

The Nature Nurture Debate

Sociology skills

- Analysis and evaluation

Key skills

- Communication

Stimulus materials

Historical Evidence against Nature theories of behaviour

If human behaviour was in our genes then human behaviour over a period of time would hardly change, in the same way that animal behaviour only changes very slowly. Your knowledge and understanding of history shows you that this is not the case.

Anthropological Evidence against Nature theories

Anthropologists are people who study and compare societies from all over the world. Anthropologists show that people behave differently in different societies.

Case Studies

A case study is a study of one particular person. We study individuals to find out about all people. If our behaviour was a result of nature then our behaviour would not change much during our lives or from one person to another. If our behaviour is just to do with nature, then people who are brought up **without** other people will behave as other people do.

Understanding the stimulus

1. What is anthropology?
2. Explain the purpose of a case study.
3. What does history tell us about changes in human behaviour?
4. Give one historical example to show that human behaviour changes over time.
5. Give one anthropological example to show that human behaviour changes from culture to culture.
6. Give one example of a case study which shows that children brought up without humans do not behave as human children normally do.

Development and Revision

1. What is the difference between nature and nurture theories of human behaviour?
2. Why do sociologists reject nature theories of human behaviour?
3. What is socialisation?
4. Explain the meaning of the following terms: norms, morals and values.
5. Why are norms so important in telling us how to behave.
6. What word do we use to describe someone who does not follow norms?