

AQA A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY • 7182

PSYCHOLOGY



EXAM QUESTION PACK

3.1.1 SOCIAL CHANGE

SCORE

/62

PERCENTAGE

%

STEMUP

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Q1.

Explain how social influence processes contribute to social change.

(Total 4 marks)

Q2.

Read the item and then answer the question that follows.

The following article appeared in a newspaper:

Britain's views on homosexuality – the biggest social change of the last 30 years?

In the UK, views on homosexuality have changed significantly in recent times. Thirty years ago, almost two-thirds of the British public opposed same-sex relationships because they were 'morally wrong'. These days, homosexuality is accepted and the majority of British people support recent changes to the laws on gay marriage and adoption.

With reference to the article above, explain how social influence leads to social change.

(Total 6 marks)

Q3.

Social influence research helps us to understand how it is possible to change people's behaviour: for example, understanding how to persuade people to eat more healthily.

With reference to this example of social change, explain how psychology might affect the economy.

(Total 4 marks)

Q4.

Using an example, explain the role of social influence processes in social change.

[illegible]

(Total 6 marks)

Q5.

A small environmental group wants to encourage people to use public transport or bicycles instead of using their cars.

Using your knowledge of the role of minority influence in social change, what advice would you give the environmental group?

Extra space

Q6.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Page 4 of 24

(Total 6 marks)

Q7.

Explain how a minority can bring about social change.

Extra space

(Total 4 marks)

Q8.

How has social influence research helped our understanding of social change?

Extra space _____

(Total 4 marks)

Q9.

Mike and his grandfather were having a conversation about recycling. Mike explained that he always puts empty cans and plastic bottles in one box and newspapers and cardboard in another box and that his mum takes these to be recycled once a week. His grandfather said that when he was Mike's age, people did not recycle. Mike said that everyone in his street recycles and that they have a big box at school especially for recycling.

Using your knowledge of the psychology of social change, explain why recycling is now behaviour carried out by a majority of people in this country.

Extra space _____

(Total 6 marks)

Q10.

For many years, smoking in public places such as trains, pubs and restaurants was quite acceptable. People could smoke wherever they wanted and non-smokers had to put up with smoky atmospheres. However, in 2007, the Government finally introduced a law banning smoking in public places and those who smoke are limited in where they can smoke.

Using your knowledge of the psychology of social change, explain how this social change has occurred.

Extra space _____

(Total 4 marks)

Q11.

Describe how social influence research has contributed to our understanding of social change.

Extra space

(Total 6 marks)

Q12.

What are the implications for social change of research into social influence?

Extra space

(Total 6 marks)

Mark schemes

Q1.

[AO1 = 4]

Level	Mark	Description
2	3-4	The explanation of how social influence processes contribute to social change is explained in some detail. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of terminology.
1	1-2	There is limited / partial explanation of how social influence processes contribute to social change. The answer may lack coherence. Use of terminology may be either absent or inappropriate.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- minorities contribute to social change by being consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic. Through social crypto-amnesia and the snowball effect, gradually the minority turns into the majority
- influence of obedience, e.g. changes to the laws which make a certain behaviour more of a social norm which others then adopt
- majority influence can occur through social norms / normative social influence
- dictators can bring about social change through power and through the process of obedience. This leads to groups of people changing their behaviour because of the fear of punishment / consequences of not obeying
- consistency contributes to social change when a minority repeatedly gives the same message. This makes a majority reassess their belief and consider the issue more carefully (and so may adopt the minority point of view)
- commitment contributes to social change when a minority show they are willing to give up something for their belief the majority take their argument more seriously (and so may adopt it as their own)
- flexibility / being non-dogmatic contributes to social change when a minority show they are willing to listen to other viewpoints the majority listen to their point of view / take their argument more seriously (and so may adopt it as their own)
- theories linked to minority influence, e.g. social impact theory, snowball effect, social cryptoamnesia
- also accept answers outlining how drawing attention, creating cognitive conflict, augmentation, identification with the minority, appearance of objectivity or certainty of correctness as processes used by minorities can contribute to social change.

Credit other relevant points, e.g. influence of media as long as they are rooted in sound psychology.

Descriptions of studies are only relevant if they are used effectively to show how social influence processes contribute to social change.

[4]

Q2.

[AO2 = 6]

Level	Marks	Description
3	5 – 6	Knowledge of social influence processes related to social change is clear and generally well detailed. Application to changing views of homosexuality is mostly clear and effective. The answer is generally coherent with appropriate use of terminology.
2	3 – 4	Knowledge of social influence processes related to social change is evident. There is some effective application to changing views of homosexuality. The answer lacks clarity in places. Terminology is used appropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 2	Knowledge of social influence processes related to social change is limited. Application to changing views of homosexuality is either absent or inappropriate. The answer as a whole lacks clarity and has inaccuracies. Terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

Application of social influence research to changing views of homosexuality from the following:

- factors affecting minority influence including consistency, commitment and flexibility
- social change occurs when minority view, eg Gay Rights campaigners, challenges majority view and is eventually accepted as the majority
- theory related to conformity such as informational social influence and / or internalisation
- influence of obedience, eg changes to the laws making equal rights more of a social norm
- credit other relevant points, eg influence of media, as long as they are rooted in sound psychology
- can also credit theories linked to minority influence, eg social impact theory, snowball effect, social cryptoamnesia.

Q3.

[AO2 = 4]

Level	Marks	Description
2	3 – 4	Explanation of how psychology / social influence research might affect the economy is clear. There is effective application to the example of eating healthily. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of terminology.
1	1 – 2	There is limited / partial explanation of how psychology / social influence research might affect the economy. There is limited application to the example of eating healthily. The answer lacks coherence. Use of terminology is either

		absent or inappropriate.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- Social influence research tells us how behaviour and attitudes can be changed: eg how minority influence can be exerted or how people tend to conform to perceived norms (or reference to any other relevant social influence process).
- In this case, the resulting change of eating more healthily means that people should be more healthy.
- Economic implication: eg saves health service / care resources; means less time off work sick.

Credit other relevant information.

Q4.

[AO1 = 6]

Level	Marks	Description
3	5 – 6	Knowledge of the role of social influence processes in social change is clear and accurate. The example selected is relevant and description of this thorough. The answer is clear and coherent. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
2	3 – 4	Knowledge of the role of social processes in social change is evident but there may be some detail missing/lack of clarity. The example selected is relevant but description of it may be partial. There are some inaccuracies. There is some appropriate use of specialist terminology.
1	1 – 2	Knowledge of the role of social processes in social change is limited and lacks detail with serious omissions/inaccuracy. The example selected may be inappropriate or absent. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- Social change refers to the change that occurs in a society and not at the individual level.
- Minorities bring about social change by being consistent, flexible and committed. Through social crypto-amnesia and the snowball effect, gradually the minority turns into the majority.
- Governments/lawmakers can bring about social change through power and through the process of obedience.
- Credit reference to conformity processes that may influence social change such as

normative and/or informational social influence.

- 'Processes' may refer to insights gained through explanations/theories and/or studies though detailed descriptions of studies (eg Moscovici) are only relevant if they are used effectively to show how they have helped our understanding.
- A wide range of examples are acceptable eg changing attitudes in relation to 'green' issues such as recycling; the smoking ban; changing views on homosexuality; votes for women, etc. but students must demonstrate how social influence processes affect the change in attitude, behaviour, etc.

Credit other relevant material.

Q5.

Please note that the AOs for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) have changed. Under the new Specification the following system of AOs applies:

- AO1 knowledge and understanding
- AO2 application (of psychological knowledge)
- AO3 evaluation, analysis, interpretation.

Although the essential content for this mark scheme remains the same, mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) take a different format as follows:

- A single set of numbered levels (formerly bands) to cover all skills
- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO2 = 6

For a minority to be successful in bringing about social change, it needs to be consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic. It helps if the members of the minority have an internal locus of control and can show that they have the skills with which to challenge the beliefs and attitudes of the majority. So the advice to the environmental group would be to remain consistent in their views when talking to members of the majority. Moscovici's research demonstrated that consistency was an effective strategy. It would also help if the environmental group could demonstrate that they were not acting out of self-interest, but because they believe that using public transport or bicycles is the best policy. They are not going to gain anything for themselves if people start following their behaviours. If they can also show that they have made personal sacrifices, such as having given up using their own cars, then they would be much more likely to have an effect on the majority. For full marks, there must be explicit engagement with the stem.

AO2

Analysis of unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of the role of minority influence to bring about social change

6 marks Effective analysis of unfamiliar situation

Effective advice that demonstrates sound knowledge of how minority influence can bring about social change and what the environmental group should do.

5 –4 marks Reasonable analysis of unfamiliar situation

Reasonable advice that demonstrates knowledge of how minority influence brings

about social change.
3 – 2 marks Basic analysis of unfamiliar situation Basic advice of how minority influence brings about social change.
1 mark Rudimentary analysis of unfamiliar situation Rudimentary, muddled advice or just an explanation of how minority influence brings about social change.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Q6.

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- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO1 = 6

There are various ways in which social influence research can help explain social change and examiners must be aware of the wide range of possible answers here. However, social change refers to the change that occurs in a society and not at the individual level.

- Minorities bring about social change by being consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic. Through social crypto-amnesia and the snowball effect, gradually the minority turns into the majority.
- Dictators can bring about social change through power and through the process of obedience.

Detailed descriptions of studies (eg Moscovici) are only relevant if they are used effectively to show how they have helped our understanding.

Research can refer to either theory or study.

AO1 Mark bands
6 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of how social influence research helps our understanding of social change. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.

5 – 4 marks Less detailed but generally accurate

Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.

3 – 2 marks Basic

Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.

1 mark Very brief / flawed or inappropriate

Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

Q7.

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- AO2 application (of psychological knowledge)
- AO3 evaluation, analysis, interpretation.

Although the essential content for this mark scheme remains the same, mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) take a different format as follows:

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- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO2 = 4

Unlike majority influence, which maintains the status quo, minority influence brings about social change. If a minority is consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic, they can challenge the beliefs held by the majority. Over time, through the snowball effect the minority becomes the majority and their beliefs become widely held. Sometimes through social crypto-amnesia, the original source of the influence is forgotten. Candidates may refer to research such as that by Moscovici, but the focus of the answer should be on explaining social change, rather than on describing his research itself.

AO2 Explanation of minority influence in social change**4 marks Effective explanation**

Effective explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge of the role of minority influence in social change.

3 marks Reasonable explanation

Reasonable explanation that demonstrates knowledge of the role of minority influence in social change.

2 marks Basic explanation

Basic explanation of the role of minority influence in social change.
1 mark Rudimentary Rudimentary, muddled, explanation of the role of minority influence in social change demonstrating very limited knowledge.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Q8.

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- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO2 = 4

There are various ways in which social influence research can help explain social change and examiners must be aware of the wide range of possible answers here. However, social change refers to the change that occurs in a society and not at the individual level.

- Minorities bring about social change by being consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic. Through social crypto-amnesia and the snowball effect gradually the minority turns into the majority.
- Dictators can bring about social change through their power and through the process of obedience.

Detailed descriptions of studies (eg Moscovici) are only relevant if they are used effectively to show how they have helped our understanding.

Research can refer to either theory or study.

4 marks Effective explanation Effective explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge of how social influence research can explain social change.
3 marks Reasonable explanation Reasonable explanation that demonstrates knowledge of how social influence research can explain social change.
2 marks Basic explanation Basic explanation of how social influence research explains social change.

1 mark Rudimentary

Rudimentary, muddled, explanation of how social influence research can explain social change demonstrating very limited knowledge.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

Q9.

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- AO3 evaluation, analysis, interpretation.

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- A single set of numbered levels (formerly bands) to cover all skills
- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO2 = 6

Social change occurs when a minority view challenges the majority view and is eventually accepted as the majority. This can take place in several ways, such as social impact theory, the snowball effect, social cryptoamnesia, or the views and beliefs of a powerful individual.

Research into minority influence by Moscovici and Nemeth can be used to explain how this change happens. In the example of recycling, while the idea started with the minority of individuals, it is now a common behaviour (majority influence). Many schools are now actively teaching the importance of recycling and local authorities are introducing new schemes to encourage recycling. The majority of homes in the country have some form of recycling facility provided by their local authority. Through the snowball effect, what was originally a minority belief, the importance of recycling, has become a majority behaviour and accepted as the social norm.

Candidates need to use their knowledge of how social change occurs and apply it to recycling.

Candidates may draw on other parts of the specification, such as attitude change, the role of the media and if it is sound psychology, this can clearly gain credit.

6 marks Effective analysis and application

Effective explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge of the psychology of social change as applied to recycling.

5 – 4 marks reasonable analysis and application

Reasonable explanation of the psychology of social change as applied to recycling.

3 – 2 marks Basic analysis and application

Basic explanation of the psychology of social change.

1 mark Rudimentary analysis of unfamiliar situation

Rudimentary, muddled consideration of the psychology of social change, demonstrating very limited knowledge.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

Q10.

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- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO2 = 4

There are various ways in which psychology might explain this social change and examiners should be prepared to credit any relevant explanation. For example, a small minority could slowly persuade the majority to change their views on smoking. The minority would need to be consistent, flexible etc. The snowball effect explains how this change gathers momentum and gradually the minority becomes the majority and people now conform to the majority view.

Eventually the Government passes a popular law and thus obedience can explain the change.

Candidates could also include explanations that include informational social influence: people are influenced by those with more knowledge, in this case scientists and doctors who tell us that smoking is bad for our health!

To access the top band, candidates must explicitly engage with the stimulus material.

AO2 Application of Knowledge and understanding

4 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed

Effective explanation and effective application of knowledge to the psychology of social change. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.

3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate

Reasonable explanation and application of knowledge to some aspects of the psychology of social change. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.

2 marks Basic

Basic explanation with very limited application of knowledge to the psychology of social change. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.

1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate

Rudimentary, muddled, explanation. Knowledge very limited and not applied to the psychology of social change. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

Q11.

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- AO2 application (of psychological knowledge)
- AO3 evaluation, analysis, interpretation.

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- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO1 = 6

There are numerous ways in which candidates can answer this question and examiners should take care to award credit to any answer that is relevant, even if it does not follow the suggestions below.

Note to examiners: all the textbooks have a slightly different slant on this part of the specification, which is not a problem. Accurate and relevant psychology can be credited.

Social change occurs when individuals / small groups change the way the majority thinks and acts. Historically, there have been many examples of such changes: the Suffragette movement, Civil Rights movement, etc. The research into minority influence by such psychologists as Moscovici and more recently Nemeth, has shown how powerful a minority can be, as long as certain conditions are met (eg consistency, confidence, flexibility). It is the minority that usually brings about social change while the majority retains the status quo.

Candidates need to focus on the research (theories and / or studies) that underpin our understanding of social change. Clearly, there is a range of acceptable answers to this question and marks should be given for the effective use of the material.

6 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed

Accurate and reasonably detailed description that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding of social change. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.

5 – 4 marks Less detailed but generally accurate

Less detailed but generally accurate description that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding of social change. There is some evidence of material to address the question.

3 – 2 marks Basic

Basic description that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding of social change but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.

1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate

The candidate provides a description which is very brief or flawed and demonstrates very limited knowledge of social change.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

Q12.

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- AO2 application (of psychological knowledge)
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- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

AO2 = 6

Social influence research has suggested that it is minorities and independent behaviour that brings about social change (conformity maintains the status quo). For example, a minority can challenge the beliefs and values of the majority causing them to re-think / re-evaluate their beliefs. However, this change can be slow and sometimes the majority does not even know where the ideas originated (eg social crypto-amnesia). It is also possible to show how a single individual can bring about considerable social change and candidates could illustrate this by considering figures in history. Sometimes it is the personality of the individual, other times it is the particular aspects of the situation, or it is a combination of these two.

NB: There are various routes that candidates may choose in answering this question. For example, candidates may have explained how research has brought about social change through the use of examples from history to illustrate the underlying theory / explanation or have offered an explanation of how social change has occurred through using research (theories and / or studies) only.

6 marks Effective explanation

Effective consideration of the implications for social change of research into social influence.

5 – 4 marks Reasonable explanation

Reasonable consideration of the implications for social change of research into social influence.

3 – 2 marks Basic explanation

Basic consideration of the implications for social change of research into social influence.

1 mark Rudimentary explanation

Rudimentary, muddled consideration of the implications for social change of research into social influence, demonstrating very limited knowledge.

0 marks

No creditworthy material

Examiner reports

Q1.

This question was answered well, mainly focusing on the impact a minority had on bringing about social change. Concepts such as flexibility, consistency, role of conflict, and the augmentation principle were described well. However, students should avoid writing lists, there does need to be some elaboration of these concepts. Those students who offered concepts such as normative social influence and informational social influence were often unable to link them to social change, even though they could have been made relevant. While examples can sometimes help add to an answer, detailed descriptions of, e.g. the suffragettes or Rosa Parks seldom added much.

Q5.

It appears as if most schools and colleges are now covering the role of minorities in bringing about social change extremely well. Most students were able to describe concepts such as consistency, flexibility, being non-dogmatic and so on. However, where students struggled was in applying this knowledge to the scenario. In a question such as this, selection of the right material is key and presenting it as advice rather than just describing how social change happens is essential. For example, it makes no sense to advise the environmental group to “use the snowball effect”. Instead, the answer needs to be shaped to fit the question. Similarly, a lengthy description of Moscovici's research is not shaping the material effectively. Many students clearly had a considerable amount of knowledge, but did not use it appropriately. Better answers made use of the scenario, such as by suggesting that the environmental group needed to demonstrate to the majority that they were suffering for their cause, for example, by using bicycles rather than cars.

Q6.

In spite of the fact that this question has been asked in several previous papers, students still appear to struggle with the concept of social change. They need to understand that the scope of the change is not merely by a few individuals but by a whole society. However, some students produced excellent answers, by considering the role of a consistent minority, who are able, through challenging their views, to persuade the majority to accept this new point of view. Over time and through the snowball effect, the minority gradually becomes the majority and at this point the change occurs.

Unfortunately, far too many students saw the words “social influence” and assumed it was an invitation to write about Asch or Milgram.

Q7.

There were some extremely well informed answers to this question, with students demonstrating sound understanding of how minorities can bring about social change. Such answers made reference to minorities being consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic. They outlined the snowball effect and the impact of social crypto amnesia in the process. Weaker answers described research into minority influence (such as Moscovici or Clark) but without selecting aspects of the research relevant to social change. They gained some marks by showing that for a minority to bring about change it needed to be consistent etc.

Q8.

In spite of this question having been asked in a similar form in several previous question

papers, students still seem to struggle with this concept and it was badly answered by the majority of students. However, there were a small number of students who appeared to have grasped the concept of social change and interestingly used examples from previous papers to illustrate their answers. Now that the specification has changed and includes the role of the minority, perhaps in the future, students will have a better understanding of the process.

Social change usually starts with a consistent, committed and non-dogmatic minority who challenge the beliefs of the majority. Through the snowball procedure and ultimately through social crypto-amnesia, the minority becomes the majority. It is at this stage that social change occurs.

Q9.

There are two skills required here; knowledge of the psychology of social change and an application to a novel situation. It was very pleasing to see that most candidates now have a grasp of what is involved in social change and can write accurate and coherent answers. However, there is still a problem with engagement with the scenario, too many candidates were unable to demonstrate the skill of analysis of an unfamiliar situation. Perhaps this is a skill that teachers can focus on developing.

Q10.

It was pleasing to see the increase in knowledge in this year's cohort as the vast majority of candidates could coherently explain the social change. Candidates were using their knowledge more effectively to engage with the stimulus material to explain how this social change had occurred. Some really effective answers went down the legitimate authority route and used graduated commitment as an explanation of the gradual changes in smoking behaviour. Others considered the role of a consistent and persuasive minority, the snowball effect and the gradual conversion of the majority.

Unfortunately, some candidates became so involved in the issue of smoking that they completely forgot to include any reference to social influence.

Q11.

This question was, in general, answered very badly, which was disappointing given that it has been asked before. Many candidates failed to gain any marks and it was clear that they were not prepared for this question; they just used it as an opportunity to describe studies on obedience and conformity, with absolutely no link at all with social change. However, very occasionally there were some excellent answers that included factors in minority influence, snowball effect, social crypto-amnesia, social heroism, etc and all linked to relevant examples of social change.

Q12.

Although the wording on the question came straight from the specification, it appeared as if it was very difficult for candidates to understand the demands of the question. These candidates appeared to focus on the words "social influence" and discussed research by Asch and Milgram with no attempt to answer the question. However, there were some centres that had clearly got to grips with this topic and produced some excellent answers. These candidates were able to write about the role of minorities in bringing about social change; they used concepts such as the snowball effect and social crypto amnesia to explain how this change happens. They considered the strategies that minorities must use in order to bring about change (such as consistency, flexibility and commitment) and used real life examples to illustrate their answers; notably the suffragettes in England and Rosa Parkes and the Civil Rights movement in America (with some clever use of the election of

Barak Obama to bring it all up to date).