

What's The Definition?

- The following key terms are used within the age and identity topic:
 - Ageism
 - Bricolage
 - Status frustration
 - Social cohesion
 - Meta-narrative
 - Neo-triabilism
- You must make sure that you know what these definitions are.
- Pick your level of stretch and challenge.
 - Are going to test your memory or do you need to use your books and notes?



Success Criteria

Grade C: Define key terms relating to age and identity.

Grade B: Explain how an individual's experiences and sense of identity is shaped by age.

Grade A: Develop an understanding of how important age is in identity and to what extent age identities are changing in contemporary Britain.

Age and Identity

- Ageism - stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination against individuals or groups on the grounds of their age.
- Bricolage - the use of readily available ordinary objects to create something new.
- Status Frustration - a sense of frustration arising in individuals or groups because they are denied status in society.
- Social Cohesion - the bonds or glue that bring people together and integrate them into a united society.
- Meta-narrative - a broad, all embracing 'big theory' or explanation of how societies operate.
- Neo-triabilism - groups with very loose fluid boundaries and an ever-changing floating membership, that only exist when they come together for particular lifestyle rituals like clubbing and dancing. They are not the cohesive and fixed social groups, with clear identities, styles and lines of division between them, associated with the concept of a subculture.

Age - How an
individual's experiences
and sense of identity
are shaped by these
factors.

Age and Identity

- Age is a socially constructed identity that is associated with a status.
- The identity and status associated with age are created by individual, social and cultural interpretations.
- These interpretations change over time.

For example:

- Age is respected in Chinese culture whereas British culture suggests older people lack status and authority.
- Aries - in medieval times childhood didn't exist they had working roles in the community.

Age and Identity

- There are different norms, values and expectations associated with different ages:
 - Infancy, childhood, teenager, youth, young, mature adulthood, middle age, old age.
- Some of the behaviours that change with age are: buying alcohol or tobacco, driving, having sex, leaving home, marrying, joining the army, voting, serving as a juror, expected to retire.
- Age enables people as well as constraining people.
 - Allows people to do things as well as preventing people from doing things.
- Age groups form a social identity as well as individual identities.
 - Social identity - fixed identity that involves little choice.

Old Age and Identity

- Spijker and MacInnes - rising life expectancy means older people are effectively 'younger', healthier and fitter than previous generations.
 - Retirement age has increased so people are having to work for longer and working helps to keep people younger.
- The point that people enter old age changes with increased life expectancy.
 - At one point old age will have been 50 years!
 - It also changes with your age.
- There are stereotypical views about passivity, inactivity, lack of independent identity, ill-health and dependency that are associated with old age.
 - These need to be changed, particularly in our aging society.

Old Age and Identity

- Lasslet - 'third age' to describe how the increased life expectancy, economic security and the young age of retired people has created a new generation of retired people who can find fulfilment.
 - You can effectively have another life after retirement with none of the stresses of work!
- Marhankova - 'active ageing' - freedom from work, longer lives, better health and increased free time allow older people to develop new identities and lifestyles.
- Opportunities for fulfilling the third age and having an active ageing identity are limited by social class.
 - Need to have income to be able to take part in some activities.

Young Age and Identity

- Due to a lack of financial commitments and responsibilities, young people have more free time to form identities in peer-group-related leisure-based consumer lifestyles.
 - What did you do on your snow day?
- Youth subcultures - share some cultural features but are in some ways different from the dominant, mainstream culture of society.
 - Teddy Boys, Mods and Rockers, Hippies, Skinheads, Punks, Ravers, Goths, Rastas.
- Each subculture has a very distinctive identity - dress, appearance, language, behaviour, music, films.
- Hebden - youth cultures often involve bricolage.
- Youth culture is demonised through the media. They are made out to be a social problem in many cases.
- A lot of young adults are conformist and not part of "deviant" subcultures.

Young Age and Identity

- Youth culture is demonised through the media. They are made out to be a social problem in many cases.
 - Youths, Hoodies.
- But a lot of young adults are conformist and not part of "deviant" subcultures.

Young Age and Identity

- Functionalists (Eisenstadt, Parsons, Bales) suggest youth subcultures are a way of dealing with status frustration.
- This age cannot establish an independent adult status due to economic independence but can separate themselves from other agencies of socialisation through subcultures.
 - Criticised for not considering the range of subcultures and the dysfunctional aspects associated with some.

Young Age and Identity

- Marxists like Hall and Jefferson suggest youth subcultures are subcultures of resistance to the dominant social class and dominant culture.
- Cohen thought working-class subcultures try to re-establish social cohesion that was lost in the break-up of traditional working-class communities.
 - Criticised for studying white, male, working class subcultures; for not considering other factors other than social class as influence subcultures, or that of the media.

Young Age and Identity

- Feminists argue studies into youth subcultures were male stream (written by men about male subcultures).
- They argue girls are less likely to get involve due to gender role socialisation, stricter parental control, concerns about personal safety.
- McRobbie and Garber found girl subculture was 'bedroom culture'.

Young Age and Identity

- Postmodernists disregard subcultures and metanarratives.
- They believe structural factors (class, age, gender etc.) are less significant in identity and group formation.
- Young people are thought to pick 'n' mix their groups and be fluid with their groups.
- Thornton sees youth subcultures as being replaced by media-generated, taste-based cultures.
- Bennett argues for neo-tribalism as a way to describe youth cultural activities.

Age - Their relative
importance and the
extent to which these
factors are changing in
contemporary society.

Age and Identity

- 2011 British Attitudes Survey - age was the strongest 'bonding factor' when it came to identity.
- Bradley - age is particularly significant for the young and the old.
- Lincoln - bedroom culture is still significant for teenage girls. But boys are now more likely to get involved.

Age and Identity

- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations and Equality Act have banned age discrimination both inside and outside of work.
- The retirement age has been abolished meaning people are not forced to retire.
- Young women are now more involved in youth subcultures. Hollands found girls' roles were becoming more similar to those of men.

Do you think that
age is important in
identity? Discuss
your ideas with the
people around you.

Are They Changing?



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What are the two
questions that are
asked for every
area of Topic 4?

Spec Breakdown

The relationship of identity to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexuality and social class in contemporary society:

- 1) How an individual's experiences and sense of identity are shaped by these factors.
 - Bradley, Barnes, Gilroy, McRobbie, Hall, Bourdieu
- 2) Their relative importance and the extent to which these factors are changing in contemporary society.
 - Bradley, Barnes, Gilroy, McRobbie, Hall, Bourdieu

This is the end of
topic 4 - have you
got any questions
that you need to
ask?