Inside the Crew

How groups shape belonging, behavior, and opportunity

S.3 "Examine the social construction of groups and their impact on individuals. Describe the process of socialization, examining how social groups are composed and why individuals become members of or associate with different social groups..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show someone learning a group norm, circle two status labels, and put a star beside two ways group expectations or labels affect a person.

The Library Repair Crew

1. On Tuesday afternoons, students gather at the public library to repair broken bikes. No one was born a repair crew member; the group formed when volunteers chose a name, agreed to share tools, and posted a meeting time. Newcomer Lena joined because her bus route ended early and she wanted a way to get home. At first, she reached for a wrench without asking. After watching older members request tools and explain each repair, she began doing the same. This learning through interaction is socialization: group expectations become habits. Shared interests, schedules, and access to transportation shape who can join.

2. Through a symbolic interactionist lens, the crew's shared repair terms build belonging; these terms are part of a subculture distinct from the wider school. Some members challenge the widespread idea that buying new is always better than repairing, making their group a counterculture in that respect. A visitor calls their grease-stained clothes "sloppy," judging them by the visitor's dress norms, an example of ethnocentrism. Lena asks why members wear old clothes and learns they protect other clothes from oil, showing cultural relativity. A student used to quiet solo work might find the noisy, shared workspace disorienting, a form of culture shock.

3. Lena's status set includes student, older sister, and elected tool manager. Her age-based status as a teenager is ascribed, while tool manager is achieved through a vote. A labeled key ring signals her manager status, but it does not make her the boss of every member. Her manager role requires tracking tools and lending them fairly. When a visitor treats her only as "the kid" and ignores her directions, age becomes her master status in that interaction. Economic resources, one aspect of social class, also matter: members with money can buy spare parts quickly, while others depend on donated parts and wait longer to finish.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How was the repair crew formed, and how did Lena learn one of its expectations?

2. How do the crew's repair terms and its views on replacing items show two different ways a group can relate to the wider culture?

3. Why is the visitor's comment about clothing ethnocentric, while Lena's question shows cultural relativity?

4. How do Lena's statuses and members' economic resources affect what happens in the crew?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a school group unrelated to bike repair. In four to five sentences, explain why a newcomer joins, how they learn one group norm, and how a status or resource affects their experience.

ANSWER KEY

Inside the Crew

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show someone learning a group norm, circle two status labels, and put a star beside two ways group expectations or labels affect a person. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How was the repair crew formed, and how did Lena learn one of its expectations?	**Volunteers chose a name, agreed to share tools, and set a meeting time. Lena watched older members request tools and explain repairs, then began doing the same.**
2	How do the crew's repair terms and its views on replacing items show two different ways a group can relate to the wider culture?	**Its shared repair terms are part of a subculture and help members feel they belong. Members who challenge the idea that buying new is always better act as a counterculture in that respect.**
3	Why is the visitor's comment about clothing ethnocentric, while Lena's question shows cultural relativity?	**The visitor judges the crew's clothes by the visitor's own dress norms. Lena asks about the crew's practice and learns that old clothes protect other clothes from oil.**
4	How do Lena's statuses and members' economic resources affect what happens in the crew?	**As tool manager, Lena tracks and lends tools, but a visitor ignores her directions after treating her age as her defining status. Members who can buy parts finish repairs sooner than those who must wait for donations.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Sam joins the school garden club because he wants to grow food for the cafeteria. He learns to label each seed tray after watching other members do it and hearing why the labels matter. The club chooses him as supply manager, so he keeps track of seeds and lends tools to members. When the club runs low on soil, Sam has to help the group decide which planting projects can begin first.

Accept other passage-supported examples of learned norms, statuses, and their effects. In the open response, look for an invented group, a clear path into membership, socialization through interaction, and a specific effect of status or resources.