Four Sociological Perspectives (sorting activity)

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Out of Class

In Class (Instructor)

In Class (Students)

- Work in Groups
- Whole Class
- Writing
- Problem Solving
- Discussion
- Instructor Evaluation
- Present
- Practice
- Create

Begin Here.

Before class, instructor prepares materials: (5) statements related to each of the 4 perspectives. These sentences are then placed out of order into envelopes with instructions printed out and pasted on the envelope.

Instructor places the envelopes at each desk/work station and divides the class into groups of 3-5.

Instructor gives a brief introduction to the role of theoretical perspectives within the field of sociology without identifying them. Then the instructor provides a verbal introduction to the activity, students can follow along with the printed handout

In their groups, students are asked to identify and debate informally the similarities and connections among the different statements.

The students then sort the statements into four groups based on what they think reflect sociological perspectives.

Instructor monitors the group work by visiting each of the groups and affirms group choices, or asks guiding questions to facilitate the activity.

Each group is told to assign a name and abstract representation (ex. a logo) for each category

One representative from each group is told to write on the smart board/poster board the way in which they chose to categorize the sentences

The instructor stops the activity and moves to the next phase of class-wide discussion on the topic

The instructor asks pointed questions to facilitate a presentation of students in the groups of each of the four perspectives. Starting from the names students created the instructor then uses these presentations to move into presenting the theory. A group which has identified one of the categories is asked to summarize their group findings relating to that perspective.

Instructor presents the 4 theoretical perspectives (making references to the language chosen by the groups in their discussion). Repeat this iteration for each of the 4 theoretical perspectives

As a class, they have a conversation regarding similarities, points of tension, and ambiguities found during categorization and theorizing

Instructor facilitates a discussion of the four perspectives applied to one example.

Students apply the theory to the given example as a class by identifying how the case fits can be parsed into the 4 perspectives

Instructors encourage to take note of and creatively integrate the names and abstract representations created by the students. They then take a photo of the students work and sends it to the class