

Worksheet 8: Applying theoretical ideas answers

- 1** Functionalists argue the roles and functions of education are positive for society.
Accept any reasonable answer including:

 - *Social control in schools prepares young people for similar social control in the workplace.*
 - *Schools have an economic function: teaching learners the skills and knowledge necessary to gain jobs and contributing to the economic well-being of themselves and society.*
 - *Schools practice selective role allocation by channelling learners to the subjects and careers that they are most suited for.*
 - *Schools are a meritocracy as they give learners equal opportunities. All learners have a chance to achieve well and provides a platform for future social mobility.*
 - *Schools prepare learners for the workplace by emphasising achieved status through standardised testing, by sifting and sorting learners into sets and by encouraging some learners into vocational rather than academic learning.*

- 2** Marxists argue education reproduces of class inequalities.
Accept any reasonable answer including:

 - *Both socialisation and social control ensure working class children conform to the status quo and develop a false class consciousness – they do not question the unjust society.*
 - *The hidden curriculum is used to ensure that working class learners accept the ‘myth of meritocracy’ and therefore their failure is seen as deserved.*
 - *Schools have a middle-class culture, e.g. the importance of cultural capital in academic success.*
 - *Working class children do not achieve as well as middle- and upper-class children due to material factors, e.g. a lack of access to digital technology and other equipment.*
 - *Working class children are often behind when they arrive in secondary school where they are then put in lower sets which set them up to fail.*

- 3** Feminists argue that the roles and functions of education maintain gender inequalities.
Accept any reasonable answer including:

 - *Schools have a patriarchal culture with teachers reinforcing traditional gender identities and expectations of both girls and boys.*
 - *Teachers do not always challenge male power in the classroom, e.g. disruptive behaviour and dominating the classroom space.*
 - *Schools often operate as a gender hierarchy because males are frequently headteachers while teachers are more likely to be female. Therefore, gender inequality is seen as normal.*
 - *Girls in some cultures lack strong female role models as teachers are often male.*
 - *In some cultures, girls do not have the same access to education as boys which leads to continued gender inequality in society.*
 - *Boys often label girls in their peer group in negative, sexualised ways to control their behaviour. This mirrors male behaviour in wider society.*