Who Gets the Job?

Three sociological views of gender roles in a school club

S.5.5 "Compare and contrast various sociological perspectives of gender role socialization."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the three perspectives, underline one detail showing what each perspective examines, and circle two sentences that compare perspectives.

The Robotics Club

1 At a high school robotics club, students sign up to build a competition robot. More boys volunteer to program, while more girls offer to plan the team presentation, even though any student may choose either job. Gender role socialization is the process of learning a society's expectations about behaviors linked to gender. A functionalist perspective asks how shared expectations organize a group and help it fill tasks. A functionalist might say familiar role patterns make assigning work seem quick and predictable. That explanation does not prove the pattern is fair or that students have different natural abilities.

2 A conflict perspective looks instead at who benefits when expectations shape choices. In the club, programming may bring more recognition and a stronger path to leadership than making the presentation. If adults praise boys for technical work but praise girls mainly for being helpful, unequal rewards could steer future choices. The conflict view emphasizes how schools and other institutions can maintain differences in power and opportunity, even when no one announces a rule that excludes girls. Both functionalist and conflict perspectives examine patterns across the group, but they disagree about whether the pattern's most important effect is coordination or unequal access.

3 A symbolic interactionist perspective zooms in on everyday exchanges. Imagine a mentor handing a new boy a coding guide and asking a new girl to make posters. The students might read these gestures as clues about what others think they can do. Over time, repeated comments, labels, and small choices can shape how students see their own options. Like the conflict view, this view can reveal barriers that are easy to miss. Unlike the conflict view's focus on unequal rewards across an institution, it tracks how people create and interpret meanings during face-to-face encounters.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How would functionalist and conflict perspectives explain the club's pattern of job choices differently?

2. What might conflict and symbolic interactionist perspectives both notice in the club, and how does their focus differ?

3. How could functionalist and symbolic interactionist perspectives explain the same assignment of club jobs at different scales?

4. A researcher studies the club's job pattern, differences in praise, and a mentor's small gestures. Which perspective would most closely examine each kind of evidence, and why?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a situation outside a robotics club in which people learn gender expectations. In four sentences, describe it, compare how two perspectives would explain it, and state one idea the perspectives share.

ANSWER KEY

Who Gets the Job?

HIGH SCHOOL · S.5.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number the three perspectives, underline one detail showing what each perspective examines, and circle two sentences that compare perspectives. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How would functionalist and conflict perspectives explain the club's pattern of job choices differently?	**A functionalist would focus on how familiar roles make assigning tasks quick and predictable. A conflict theorist would focus on whether the roles give some students more recognition and access to leadership.**
2	What might conflict and symbolic interactionist perspectives both notice in the club, and how does their focus differ?	**Both might notice barriers to students' choices. The conflict view examines unequal rewards and opportunities across the group, while symbolic interactionism examines the meanings students take from everyday exchanges.**
3	How could functionalist and symbolic interactionist perspectives explain the same assignment of club jobs at different scales?	**A functionalist would examine how shared expectations help the club assign jobs. A symbolic interactionist would examine how a mentor's words or gestures signal which jobs seem suitable for each student.**
4	A researcher studies the club's job pattern, differences in praise, and a mentor's small gestures. Which perspective would most closely examine each kind of evidence, and why?	**Functionalism would examine the job pattern as a way of organizing tasks. Conflict theory would examine unequal praise as a possible source of unequal opportunity. Symbolic interactionism would examine what the mentor's gestures mean to students.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In a school play, boys are asked to run the lights while girls are steered toward costumes. A functionalist might examine how familiar expectations make assigning these tasks seem efficient. A conflict theorist would ask whether lighting leads to more influence and whether girls have equal access to that opportunity. Both perspectives treat the division as shaped by social expectations, rather than as evidence of what students can do naturally.

Accept other passage-supported contrasts. For the open task, accept any plausible new situation if the four sentences accurately compare two perspectives and identify an idea they share.