Social Stratification Study Guide

I. Dimensions of Stratification
   a. Define social stratification
   b. List the 3 dimensions of social stratification
   c. Apply the contributions of Marx and Weber to stratification
   d. Associate the terms Bourgeoisie and Proletariat with examples
   e. Distinguish income and wealth
   f. Determine the significance of power as it relates to stratification
   g. Determine the significance of prestige as it relates to stratification

II. Explanations of Stratification
   a. List the 3 explanations of stratification
   b. Apply each theory to given examples
   c. Define false consciousness

III. Social Classes in America
   a. Define class consciousness
   b. List and evaluate the 6 American classes
   c. Apply specific occupations/descriptions to each of the American Classes
   d. Contrast social classes of industrial vs. transitional societies

IV. Poverty in America
   a. Distinguish Absolute and Relative Poverty
   b. Apply Relative Poverty by comparing the American Poor to international poverty
   c. Relate race, gender and age to poverty
   d. Summarize the American “War on Poverty”
   e. Recognize the controversy associated with TANF/welfare
   f. Determine the characteristics of the Welfare Reform Act, 1996

V. Social Mobility
   a. Define social mobility
   b. Define and apply to examples the 3 types of social mobility
   c. Apply Open Class Systems/meritocracies to examples
   d. Summarize the trends in intergenerational mobility
   e. Apply the consequences of vertical mobility
   f. Define and apply to examples Closed Class Systems
   g. Summarize the Indian Caste System
   h. Evaluate the concept of mobility as it applies to the Caste System

---

Social Stratification R.A.F.T.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am in 20 years as a candidate for President of the USA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech given to war veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iec Increasing Upward Vertical Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a candidate for President, a top issue is homelessness among US War Veterans. You need to write the speech you would give to a veterans group. In this speech you must include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The effects of downward vertical mobility on the homeless veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Your plan for increasing upward vertical mobility of war veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 5 vocabulary words from sociology class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Please remember that the group you are speaking to knows NOTHING about sociology, so EXPLAIN your terms in a way that makes them meaningful to your audience!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Grading Criteria:

1. Correct usage of 5 unit vocabulary words : ______/5 points
2. Demonstration of correct understanding of social stratification concepts:
   a. Effects of downward vertical mobility ______/4 pts
   b. Sensible plan to increase vertical mobility ______/4 pts
   c. Appropriate understanding of audience is displayed ______/2 pts
3. Response is written in correct voice and format : ______/3 points
4. Response shows demonstration of creativity and effort : ______/2 points

Total Points : ______/20
**Intro to Social Stratification Activity**

Rank the statuses by placing the highest/best WHS status at the top of the right hand column and the worst at the bottom:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>class president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>drama club member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>honor society member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>captain of the girls basketball team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>member of a wealthy family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>talented artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>varsity cheerleader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>band member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>captain of the boys basketball team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>good looking student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>class clown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>library aide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>frequently suspended student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>varsity football player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>leadership class student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answer:

1. Which statuses were most difficult for you to rank?

2. Whose values does the survey represent?

3. If a school administrator had done the ranking, how might it be different?

   A parent?

   A freshman?

4. How are people at each status level treated?

5. What other statuses might you have added? Are they high or low?
September 25, 2005
The Education Gap
By DAVID BROOKS

Especially in these days after Katrina, everybody laments poverty and inequality. But what are you doing about it? For example, let's say you work at a university or a college. You are a cog in the one of the great inequality producing machines this country has known. What are you doing to change that?

As you doubtless know, as the information age matures, a new sort of stratification is setting in, between those with higher education and those without. College graduates earn nearly twice as much as high school graduates, and people with professional degrees earn nearly twice as much as those with college degrees.

But worse, this economic stratification is translating into social stratification. Only 28 percent of American adults have a college degree, but most of us in this group find ourselves in workplaces in social milieus where almost everybody has been to college. A social chasm is opening up between those in educated society and those in noneducated society, and you are beginning to see vast behavioral differences between the two groups.

For example, divorce rates for college grads are plummeting, but they are not for everyone else. The divorce rate for high school grads is now twice as high as that of college grads.

There are other behavior differences, large and small, which reflect the different social norms in the two classes. High school grads are twice as likely to smoke as college grads. They are much less likely to exercise. College grads are nearly twice as likely to vote. They are more than twice as likely to do voluntary work. They are much more likely to give blood. These behavioral gaps are widening.

We once had a society stratified by bloodlines, in which the Protestant Establishment was in one class, immigrants were in another and African-Americans were in another. Now we live in a society stratified by education. In many ways this system is more fair, but as the information economy matures, we are learning it comes with its own brutal barriers to opportunity and ascent.

In an agricultural or industrial society, you might grow up in a poor or disorganized family, but you could get a job in a factory and with some grit and determination work your way to respectability. But in an information society, college is the gateway to opportunity. Crucial life paths are set at age 18, which means family and upbringing matter more.

Educated parents not only pass down economic resources to their children, they pass down expectations, habits, knowledge and cognitive abilities. Pretty soon you end up with a hereditary meritocratic class that reinforces itself generation after generation.
You see the results in the college graduation data. In the 1970's, when the information age was young, kids from poorer, less educated families were catching up to kids from more affluent families when it came to earning college degrees. But now the gap between rich and poor is widening. Students in the poorest quarter of the population have an 8.6 percent chance of getting a college degree. Students in the top quarter have a 74.9 percent chance.

The most damning indictment of our university system is that these poorer kids are graduating from high school in greater numbers. It's when they get to college that they begin failing and dropping out.

Thomas Mortenson of the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education has collected a mountain of data on growing educational inequality. As he points out, universities have done a wonderful job educating affluent kids since 1980. But they "have done a terrible job of including those from the bottom half of the family income distribution. In this respect, higher education is now causing most of the growing inequality and strengthening class structure of the United States."

Part of the problem is that kids from poorer families have trouble affording higher education. But given the rising flow of aid money, financial barriers are not the main issue. A lot of it has to do with being academically prepared, psychologically prepared and culturally prepared for college.

I'm going to come back to this subject and write about what some colleges are doing to help these students and how most colleges are neglecting them. But let me conclude with the thought that while we have big political debates in this country about equality of results, all those on the left and right say they believe in equality of opportunity.

This is where America is failing most.
"The Education Gap"

Questions

1. If a high school graduate makes $100, how much will someone with a college degree make? $______________ a Professional degree (MD, PhD, VM, etc) $______________

2. ____% of Americans have a college degree, but most college graduates work and/or are in social groupings with people who have a ____________ degree.

3. A person will a college degree, is _______ likely to get a divorce.

4. A person with a ________ degree is more likely to smoke.

5. A person with a ________ degree is less likely to exercise.

6. A person with a ________ degree is twice as likely to vote.

7. A person with a ________ degree is twice as likely to volunteer.

8. Our society is now stratified by ________________________________.

9. How does your parents’ level of education affect you?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

10. There is a _______% chance of the lower ¼ of the population getting a college education.

11. There is a _______% chance of the upper ¼ of the population getting a college education.

12. What will most likely happen to the poorer half of students who attend college?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Taboo: Initiation Rituals

1. Initiation gives us a sense of _________________________________.

2. Initiation means _________________________.

3. Would you want to be a member of the "hanged man's club?" Why or why not?
   ____________________________________________

4. Would you wear the "ant gloves," knowing that if not, you could not ever marry? Why or why not?
   ____________________________________________

5. How many times must a person wear the "ant gloves" to achieve their status as a man? Why do you think this is?
   ____________________________________________

6. What might be a comfort to the boys who participate in the ant glove ritual?
   ____________________________________________

7. In Pappau New Guinea, what type of ritual helps boys to become men?
   ____________________________________________

8. What rewards are in store for the boys who can survive the ritual?
   ____________________________________________

9. In addition to swallowing the vines, what other ritual elements must the boys endure?
   ____________________________________________

10. In a minimum of 7 sentences, describe a time you did something to elevate your status. Compare and contrast this to the initiation rituals you saw in the video.
Social Stratification Web Quest

Go to [http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/strat.html](http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/strat.html)

1. What is likely to determine your future success, social status or IQ?
2. Click on the interactive quiz. Take the 12 question quiz regarding inequality in the world. At the end, record how many you got correct here ________________.
3. Summarize, in at least 7 sentences, what you learned from this quiz about inequality. Be sure to mention, gender inequality, racial inequality, and general impressions on the trends of wealth in this nation.

4. Apply the following quote from this site to you social stratification “Some people are born on third base and go through life thinking they hit a triple.” -- Barry Switzer


5. Click on slide show, voices from the poll. Do you agree with Maurice Mitchell’s statement “It’s hard to get wealthy if you family isn’t?”
6. Now click on the “components of class.” According to this site, what are the 4 components of class? Fill each in for your family, do you believe the results to be accurate? Why or why not?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

7. Click on “how class breaks down.” Run your cursor over each level of education and class. According to this, how does education relate to status in America?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

8. Now click on “results of the poll.”
   a. “opportunity and advancement:” according to the pie charts, the majority of those polled said compared to their class growing up, they are now in a class.
   b. “opportunity and advancement:” How confident do Americans seem regarding their chances at becoming financially wealthy?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

c. “who is rich:” Who feels there is a lot of tension between the classes, the rich or the poor? 

d. “who is rich:” how does faith in God relate to the money you make? Why do you think this is?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

e. “who is rich:” how does excellent health compare to wealth? Why do you think this is?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

f. “what it takes to get ahead:” according to these tables which will be more likely to help you get ahead: knowing the right people, natural talent, education, hard work, coming from wealth?

g. “and will you get there:” according to the pie graphs, are most people better off than there parents or worse off? How do you think you will compare to your parents?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
The Caste System in India

Discrimination against India's lowest Hindu castes is technically illegal. But try telling that to the 160 million Untouchables, who face violent reprisals if they forget their place.

The sins of Girdharilal Maurya are many, his attackers insisted. He has bad karma. Why else would he, like his ancestors, be born an Untouchable, if not to pay for his past lives? Look, he is a leatherworker, and Hindu law says that working with animal skins makes him unclean, someone to avoid and revile. And his unseemly prosperity is a sin. Who does this Untouchable think he is, buying a small plot of land outside the village? Then he dared speak up, to the police and other authorities, demanding to use the new village well. He got what Untouchables deserve.

One night, while Maurya was away in a nearby city, eight men from the higher Rajput caste came to his farm. They broke his fences, stole his tractor, beat his wife and daughter, and burned down his house. The message was clear: Stay at the bottom where you belong.

* * * * *

To be born a Hindu in India is to enter the caste system, one of the world's longest surviving forms of social stratification. Embedded in Indian culture for the past 1,500 years, the caste system follows a basic precept: All men are created unequal. The ranks in Hindu society come from a legend in which the main groupings, or varnas, emerge from a primordial being. From the mouth come the Brahmans—the priests and teachers. From the arms come the Kshatriyas—the rulers and soldiers. From the thighs come the Vaisyas—merchants and traders. From the feet come the Sudras—laborers. Each varna in turn contains hundreds of hereditary castes and subcastes with their own pecking orders.

A fifth group describes the people who are achuta, or untouchable. The primordial being does not claim them. Untouchables are outcasts—people considered too impure, too polluted, to rank as worthy beings. Prejudice defines their lives, particularly in the rural areas, where nearly three-quarters of India's people live. Untouchables are shunned, insulted, banned from temples and higher caste homes, made to eat and drink from separate utensils in public places, and, in extreme but not uncommon cases, are raped, burned, lynched, and gunned down.
Caste Parties

The Hindu caste system is ordered hierarchically, with Brahmins at the top and Sudras at the bottom. Untouchables, also known as Harijans or Dalits, fall outside of the caste system all together.

Article Questions
Please answer in complete sentences.

1. How does this pyramid chart show by appearance just how untouchable the untouchable class is?
2. The Indian government has outlawed the Caste System, so why do you think it is still practiced by the entire rural population (85% of India)?
3. Does the story of the Caste System remind you of any aspect of US History? Which part? How did/does this affect the people of the US?
4. What sins did Girdharilal Maurya commit?
5. The Caste System is derived from the Hindu religion (which is practiced in nearly all parts of India), how do you think this plays a role in the decision of many Indian’s to break the law and practice the Caste System?