UNIT 3
Social Inequality

CHAPTER 8
Social Stratification

CHAPTER 9
Racial and Ethnic Relations

CHAPTER 10
Gender, Age, and Health

Introduce the Unit
Share the information in the chapter overviews with students.

Chapter 8  Almost all societies distinguish among their members on the basis of various characteristics.

Chapter 9  Racial and ethnic relations are an essential part of life in the United States.

Chapter 10  Concerns and discrimination related to gender, age, disability, and health care are issues in the United States today.

Unit Resources
Planning
- Teacher Management System: Pacing Guides and Lesson Plans
- TOS Calendar Planner
- PowerNotes® Presentations DVD

Differentiating Instruction
- Reading and Activity Workbook: Guided Reading Activities and Applying What You’ve Learned
- Virtual File Cabinet

Enrichment
- Cultural Diversity: Global Connections with Rubrics
- Project-Based Activities with Rubrics
- Readings and Case Studies in Sociology
- Research Projects and Activities for Teaching Sociology
- Psychology and Sociology Teacher’s Guide to Analyzing Movies
- APA and ASA Writing Guide

Assessment
- Alternative Assessment Handbook
- Review and Assessment Resources with Answer Key
- TOS ExamView Test Generator
- HOAP Holt Online Assessment Program (in the Premier Online Edition)
# Chapter 8 Planning Guide

Each chapter of *Holt McDougal Sociology: The Study of Human Relationships* is supported by a wide array of intervention, enrichment, and assessment resources. For more information about these resources, see pages T24–T33.

## Section Overview

### Section 1: Systems of Stratification

**The Main Idea:** Many societies rank their members based on certain criteria, a process called social stratification.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reproducible and Technology Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading and Activity Workbook: Guided Reading Activity*</td>
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<td>Research Activities for Teaching Sociology*</td>
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<td>Project-Based Activities with Rubrics*</td>
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<td>Review and Assessment Resources: Section Quiz*</td>
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<td>Online Quiz: Section 1 Quiz</td>
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<td>APA and ASA Writing Guide*</td>
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### Section 2: The American Class System

**The Main Idea:** Most sociologists use six class divisions when describing the American class system. Because it is an open system, people are able to move between classes.

<table>
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<td>Review and Assessment Resources: Section Quiz*</td>
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<td>Online Quiz: Section 2 Quiz</td>
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### Section 3: Poverty

**The Main Idea:** Americans living below the poverty level have fewer opportunities. Government welfare programs attempt to remedy this situation.

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Reading and Activity Workbook: Guided Reading Activity*; Applying What You've Learned*</td>
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<td>Review and Assessment Resources: Section Quiz*; Chapter Review Activity*; Chapter 8 Test, Forms A and B*</td>
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<td>Online Quiz: Section 3 Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transparencies with Teacher's Notes: Poverty Level by Family Size, 2007; Percent of Population Below Poverty Level Based on Selected Characteristics, 2005; Poverty Levels Across the United States; Milestones in Welfare Legislation</td>
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**Differentiating Instruction**

**Teacher Management System**
- Pacing Guide
- Section Lesson Plans

**Reading and Activity Workbook**
- Guided Reading Activities
- Applying What You’ve Learned Activity

**SOS Student One Stop**
- Reading and Activity Workbook
- Interactive Features

**TOS Teacher One Stop**
- ExamView Test Generator
- Quiz Show for ExamView
- PuzzlePro
- Review and Assessment Resources with Answer Key

**TE Differentiated Activities in the Teacher’s Edition**
- Illustrated News Stories, p. 187
- Discussing Causes of Poverty, p. 198
- Life Chances Poster, p. 199
- Graphing Monthly Expenses, p. 202

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**Key to Differentiating Instruction**

**Below Level**
Basic-level activities designed for all students encountering new material

**At Level**
Intermediate-level activities designed for average students

**Above Level**
Challenging activities designed for honors and gifted and talented students

**Standard English Mastery**
Activities designed to improve standard English usage

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**Application-Based Assessment**

**Quick Lab (p. 189)**

**Rating Prestige** This activity asks students to calculate occupational prestige ratings based on data they will gather. Have students use the jobs listed in the chart on page 189 to create a questionnaire to survey their peers. Students will then calculate occupational prestige ratings based on the completed surveys. To reduce the amount of class time needed for this activity, you may limit the number of occupations surveyed to ten.

**Simulation (pp. 202–203)**

**Only What You Can Afford** In this simulation from Johnathan Bush of Bedford North Lawrence High School in Bedford, Indiana, students examine some effects of social stratification on fictional American families of varying incomes. Using the estimated after-tax incomes for three families, students work in groups to create a monthly budget for each family. Encourage sensitivity among your students as they work together to complete the simulation; group members are likely from varied backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses.

Tell students to note carefully the percentages given in the text for each expense category. Tell them that these figures are reasonable estimates of how many Americans spend their monthly earnings. Remind students that their budgets should be realistic, based on meeting basic needs first.

**Find More Activities Online** For additional Application-Based Assessments for this chapter, visit thinkcentral.com.

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**Teacher Resources**

- Online Quizzes
- Internet Features
- WebQuests
- Current Events
- Online Quick Lab and Applying What You’ve Learned
- Click for More
For many Americans, poverty statistics bring to mind images of urban areas. They conjure up mental pictures of single mothers and their children living in dark and dingy tenements. Or people might visualize crime-infested city streets controlled by drug dealers and street gangs. For others, images of the homeless sleeping on park benches and begging on street corners come to mind. However, urban poverty is just one part of a larger picture.

Characteristics of Rural Poverty
About 20 percent of poor Americans—more than 7 million people—live in rural areas. In fact, the poverty rate in rural areas has exceeded the level found in big cities. According to government statistics, 15.2 percent of rural Americans are poor. In contrast, the poverty rate for urban areas stands at 11.8 percent. However, the characteristics of poverty are much the same in rural areas as elsewhere. Poverty rates are much higher among rural minorities than among rural whites. African American, Hispanic, and Native American families are more than twice as likely as white families to be poor. Rural young people are also more likely to be poor than are members of other age groups. In fact, one out of every five rural Americans under the age of 17 is poor. Families headed by single women are more likely to be poor than are married-couple families.

Special Challenges
The poor people living in rural areas face many challenges. They seldom have easy access to government services. Social-welfare offices, public health clinics, job-training programs, and federally funded day-care centers are rare in rural areas. Poor people in rural areas are at particular risk in terms of health care. Many rural hospitals have closed, and registered nurses are in short supply at those that remain open. In addition, the ratio of physicians to residents in small communities is less than the national average. Nationally, there are 191 practicing physicians for every 100,000 people. However, that ratio varies from 209.6 per 100,000 people in urban areas to 52.3 per 100,000 people in the most isolated rural locations. Some rural communities in the United States do not have any primary-care physicians at all.

Changes in the economy have worsened the already difficult employment situation of poor people in rural areas. Many of the industries that traditionally supported the rural economy, such as farming, mining, timber, and manufacturing, suffered declines during the 1980s and 1990s. Some businesses relocated factories to other countries to take advantage of cheap labor. This relocation has led to a general economic decline. Many rural jobs have also been lost to automation.

Introduce the Chapter
Social Stratification
1. Ask students to write a definition of the vocabulary term social inequality in their own words. Then have students list the ways that societies have various levels of inequality. Ask volunteers to share their lists with the class. Make a class list of responses.
2. Guide students in a discussion of why societies have various levels of inequality. Next, have students brainstorm the criteria they would use to decide how best to distribute scarce resources.
3. Tell students that as they study this chapter they will learn what social stratification is, what features characterize the American class system, and what groups of Americans are affected by poverty. [Verbal/Linguistic]

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11, Discussions
CHAPTER 8
SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Chapter at a Glance

SECTION 1: Systems of Stratification
- Most societies divide their members into ranks based on selected characteristics, which can lead to social inequality.
- Two basic types of stratification systems exist today: caste systems and class systems.
- Systems of stratification range from closed, in which movement between ranks is difficult, to open, in which individuals are able to move between ranks.
- Members of a social class have similar levels of wealth, power, and prestige.
- Functionalists and conflict theorists offer differing explanations of the causes and consequences of stratification, while other sociologists attempt to blend the two theoretical approaches.

SECTION 2: The American Class System
- Sociologists use three techniques to determine social class: the reputational method, the subjective method, and the objective method.
- Most sociologists use a system that identifies six social classes in the United States: the upper class, the upper middle class, the lower middle class, the working class, the working poor, and the underclass.
- Because the United States has an open class system, social mobility—movement between social classes—is possible.
- Sociologists are more interested in the structural causes of social mobility than in the individual causes.

SECTION 3: Poverty
- About 37 million Americans live in poverty, or below what society considers to be the minimum adequate standard of living.
- The government calculates the poverty level annually based on the cost of an adequate diet.
- Characteristics such as age, sex, and race affect poverty.
- Poor and wealthy members of society have different life chances and behavior patterns.
- Government welfare programs attempt to reduce inequality.

A Hidden Problem
Urban poverty is visible. Americans are often confronted by news reports about its effects. Although the reality of rural poverty is largely hidden, it is no less a problem than urban poverty. Both types of poverty are examples of how people around the world are affected by the unequal distribution of a society’s resources and rewards. As you will read in this chapter, a person’s social status plays a role in determining how those resources are distributed.

What do you think?
1. How are the characteristics of rural poverty similar to and different from the characteristics of urban poverty?
2. The “invisibility” of rural poverty intensifies the problem. What steps would you take to bring this issue to the public’s attention?

Using the Case Study
Rural Poverty
1. Teach Have students read the Case Study. Then ask the What do you think? questions to facilitate class discussion about the material.
2. Apply Ask the class to list the number of recent news stories they have seen, read, or heard on poverty. Tally their responses and write the total. Then ask students how many of these news stories were on the rural poor. Tally their responses and write the total. Have students discuss the results of the tallies.

What do the results show about the media and the social issue of rural poverty?
3. Review Have students write out their own answers to the What do you think? questions.
4. Link Remind students to think about the content of the Case Study as they read the remainder of this chapter. Point out specific places in the chapter that link to the Case Study. [5] Verbal/Linguistic

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11, Discussions

Answers
What do you think? 1. same—most widespread among children, women, and ethnic minorities; different—those in rural areas have less access to services, job training, medical care; 2. Answers will vary, but students may mention the use of photographs or interviews to create human interest and attract media attention.
Chapter 8

Before You Read

Main Idea
Many societies rank their members based on certain criteria, a process called social stratification.

Reading Focus
1. What are the characteristics of the two types of stratification systems?
2. What are the three dimensions of social stratification?
3. How do the major theories explaining social stratification differ?

Vocabulary
social stratification
social inequality
caste system
exogamy
endogamy
class system
bourgeoisie
proletariat
social class
wealth
power
prestige
socioeconomic status

Academic Vocabulary
Review with students the high-use academic terms in this section.

means of production  the materials and methods used to produce goods and services (p. 188)
synthesize  to blend (p. 190)

Taking Notes
types—caste system, class system; dimensions—wealth, power, prestige; explanations—functionalist theory, conflict theory, synthesis

Teach the Main Idea

Systems of Stratification
1. Teach  Ask students the Reading Focus questions to teach this section.

2. Apply  Write the vocabulary terms caste system and class system for students. Ask volunteers to identify in one or two words an attribute of either system. caste system—closed, lifelong, immobility, inherited, restricted occupation, ascribed status; class system—open, mobility, control, achieved status. Make a class list of student responses.

3. Review  As you review the section’s main ideas, have students write summary definitions of caste system and class system.

4. Practice/Homework  Have students write a short essay on whether caste is easier to identify than class and explain their response.  

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11, Discussions
Almost every society throughout history has separated its members on the basis of certain characteristics. Sociologists call this division of society into categories, ranks, or classes social stratification. The levels of stratification and the characteristics used have varied. Such ascribed statuses as ancestry, race, age, physical appearance, and gender are among the most common distinguishing characteristics. Achieved statuses—such as education and occupation—can also be used to determine social standing. Factors such as talent and effort may also play a part. Divisions based on individual characteristics and abilities lead to social inequality—the unequal sharing of scarce resources and social rewards.

The level of social inequality in a society depends on the degree to which that society’s stratification system is open or closed. In a closed system, movement between the strata, or status levels, is impossible. A person is assigned a status at birth and remains at that level. In an open system, movement between strata is possible. The openness of the system determines the ease of movement.

Sociologists recognize two basic types of stratification systems in today’s societies: caste systems and class systems. Picture a continuum with closed systems to the left and open systems to the right. Caste systems would fall at the far left of the continuum. In a caste system, a person’s status is assigned at birth. In all but the rarest cases, the individual remains in that status. Class systems, on the other hand, would fall somewhere on the right of the continuum. The actual location depends on the society; because class systems range from slightly open to very open.

**Caste Systems** In a caste system, resources and social rewards are distributed on the basis of ascribed statuses. A newborn child’s lifelong status, or caste, is determined by the status of his or her parents. Effort and talent may affect someone’s position within a caste, but they cannot move the person to a higher status.

Because status is inherited, a caste system has elaborate norms governing interaction among the different castes. For example, marriage between members of different castes would make it difficult to assign a status to children. Which parent’s status would be used? To avoid this problem, caste systems traditionally have forbidden the practice of exogamy, or marriage outside one’s social category. Caste systems generally have practiced endogamy, or marriage within one’s social category, instead.

Caste systems were once common in South Asia. India provides one of the best examples of this system of stratification. Developed more than 3,000 years ago, the Indian caste system assigned individuals to one of four castes: Brahmins, Kshatriyas (kuh-SHA-tree-uhz), Vaisyas (VISH-yuhz), and Sudras. These castes were subdivided into thousands of subcastes based on specific occupations. Below these four castes was a class of outcasts, Harijans—or Dalits, as they now call themselves. Harijans were considered unclean and were given only the most undesirable tasks to perform. Other castes avoided all contact with them because being touched by a Harijan made a higher-caste person unclean. The only way to remove this “stain” of uncleanness was to go through special cleansing rituals.

The Indian constitution, which was adopted in 1950, outlawed the discrimination against the Harijans. It also declared that all Indians, regardless of background, were equal. In addition, government programs set aside places in schools and government jobs for lower caste members and Harijans. But dismantling the caste system has proved extremely difficult. Some blurring of distinctions among the castes has taken place in the cities. There, modern transportation systems and work arrangements force mixing among the castes. However, in the rural areas—where most Indians live—caste still plays a major role in organizing everyday life.

**Types of Stratification Systems**

**Recall** What is social stratification? division of society into ranks or classes **Identify** What determines the level of social inequality in a society? how open or closed a society’s stratification system is **Contrast** Before 1950, how did the lives of Harijans differ from those of other castes? had to perform most undesirable tasks, other castes avoided all contact

**Info to Know**

**Hinduism and Caste in India** In 2008 Hindus made up approximately 918 million—about 80 percent—of the population in India. According to Hinduism, people are reincarnated, or reborn, after death. The faith teaches that a person’s actions during past lives determine the caste into which the person will be born in the next life. Since the passage of the Indian Constitution, Hinduism in India has slowly moved away from its association with the caste system.
**The Dimensions of Social Stratification**

**Define** How is the term *wealth* defined? an individual’s assets and income

**Elaborate** Why do you think the income gap in the United States has been growing? possible answer—CEOs and company owners are being paid hundreds of times more than the workers.

**Transparencies with Teacher’s Notes:** Distribution of Income and Wealth in the United States

**Interactive Feature:** Distribution of Wealth and Income

**Biography**

Erik Olin Wright (1947— ) Erik Olin Wright, a sociologist at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, became a leading class stratification theorist. In his book *Classes* (1985), Wright updated Marx’s theory of class stratification to account for the middle class. Like the proletariat, members of the middle class work for the bourgeoisie. However, like the bourgeoisie, middle-class members work in occupations where they supervise the proletariat.

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

**means of production:** the materials and methods used to produce goods and services

**Distribution of Wealth and Income** In the United States, wealth is unequally distributed. About four-fifths of the country’s wealth is in the hands of the richest fifth of the population. The lowest fifth is in debt and has no wealth. Income is also distributed unequally. The top one-fifth of income earners receives approximately half of the total national income.

**Interactive Feature**

**Thinking Critically** What do you think is the significance of the lowest fifth having no wealth?

**Skills Focus**

**Thinking Critically** What do you think is the significance of the lowest fifth having no wealth?

**Statistically Speaking** Here are some facts to help you understand the distribution of income and wealth in the United States.

**DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME AND WEALTH IN THE UNITED STATES**

- **Highest Fifth:** 20%
- **Fourth Fifth:** 14%
- **Third Fifth:** 10%
- **Second Fifth:** 7%
- **Lowest Fifth:** 1%

Income is distributed unequally in the United States, although not as strikingly as total wealth. The top 1 percent of the population earned over 21 percent of the total national income in 2005. Recent studies suggest that this income gap has been growing. One study estimates that corporate chief executives make 300 times as much money as the average worker. This ratio stood at 116 to 1 in 1997 and just 30 to 1 in the 1970s.

**Power** People with substantial wealth usually also possess considerable power. **Power** is the ability to control the behavior of others, with or without their consent. Power can be based on force, the possession of a special skill or type of knowledge, a particular social status, personal characteristics, or custom and tradition.

**Critical Thinking: Draw Conclusions**

1. **Stratification in India and the United States** Lead a class discussion on the characteristics of caste systems and class systems. Then organize students into pairs. Ask pairs to imagine that they are teen pen pals, one living in India and one living in the United States.

2. **Have one student in each pair write a letter to his or her pen pal describing the caste system in India and how it has changed over time.** Meanwhile have the other write a similar letter about the class system in the United States and how it has changed.

3. **Then have partners exchange letters, review them for accuracy and completeness, and do peer edits.**

4. **Next, have students revise their letter based on their partners’ feedback. Ask volunteers to read their letters to the class.**
Rating Prestige

These occupational prestige ratings from the General Social Survey (GSS) are based on a scale ranging from a low of 1 to a high of 100. How would your ratings compare?

### PRESTIGE RATINGS FOR SELECTED OCCUPATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Firefighter</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Electrician</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered nurse</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Mail carrier</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school teacher</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Musician/composer</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airline pilot</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Child-care worker</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer programmer</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Retail apparel salesperson</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociologist</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Garbage collector</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police officer</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Waiter/waitress</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Janitor</td>
<td>22</td>
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### Procedure

1. Working in pairs, survey a sample of students in your school to create your own occupational prestige ratings. First, list the 20 occupations from the chart in alphabetical order on a piece of paper.
2. Then ask each student in the sample to assign a prestige value from 1 to 100 to each occupation.
3. Calculate a rating for each occupation by adding up the values that each student assigned and dividing by the number of students in the sample. Rank the occupations in order of their rating.

### Analysis

1. Compare your results with the GSS ratings and discuss your findings as a class.
2. How might you explain the similarities or differences? What factors might influence the values each person assigned?

### Explaining Stratification

**Prestige** Individuals can also be ranked according to prestige. *Prestige* is the respect, honor, recognition, or courtesy an individual receives from others. Prestige can be based on any characteristics a society considers important. Occupation, education, family background, and area of residence are among the factors that often determine prestige.

In the United States, occupation tends to be the most important determinant of prestige. When asked to rate occupations according to levels of prestige, Americans consistently place jobs that require higher levels of education at the top of the list. Also, jobs with higher prestige ratings tend to produce higher incomes.

To rank people according to wealth, power, and prestige, sociologists often calculate people’s *socioeconomic status* (SES). This rating combines social factors such as educational level, occupational prestige, and place of residence with the economic factor of income. The SES is then used to determine an individual’s relative position in the stratification system.

### Critical Thinking: Analyze

**Dimensions of Social Stratification**

1. Review with students the three dimensions of social stratification. Write the following questions for students: Which would you rather have—wealth, power, or prestige? Why?
2. Organize students into pairs. Have partners ask each other the questions on the board and make a list of their responses and explanations.
3. Ask volunteers to share their responses and explanations with the class.
4. Guide students in a review of the dimensions of social stratification and social class.

**Answers**

**Reading Check** Sociologists use these social factors to calculate people’s socioeconomic status or social ranking. Generally, the higher one’s socioeconomic status, the higher one’s social ranking.
Assessment

What do sociologists define as social class?

Some sociologists believe that the functionalist approach also assumes that positions that offer higher rewards are more important. A heart surgeon may earn more money, but is he or she more important to society than the garbage collector whose work prevents the spread of contagious diseases?

**Conflict Theory** Conflict theorists see competition over scarce resources as the cause of social inequality. Conflict theorists who base their work on Marxist theory say that stratification comes from class exploitation. The owners of the means of production control the working class in order to make profits and maintain their power in society.

Many American conflict theorists—such as C. Wright Mills, Irving Louis Horowitz, and G. William Domhoff—take a broader view of inequality. According to their view, various groups within society compete with one another for scarce resources. Once a group gains power, it is able to shape public policy and public opinion to its own advantage. In that way, it maintains its position of power.

Critics have found shortcomings in conflict theory as well. One of its major weaknesses is that it fails to recognize that unequal rewards are based, in part, on differences in talent, skill, and desire. Not everyone is suited for every position in the social structure. Consequently, society must have some way to urge the proper individuals into positions that are vital to its operation. One approach is to offer different rewards.

**Efforts at Synthesis** Some sociologists, noting that neither approach fully explains stratification, have tried to synthesize the two. Ralf Dahrendorf suggests that each approach might be used to explain specific aspects of stratification. For example, functionalist theory helps explain why people spend years training to become doctors or lawyers. Conflict theory helps explain why the children of the wealthy tend to go to the best colleges.

Gerhard Lenski takes a similar approach. However, he asserts that the usefulness of the theory depends on the society under study. He notes that functionalists state that a stratification system functions because members of society accept it. Such a view would apply to simple societies—such as hunter-gatherer societies—where survival depends on cooperation. Lenski suggests that the conflict theory would apply to more complex societies, in which people struggle to control wealth and power. A ruling group emerges from the struggle, and social inequality develops as this group takes steps to maintain its position.

**Reading Check** Find the Main Idea How have sociologists synthesized the functionalist and conflict approaches to social stratification?

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**Review & Assess**

**Close**

Review the systems of stratification by asking students to summarize caste and class systems and to compare how closed or open the systems are.

**Review**

- Online Quiz: Section 1

**Assess**

- SE Section 1 Assessment
- Review and Assessment Resources:
  - Section 1 Quiz
- Alternative Assessment Handbook

**Reteach/Intervene**

- Reading and Activity Workbook:
  - Section 1
- Teacher Management System: Section 1 Lesson Plan
- Interactive Skills Tutor CD-ROM

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

- Synthesize: to blend

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**SECTION 1**

**Assessment Answers**

1. by dividing a society’s members into ranks based on selected characteristics
2. grouping of people with similar levels of wealth, power, prestige
3. functionalist—society does not provide equal access to education and jobs, rewards do not always reflect social value of roles; conflict—fails to recognize that unequal rewards are based in part on differences in talents, skill, and desire
4. same—both stratification systems; different—caste systems closed, class systems relatively open
5. possible answer—wealth; can buy resources, products, services
6. possible answer: functionalists—stratification necessary to help society function smoothly; conflict theorists—stratification result of conflict over scarce resources; synthesis—functionalist applies to simple societies, conflict applies to more complex societies
7. Essays will vary, but students should mention the ideas of Dahrendorf and Lenski to explain how the functionalist and conflict theories of stratification are complementary.
Social Stratification Around the World

All societies have found ways to stratify their members based on specific characteristics. Ascribed statuses such as race, gender, and age are among those most commonly used to divide a society's members into ranks. Even achieved statuses such as occupation or education may be used.

Kiwai Papuans Even simple societies experience social stratification. Anthropologist Gunnar Landtman at first observed little social inequality among the Kiwai Papuans of New Guinea. Most villagers did the same work and lived in similar dwellings. Eventually, however, Landtman observed that men who were warriors, harpooners, and sorcerers were considered “a little more high” than others. Women and the unemployed were described as “down a little bit” and were not allowed to own land.

Mosuo The Mosuo are a minority ethnic group of about 56,000 people in southwest China. Some scholars consider Mosuo society a matriarchy, or a society in which women have authority over men. Mosuo society is matrilineal, meaning that women carry on the family name and lineage is traced through the mother. Women also run Mosuo households, which often consist of several families with one woman elected as the head. The female leaders of each village govern the region by committee.

Democratic Republic of the Congo Historically, Congolese society has been stratified by gender. Women are seen as lower in the social ranks than men. The result is a society plagued by social inequality. Legally, men are considered the head of the household. Women are expected to obey their husbands. They do not have the legal right to choose where they live or to file for divorce. Because they are underrepresented in government, women's opportunities to change these policies are limited.

Maasai The Maasai, a nomadic group in East Africa, use a system of age-sets to organize their society. Boys of the same age go through the rite of passage initiating them into adulthood at the same time, forming a permanent age-based group. These groups move up through a system of ranks, each lasting about 15 years. Ultimately they reach the rank of senior elder and gain the authority to make decisions for the tribe.

South Africa For decades, South Africa presented a prime example of a society stratified by race. The white minority practiced a policy of apartheid, or apartness. People were divided into four racial groups: white, black, Colored (mixed race), or Asian. Whites and nonwhites were segregated in housing, education, employment, and transportation. Nonwhites also faced political and economic discrimination. A new constitution in 1994 ended apartheid but not its effects on the nonwhite population.

Thinking Critically

1. Identify Cause and Effect How do these systems of stratification lead to social inequality?
2. Discuss Do you think that societies around the world should allow social stratification to continue? Explain your answer.

Answers

Thinking Critically 1. Putting people or groups into divisions based on characteristics, abilities, or talents results in unequal sharing of scarce resources and social rewards; 2. Possible answer—No; all people should have equal access to food, education, and health care.
The American Class System

Before You Read

Main Idea
Most sociologists use six class divisions when describing the American class system. Because it is an open system, people are able to move between classes.

Reading Focus
1. How do sociologists determine social class?
2. What are the characteristics of social classes in the United States?
3. What are the types of social mobility?

Vocabulary
reputational method
subjective method
objective method
social mobility
horizontal mobility
vertical mobility
intragenerational mobility
intergenerational mobility

Does everyone have access to the nation’s best universities? In recent years, Harvard University has made significant changes to its financial aid policy. In 2004, the university announced the Harvard Financial Aid Initiative, which eventually made it possible for students from families earning less than $60,000 per year to attend Harvard without paying tuition. In 2007, Harvard revised its policies again, this time reducing the amount of tuition families earning $180,000 per year or less will have to pay so that tuition costs do not exceed 10 percent of their income. These changes will benefit over half of Harvard’s 6,600 undergraduates. Several Ivy League schools followed suit and revised their own financial aid policies.

The goal of these revisions is to make Harvard and the other Ivy League schools affordable for lower-class and middle-class students as well as the wealthy. In 2004 only about 8 percent of Harvard’s undergraduates came from low-income families. Harvard says that their new financial aid policy has increased the number of students from families with incomes of less than $80,000 by 33 percent. However, at the nation’s 59 wealthiest private colleges, an average of 14 percent of students come from low-income households. And in 2008 Harvard only accepted 7 percent of a record 27,426 applicants. Low-income students—who tend to have lower standardized test scores and are more likely to have part-time jobs, leaving them less time for activities sought after by college admissions boards—still face a monumental task in trying to get accepted by an Ivy League school. Most low-income students continue to attend public colleges and universities.

Academic Vocabulary
Review with students the high-use academic term in this section.

social advancement the process of moving up through the ranks of a class system (p. 193)

Taking Notes
upper class—1 percent, prestigious schools, owners and executives of large businesses, heirs, investors; upper middle class—14 percent, college or university education, business executives, professionals; lower middle class—30 percent, high school, some college, lower-level managers, skilled craftworkers, supervisors; working class—30 percent, high school, factory workers, clerical workers, lower-level salespeople; working poor—22 percent, some high school, laborers, service workers such as gardeners and house cleaners; underclass—3 percent, some high school, undesirable low-pay jobs, unemployed, on welfare

Teach the Main Idea
1. Teach Ask students the Reading Focus questions to teach this section.
2. Apply Ask students what the social stratification in their school is. Is there an upper class or a lower class, and if so, on what characteristics are these classes based? Is it difficult to fit all groups into a class? Tell students not to name students when they respond. Make a class list of student responses. Guide students in a discussion of the class list.
3. Review After students read the section, have students review the class list. Ask them for additions to the list.
4. Practice/Homework Have students create a chart of the social stratification and characteristics of their school.

Open to ALL?
Determining Social Class
By definition, social inequality exists in all class systems. What form inequality takes
varies from society to society—the fewer the number of ascribed characteristics used to
determine access to rewards, the more open the class system. The United States has a
fairly open system. The law forbids discrimination based on ascribed characteristics such
as race, religion, ancestry, or sex.
In theory, Americans have equal access to the resources needed for social advancement.
However, the United States has a wide range of social classes, and the rate of social mobility
is not equal for every segment of American society. To understand why such conditions
exist, one needs to look at the characteristics of social class and the patterns of social mobility
in the United States.
Sociologists do not agree on the number of class divisions that exist in the United States.
Most sociologists use a six-class system. The divisions in this system are upper class, upper
middle class, lower middle class, working class, working poor, and underclass.
Sociologists rely on three techniques to rank individuals according to social class—
the reputational, subjective, and objective methods. In the reputational method, individ-
uals in the community are asked to rank other community members based on what
they know of their characters and lifestyles. This method is suitable only when studying
small communities in which everyone knows almost everyone else. The findings from these studies cannot be used to make
conclusions about other communities.
In the second technique, the subjective method, individuals are asked to determine
their own social rank. When the choices are limited to upper, middle, and lower class, most
people say they are middle class. Researchers have found that people do not like to place
themselves in the upper or lower classes. This problem can be partially eliminated by includ-
ing the upper middle class and working class in the list of choices.
The third classification technique is the objective method. In this approach, sociologists
define social class by income, occupation, and education. The statistical basis of this method makes it the least biased. However, it is not
without its shortcomings. This technique’s major problem involves the selection and measurement of social factors. Each combi-
nation of factors produces a slightly different picture of social-class membership.
Social Classes in the United States
Regardless of the method used to identify class membership, sociologists generally agree
on the basic characteristics of the American social-class system. Many of them also agree
on the relative distribution of the population within the system. Estimates suggest that
about 1 percent of the population of the United States belongs to the upper class. Another 14
percent of Americans are part of the upper middle class, while another 30 percent belong
to the lower middle class. Another 30 percent comprise the working-class category. Another
22 percent of Americans are members of the working poor, and 3 percent are members of
the underclass. However, recent figures suggest that the underclass may be shrinking.
One major difference between the classes is income. Classes also differ in terms of lifestyle
and beliefs. A brief look at the general characteristics of each class will help you understand
how social class affects life patterns.
The Upper Class Although the upper class is a small segment of the population, it controls
a sizable proportion of the country’s wealth. Generally, the upper class can be divided into two
groups—“old money” and “new money.”
America’s old money includes such families as the Rockefellers, Vanderbilts, and
Kennedys. The term old money refers to the fact that these families have been wealthy
for generations. Much of their wealth comes from inheritance. Yet in terms of social rank,
the family name and the accomplishments of previous generations are as important as the
size of the family fortune. Members of this class are born into an atmosphere of wealth
and power. They are able to attend prestigious schools, eat at the best restaurants,
and vacation at the most exclusive resorts. Most have some of the world’s richest and
most famous people among their friends.

Collaborative Learning

Values of the American Class System
1. Organize students into small groups. Ask students to make a list of American cultural
   values and motivations that influence the class system. value—belief that all Americans
   have equal access to social advancement, hard work and economic success;
   motivation—better one’s life and one’s children
2. To help students get started, remind them of related sayings such as America is the land
   of opportunity, every child can grow up to be
   president, and you can be anything if you just work hard enough.
3. Have all groups share some of the items on their list with the class and make a class list.
4. Guide the class in a discussion of the class list. Point out that many of the values and
   motivations hold the individual responsible for his or her social class. 15 Interpersonal

Answers

Reading Check reputational—individuals in a community rank other
community members based on what they know of their characters and
lifestyles; subjective—individuals asked to determine their own social
rank; objective—statistical method to determine social class by income,
occupation, and education
Social Classes in the United States

Explain Why do some members of the old money group look down on members of the new money group? conspicuous consumption by newly rich

Compare How are the lower middle class and upper middle class alike? hold white-collar jobs that require education

Contrast How is membership in the upper class different from membership in the upper middle class? upper class—great wealth in assets; upper middle class—wealth based on income

Activity Social Class Organize students into pairs. Have each partner write two questions on each of the six social classes in America. Have partners exchange questions and answer each other’s questions. Visual/Spatial, Interpersonal

Info to Know

Who’s Got the Money? According to Forbes magazine, the four wealthiest Americans in 2007 were Bill Gates, worth $59 billion; Warren Buffet, worth $52 billion; Sheldon Adelson, worth $28 billion; and Lawrence Ellison worth $26 billion. Tied for fifth position were Sergey Brin and Larry Page, each worth $18.5 billion. Gates, Ellison, Brin, and Page made their fortunes in the computer industry. Gates is the founder of the software company Microsoft and Ellison is the founder of the software company Oracle. Brin and Page co-founded Google, an Internet search engine.

The term new money refers to the newly rich. They generally have acquired wealth through their own efforts rather than through inheritance. New money is less prestigious than old money. Some of those with old money look down on the newly rich for their conspicuous consumption. This term was coined by economist Thorstein Veblen in 1899 to describe the purchase of goods for the status they bring rather than for their usefulness.

Not surprisingly, membership in the upper class sometimes carries with it great power and influence. Members often fill top positions in government and private enterprise. Frequently, upper-class members also use their wealth to support charities.

The Upper Middle Class Members of the upper-middle class are primarily high-income businesspeople and professionals such as doctors and lawyers. Most have a college education, and many have advanced degrees. Their money buys them large houses, expensive cars, yearly vacations, a college education for their children, and many added luxuries. Class membership is generally based on income rather than on assets. Consequently, many in the upper middle class are career-oriented. Many people in this class are politically and socially active. However, their power and influence are limited to the community level and do not extend to the national level.

The Lower Middle Class Like the majority of the upper middle class, most members in the lower middle class hold white-collar jobs, which do not involve manual labor. Many of their jobs require less education and provide a lower income than those held by the upper middle class. Lower middle class jobs include nursing, middle management, and sales. Owners of small businesses also belong to the lower middle class. Members of this class live a comfortable life but must work hard to keep what they have achieved.

The Working Class Many members of the working class hold jobs that require manual labor. Factory workers, tradespeople, less skilled workers, and some service workers fall into this category. Such jobs have traditionally been labeled blue-collar jobs, named after the color of the coveralls worn by many manual laborers. Some of these jobs pay as much or more than many of the positions held by members of the lower middle class. However, these jobs carry less prestige. Other working-class people hold clerical, lower-level sales, and various service jobs that do not require manual labor. These types of jobs are sometimes called pink-collar jobs because traditionally women have held them. Many members of the working class have few financial reserves. Unexpected crises, such as the loss of a job, can push working-class individuals into lower classes.

American Social Class Characteristics

1. Assemble materials: index cards, poster paper, markers, glue, magazines, and newspapers. Write an American social class on each of six index cards. Organize students into six groups. Give each group an index card with its assigned social class.

2. Have each group brainstorm and take notes on the characteristics of their assigned class and what life is generally like for that class.

3. Then have groups use the materials to create a collage (without a title) representing their assigned social class.

4. Have each group display its collage to the class, and ask students to identify which American social class it represents. Then have groups explain their collage. Visual/Spatial, Interpersonal

Collaborative Learning

Collages

Percent of U.S. Population 1%
Education prestigious universities
Occupations owners and executives of large businesses; investors; heirs

Percent of U.S. Population 14%
Education college or university
Occupations business executives; professionals

Percent of U.S. Population 30%
Education high school, some college
Occupations lower-level managers; skilled craftworkers; supervisors

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 8, Collages
The Working Poor  Members of the working poor work at the lowest-paying jobs. These jobs are often temporary or seasonal, such as housecleaning, migrant farmwork, and day laboring. Even though the working poor work hard, they rarely make a living wage. Many depend on government-support programs. Most are high-school dropouts and, because of their lack of education, their future prospects are often bleak. Most are not involved politically. They believe their situation will remain the same regardless of who is in power.

The Underclass  Families that have experienced unemployment and poverty over several generations are considered part of the underclass. Some members of the underclass do work, but usually only at undesirable, low-paying jobs. Their chief source of income is often public assistance. Life for people in the underclass is a day-to-day struggle for survival. Typically, only 50 percent of children in the underclass make it into a higher class.

Reading Check  Analyze  How do American social classes reflect social inequality?

Social Mobility

The United States has an open class system, which makes social mobility possible. Social mobility is the movement between or within social classes. Sociologists study two types of social mobility: horizontal and vertical.

The term horizontal mobility refers to movement within a social class or stratum. When an individual moves from one job to another of equal social ranking, that individual experiences horizontal mobility. An accountant may consider a move from one firm to another an important step up the career ladder. However, if the move does not involve any major change in the accountant’s wealth, power, or prestige, sociologists view it as horizontal mobility.

Vertical mobility, on the other hand, is the movement between social classes or strata. The monetary and social rewards of promotion from a secretarial to a management position may move an individual from the working class to the lower middle class. This type of mobility can be either upward or downward.

There are two kinds of vertical mobility. When sociologists focus on changes in social position during one person’s life, they are studying intragenerational mobility. With intergenerational mobility, however, the focus is on status differences between generations in the same family. For example, the child of a mechanic who becomes a doctor experiences intergenerational mobility.

Most Americans believe that all people in the United States are free to reach their own particular level of achievement. They believe that people will rise or fall to their own particular level of achievement. Although this theory appears to be true, the reality is somewhat different.

Social Classes in the United States

Infer  What is the main factor that limits opportunity for the working poor? Lack of education; most have only some high school

Elaborate  Why do you think it is hard to earn a living with seasonal work? Seasonal work is not available year-round.

Reading Focus

Identify  When does horizontal mobility occur? When a job change is of equal social ranking

Analyze  What type of social mobility occurs if an individual moves from a job as a receptionist to that of a nurse? Vertical mobility

Reading Focus

What are the types of social mobility? Horizontal, vertical

Social Mobility

Occupational Mobility and Class

In a study of American occupational mobility, researchers found that the most mobility occurs among the middle class. The chance of upward or downward occupational mobility is equally likely for those in the middle class. In contrast, the study found relatively little occupational mobility in the upper class and the two lower classes. For someone from a lower-class background, it is difficult to achieve upward mobility. Similarly, it is uncommon for someone from an upper-class background to experience downward mobility.

Critical Thinking: Infer

Social Mobility

1. Assemble materials: poster paper, markers, old news magazines and newspapers. Ask students to describe the vocabulary terms horizontal mobility, intragenerational vertical mobility, and intergenerational vertical mobility.

2. Have students write fictional newspaper headlines that illustrate each type of social mobility. Then have students create a visual diagram using the materials to illustrate their headlines.

3. Ask volunteers to share their newspaper headlines and diagrams with the class.

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 23, Newspapers

Answers

Reading Check  Wealthier Americans have more and greater opportunities for education and jobs.
Social Mobility

Recall: What can cause social mobility to occur? structural causes, individual efforts

Identify Cause and Effect: How have changes in merchandising patterns affected the workforce since 1940? White-collar workforce has more than doubled.

Research indicates that even though the majority of Americans reach a higher occupational status than their parents, most remain in the same social class. When individuals do undergo vertical mobility, they rarely move up or down more than one social class.

Structural Causes of Upward Mobility
While individual effort often plays a role in social mobility, sociologists are more interested in the structural causes. These causes include advances in technology, changes in merchandising patterns, and increases in the population’s general level of education.

When technologies change, the jobs available to workers also change, which can result in downward mobility for individuals caught in the shift. However, it often means upward mobility for the next generation of workers. For example, the disappearance of millions of factory jobs due to mechanization has forced some new workers into higher-status jobs, primarily in the service industry.

Changes in merchandising patterns have also affected social mobility. Recent changes include an explosion in the credit industry, a greater emphasis on insurance, increased real-estate transactions, and an extraordinary growth in personal services. These changes have increased the white-collar workforce from approximately 31 percent of all workers in 1940 to 77 percent today.

Another factor that has promoted upward mobility is an increase in the general level of education. The percent of the population aged 25 and older without a high school diploma has shrunk from 75 percent in 1940 to 15 percent today. Also, more Americans are going to college. Today 26 percent of people 25 and older have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to less than 5 percent in 1940.

Structural Causes of Downward Mobility
Although upward mobility is more common, movement down the class ladder also occurs. Personal factors such as illness, divorce, and retirement can cause downward mobility. Once again, sociologists are more interested in the structural causes of this movement.

Changes in the economy are the primary structural causes of downward mobility. Breakthroughs in technology can alter the demand for labor. Workers may suddenly find themselves without jobs. If these workers are unable to find new jobs with comparable salaries, they may experience downward mobility. For younger workers, the drop in social status is often temporary. However, for older workers the shift may be permanent.

Economic changes also can affect intergenerational mobility. In times of economic growth and low unemployment, individuals entering the job market have less difficulty finding desirable employment. However, jobs are less plentiful during an economic recession. As a result, even highly qualified graduates sometimes cannot find jobs in their chosen fields.

Close
Review the six class divisions in the American class system by asking students to identify the social classes and give some characteristics of each class. Discuss students’ ideas as a class.

Review
Online Quiz: Section 2

Assess
Section 2 Assessment
Alternative Assessment Handbook
Reading and Activity Workbook: Section 2
Teacher Management System: Section 2 Lesson Plan
Interactive Skills Tutor CD-ROM

Think Central
Visit thinkcentral.com for opportunities to reteach or help students review key topics in this chapter.

Keyword: SPSTeachSoc

Answers
Reading Check: intragenerational—changes in social position during one person’s life; intergenerational—status differences between generations in the same family

Section 2 Assessment Answers
1. when studying small communities in which everyone knows almost everyone else
2. Answers should include characteristics of the upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, working class, working poor, and underclass.
3. movement between or within social classes
4. Possible answer—Yes, the higher the occupational achievement, the higher the social class.
5. possible answer—horizontal mobility
6. advances in technology, changes in merchandising patterns, increases in the population’s general level of education
7. Paragraphs should include evaluations of the methods of measuring social class: reputational, subjective, and objective.
Poverty

Before You Read

Main Idea
Americans living below the poverty level have fewer opportunities. Government welfare programs attempt to remedy this situation.

Reading Focus
1. How is poverty defined in the United States?
2. What groups of Americans are affected by poverty?
3. What are the effects of poverty on poor Americans?
4. What steps have been taken by the federal government to reduce the effects of poverty?

Vocabulary
poverty poverty level life changes life expectancy transfer payments

A Penny Per Pound

Can you imagine having to struggle for a one-cent raise? That is exactly what the Coalition of Immokalee Workers—an advocacy group composed largely of tomato pickers in the Immokalee area of southwest Florida—has been doing since 2001. For decades, the Immokalee tomato pickers have been working 12-hour days for substandard wages and living in rundown shacks and trailers. They spend each day on their hands and knees filling 32-pound buckets of tomatoes. To earn even $50 a day, each worker must pick enough tomatoes to fill 125 buckets—two tons of tomatoes!

In an effort to improve the workers’ situation, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers began a campaign of protests and boycotts against the major fast-food chains that purchase their tomato harvest. Since 2005, the tomato pickers have gotten Burger King, McDonald’s, and Yum! Brands, the parent company of Taco Bell, to agree to pay an additional penny per pound of tomatoes. This increase means that a worker will earn 77 cents per penny per pound of tomatoes. To earn even $50 a day, each worker must pick enough tomatoes to fill 125 buckets—two tons of tomatoes!

Poverty

1. Teach Ask students the Reading Focus questions to teach this section.
2. Apply Have students scan the section, including charts and diagrams. Then have students write a list of words that come to mind when they hear the vocabulary term poverty. Guide students in a class discussion of poverty in the United States. Who defines what poverty is? What are some of the characteristics that affect poverty?
3. Review As you review the section’s main ideas, have students write a definition of poverty and list the groups affected by poverty.
4. Practice/Homework Ask students which characteristic they think most affects poverty. Have students write a journal entry on how poverty affects a fictional teen.

Visual/Spatial

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11, Discussions
Defining Poverty in the United States

The United States is one of the richest countries in the world. However, not everyone in American society shares equally in this prosperity. Almost 37 million people—about 13 percent of the population—live below the poverty level. Many millions more make incomes that are too low to meet their basic needs. However, they make too much money to qualify for public assistance. For all of these people, daily life is often a struggle.

Who is classified as poor depends on how poverty is defined. In general, poverty is seen as a standard of living that is below the minimum level considered adequate by society. Thus, poverty is a relative measure. What one society considers poverty might be seen as an adequate standard of living in another.

For example, many poor Americans live more comfortable lives than the majority of people in some industrializing nations. This fact does not mean there are no poor people in the United States. Rather, it means that the standard of living in the United States is high.

What does it mean to be poor in the United States? To answer this question, you need to look at the characteristics of poverty in the United States and at the effects that poverty has on people’s lives. You also need to examine some of the ways that the government responds to the problem of poverty.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines poverty in terms of the minimum annual income needed by a family to survive. This minimum income is called the poverty level. The government considers families with income levels below this amount to be poor.

The poverty level is determined by calculating the cost of providing an adequate diet, based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s minimum nutritional standards. This figure is then multiplied by three because research has indicated that poor people spend one-third of their income on food. Each year, the government adjusts the poverty level to reflect increases in the cost of living. The poverty level most often quoted in news stories is for a family of four. The government actually establishes a series of poverty levels that takes into account the number of people in a family. The table on this page lists the poverty levels for various family sizes.

Recently, poverty researchers have questioned the usefulness of the government’s poverty levels. They point out that the method for calculating poverty was developed in the 1960s. Since then, eating and spending habits have changed greatly. In response to this criticism, the Census Bureau has begun to experiment with different definitions of poverty. One definition bases the poverty level on spending for the basic necessities, which include food, clothing, housing, and “a little bit more”—other personal expenses. Using this definition would raise the poverty level for a family of four by a few thousand dollars. As a result, several million more Americans would be added to the ranks of those in poverty.

Differentiating Instruction

English-Language Learners

1. Create a web graphic organizer. Write Some Characteristics of Poor Americans in the center. In each of three adjoining circles, write the main characteristics: sex, age, race/ethnicity. Ask students which groups are most affected by each characteristic. Write the responses in the web.

2. Then ask students to list some facts about each characteristic. Next, ask volunteers to read their list and write responses in the web.

3. Ask students to list causes of poverty for each group. Then ask volunteers to read their list and make a class list.

4. Guide students in a summary discussion on the characteristics of poor Americans and possible causes of poverty for each group.

Answers

Skills Focus possible answer—no job-related costs for retirees such as commuting expenses; retirees already have durable goods such as furniture

Reading Check calculate cost of an adequate diet, multiply by three

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Poverty in America

Poverty affects Americans of all races, ethnicities, and age groups. However, because of a history of discrimination and many other factors, certain groups suffer from greater percentages of poverty. As you can see in the table at right, the poverty rate for whites averages 2 percentage points lower than the rate for the overall population. African Americans and Hispanics, on the other hand, have poverty rates that are almost twice that of the nation as a whole. Although the poverty level is uniform across the country, the percentage of people below the poverty level varies by state. In Mississippi—the state with the most residents living in poverty—21.3 percent of the population is below the poverty level. In contrast, only 7.5 percent of New Hampshire residents are below the poverty level. Economic factors such as the strength of local industries or education programs can cause these variations. Cost of living, a local measure, may also play a role. For example, urban areas tend to have high costs of living. In New York City the cost of living is among the highest in the nation, and one in five people there live below the poverty level.

Skills Focus INTERPRETING MAPS

What region suffers the most from poverty? Why do you think this is so?

Variations in American Poverty

Not every American runs an equal risk of being poor. Characteristics such as age, sex, and race and ethnicity affect poverty.

As an age group, children have the largest percentage in poverty. Children under age 18 form 25 percent of the population, but they represent 33 percent of those living in poverty. Not all children have an equal likelihood of being poor. The level of poverty among African American and Hispanic children is more than twice the level among white children.

About 57 percent of the poor are women. Also, women head about one-half of all poor families. As in the case of children, not all female-headed households are at equal risk. Almost 40 percent of households headed by African American and Hispanic women live in poverty. This compares to a rate of 25 percent for families headed by white women.

As the statistics above indicate, poverty varies by race and cultural background. Regardless of age or sex, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely than whites to live in poverty. As you can see in the table above, African Americans and Hispanics have poverty rates that are almost twice that of the United States as a whole.

Reading Check Infer What characteristics make it more likely that someone will live in poverty?

Poverty in America

Activity Looking Locally Have students find their state on the map and identify the poverty level for their state. Have them discuss possible reasons their state falls in that category.

Logical/Mathematical

A recent study of dental health and hygiene found that people can retain good health even when living in severe poverty. The researchers concluded that when poverty itself cannot be eliminated, adequate housing, supportive family, and a strong spiritual foundation are protective factors that can contribute to overall health.

Answers

Statistically Speaking the South; possible answer—larger African American and Hispanic population

Reading Check being a child, a woman, an African American, or a Hispanic
**Effects of Poverty**

**Compare** What is the relationship between income and divorce rates? *Low-income divorce rates are higher than other population segments.*

**Interpret** Why are schools in low-income areas often inadequately funded? *Low tax revenues due to low local property taxes.*

**Government Responses to Poverty**

**Identify** Which president initiated federal antipoverty programs? *Lyndon B. Johnson*

**Identify Cause and Effect** How have the federal programs been able to lower poverty rates among the elderly? *Through social-welfare programs such as Medicare, increased Social Security benefits.*

**Critical Thinking Skills: Draw Conclusions**

1. Write the following terms for students: **Age, Sex, and Race or Ethnicity.** Ask students to use the terms to describe the characteristics of poverty in the United States and make a class list.

2. Ask students to identify the federal government’s main poverty assistance programs and make a class list.

3. Then ask students to discuss whether they believe poverty can ever be eliminated in the United States and why or why not.

4. Have students write a journal entry describing why they think that poverty can or cannot be eliminated in the United States.

**Answers**

**Reading Check** Poor Americans have fewer opportunities to share in the benefits of society.
SSI provides income support for people 65 years of age and older and for blind and disabled adults and children. TANF gives cash payments to poor families with children.

The second approach used by the government to assist poor Americans is subsidies, which transfer goods and services rather than cash. The Food Stamp program is, perhaps, the best-known government subsidy. Under this program, poor people receive coupons or cards that can be used to buy food. Other subsidies include those for housing, school lunches, and Medicaid—a health-insurance program for the poor.

From the 1980s onward, calls for reform of the social-welfare system grew louder. Critics charged that the system had created a permanent “welfare class” who chose to live off government assistance rather than to work. In 1996 the federal government responded by passing the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. This act turned the administration of some welfare programs over to the states. It also changed the rules for payment of assistance. Before, people could receive payments indefinitely. Now most people receive payments for no more than five years and are required to work after two years in the program.

Some observers have hailed welfare reform as a success, pointing out that it has greatly reduced the number of people on welfare. How well the people who have moved from welfare to work are doing is less clear, however. One study found that nearly a third of those who had left welfare were back on the rolls within two years. Those who remained off welfare reported facing considerable economic problems. About half said they sometimes ran out of food and could not afford to buy more. More than a third reported that at least once during the year they could not pay their rent or utility bills. Some observers suggest that such statistics show that the success of welfare reform should be judged as much on “income and poverty outcomes” as on welfare-roll reductions.

### Skills Focus

**INTERPRETING CHARTS** How long did Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) operate before being replaced?

### MILESTONES IN WELFARE LEGISLATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Social Security Act</td>
<td>Established Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), requiring states to assist eligible families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Economic Opportunity Act</td>
<td>Cornerstone of Johnson’s war on poverty; provided job training, adult education, and small business loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act</td>
<td>Replaced AFDC with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), changing the criteria for determining eligibility and delivering benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Deficit Reduction Act of 2005</td>
<td>Revised TANF, changes designed to promote work and support children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reviewing Main Ideas and Vocabulary

1. **Define** What is the poverty level?
2. **Recall** How do characteristics such as age, sex, and race affect poverty?
3. **Identify** What are two reasons for ill health and a shorter life expectancy among poor Americans?
4. **Explain** Why did critics call for welfare reform?

### Thinking Critically

5. **Predict** What effect do you think the changes to welfare programs might have on the recipients’ self-esteem? Explain.

6. **Summarize** Using your notes and a graphic organizer like the one below, describe the effects of poverty on life chances and behavior patterns.

   ![Effects of Poverty Chart]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects of Poverty</th>
<th>Life Chances</th>
<th>Behavior Patterns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

7. **Descriptive** Write a short essay on what effects you think welfare reform will have on poverty in the United States in the future.

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**Answers**

**Skills Focus** 61 years (from 1935 to 1996)

**Reading Check** transfer payments—percentage of tax revenues goes to groups that need public assistance, e.g. SSI and TANF; subsidies—transfer or subsidize goods and services, e.g. food stamps and Medicaid
Bellringer

Motivate: Summarize the six categories for creating a budget. Tell students that they will create monthly budgets for three imaginary families who belong to various social classes. Tell students that a simulation is a representation of a possible real-life situation.

Reading and Activity Workbook: Chapter 8 Simulation

Direct Teach

Only What You Can Afford

Prepare (15 minutes): Divide the class into groups of six. Groups should sit together.

Read through Steps 1–2 as a class and point out the sample budget worksheet. Allow groups a few minutes to review the main points about creating a budget.

Execute (30 minutes): The simulation will begin with groups dividing the work among group members, so that pairs of students research and complete one of the families’ budget worksheets. Budget worksheets should follow the format of the example shown in the text. You may want to advise students to use calculators when creating their budget and pie chart.

Have the three pairs come back to form their original group of six and make a pie graph that represents each family’s budget. Remind students to write a title for their pie graphs and label each slice of information in the pie.

Guide a class discussion on how the groups made their budgets and what they noticed when they compared their pie graphs.

Only What You Can Afford

What are the significant, everyday lifestyle differences between people of different classes in the United States?

1. Introduction

Social stratification is a system by which society places its members into social classes. The ranking of people into a hierarchy is practiced by most of the societies in the world. This simulation will give you a glimpse of what some of the American social classes look like from within. It is based on three imaginary families who belong to various social classes in the United States. They live in a major metropolitan area with a high cost of living. For this simulation, the families are:

- **The Van Horns**: An upper middle class couple who work as a doctor and a lawyer. Their annual income is $160,000, which leaves them $96,000 after taxes.
- **The Johnsons**: A lower middle class couple who work as a teacher and a librarian. They make $75,000 a year, which leaves them $57,000 after taxes.
- **The Drakes**: A single mother with one child from among the working poor whose job as a nursing aide pays $17,000. After taxes are deducted, she has $16,000 to spend each year.

You will work in small groups to create monthly budgets for these families to live on based on estimated average costs. To complete this simulation, follow the steps below:

- Following your teacher’s instructions, organize into groups of at least six students.
- Create a budget worksheet for each of the three families. Divide the work among group members, so that two students do the research for and complete one of the families’ budget worksheets.
- Once you have filled out your budget worksheets, work as a group to make a pie graph that represents each family’s budget. Use the pie graphs to compare the three budgets. You will turn in the worksheets and pie graphs.
- As a class, discuss how you made your budgets and what you noticed when you compared your pie graphs.

2. Creating Your Budget

Use the Budget Worksheet on the next page to create your budget. First, divide your family’s after-tax income by 12 to determine how much they can spend each month. Then consider the categories below. Figures listed are per month.

- **Housing**: You should spend about 35 percent of your monthly income on housing. Review the options below. If you choose to purchase your residence, you will need to budget 3 percent of your mortgage payment each month for maintenance. Also note the appropriate utilities cost on your budget worksheet.
  - 4-Bedroom house (mortgage, insurance, taxes): $3,300
  - 2-Bedroom house (mortgage, insurance, taxes): $2,200
  - 2-Bedroom apartment (rent, insurance): $1,000
  - 1-Bedroom apartment (rent, insurance): $600
  - Utilities for houses (energy, water, sewer): $150
  - Utilities for apartments (energy): $90

- **Transportation**: The cost of an automobile should not exceed about 25 percent of your monthly income. The figures below include loan payment, insurance, and gas. You may not be able to afford a car at all and be forced to rely on public transportation. Choose one of the options below.
  - Two luxury cars: $2,200
  - One luxury car: $1,100
  - Two economy cars: $1,000
  - One economy car: $500
  - Public transportation: $100

- **Food**: Research indicates that the poor spend about 20 percent of their income on food. Review the grocery options below and choose the one your family can afford.
  - Also decide if they will eat out and how often. Add the appropriate figure to your budget worksheet.
    - Groceries, Tier 1 (fresh, organic, lots of variety): $350
    - Groceries, Tier 2 (mostly packaged, less variety): $300
    - Groceries, Tier 3 (limited to discount options): $250
    - Dining Out, Tier 1 (specialty restaurant, per visit): $60
    - Dining Out, Tier 2 (family restaurant, per visit): $30
    - Dining Out, Tier 3 (fast-food chain, per visit): $10

Differentiating Instruction

Struggling Readers

1. Ask students to list the basic things they would need if they were living on their own. Ask volunteers to share their lists, and note student responses on the board. Then write five categories of basic necessities: place to live, food, clothing, transportation, and personal care.

2. Organize students into groups. Tell each group to imagine that they earn $1,300 a month. Have groups list how much of their monthly earnings they would spend for each category.

3. Have groups make a bar graph to show how much they would spend for each category. Remind groups to label the horizontal and vertical lines and to include a title.

4. Have groups present and explain their bar graphs to the class. Post the bar graphs in the classroom. Visual/Spatial, Interpersonal, Kinesthetic

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 7, Graphs
Health Care  Choose one of the options below for your health care coverage, based on how much you think your family can afford.

- Excellent coverage  $400
- Good coverage  $300
- Moderate coverage  $200
- Minimal coverage  $100

Personal Care  This category includes clothing and grooming products. Consider what kind of clothing your family’s jobs require when selecting one of these options.

- From a high-end department store  $150
- From a discount department store  $100
- From a uniform or thrift store  $50

Miscellaneous  Do you have anything left over for these miscellaneous expenses? Are you able to spend anything on entertainment? If not, decide how your family should spend its remaining funds.

- Phone, landline  $70
- Phone, cellular  $70
- Basic cable  $20
- High-speed internet access  $40
- Annual vacation, one week in another city  $100
- Pet supplies and care  $60
- Entertainment (movies, amusement parks, etc.)  Varies

3. Discussion
What did you learn from this simulation? Hold a group discussion that focuses on the following questions:

- How did the options available to each family differ?
- Which families bought property and which had to rent? What are the long-term consequences of these choices?
- How did the amount of money available for unnecessary expenses such as dining out and entertainment vary among the families? Was spending less in some areas in order to have more “fun money” an option for all families?
- Did your families have any money left over for emergencies? How about for savings? Did this vary by social class and income level? How?
- The poverty level is national, but cost of living varies by city. How do you think this situation affects poor families in areas with a high cost of living, such as the Drakes?
- This simulation ignored solutions to poverty, such as charities and welfare programs. How might these options change the Drake family budget?

Sample Budget Worksheet

| Total Net Annual Income | $________ |
| Total Net Monthly Income | $________ |

Housing

| Mortgage or Rent | $________ |
| Maintenance (applies to houses only) | $________ |
| Utilities | $________ |
| TOTAL | $________ |

Transportation

| Car Payment | $________ |
| Cost of mass transit (if car not possible) | $________ |
| TOTAL | $________ |

Food

| Groceries | $________ |
| Dining Out (total cost of meals chosen) | $________ |
| TOTAL | $________ |

Health Care

| TOTAL | $________ |

Personal Care

| TOTAL | $________ |

Miscellaneous

| Phone, landline | $________ |
| Phone, cellular | $________ |
| Basic cable | $________ |
| High-speed internet access | $________ |
| Vacation | $________ |
| Pet supplies and pet care | $________ |
| Entertainment | $________ |
| Other | $________ |
| TOTAL | $________ |

TOTAL EXPENSES $________

SURPLUS OR SHORTAGE $________

Skills Focus: Identifying Main Ideas and Details

Planning for Needs and Wants

1. Tell students that to make a realistic budget, they need to determine their needs and most important wants. Write the terms needs and wants and their definitions for students.

2. Tell students to imagine that they earn $2,000 a month. Have students make a realistic list of their monthly needs and wants and assign a dollar amount to each item.

3. Have students add their monthly total expenses and subtract them from their monthly earnings. Ask students if their expenses are more than their income, how would they cut expenses? Then ask students if their income is more than their expenses, what would they do with their extra money?

4. As a class, discuss life’s necessities, including shelter, food, and clothing. Ask if their budgets include these necessities. Then ask what other necessities they might want to add. [Visual/Spatial, Interpersonal]

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11, Discussions

Review & Assess

Review
When all worksheets and pie graphs have been completed and discussed as a class, have students discuss the simulation in their small groups, using the discussion questions listed in the text as a focus.

Assess
Evaluate student performance in the simulation using the following rubric.

Rubric
Assign each student a score of 1–5 for each of the following:

- The student
  - appeared focused on the simulation.
  - contributed to his/her group.
  - contributed to the class discussion.
  - demonstrated concept proficiency.

Social Stratification

SKILLS FOCUS

At Level

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Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11, Discussions

Social Stratification

203
Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. a. to help society function smoothly by providing higher rewards to ensure high-skill roles are performed
   b. blurring of castes in urban but not rural areas since Indian constitution adopted in 1950 declared all Indians equal
   c. possible answer—income, level of education, location of residence; power and prestige come from either position or wealth

2. a. upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, working class, working poor, underclass
   b. young displaced workers probably can retrain for higher-status jobs; older displaced workers might difficulty retraining and may take lower-status jobs
   c. Possible answer—Yes, jobs and education can move people fairly easily between lower middle and upper middle class, but it’s harder for the working poor and underclass to move up, and children of the upper class are likely to stay there.

3. a. U.S. Census Bureau
   b. require most people to work after two years on welfare
   c. possible answer—poor health and lack of access to health care, resulting in decreased life expectancy and increase risk of chronic diseases

Internet Activity

4. possible answer—complete application form; government employee analyzes income and assets to determine if individual qualifies for assistance based on different levels of income and number in household; disqualified individuals can add information to findings or appeal; once qualified, receive transfer payments or government subsidies; annual evaluation of income and assets by government employee

Reviewing Vocabulary

For each of the following questions, choose the letter of the best answer.

5. What do sociologists call the division of society into categories, ranks, or classes?
   A. caste system   B. exogamy   C. social inequality   D. social stratification

6. What term refers to the materials and methods used to produce goods and services?
   A. bourgeoisie   B. proletariat   C. means of production   D. socioeconomic status

7. What is the respect, honor, recognition, or courtesy an individual receives from others called?
   A. power   B. prestige   C. socioeconomic status   D. wealth

8. Which of the following involves asking individuals to determine their own social rank?
   A. objective method   B. social mobility   C. subjective method   D. reputational method

9. Which type of mobility relates to status differences between generations of the same family?
   A. horizontal   B. vertical   C. intergenerational   D. intragenerational

10. What term do sociologists use to describe the likelihood that individuals have of sharing in the opportunities and benefits of society?
    A. life chances   B. life expectancy   C. poverty   D. poverty level

Sociology in Your Life

11. Essays will vary, but students should include examples from their community in their analysis of the effects of social stratification on their community.
SKILLS ACTIVITY: INTERPRETING CARTOONS

The phrase “the haves and the have nots” is often used to informally describe the gap between the rich and the poor in the United States. Study the cartoon below. Then use the information to answer the questions that follow.

12. Describe How has the cartoonist chosen to visually represent social stratification?

13. Analyze What is the significance of the fact that the bridge is crumbling?

14. Make Judgments Who do you think is the intended audience for this cartoon? What is the cartoonist trying to say to them?

WRITING FOR SOCIOLOGY

Use your knowledge of social stratification to answer the question below. Do not simply list facts. Present a clear argument based on your critical analysis of the question, using appropriate sociological terminology.

15. Write a dialogue between a functionalist and a conflict theorist explaining social stratification. Include the following topics in the dialogue.
   • Causes of social stratification
   • Consequences of social stratification
   • Wealth, power, and prestige

Skills Activity

12. Possible answer—Workers cannot get across to move up to middle and upper classes; middle and upper classes have large, modern house; workers have small houses in crowded area.

13. Possible answer—Vertical mobility is becoming less possible.

14. Possible answer: audience—voters who influence public policy; message—people in poverty are finding it harder to get ahead.

Writing for Sociology

15. Possible answer—functionalist to conflict theorist: Wealth, power, and prestige are necessary rewards for those who work hard to create new inventions, do difficult jobs, or build companies that create jobs and without wealth and rewards, people would not do this work; conflict theorist to functionalist: Access to wealth must remain open to all through good health care and good education and the wealthy must share their money with those less fortunate.