



Chapter 9 Project

Purpose

Stratification is an important part of society for many different reasons. It helps explain how and why various forms of inequality exist, making it easier for us to also think of ways to reduce such inequality. **The purpose of this project is to think about stratification as it relates to social class and what can be done at the national or state level to reduce that inequality.**

Directions

Part 1

Think about how wealth and income are distributed in the United States and how we discuss the different social classes. Using two sources, further explore social classes in the U.S. and what policies at the federal level have benefited the lower class, middle class, or upper class. For instance, can you find anything related to unemployment benefits? How might that help the lower class? Are there any recent federal or state laws or policies that have changed regarding this issue?

Part 2

Write a brief summary of your two sources and then use your sociological imagination to think of your own plan for what can be done at the federal level to reduce financial inequality in the U.S. Your summary should also answer the following questions:

- How do these policies contribute to social stratification, and how has that affected your own life?
- Would you make any changes to current federal policies?
- What would these changes include, and how would they affect your life?
- Why do you feel these changes would be beneficial and help to reduce wealth and income stratification?
- If you would not make any changes to current federal policies, why not?

Finally, you should be prepared to share your ideas with your classmates. Each student will have the opportunity to explain what changes they would make and why, or if they would not make changes, why not. Once every student has had the opportunity to speak, you should be prepared to write a paragraph explaining if your own views have changed. Did another student present an idea that you had not thought of yet? Did someone make a better argument for a policy change than you originally had?

Materials

Access to two outside sources regarding inequality at the state and/or federal level

 Checklist**Part 1**

- ☐ Find two sources about U.S. social class and federal-level policies

- Include the changes you would make, if any, and how they would affect your life
- Include benefits of suggested changes, if any
- Include explanation of not making changes, if applicable

Part 2

- ☐ Include brief summary of two sources
- ☐ Include reflection of federal policies
 - Include how the policies contribute to social stratification and how that affects your life

- ☐ Share ideas with the class
- ☐ Write if another student presented something you didn't consider or made a better argument

Chapter 9 Writing Assignment

Purpose

Stratification exists to explain how and why inequality is present in our societies. It often gives privileges to some classes more than others. **The purpose of this writing assignment is to apply what you have learned about stratification and think critically about the problem of inequality and how it can be solved.**

Directions

This assignment will be three to four pages and use APA style. In your assignment, you will need to fully address the following prompts. Some questions have objective, correct answers. Others will ask you to think more critically and consider the strengths and weaknesses of a certain theoretical approach as it relates to stratification. In other words, how does the certain theoretical approach do a good job of explaining inequality, or how does it not explain inequality well or overlook it entirely?

- Define social stratification and explain the difference between income and wealth.
- Explain how social class is related to social stratification.
- Explain the key differences between upper class, middle class, and lower class.
- Share how social stratification has affected your own life (e.g., opportunities for meaningful employment, education, and income level).
- How does the functionalist perspective examine social stratification? What are some strengths and weaknesses of using this perspective to explain social stratification?
- How does conflict theory explain social stratification? What are some strengths and weaknesses of using this perspective to explain social stratification?
- How does symbolic interactionism explain social stratification? What are some strengths and weakness of using this perspective to explain social stratification?

Materials

None required

Checklist

- ☐ Three to four pages
- ☐ APA style
- ☐ Answers all given prompts
 - Defines social stratification and income and wealth
 - Explains social class and relation to social stratification
 - Explains differences between upper class, middle class, and lower class
 - Shares how social stratification has affected your own life
 - Summarizes functionalist perspective and its strengths and weaknesses related to social stratification
 - Summarizes conflict theory and its strengths and weaknesses related to social stratification
 - Summarizes symbolic interactionism and its strengths and weaknesses related to social stratification