

Title**Why Are You Still Here?****Time**

45 minutes (15 minutes for individual work. 30 minutes for synoptic discussion)

Preparation

OHP of questions for students to consider about their continued presence in education (or they could be written on a flipchart / whiteboard)

MaterialPen / paper. OHP transparency / flipchart / whiteboard
Ideally the students should have covered explanations for differential educational achievement based around class, gender and ethnicity.**Prior Knowledge**

This exercise is designed to use the student's knowledge of sociological explanations for differential achievement and relate it to their own experience and reasons for continuing in education. Although by no means perfect (in terms of reliability and validity - two concepts that might be further examined in relation to the evidence produced), the exercise asks students to "test" various sociological explanations by relating them to their experience / perceptions.

Objective

The exercise consists, initially, of asking the students to individually consider the following questions (you can add more if you consider it appropriate).

- Parents' occupation(s) - to give a rough guide to class background.
 - Your gender
 - Your ethnic group
- Brief details of the educational achievements of your family. For example, parents' qualifications, level of education / qualifications of brothers and sisters (note their age).
1. Make a short list of your reasons for studying at A-level (for example, consider the uses to which you will put your qualifications / the consequences of failure). Prioritise the list (e.g. most important reason first).

If necessary prompts can be given (for example, work reasons, peer pressure, parental pressure, etc.).
 2. List the things (both material and cultural) that make your continued presence on the A-level course difficult. Prioritise this list.

If necessary prompts can be given (for example, lack of money, dislike teachers / teaching styles, no friends, personal problems outside school / college, etc.).
 3. List the things (both material and cultural) that motivate you to continue with your A-level course. Prioritise this list.
 4. Think about your friends / peers who left school at 16 and consider:
 - a. Why did they leave (material / cultural reasons)
 - b. What are they doing now?