Who Studied Society?

Identify early sociologists by the questions they asked and the work they did.

S.1.2 "Identify key figures in the development of the discipline of sociology."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each sociologist's name in the passage. Underline one contribution or research focus linked to each person so you can identify them from that clue.

Six Ways to Study Society

1 In the nineteenth century, factories and growing cities changed daily life. Some thinkers asked how societies hold together and why social conditions differ. Auguste Comte argued that society could be studied systematically, using observation rather than guesswork. He gave this new field the name sociology. Harriet Martineau helped make social inquiry more rigorous. In *Society in America*, she examined institutions alongside the lives of people affected by them, including women and enslaved people. She also translated and condensed Comte's work for English readers. Their efforts helped turn questions about society into a field of study.

2 Karl Marx focused on conflict between economic classes. Writing about capitalism, he argued that owners control the means of production while workers sell their labor. He saw struggles over wealth and power as forces that change societies. Émile Durkheim examined a different puzzle: how social ties affect people's lives. In his study of suicide, he compared patterns across groups rather than treating each death only as a private event. He argued that social facts, including shared rules and institutions, influence individual behavior. His work showed why sociologists look for patterns beyond a single person's story.

3 Max Weber argued that understanding society requires attention to the meanings people give their actions. He also studied how bureaucracies organize work through rules and specialized roles. W. E. B. Du Bois combined surveys, interviews, and historical evidence to study Black communities. In *The Philadelphia Negro*, he documented how racial discrimination and limited opportunities shaped life in a Philadelphia neighborhood. At a time when racist claims were often treated as fact, his careful research challenged those claims. These thinkers did not ask identical questions, but each expanded what sociologists could study and how they could study it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which figure gave sociology its name, and what approach to studying society did he support?

2. Which figure examined institutions and the lives of people affected by them in *Society in America*?

3. Which figure compared suicide patterns across groups, and what did this help him study?

4. Which figure used surveys, interviews, and historical evidence to challenge racist claims?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a current social issue not discussed in the passage. In 3 to 4 sentences, name two figures from the passage, pose one different research question each might ask about your issue, and explain how each question fits that figure's work.

ANSWER KEY

Who Studied Society?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each sociologist's name in the passage. Underline one contribution or research focus linked to each person so you can identify them from that clue. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which figure gave sociology its name, and what approach to studying society did he support?	**Auguste Comte gave sociology its name and supported studying society systematically through observation.**
2	Which figure examined institutions and the lives of people affected by them in *Society in America*?	**Harriet Martineau.**
3	Which figure compared suicide patterns across groups, and what did this help him study?	**Émile Durkheim compared the patterns to study how social ties and social facts influence behavior.**
4	Which figure used surveys, interviews, and historical evidence to challenge racist claims?	**W. E. B. Du Bois.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would study food delivery apps. Marx might ask how pay and power differ between company owners and couriers, a question grounded in his study of class conflict. Weber might ask what delivering meals means to couriers, drawing on his focus on the meanings people give their actions.

For the marking job, accept any passage-supported contribution or research focus linked to each circled name. For Part 3, accept different issues and figures if both proposed questions clearly connect to the figures' work.