**30 mark essays: A Level**

Key things to remember:

* Structure: Introduction, 3-4 paragraphs – make a point, explain with evidence and then add analysis (comparisons and evaluation)
* Ensure you relate points back to the question and item frequently
* Use evidence to support the points you make – studies, research and theories
* Ensure you evaluate frequently – that you assess how useful the theory/idea or evidence you have used is to answer the question
* It should be in depth but succinct - select the most relevant information and remain focused on the question

**Item A: Our future roles in society can be determined by the education system which operates using a formal and informal curriculum. Some sociologists would argue that the education system is fair, where people are judged by universalistic standards. This then sorts them to future roles. However, other sociologists would see this as unfair – it merely replicates the existing class structure and creates a docile and compliant working class.**

**Applying material from Item A and your knowledge, assess the view that the system of Role Allocation in the education system is fair and legitimate (30 marks)**

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| 30 mark questions will always have a debate (an argument from different points of view). What is the debate in this question **VS** |
| How could you use the **item** to help support this debate **VS** |
| What key concepts and sociologists/studies will need to be included on either side of the argument? **VS** |

**Introduction:**

Briefly rewrite the question and explain what you will be including in your essay. Remember the title says ‘Assess the view’. If there is one view, you know there must be others that can criticise it. Make sure to use the item and make sure to define role allocation

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| **Paragraph 1** **Parsons** | Briefly describe how role allocation fits into the functionalist perspective of education….Then go on to explain Parsons’ view of **role allocation** and **meritocracy** |
| **Evaluation and analysis** | Consider problems with Parsons’ view – who could criticise him i.e. Marxist arguments, such as Bowles and Gintis’ **‘myth of meritocracy’. Link back to question** |
| **Paragraph 2****Davis and Moore** | They Parsons ideas of Role Allocation further, arguing that the education ‘**sorts and sifts’** people into the roles most suitable for their abilities and talents – explain their argument. **Link back to question…how does this then make the system of role allocation fair and legitimate?** |
| **Evaluation** | Are functionalists too positive? Can you add a real life example to show that role allocation isn’t fair? |
| **Paragraph 3****Marxists on Role Allocation** | How might Marxists agree with functionalists about role allocation and then discuss how they hold a very different view (analysis skill)Depending on who you used in your evaluation earlier, use the other Marxist here i.e. Althusser – discuss Ideological State Apparatus**Link back to question – in what ways does this criticise the view that the system of role allocation is fair and legitimate?** |
| **Evaluation** | Do Marxists assume that students are passively brainwashed into accepting their roles in society? They can be aware of what is going on. Marxists can be described as **deterministic** – explain what this means. You could describe **Paul Willis’** findings here to illustrate how some working class boys challenge the system through their non-conformist attitude. How does Willis argue against Bowles and Gintis? |
| **Paragraph 4****Neo Marxism – additional analysis point** | Bourdieu- schools reproduce privilege. Explore how wider issues beyond the school need to be identified e.g. the role of economic, cultural and social capital. Do our families have more impact than education itself? **Link back to question – in what ways does this criticise the view that the system of role allocation is fair and legitimate?** |
| **Conclusion: Weigh up – is role allocation fair and legitimate?**  |