careers and option choices
* Much of girls’ time at school was spent trying to avoid effects of teachers’ negative attitudes – included being selective about which staff to ask for help, getting on with their own work in lessons without taking part and not choosing certain options so as to avoid teachers with racist attitudes
* a large majority of teachers held racist attitudes, **MIRZA** identifies three main types:
* The colour-blind – teachers who believe all pupils are equal but in practice allow racism to go unchallenged
* The liberal chauvinists – teachers who believe black pupils are culturally deprived and who have low expectations of them
* The overt racists – teachers who believe blacks are inferior and actively discriminate against them
* Although pupils may devise strategies to try and avoid teachers’ racism, these too can limit their opportunity
* **SEWELL:** in his study of a boys’ secondary school, he found that many teachers had a stereotype of ‘black machismo’ which sees all black boys as rebellious, anti-authority and anti-school – one effect is that black boys are more likely to be excluded
* Identifies 4 ways in which the boys responded to racist stereotyping:

1. **The rebels:**
   * Most visible and influential group
   * Small minority of black pupils
   * Often excluded from school
   * Rejected the goals and rules of the school – expressed this through peer group membership – conforming to the stereotype of the ‘black macho lad’
2. **The conformists:**

* Largest group
* Keen to succeed
* Accepted the school’s goals and had friends from different ethnic groups
* Anxious to be stereotyped by teachers and peers

1. **The retreatists:**

* tiny minority of isolated individuals
* disconnected from school and black subcultures
* despised by the rebels

1. **The innovators:**

* Second largest group
* Pro-education, but anti-school
* Conformed as far as school work is involved
* The labelling theory shows how teachers’ stereotypes can be a cause of failure **however** there is a danger of seeing this as the product of individual teacher prejudices rather than racism in wider society and there is also a danger that assuming once a pupil is labelled, they will automatically fall victim to the self-fulfilling prophecy and fail

**The ethnocentric curriculum:**

* **TROYNA AND WILLIAMS:** the curriculum in British schools is ethnocentric because it gives priority to white culture and the English language
* **DAVID:** describes the national curriculum as a ‘specifically British’ curriculum – largely ignores non-European languages, literature and music
* **BALL:** criticises the national curriculum for ignoring cultural and ethnic diversity and promoting an attitude of ‘little Englandism’
* **COARD:** the ethnocentric curriculum may produce under-achievement – the image of black people as inferior undermines black children’s self esteem and leads to their failure
* **However** it is not clear what impact the ethnocentric curriculum has – **STONE** argues that black children do not suffer from low self esteem

**Institutional racism:**

* **TROYNA AND WILLIAMS:** look how schools and colleges routinely discriminate against ethnic minorities
* Institutional racism – discrimination that is built into the way institutions operate
* Individual racism that results from the prejudiced views of individuals
* Ethnocentric curriculum is a prime example on institutional racism
* **HATCHER:** study of school governing bodies shows how they gave low priority to race issues and failed to deal with pupils’ racist behaviour. Also a lack of communication between school and ethnic minority parents, meaning concerns such as language support was lacking
* Institutional racism may create an environment where ethnic minority pupils are consistently disadvantaged by a system that disregards their needs

**Selection and segregation:**

* **GILLBORN:** marketisation has given schools greater scope to select pupils, putting some ethnic minority pupils at a disadvantage
* Selection gives more scope for negative stereotypes to influence decisions about school admissions
* **MOORE AND DAVENPORT:** study on how selection procedures lead to ethnic segregation, with minority pupils failing to get into better schools. Conclude that selection leads to an ethnically stratified education system
* These schools discriminated against ‘problem students’ – used primary school reports to screen out pupils with language or learning difficulties and the application process was difficult for less educated/non-English speaking parents to understand
* **THE COMMISION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY (1993)** identified similar biases in British education – racism in school admissions procedures often means ethnic minority children end up in unpopular schools
  + Racist bias in interviews for school places
  + Reports from primary schools that stereotype minority pupils
* **However**, another cause of segregation can be the result of an active choice by parents
* **GERWITZ:** study of ‘Gorse’ and ‘Flightpath’ schools shows – ‘Gorse’ attracted mainly Asian intake (and so many white parents refused to consider it), whilst Asian parents saw it as ‘safe’ and having firm discipline. ‘Flightpath’ was viewed by Asian parents as ‘a bit rough’ with a reputation for racism

**Ethnicity, class and gender:**

* **EVANS:** when examining black children’s achievement, sociologists tend to look at their culture and ethnicity, but rarely class. However, when examining white children’s achievement, they look at their class rather than their culture and ethnicity – need to look at all of those things for every child
* **CONNOLLY:** shows how pupils and teacher’s construct masculinity differently depending on ethnicity
* found that teachers saw black boys as disruptive under-achievers and controlled them by punishing them more and by channelling their energies into sport – boys responded by seeking status in non-academic ways (e.g. football)
* teachers saw Asian pupils as passive and conformist, seen as silly/immature when they misbehaved as opposed to threatening – both teachers and pupils saw Asian boys as more ‘feminine’, vulnerable and in need of protection from bullying
* Both studies show that we cannot consider ethnicity in isolation from gender and class when explaining differences in achievement

**Gender differences in achievement – EXTERNAL FACTORS:**

* baseline tests show that 62% of girls can concentrate without supervision for 10 minutes, but only 49% of boys can do the same
* DfES – 70% of children with SEN are boys
* Girls do better than boys at KS1-3
* At GCSE this trend continues
* At A Level, the gap is smaller but girls still outperform boys

Differences in classroom behaviour

Better motivation

Why do girls do better at school?

Girls mature quicker

Different attitudes to learning

Increasing career ambitions

**The impact of feminism:**

* Has challenges traditional stereotypes of women’s role in society
* Has had success in improving women’s right and opportunities through changes in law
* **MCROBBIE:** points to change in magazines (media)
* 1970s = ‘traditional’ women; emphasis on the importance of marriage
* 1990s = assertive, independent women
* Has helped raise expectations and self-esteem of women

**Changes in the family:**

* Changes since the 1970s such as an increase in divorce rates, increased cohabitation, smaller families and increased number of lone parent families
* These changes have impacted girls’ attitudes towards education and has given girls role models

**Changes in women’s employment:**

* 1970 Equal Pay Act – pay gap has since fallen from 30% to 17%
* 1975 Sex Discrimination Act
* Proportion of women in employment has risen: 1979=47% , 2007= over 70%
* Some women breaking through the ‘glass ceiling’ – the invisible barrier to higher level jobs
* Changes have encouraged girls to see their future in terms of paid work
* Greater opportunity, better pay and role models provide an incentive for girls to gain qualifications

**Changes in ambitions of girls:**

* View that changes in the family and employment are producing changes in girls’ ambitions
* **SHARPE:** conducted interviews with girls in the 1970s and 1990s and compared results: show shift in how girls see themselves in the future - 1970s = low aspirations and believe that having ambition and intelligence could be perceived as unattractive, 1990s = wanted to be independent, priorities included being able to support themselves and getting a good career
* **FRANCIS:** interviewed girls in 2001 and found that most had high aspirations, most of which required educational qualifications

**Gender differences in achievement – INTERNAL FACTORS:**

**Equal opportunity policies:**

* The belief that boys and girls are equally capable and entitled to the same opportunities is now part of the mainstream thinking in education and influences educational policies
* E.g. – GIST (girls into science and technology) encourage girls to pursue careers in these non-traditional areas
* Introduction of the national curriculum in 1988 has helped remove one source of gender inequality by making girls and boys study mostly the same subjects
* **BOALER:** the impact of equal opportunities is a key reason for the changes in girls achievement through the removal of many of the barriers, also making school more meritocratic

**Positive role models in schools:**

* Increase in the proportion of female teachers and head teachers in recent years – in 1992, there was 50% of women head teachers in nursery and primary schools, by 2005, there was 66% **(DfES 2007)**
* More female teachers has helped girls have a role model for educational achievement
* It can be argued that primary schools have been ‘feminised’ – may have an impact on how far each gender sees schooling as part of their ‘gender domain’

**GCSE and coursework:**

* Some argue that changes in ways pupils are assessed has favoured girls and disadvantaged boys
* **GORAD:** found gender gap in achievement was constant from 1975-1989 – changed when GCSE’s and coursework were introduced – gap in achievement is the “product of the changed system of assessment”
* GCSE system benefits girls due to early socialisation of gender roles, meaning that they can meet demands of GCSEs and coursework, and therefore able to achieve greater success than boys
* **However, ELWOOD** argues that although coursework has some influence, it is unlikely to be the only cause of the gender gap – exams have more influence on final grades

**Teacher attention:**

* **SPENDER:** found teachers interact more with boys than girls
* **However,** **FRENCH AND FRENCH** found that the amount of attention teachers pay to boys and girls was similar
* **FRANCIS:** boys do get more attention, however were disciplined more harshly and felt picked on by teachers
* **SWANN:** found gender differences in communication styles. Boys dominated class discussions, whereas girls prefer group work and are better at listening – may explain why teacher respond more positively to girls than boys

**Challenging stereotypes:**

* There has been a removal of girls’ barriers to achievement as a result of the removal of gender stereotypes from textbooks and reading schemes
* Research in the 70s and 80s found that reading schemes portrayed women mainly as housewives and mothers
* **WEINER:** since the 80s, teachers have challenged such stereotypes of women, and the removal of sexist images may have helped to raise girls’ achievement by presenting them with more positive images of what women can do
* **LOBBAN:** studied 179 stories and 6 reading schemes, finding that women were nearly always presented in traditional domestic roles

**Selection and league tables:**

* Girls are more favourable as they do better in exams than boys
* **JACKSON:** the introduction of exam league tables, which place a high value on academic achievement, has improved opportunities for girls – high achieving girls are attractive to schools, whereas low-achieving boys are not.
* This tends to create a self-fulfilling prophecy because girls are more likely to be recruited by good schools, whilst boys who are seen as a risk go to low achieving schools
* **SLEE:** boys are less attractive to schools because they are more likely to suffer from behavioural difficulties and are4 times more likely to be excluded
* As a result, boys are seen as ‘liability students’

**Boys and achievement:**

**Boys and literacy:**

* **DCSF (2007)** claim that the gender gap is mainly the result of boys’ poorer literacy and language skills
* Parents spent less time reading with boys
* Boys have less of a ‘bedroom culture’ and instead engage in activities such as football
* These prevent boys from improving their language and literacy skills and so cannot meet the demands of the education system, require for educational success

**Globalisation and the decline of traditional men’s jobs:**

* the decline in many ‘male’ jobs has led to an ‘identity crisis for men’ who now believe they have little prospects and so give up trying (**MITSOS AND BROWNE**)

**Feminisation of education:**

* **SEWELL:** boys have fallen behind because education does not nurture ‘masculine’ traits such as leadership – instead they celebrate qualities that are more associated with girls, putting boys at a disadvantage

**Lack of male role models:**

* **DfES (2007)** – men only make up 16% of primary school teachers
* **YOUGOV:** 42% OF 8-11 Y/O boys said a male teacher made them work harder

**‘Laddish’ subcultures:**

* **EPSTEIN:** boys were ridiculed for being ‘swots’ if they were focussed on school
* **FRANCIS:** linked the idea of boys fearing being labelled as swots because it was a threat to their masculinity (importance of masculinity in w/c culture = being tough and doing manual work)

**Subject choice:**

* There is a difference in the subjects that boys and girls choose
* **STABLES:** national curriculum gives people freedom to choose but this is where subjects become more gendered – this even more so at A level

*Explanations of gender differences in subject choice...*

1. **Early socialisation:**

* Boys and girls are socialised differently – this shapes their gender identity, and continues in school
* **BYRNE:** teachers encourage boys to be tough and masculine, and girls to be quiet and helpful
* **MURPHY:** this leads them to have different choices in subjects
* **BROWNE AND ROSS:**children’s beliefs about ‘gender domains’ are shaped by their early experiences and expectations of adults
* Children are more confident when engaging in tasks that they see as part of their gender domain
* Study by **MURPHY** shows that boys and girls pay attention to different details when tackling the same task which helps to explain why there is a difference in subject choice

1. **Gendered subject image:**

* The image a subject gives off will affect who wants to choose it
* **KELLY:** science is a boys subject for lots of reasons – one being that most science teachers are make and resources, such as textbooks are male dominated
* **DfES:** found that in single-sex schools, there are less stereotyped subject images

1. **Peer pressure:**

* Choosing the same subjects as their friends as a result of pressure applied to an individual if their choice is disapproved
* E.g. boys not taking dance because it falls outside of their gender domain and so are likely to receive a negative response from peers
* **DEWAR:** did American study and found that girls were called lesbians or ‘butch’ if they were more interested in sport than in boys

1. **Gendered career opportunities:**

* Linked to subject choice because employment is highly gendered
* Women stay in female friendly jobs such as cleaning
* Sex-typing gives people the idea that only certain jobs are acceptable for their sex, and consequently affects what subjects and courses they will choose

**Gender identity:**

* Pupils’ experiences in school reinforce their gender and sexual identities.
* These experiences may all contribute to reinforcing what **CONNELL** calls ‘hegemonic masculinity’ – the dominance of heterosexual masculine identity and the subordination of female and gay identities

1. **Verbal abuse:**

* **CONNELL:** “a rich vocabulary of abuse” is one of the ways in which dominant gender and sexual identities are reinforced
* **LEES:** boys called girls ‘slags’ if they appeared to be sexually available – and ‘drags’ if they didn’t
* **PAETCHER:** sees name-calling as helping to shape gender identity and maintain male power – calling pupils labels such as ‘gay’ is a way in which pupils ‘police’ each other’s sexual identities
* **PARKER:** found that boys were labelled as ‘gay’ for being friendly with girls or female teachers
* However, **PAETCHER** and **PARKER** not that these labels often bear no relation to pupils’ actual sexual behaviour, but instead function to reinforce gender norms

1. **Male peer groups:**

* Male peer groups use verbal abuse to reinforce their definitions of masculinity
* **EPSTEIN AND WILLIS:** boys in anti-school subcultures often accuse boys who want to do well of being gay or effeminate
* **MAC AN GHAILL:** studied Parnell School and found how peer groups reproduce a range of different class-based masculine identities
* **REDMAN AND MAC AN GHAILL:** the dominant definition of masculine identity changes from that of the macho lads in the lower school to that of the real Englishmen by sixth-form – represents a shift away from a w/c based definition based on toughness to a m/c one based on intellectual ability

1. **Teachers and discipline:**

* **HAYWOOD AND MAC AN GHAILL:** found that male teachers told boys off for ‘behaving like girls’ and teased them when they gained low marks in tests than girls - teacher play an important role in reinforcing dominant definitions of gender identity
* **ASKEW AND ROSS:** male teachers’ behaviour can subtly reinforce messages about gender identity
* Make teachers often have a protective attitude towards female colleagues, coming into their classes to ‘rescue’ them by threatening pupils who are being disruptive (*also reinforces idea that women cannot cope alone)*

1. **The male gaze:**

* **MAC AN GHAILL:** refer to the visual aspect to the way pupils control each others’ identity as the ‘male gaze’: the way male pupils and teacher look girls up and down, seeing them as sexual objects and making judgements about their appearance
* See the male gaze as a form of surveillance through which dominant heterosexual masculinity is reinforced and femininity devalued – it is a way boys can prove their masculinity

1. **Double standards:**

* A double standard exists when we apply one set of moral standards to one group but a different to another group
* **LEES:** Identifies a double standard of sexual morality in which boys boast about their own sexual exploits, but call a girl a ‘slag’ if she doesn’t have a steady boyfriend or if she dresses and speaks in a certain way
* Sexual conquest is approved of and given status by male peers and ignored by male teachers, whereas ‘promiscuity’ among girls attracts negative labels

**The role of education: functionalism and new right:**

**[Functionalism]**

Functionalists are interested in the functions of education:

* Social integration
* Socialisation
* Social placement
* Social and cultural innovation

**DURKHEIM:**

* wrote ‘moral education’ (1961)
* takes a structuralist, macro approach to the role of education in society
* key concept = social solidarity
* major function of education is the transmission of society’s norms and values
* without similar attitudes in people, social life would be impossible
* education, particularly the teaching of history, provides links between the individual and society. Children will come to see that they are part of something larger than themselves, they will develop a sense of commitment to the social group
* school makes children cooperate with other members of society besides family and friends – it is **society in miniature**
* education also teaches children skills for their future role
* *armchair theorist*

Weaknesses:

* **DURKHEIM** assumes the norms and values transmitted by the education system are those of society as a whole. *(****MARXISTS*** *would argue the values transmitted are those of the ruling class/ruling elite)*

**PARSONS:**

* Structuralist, macro approach
* Key concepts = focal socialising agency, particularistic and universalistic standards, ascribed/achieved status, meritocracy and role allocation
* School acts as a bridge between the family and society, preparing children for their adult roles
* School prepares children for the transition between their particularistic standards and ascribed status of the family, to the universalistic standards and achieve status of society
* Status is achieved on the basis of merit (meritocracy) – ***debateable***
* Advanced, industrial society requires a highly motivated, achievement orientated workforce.
* By using the principle of differential reward for differential achievement, this value is instilled in society
* Schools match children to occupations based on aptitude and achievement
* *Armchair theorist*

Weaknesses:

* Evidence that equal opportunity in education does not exist; achievement is greatly influence by class background rather than ability
* Fails to recognize that the value of consensus may be that of the ruling elite
* **WRONG:** argues that functionalists have an ‘over-socialised’ view of people as puppets of society – wrongly imply that pupils passively accept all they are taught and never reject the schools’ values (deterministic)

**DAVIS AND MOORE:**

* see education as a device for selection and role allocation
* focus on the relationship between education and social inequality
* inequality is necessary to ensure that the most important roles are filled by the most talented people
* not everyone is equally talented, so society offers higher rewards for these jobs to encourage everyone to compete for them
* education acts as a proving ground for ability, it ‘sifts and sorts’ us according to our ability – the most able gain the highest qualifications, giving them entry to the highest rewarding positions

Criticisms:

* **TUMIN:** **DAVIS&MOORE** put forward a circular argument
* **NEW RIGHT:** the state education system fails to prepare young people adequately for work because state control of education discourages efficiency, competition and choice

**[New Right]**

* Believe that the state cannot meet people’s needs, and so people must meet their own needs through the free market
* Favour the marketisation of education
* Oppose multi-cultural education that reflects the cultures of the different minority groups in Britain
* Believe that some are more naturally talented than others
* Favour an education system run on meritocratic principles of open competition and one that serves the needs of the economy by preparing young people for work
* Believe that education should socialise pupils into shared values, such as completion and instil a sense of national identity
* Believe that the current education system is **not** achieving these goals because it is run by the state
* Believe the state takes a ‘one size fits all’ approach – imposing uniformity and disregarding local needs
* State education systems = unresponsive and breed inefficiency
* Schools that waste money or get poor results lead to lower standards of achievement for pupils, a less qualified workforce and less prosperous economy
* **SOLUTION =** marketisation of education
* Competition between schools and the laws of supply and demand will empower consumers, resulting in greater choice, diversity and efficiency to schools and increasing their ability to meet the needs of pupils, parents and employers

**CHUBB AND MOE:**

* Argue that the American state education has failed
* Make a case of opening it up to market forces of supply and demand
* Claim that:
* Disadvantaged groups have been badly served by state education – has failed to create opportunity
* State education is inefficient as it fails to produce pupils with skills needed by the economy
* Private schools deliver higher quality education because, unlike state schools, they are answerable to paying consumers (parents)
* Base their arguments of a comparison of the achievements of 60,000 low income families in 1,015 state and private high schools
* Evidence shows that pupils from low-income families consistently do about 5% better in private schools
* Call for the introduction of a market system in state education that would put control in the hands of consumers (parents and local communities
* Argue it would allow consumers to shape schools to meet their own needs and would improve quality and efficiency
* Propose an end to system where schools automatically receive guaranteed funding, and instead propose a system in which each family would be given a voucher to spend on buying education from a school of their choice
* This would force schools to be more responsive to parents’ demands as they would have to compete for ‘business’

**Two roles for the state:**

* See the state as having two important roles:
* Imposes a framework on schools, within which they have to compete (e.g. – through Ofsted reports and league tables, parents can make informed choices between schools)
* Ensures that the schools transmit a shared culture. The national curriculum seeks to guarantee that schools socialise pupils into a single cultural heritage

**Evaluation:**

* **GERWITZ AND BALL:** competition between schools benefits the m/c, who can use their cultural and economic capital to gain access to more desirable schools
* **MARXISTS:** education imposes the culture of dominant minority ruling class, not a shared national culture

**The role of education: Marxism**

* See society based on class conflict
* See education as legitimising inequality through ideology
* Education prepares children for the world of work by giving them skills and values they’ll need
* Education justifies inequality
* Education passes on ruling class ideology that supports capitalism

**ALTHUSSER:**

* Education is an ideological state apparatus (ISA)
* Education’s main function is to maintain, legitimate and reproduce generation by generation, class inequalities in wealth and power by transmitting ruling-class values disguised as common values
* Hidden curriculum
* Two functions:
* Reproduces class inequality
* Justifies class inequalities
* State consists of two ‘apparatuses’ which both serve to keep the bourgeoisie in power
* The repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) – maintain the rule of the bourgeoisie by force or the threat of it
* The ideological state apparatuses (ISA) – maintain the rule of the bourgeoisie by controlling peoples idea, values and beliefs

Criticisms:

* **(MORROW AND TORRES)** critical modernists argues that sociologists must explain how education reproduces and legitimises all forms of inequality, not just class and how the different forms of inequality are inter-related
* in schools today, there are a range of policies aimed at different children to try and provide equal opportunity

**BOWLES AND GINTIS:**

* Education serves to reproduce capitalist relations of production
* Education ensures that workers will unquestionably adapt to the needs of the system
* ‘correspondence theory’
* What goes on in school corresponds directly to the world of work
* Hidden curriculum
* Success is not entirely related to intellectual ability
* Pupils who conform and fit in, rise above those who display behaviour which challenges the system
* Studied 237 New York high school students – found schools reward those with the personality traits of a compliant worker
* Education stunts and distorts students’ development

Criticisms:

* **REYNOLDS:** curriculum does not seem designed to teach the skills needed by employers or uncritical passive behaviour that makes workers easy to exploit
* Survival of liberal humanities-based subjects and limited emphasis on science and applied knowledge suggests a lack of correspondence
* **CROWN:** modern businesses need shared teamwork and creativity but exam system encourages completion and judgement
* Fail to recognise a lack of correspondence between schools and the needs of the economy

**WILLIS:**

* Schools reproduce the relations of production by demonstrating that the boys in the anti-school subculture shared a similar outlook to the workers in the factories they were likely to end up in
* w/c pupils can resist such attempts to indoctrinate them
* acts of defiance are ways of resisting school
* notes similarities between anti-school counter-culture and shop floor culture of male manual workers

Strengths:

* triangulated his methods

Allowed him to obtain more in-depth data

* observation/participated
* interviews

Criticisms:

* his study was so small-scale that we cannot generalise his findings
* interviewed boys as a group – may have had influence over each other: in groups people tend to conform to what others say

**Educational policy and inequality:**

**Selection: the tripartite system:**

* 1944-1965
* **Aims:**
* To educate all to make the best use of their talents
* Britain needed a better educated workforce
* **Details:**
* A 3 stage education system
* Introduction of a meritocratic system – based on ability
* An exam at aged 11 determined entrance – based on IQ (passed by mainly m/c)
* Grammar schools offered an academic curriculum and access to non-manual jobs and HE
* Secondary modern schools offered a non-academic ‘practical’ curriculum and access to manual work for pupils who failed the 11+ (mainly w/c)
* **Pros:**
* The more able don’t get held back
* Served many m/c families well
* Did provide almost guaranteed social mobility for those w/c pupils who made it to grammar schools
* Gave w/c pupils more chances than they have today
* **Cons:**
* Labelling – people who didn’t make it into grammar schools
* Only 2 types of school available
* Divided children from different backgrounds
* Some children received a ‘second class’ education

**The comprehensive system:**

* 1965-1979
* **Aims:**
* Introduced by the labour government.
* Ensure all students no matter what their ability had a similar education
* **Details:**
* No entry examinations. Schools serve their catchment areas.
* All students of all ability attend the same school.
* Both boys/girls attend the same school.
* Reflected catchment - locality
* **Pros:**
* One education for all – fairness!
* Brings together children from different social classes.
* No entrance exam – all treated fairly.
* Larger schools = cheaper to run.
* Serves its local catchment area
* **Cons:**
* Labelling – people who didn’t make it into grammar schools
* Only 2 types of school available
* Divided children from different backgrounds
* Some children received a ‘second class’ education

**Marketisation and parentocracy:**

* The 1988 Education Reform Act introduced by the Conservative Government under Thatcher established the principle of marketisation in education

1. **Marketisation:**

* Competition between schools encouraged
* Successful schools with thrive, and those that are failing will either have to improve or face funding cuts or closure
* ERA created an ‘education market’ by:
* Reducing direct state control over education
* Increasing both competition between schools and parental choice of school

(*argue that state control leads to low standards, inefficiency and lack of choice for parents)*

* **DAVID:** describes this phase as a ‘parentocracy’ – supporters of marketisation argue that in an education market, power shifts away from the producers to the consumers – this encourages diversity among schools and gives parents more choice, meets the needs of different pupils and raises standard
* Policies include: exam league tables, Ofsted inspections, business sponsorship of schools and formula funding

1. **The reproduction of inequality:**

* Critics argue that marketisation has increased inequalities between pupils
* **BALL AND WHITTY:** examine how marketisation reproduces and legitimises inequality – via exam league tables and the funding formula...
* ***Exam league tables:***
* Schools with good results attract parents, and so are in more demand
* Allows schools to be more selective, choosing only the high-achieving
* Schools with poor league table position – opposite applies. Cannot afford to be more selective and have to take the less able – results are poorer and remain unattractive
* Overall effect = produces unequal schools that reproduce social class inequalities
* ***The funding formula:***
* Schools allocated funds by formula based on how many pupils they attract
* Popular schools get more funds – can afford better quality teachers and facilities and to be more selective = attract more able/ambitious m/c applicants
* Unpopular schools lose income and find it difficult to match the teacher and facilities of their more successful rivals - unpopular schools fail to attract pupils and their funding is further reduced

1. **Testing:**

* Allows parents to judge the quality of schools –pupils would sit national tests at the ages of 7,11 and 14 as well as GCSEs and A levels

1. **The national curriculum:**

* Introduced to help provide a meaningful comparison of standards
* Prescribed a range of subject that every school would have to teach
* Influence of local authorities on education was reduced

Criticisms:

* Testing can be damaging and stressful on children
* Testing may disrupt what was taught, schools would ‘teach to test’
* Very few extra places were available in popular schools – parents had little or no choice of schools
* League tables were felt to be counterproductive – schools might not admit low achievers or difficult pupils or enter them for exams
* Competition may force schools to spend large amount of money on marketing rather than on the education of pupils

**The myth of parentocracy:**

* **BALL:** believes that marketisation gives the appearance of creating a ‘parentocracy’, however it is a myth, not reality
* Claims parents have the same freedom to choose which school to send their children to

**However: GERWITZ** shows m/c parents have more economic and cultural capital and so are better able to take advantage of the choices available

For example, **LEECH AND CAMPOS** show what middle class parents can afford to move into the catchment areas of more desirable schools

By disguising the fact schooling continues to reproduce class inequality in this way, the ‘myth of parentocracy’ makes inequality in education appear to be fair and inevitable

**New Labour polices since 1997:**

1. **Reducing inequality:**

* Introduced several policies aimed specifically at reducing inequality in achievement by targeting support on disadvantaged groups
* E.g. – designating some deprived areas as Education Action Zones and providing them with additional resources
* E.g. – the Aim Higher programmes to raise the aspirations of groups who are under-represented
* Also introduced policies to raise achievement and standards more generally, such as the National Literacy Strategy – claimed these policies are of greater benefit to disadvantaged groups and so help reduce inequality

1. **Promoting diversity and choice:**

* Aimed to promote greater diversity and choice
* E.g. – 2002 Blair said education needs to move into the ‘post-comprehensive’ era, replacing the ‘one size fits all, mass production’ education system with a new one built around the aptitudes and needs f the individual child and where power is in the hands of parents
* Labour introduced a number of policies
* E.g. – secondary schools encouraged to apply for specialist school status in particular curriculum areas (by 2007, about 85% of secondary schools had become specialist schools) – argued this offers parents a greater choice and raises standards of achievement
* E.g. – promoted academies as a policy for raising achievement and plans to have 200 academies by 2010 in hope to raise the former comprehensives with poor results

1. **Postmodernism and New Labour policies:**

* **THOMPSON:** argues education becomes ‘customised’ to meet the differing needs of diverse communities – in postmodern society, schools can break free from the ‘oppressive uniformity’ of the old centralised ‘one size fits all’ mass education system where all schools are expected to be the same
* **USHER:** contrasts modern and postmodern education:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Education in modern society | Education in postmodern society |
| * ‘one size fits all’ mass education | * Diverse and customised to individual learners’ needs |
| * Controlled centrally by the state | * Controlled locally by communities |
| * Fixed in time and place | * Flexible (e.g. – distance learning via the internet) |
| * Only takes place during a fixed period of the individual’s life | * Lifelong learning – individuals constantly update their skills in response to the changing needs of the economy |
| * Teacher led – the learner passively absorbs knowledge from the teacher | * The learner is active and learns through their own experience |

(Postmodernists relate these changes in education to changes in the economy and wider society – especially the trend towards ‘post-Fordism’)

Strengths:

* **TROWLER:** policies such as increased funding of state education, raising standards and a focus on a ‘learning society’ is evidence of Labour’s commitment to reducing educational inequality

Criticisms of New Labour policies:

* **WHITTY:** sees a contradiction between Labour’s policies to tackle inequality and its commitment to marketisation (e.g. – while EMAs may encourage w/c students to stay on until they are 18, tuition fees for higher education may deter them from going to university) Labours anti-inequality policies are merely ‘cosmetic’ – present a positive image without actually reducing class inequalities

**Policies relating to gender and ethnicity:**

* **Gender:**
* Since the 1970s policies such as GIST have been introduced to reduce gender differences in subject choice
* More recently, under the tripartite system, girls often had to achieve a higher mark than boys in the 11+ in order to obtain a grammar school place (unlike in the 19th century when girls were largely excluded from HE)
* **Ethnicity:**
* There have been policies aimed at raising the achievement of children from minority background, and these policies have gone through several phases:

1. **ASSIMULATION –** policies in the 60s and 70s focussed on the need for pupils from minority ethnic groups to assimilate into mainstream British culture as a way of raising their achievement, especially by helping those for whose English was not their first language (closely related to compensatory education)

**However** critics argue that some minority groups who are at risk of under-achieving such as African Caribbean pupils, already speak English and that the real cause of their under-achievement lies in poverty or racism

1. **MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION (MCE) -**  policies through the 80s and into the 90s aimed to promote the achievements of children from minority ethnic groups by valuing all cultures in the school curriculum, thereby raising minority pupils’ self-esteem and achievements

**However** MCE has been criticised on several grounds....

* + - **STONE:** argues that black pupils do not fail for lack of self-esteem, so MCE is misguided
    - The New Right criticise MCE for perpetuating cultural divisions – they take an assimilationst view that education should teach a shared national culture and identity into which minorities should be assimilated

1. **SOCIAL INCLUSION –** of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and policies to raise their achievement; have been the focus since the late 1990s. Policies include:

* Detailed monitoring of exam results by ethnicity
* Amending the Race Relations Act to place a legal duty on schools to promote racial equality
* Help for voluntary ‘Saturday schools’ in the black community
* Continued funding of English as an Additional Language programmes

**However** **MIRZA** sees little genuine change in policy – she argues that instead of tackling the structural causes of ethnic inequality such as poverty and racism, educational policy still takes a ‘soft’ approach that focuses on culture, behaviour and the home

* + Argues that although schemes for motivational and personal development and projects on parenting skills etc might make a small difference, they are short-term policies unlikely to have any lasting impact.