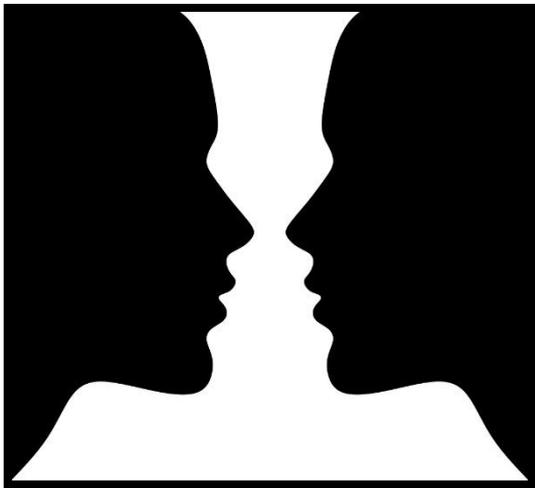


What is Sociology?

Sociology is a very broad and interesting subject. However, we can define it as a subject which studies individuals, culture and relationships within society. It helps you to wear a 'sociological glasses' and look at issues in ways you never thought of before. In Sociology, we do not settle for what is obvious but we look at things through different perspectives. It is interesting because it is found all around us. We start to ask questions that most of us take for granted, like why females and males are seen differently, why do we have racism, why certain people buy things that they believe will improve their image in society. Sociology helps you to start thinking critically.

There is no one fixed perspective in Sociology. Take the example of the pictures below:



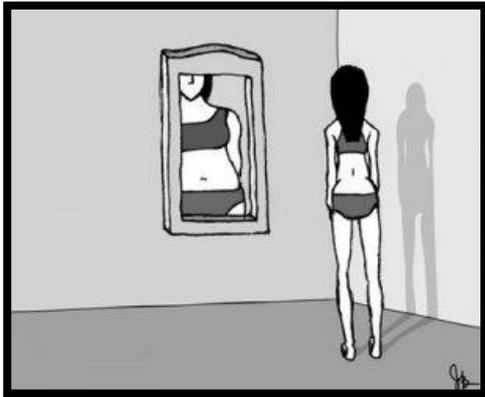
Some might think that this picture is only showing two people looking at each other. However, if you look deeper you can notice that there is a candle holder as well.

Some look at this picture and identify a young female looking at the other side. However, if you look deeper you can notice that there is an old lady as well.



These two pictures portray sociology very well. There is no right or wrong answer, just more than one perspective. People look at things differently and that is what we study in sociology.

In Sociology we study topics like **Culture and Identity** – we look at how we become the person



who we are. It could be because of the people we are constantly meeting, what we buy, what we believe in, the social class we are found in or because of the ideas that the media is creating. We look at how society tends to create stereotypes of how a female, a male, a homosexual and people with different races are. We criticize these stereotypes and discuss how some people are challenging these 'boxes' that society fits us in.

Another topic that we look deep into is **Family** – we discuss how some look at family as an important social institution while others like Feminists look at it as creating inequalities between men and females. We look at how the family does not always offer love and respect, we have cases of intimate violence and inequalities at home.

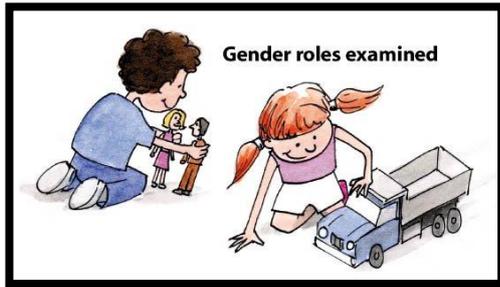
Religion is a topic which creates lots of discussions. Some look at it as creating unity, while others believe that it is bringing about conflict. We look at how religion is losing its influence but we still find people who believe in their religion in a strict way.

In **Environment** we look at how our consumption patterns can leave a negative impact on our environment. We also discuss ways of how we can improve our surroundings, not just for us but for our future generations.

Another topic that we study is **Welfare and Social Policy**. Here we discuss poverty and who faces it. We also discuss the welfare system and how there are people who believe that it helps to reduce poverty and some who believe it is making people lazier.

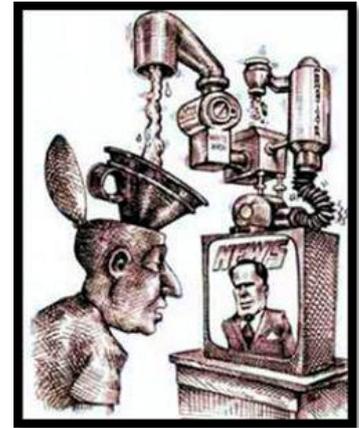
Crime and Deviance is a topic which makes us more aware of why people commit crime. We discuss different victims and perpetrators of crime. We question prison and punishment and think of other alternative ways to help the criminal.

In **Race and Ethnicity** we look at migration patterns and how this is influencing the whole world. We discuss why racism is present and keeps on persisting and why migration is increasing. We look at ways of how we can tackle integration of people from different cultures living in one country.



Gender and Sexuality is another topic which makes us aware of the different sexualities and stereotypes we have around us. We look at how the world changed its perception of different sexualities (for example, homosexuals). We discuss different perspectives and challenge different views on gender.

Media is a topic which helps us to discuss and criticise how the media is owned by a small group of powerful people and how these influence the agenda on the media. We look at how and why media is creating a global culture – countries are becoming similar all over the world. We discuss how some look at media as making us passive and others believe that nowadays we have a voice in it by the use of social media. We also analyse the stereotypes that the media portrays on different groups in society like women, minority ethnic groups, social classes, disabled people and elderly.



As one can notice, Sociology is a subject which analyses current issues around the world. It is a subject which is easy to apply in your everyday life. It does not only help you to expand your knowledge but it will also help you in the way you see certain issues. Sociology will also help you to enhance your discussion, essay writing and critical thinking skills.
