Scenes and Society

How group practices shape identity and influence communities

S.3.2 "Describe various subcultures and countercultures and explain their influence according to sociological perspectives."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one practice of each group, circle one challenge to established norms, and write S, F, or C beside one explanation from each sociological perspective to track how groups influence society.

Skate Parks and Punk Shows

1. At a city skate park, riders learn tricks, trade advice, and use words such as "ollie" that outsiders may not know. These shared practices make skateboarding a subculture, a group with its own customs inside a larger society. Skaters do not have to reject the wider society's main values to belong. A symbolic interactionist looks at how a trick name or a worn skateboard gains meaning through repeated encounters. A functionalist might notice that teaching beginners builds friendships and gives young people a place to spend time. Those ties can lead skaters to organize cleanups and request safer public spaces.

2. In the late 1970s, some punk bands and fans rejected the idea that music had to be polished, expensive, or approved by major record labels. They recorded rough songs, made their own posters, and held low-cost shows. These participants formed a counterculture because they openly challenged established rules about who could make and distribute music. A conflict theorist would ask who controlled recording studios and concert venues and how do-it-yourself shows shifted some power to young musicians. The movement helped independent labels and venues grow, though not every punk fan shared the same political views.

3. Neither group has only one effect. Skaters may form supportive friendships, but neighbors may object to noise, and officials may restrict places to skate. Punk shows can open doors for musicians without label contracts, yet venues still need money and must follow safety rules. A functionalist studies how group routines create belonging and how disagreements can lead a city to set clearer rules for shared spaces. A symbolic interactionist studies how meanings change: a skateboard may signal skill to riders but danger to a passerby. Comparing these views helps explain both a group's identity and its influence on wider society.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the passage describe skateboarding as a subculture rather than a counterculture? Use a practice from the skate park as evidence.

2. Why does the passage describe some punk participants as a counterculture? Explain how a conflict theorist would interpret the effect of their shows.

3. How could a symbolic interactionist explain why a skateboard means different things to riders and passersby?

4. From a functionalist perspective, what are two ways the skateboarding subculture might influence its wider community?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a group at a school or in a community that is not described in the passage. In one paragraph, describe its shared practices, classify it as a subculture or counterculture, and explain one possible influence using two different sociological perspectives.

Scenes and Society

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one practice of each group, circle one challenge to established norms, and write S, F, or C beside one explanation from each sociological perspective to track how groups influence society. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the passage describe skateboarding as a subculture rather than a counterculture? Use a practice from the skate park as evidence.	**Skaters share practices such as learning tricks and using terms like "ollie," but they do not have to reject the wider society's main values.**
2	Why does the passage describe some punk participants as a counterculture? Explain how a conflict theorist would interpret the effect of their shows.	**They challenged established rules about who could make and distribute music. A conflict theorist would see their do-it-yourself shows as shifting some power away from those who controlled studios and venues.**
3	How could a symbolic interactionist explain why a skateboard means different things to riders and passersby?	**Its meaning develops through people's encounters with it. Riders may see skill in a skateboard, while passersby may see danger.**
4	From a functionalist perspective, what are two ways the skateboarding subculture might influence its wider community?	**Teaching beginners can build friendships, and skaters can organize cleanups or request safer public spaces.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At lunch, the Quiet Readers meet in the library, swap book recommendations, and clip paper bookmarks to their backpacks. They are a subculture because their shared habits differ from other students' lunch routines without rejecting the school's main values. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the bookmarks signal membership and help readers recognize one another. From a functionalist perspective, the group builds friendships and offers students a calm place to spend lunch. Its members might persuade the school to keep the library open at lunch.

Accept other passage-supported examples of group practices and influence. For Your Turn, accept a plausible original group if the classification fits its practices and the two perspectives explain possible effects rather than merely naming them.