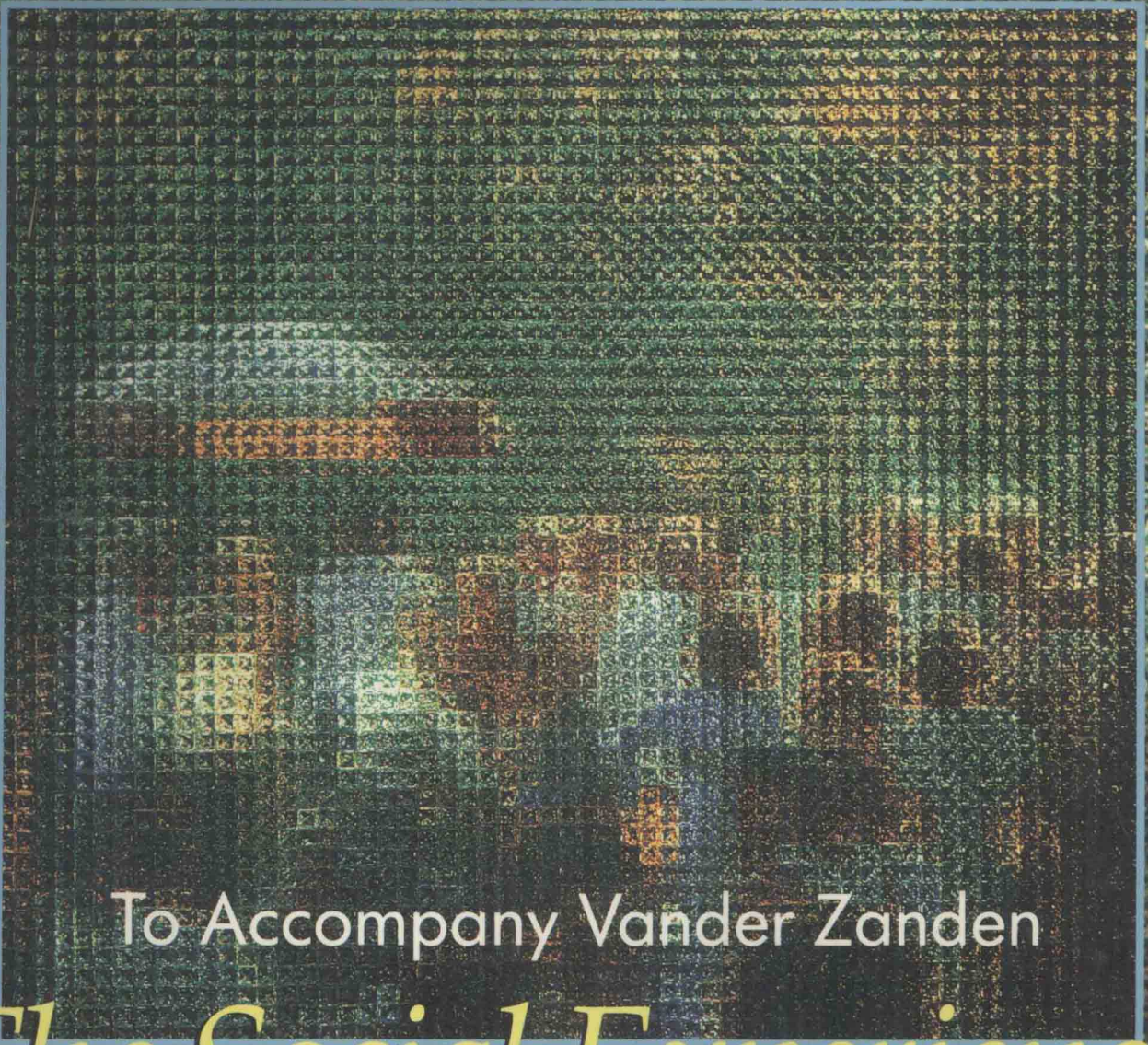


STUDY GUIDE WITH CLASSIC READINGS



To Accompany Vander Zanden

The Social Experience

Second Edition

Sherry Cable

STUDY GUIDE with CLASSIC READINGS

to accompany

The Social Experience *Second Edition*

James W. Vander Zanden

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Study Guide with Classic Readings to accompany
Vander Zanden: The Social Experience

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TO ENSURE QUALITY AND ACCURACY . . .

In planning the Second Edition of this guide, we invited a number of instructors and students to give us a hand in structuring the guide and ensuring its quality and accuracy. Close attention was given to answer keys and to the clarity of multiple-choice items in the "Practicing for Exams" section of the guide. Other users of the First Edition guide generously offered their comments and corrections. The result, we feel, is an unusually clean study guide that can be used with confidence alongside the text.

The following individuals deserve special thanks for their role in the reviewing process:

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Sherry Cable, University of Tennessee
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These authors of the First Edition of the guide re-read their respective chapters upon publication of the guide and submitted a list of corrections and improvements that were incorporated into this Second Edition.

Student Users

Christine Hardy, Tami Linville, Sandra Podgurski

These student users of the First Edition provided detailed accuracy reviews of the guide.

Study Guide Adopters

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These users of the First Edition guide provided corrections that were incorporated into the new edition.

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These users of the First Edition of the Vander Zanden text provided feedback to the First Edition supplements package and guidance in our revision plans for the Second Edition supplements, including the Study Guide.

Manuscript Reviewer

Finally, Lachelle Norris-Hall of the University of Tennessee reviewed the complete guide manuscript for the Second Edition. Working with guide author, Sherry Cable, Ms. Norris-Hall checked all answer keys, multiple-choice items, and other parts of the guide to ensure their accuracy, clarity, and faithfulness to the text. We are especially grateful to her for her contribution.

TO THE STUDENT

This *Study Guide* is designed for use with James W. Vander Zanden's text *THE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE*, Second Edition. Thoughtful, systematic use of the *Study Guide* will help you master the facts and principles introduced in the text and prepare for course exams.

For most students, an effective approach is to (1) scan the *Study Guide*, especially the Chapter Focus and Study Outline sections, before reading each chapter of the text; (2) read the text carefully, making notes and highlighting important ideas as you proceed; and (3) return to the *Study Guide* to work through the various exercises offered for each chapter.

Each chapter of the *Study Guide* offers the following study aids:

The Chapter Focus provides a brief summary of the material in the chapter and lists the study objectives for the chapter. By the time you have completed your study of the text and guide, you should be able to write out clear and accurate answers to each objective.

The Study Outline of the Chapter presents a section-by-section overview of the chapter's contents. Checking the outline both before and after reading each text chapter will reinforce in your mind the major topics covered in the chapter and will clarify the relationships among these topics.

The Key Terms section offers both a review of the important new terms introduced in the chapter and an opportunity to test your knowledge of the definition of each term.

The Did You Think That...? section presents three or four statements that, on close examination, prove mythical. Your job is to explain why the statement is incorrect. Completing this section will help you focus on important distinctions made in the chapter.

The Data Check exercises emphasize points made in the various figures and tables appearing in the text chapter. Too often, students neglect the visual materials offered by the text as a means of summarizing text information. Completing this section will help you get the most out of the valuable visual resources in the text.

The Practicing for Exams section consists of three sets of objective test questions--true/false, multiple-choice, and essay--that cover much of the chapter information you will see eventually on class exams. Set aside time for each test, then take the test as though it counted. Look up any question you missed. (Text page numbers appear along with the answers provided in the next section).

Answers to all chapter exercises except the essay questions appear at the end of each chapter. Page references are given along with the answers to the true/false and multiple-choice questions, and the pages are listed that address the material covered by the essay questions.

In addition to the chapter components outlined above, the *Study Guide* includes four other sections--three at the front of the guide, and one at the back--that enhance its value to students. Immediately following this "To the Student" preface is an essay entitled "Tips for Studying and Learning." It covers such basic study advice as planning your time, taking lecture notes, reading the text, and preparing for exams. You will not find a better summary of these topics, and we suggest you read it right now. The next section, "A Useful Vocation," presents a brief overview of the field of sociology and its

potential as a career. Then "Selected Job Profiles" offers vignettes of on-the-job experiences of individuals who applied their sociology major to different careers--who give a personal view of career choices in sociology.

The final section of the *Study Guide* offers eight "Classic Statements" derived from sociology's literature. These selections, which include writings from many of the founding figures of sociology, shaped the course of sociological thought at the time they appeared, and they remain influential today. As you read each essay, consider (1) what the author is saying, (2) in what ways the author's central themes are relevant to society in the 1980s, and (3) how the reading is related to the Vander Zanden text. Follow-up questions after each reading will help you focus on these three issues.

Remember that a study guide is only useful if it supplements your diligent study of the text itself. It cannot replace the text, nor can it guarantee success on examinations. Used with the Vander Zanden text, however, this *Study Guide* should noticeably boost your course performance and, we hope, increase your appreciation of sociology.

TIPS FOR STUDYING AND LEARNING

Philip B. Young

Suppose you were reading the employment pages of the local newspaper and came across the following job listing:

Intelligent, mature individual needed for complex job involving much reading, writing and public speaking. Constant testing and evaluation with new supervisors approx. every four months. May create high levels of stress. Low pay.

If you haven't already figured out the joke, you are currently working at this job -- as a student! Faced with such a job description, no reputable business manager would allow an employee to undertake the task without special training. But colleges rarely offer comprehensive "student skill" training. They assume that you either have the skills from high school or can pick them up "on the job."

These are unrealistic assumptions. Thousands of otherwise capable students fail or drop out of school each year because they lack the proper mental attitude and study skills. Even my best students admit that they need help managing their study, and you probably feel the same way. So here, in highly condensed form, is some practical advice for improving your study skills and a general approach to your role as a student. I hope you find it helpful. Both your instructor and I want you to become a more successful student in all your courses.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

Students who earn higher-than-average grades and feel successful with their accomplishments are, fortunately, not just the most intelligent. Intelligence helps, certainly, but successful students typically show three characteristics: (1) they choose realistic and personally relevant goals; (2) they believe in themselves as learners; and (3) they master necessary study skills and organize their daily lives. Let me say a few words about each.

Goals. Why are you in college? When I ask my students this question I get predictable, stereotyped responses such as "to learn" or "to broaden my horizons," but I continue to probe and two types of answers begin to emerge. Some say:

"I came to please my father--he wants me to be the first college graduate in the family."

"All my friends were going to college and I didn't want to be left behind."

"You have to have a college degree to get a good job."

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Other students say:

"I like to learn and I'm particularly interested in learning about computers."

"I was fed up with my old dead-end job. Now I want to learn psychology (or economics or biology...) to prepare for a new career."

"I'm studying for my certification exam next summer, and this course will help me prepare for the test."

Notice that the first three answers reflect goals imposed by someone else (parents, peers, society), whereas the second set of answers are personal goals chosen by the student. This is important. I have noticed that students who set personal goals for themselves and who relate those goals to the objectives of the courses they are taking tend to be the best students in my classes. Not necessarily the smartest, but the best. They are active and enthusiastic learners, they ask challenging questions, and they tend to score higher on tests and papers. In short, those students who are surest about how their college years will benefit them personally are the most highly motivated students and it shows in their performance.

Beliefs. I often ask my students to fill out a questionnaire called the Locus of Control Scale. This questionnaire is designed to assess the degree to which one believes that he or she can exert positive control over his or her life, as opposed to the belief that powerful external forces (bad luck, fate, etc.) shape one's life. The best students in my classes almost always perceive themselves as in control of their lives. They believe that they can, with effort, overcome the obstacles to success. They are persons who don't quit, but continue to strive and try harder until they reach their goal.

A large part of your college success comes down to one word: commitment. You must commit yourself to a personal goal and find the connections between that goal and your college courses. And, you must be committed to yourself--believe in your learning ability and your ability to persevere in the face of obstacles to your goal. This level of commitment cannot easily be taught, but you can discover it for yourself. Talking over your thoughts and feelings with family, friends, teachers or professional career counselors in your campus counseling center can help. In the meantime, you might begin by trying to answer honestly the question, "Why am I in college?"

Study Skills. Fortunately, successful students also possess something that can be taught and easily learned--effective study skills and habits. Perhaps you are already a student with good study habits. Let's find out. Several years ago, a psychologist at The Ohio State University asked 50 good students and 50 poor students to answer a set of questions about their study habits. Some of these questions follow. Answer each one honestly by writing "yes" or "no" next to the question. When you are finished, score your answers against the key at the end of the quiz (no peeking!).

- _____ 1. Do you study every day in the same place?
- _____ 2. Do you know in the morning exactly how you are going to spend the day, on a hour-by-hour basis?
- _____ 3. Do you sit up late studying the night before an examination?

- _____ 4. Does your desk have anything on it that might distract you from your work?
- _____ 5. When studying, do you frequently skip the graphs or tables in your texts?
- _____ 6. Do you usually skim over a chapter before reading it in detail?
- _____ 7. Do you usually glance through a chapter, looking at the paragraph headings, before reading it in detail?
- _____ 8. Do you usually try to summarize your readings in a sentence or short paragraph?
- _____ 9. When you memorize something, do you usually do it all at one sitting?
- _____ 10. Do you consciously try to use facts you learn in one course to help you in your work in other courses?

Good students tended to answer the questions as follows: (1) yes; (2) yes; (3) no; (4) no; (5) no; (6) yes; (7) yes; (8) yes; (9) no; (10) yes.

How did you do? You probably found that you don't do all the things good students do; almost everyone has at least one weakness in her or his study skills. And let's face it; all the commitment and positive thinking in the world, important as they are, will not make you a successful student if you are disorganized and a poor reader and note taker. Let's discuss some tips and suggestions for study skill improvement in two areas: (1) effective use of your time; and (2) learning and remembering what you read.

MANAGING YOUR TIME: A THREE-STEP PLAN

Most good students make a "study-play" schedule to plan their time, and you should too. It will keep you from vacillating about what you are going to do next during the day and will help you approach study tasks in a logical order. Above all, it will help you genuinely relax during your leisure time rather than feeling guilty about work left undone. One good scheduling approach is my Three-Step Plan (See Figure 1).

Step One: The Term Calendar. The first thing you want to do is to get an overview of the entire term--the "big picture." You need to be able to visualize, for each of your courses, the due dates for papers, projects, reports, and exams. And you also want to know the dates of vacations, holidays, special events, and any other personal plans that will take up your time. Write all these school and personal events on a Term Calendar.

A Term Calendar doesn't have to be fancy, but it must have a space for each day that is large enough to hold several notations. (I use a calendar that the local bank or dry cleaner distributes, and get the added bonus of pictures of gondolas in Venice or the Rocky Mountains!) Tear off the calendar pages for the months of the upcoming term and either tape them to the wall or put them on a bulletin board near your study desk.

Now, here is a suggestion to help you avoid procrastination--that self-defeating habit of waiting until the last minute to prepare for an exam or write a paper. During the first week of classes ask your instructors for the specific dates of all the quizzes, the exams,

Figure 1 A Three-Step Plan for Effective Time Management

I. Term Calendar

September

October

November

December

II. Weekly Schedule

	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
7-8 A.M.						
8-9 A.M.						
9-10 A.M.						
10-11 A.M.						
11-12 A.M.						
6-7 P.M.						
7-8 P.M.						
8-9 P.M.						
9-10 P.M.						
10-11 P.M.						

III. Daily "To Do" List

TO DO
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Figure 2 Weekly Schedule

STUDENT <u>Joan Noswot</u>			<u>Fall</u>		SEMESTER, 19 <u> </u>	
Hour	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7-8	Dress Breakfast	Dress Breakfast	Dress Breakfast	Dress Breakfast	Dress Breakfast	
8-9	ENG. COMP.	Study Eng.	ENG. COMP.	CHEM. LAB	ENG. COMP.	Dress Breakfast
9-10	GEN. PSYCH.	Study Math	GEN. PSYCH.	CHEM. LAB	GEN. PSYCH.	Study Psych.
10-11	Study German	Study German	Study German	CHEM. LAB & Review German	Study German	Study Eng.
11-12	GERMAN	GERMAN	GERMAN LAB	GERMAN	GERMAN	Study German
12-1	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1-2	MATH	Study Psych.	MATH	Study Psych.	MATH	Recreation or Study
2-3	CHEMISTRY	Recreation or Study	CHEMISTRY	Recreation or Study	CHEMISTRY	Recreation or Study
3-4	Recreation or Study	Athletics	Recreation or Study	Athletics	Study Chem.	Recreation or Study
4-5	Job	Job	Job	Job	Job	Job
5-6	Job	Job	Job	Job	Job	Job
6-7	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
7-8	Study Math	Study Math	Study Math	Study Math	Study Math	Free Time
8-9	Study Eng.	Study Chem.	Study Psych.	Study Chem.	Free Time	Free Time
9-10	Study Eng.	Study Chem.	Study German	Study Chem.	Free Time	Free Time

and the papers or projects. Using a red pen or pencil write on your Term Calendar the exam or assignment on the date you must take it or turn it in. Next, use a blue pen or pencil to write in all the vacations and special events that will occupy a significant amount of your time on a given day and thus need to be planned around. Finally, take a green pen or pencil and write in your own deadline date for test preparation or assignment completion. Set the date at least two days ahead of your instructor's date for tests, and one week ahead for major written assignments such as term papers. Convince yourself that the green dates are the ones you must meet and you'll always be on time with your preparation and assignments.

The Term Calendar allows you to see at a glance what you have to do, and gives you some personal control over when you have to have it done. Your green due dates also allow you some flexibility to plan around special events or unexpected emergencies. Remember: work for the green dates!

Step Two: The Weekly Schedule. After you have the entire term's requirements mapped out on your Term Calendar, you need a plan to accomplish all of these activities on a weekly basis. This is the purpose of the Weekly Schedule. To help you make up your own Weekly Schedule, I have included a sample schedule for a hypothetical student named Joan Noswot (see Figure 2). Draw for yourself a day/time matrix like the sample, and then make at least three copies of it for later revisions. Fill out the first copy with all of your fixed and personally chosen activities and then tape it to the wall next to your Term Calendar.

Your Weekly Schedule represents your ideal plan for managing your time during a typical week. You probably won't follow it exactly, but at least it gives you guidance about the logical order in which tasks should be completed, and helps you locate large and small blocks of time that you can use for study and leisure during the week. A Weekly Schedule is never chiseled in stone. If, after a week or two of trying it, the schedule is unrealistic, revise it!

Step Three: The Daily "To Do" List. The final step in your time management plan is to set daily goals for your study in each subject. Keeping track of these daily goals and helping you reward yourself for accomplishing your goals is the function of the Daily "To Do" List.

Each night before you retire look at both the Term Calendar and the Weekly Schedule that you have taped to your wall, and spend ten minutes deciding on the five or six (one per class) study goals for the next day. Make your study goals specific and realistic. For example, instead of saying "Study Sociology" write "Read Vander Zanden, pp. 120-129." This is a specific and realistic goal, and if these pages encompass a major section of your assignment in Sociology you will also be reading a meaningful amount.

I recommend that you write your list of study goals for the day on a 3"x 5" card labeled "To Do" and date with that day's date. This small card is easily carried in your pocket or purse and can be held in one hand for easy reference the next day. Also, the cards for a week can be easily saved (just toss them in a convenient drawer each night) and reviewed at the end of the week. If you find, at the end of the week, that you have accomplished all or almost all of your goals then reward yourself with something you really like to do--you have earned it! Unsuccessful weeks should end with some relaxation and recreation, of course, but you should also consciously deny yourself the special rewards that are not part of your normal weekend routine.

Thousands of successful students have proved that study schedules, daily "To Do" lists, and rewards for completed tasks work--they can help make you a better student. But they cannot work unless you want them to, unless you try to make them work by following your plan and using the rewards properly. Give the three-step system a fair trial period of one month at the very least.

READING AND REMEMBERING: THE PQ4R TECHNIQUE

The same team of researchers who developed the questionnaire you answered earlier also developed a program to help poor students with their academic problems. One of the most important parts of their program was an attempt to teach these students how to read with a purpose. They found that the slower students were extremely passive readers. They would plunge into an assignment with the first sentence, move their eyes and turn pages until they finished the last sentence, whereupon they would close the text and declare their studying finished!

How to get these students more actively involved in the material they read? The most successful solution to this problem was a five-step procedure for textbook study called the SQ3R technique. Many students are taught this technique in public and private schools so you may recall it from earlier days. A more recent variation of this technique is called the PQ4R technique (Thomas and Robinson, 1972). PQ4R stands for:

Preview
Question
Read
Reflect
Recite
Review

I recommend that you memorize this formula and apply it to your reading in each of your classes. Let's look at each section briefly.

1. **Preview.** The very first thing to do is to read the objectives and topic outline (if provided) for the unit or textbook chapter. Then survey (Preview) the actual pages you will be reading: (1) Read the chapter preface and chapter summary, noting the major points. (2) Skim the chapter pages, paying special attention to the major headings and the order in which they appear. The purpose of such a preview is to construct a "mental map" of the terrain. Try to understand what the author is trying to accomplish and get the major points clearly in mind before the details begin to clutter up the big picture.

2. **Question.** People seem to learn better and remember longer what they read when they are searching for the answer to a question. Sometimes text authors will provide questions at the beginning of the chapter in an introduction or as a list of learning objectives. (In the present Study Guide the most important questions are implicitly stated in the form of chapter objectives.) Write down your questions and keep them in front of you as you read and search for their answers.

3. **Read.** When you begin to read, read actively! Refer to your mental map and keep your list of questions in front of you. Each time you come to a passage relevant to one of your questions or chapter objectives, put a light check mark in the margin of the

book. Then when you finish reading the chapter, come back to these sections and reread them, underlining the most important words or phrases only. (Wholesale underlining or highlighting of sentences or paragraphs the first time through is wasteful, and it can harm your study by directing your attention to less important information.) Some good students also write short notes in the margins, and put an "X" or a star next to the most important information. But they do this only the second time through when they know what's really important.

Pay special attention to the new words and technical terms that you meet. Studying a new subject is often like learning a foreign language; the new vocabulary can be overwhelming. Carry a supply of 3" x 5" cards with you and, each time you come across a new term write it on a card. Put the definition and perhaps an example of the term on the back of the card. Carry these cards with you and use them to study the new terms during the "in-between" times on your daily schedule.

Finally, when you read, read everything. This means tables, graphs, and pictures as well as the main text. Authors put them in the book for a purpose, not just to fill up space. Often a minute or two spent studying a table or a graph will tell you what a whole page of the book is saying.

4. **Reflect.** It is extremely important that you attempt to relate what you read to what you already know. Use mental imagery to imagine the application of what you are reading to some familiar situation, or think of original examples from your own life. This is the meaning of reflection.

5. **Recite.** Stop periodically and try to recall, to yourself or actually out loud to someone else, what you have just read. Don't simply think about it. It's too easy to fool yourself into believing that you understand a topic when you really do not. If what you recite is unclear or is incorrect, it will be immediately apparent that you must go back and reread the section.

If you read through a prose passage without recitation, you will remember when you finish perhaps no more than 50% of the points made, and by the end of the day you may remember no more than 25% of the points. On the other hand, psychological experiments have shown that two or three recitations can double and triple your recall. Each time you come to a major heading in the chapter stop, close the book, and try to recite in your own words the essential information in the section you have just read. Talking to yourself is the single most important part of studying, but it is the part most students fail to do. The more difficult the material, the more time you need to spend "talking it over."

6. **Review.** A review is a summary recitation in which you go over the key questions of the chapter and try to answer them again. You should schedule two reviews: one immediately after you have studied the chapter and a final review before the examination.

Two words of caution about review are necessary. First, try to distribute your study sessions and reviews over several days. Studies of learning conclusively show that this strategy increases the amount that you learn and decreases forgetting--especially if your reviews are cumulative, building upon sections that you have read previously.

Second, do not confuse a final review session with a "cramming" session a few hours before the exam. Trying to learn a lot of new material for the first time just a few hours before the exam will usually decrease your recall. Reviewing previously learned material the night before the exam, with a good night's sleep in between, is the best way to maximize your recall. Cramming simply increases anxiety and never gives you the mastery you could have had with a few well-spaced reviews.

If you have used the PQ4R method to study, then you know that taking tests is relatively painless. Your review for the exam consists mainly of "talking to yourself" about what you remember and glancing at your underlining and marginal notes to check your memory. You do not have to reread long sections of the text.

Quickly: Can you name and describe the six steps of the PQ4R technique? Do it now.

A USEFUL VOCATION

WHY STUDY SOCIOLOGY?

Jonathan H. Turner

In the 1960s, students were discontent, frustrated, and rebellious. They were angry at "the system," "the establishment," the war in Vietnam, and the university which seemed to personify the status quo. And they flocked to sociology because they wanted to understand more about the problems of war, poverty, undeserved privilege, hunger, pollution, consumer abuse, and other human ills. They saw sociology as relevant to their concerns and were fascinated by a curriculum that seemed in touch with their protest.

As a student in the 1980s, your immediate concerns are very different. The student protest of the 1960s is a distant memory--so distant that it has become a subject in history courses. In the intervening years economic problems have led to a scarcity of jobs, and so students now spend a great deal of time worrying about the practical implications of their courses. You are rightly worried about getting a job, making enough money, and having some future and security. Finding a niche in the system that frustrated and outraged your predecessors in the 1960s is a far more immediate worry than changing this system.

When I think about this transformation, I am amazed and startled. A truly dramatic shift in orientation has occurred among students. Advocacy has been replaced by worries about vocation. Indeed, the protest generation has given way to the prerequisite generation: most students today visualize their college curriculum in terms of its relevance to pre-medicine, pre-law, pre-business, pre-accounting, and other high-paying and high-prestige careers. In all of the vocationalism, sociology seems a bit mundane and irrelevant.

Yet, lurking beneath these immediate vocational issues is the same deep concern over the fate of humans in what sometimes seems like an insane world. There is political turmoil and warfare in other parts of the world and Americans seem to be part of it. There is worry over the safety of nuclear power. There is fear and protest over the headlong flight of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. into an arms race. There is fear of pollution, toxic wastes, and the fallout of our industrial-urban system. There is recognition of injustice--against women, minorities, the poor--in a land of the free and equal. There are deep fears about crime, violence, and the disorder that is fueled by poverty and alienation. There is disgust with political corruption and ineptitude and with media banality. And so on. The concerns of the 1960s have not gone away; they persist but they take a backseat to the problem of surviving and making a living. The economic roller coaster of the last fifteen years has created economic insecurity which pushes these more enduring problems into the background.

I hope that you will pause to consider what the protest generation of the 1960s saw in sociology.¹ They saw that sociology was relevant to understanding and doing something about the problems of the world. But they failed to capitalize on this insight. Patterned by an uncertain job market, your generation may be much better prepared to use sociology in practical ways rather than as a soapbox for mounting a protest and venting frustrations. For the problems of the world--indeed, the very ones that make people so anxious about jobs and careers--are largely sociological in nature.

Source: From *Sociology: A Student Handbook* by Jonathan H. Turner. Copyright © 1985 by Jonathan H. Turner. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

They will not go away until we develop a body of knowledge about how the social world operates. In essence, the problems of the contemporary world are *organizational*. They revolve around our inability to organize ourselves in ways that please everyone. And it is this fact that makes them sociological in character.

To a practical mind, this fact should signal that there is money to be made in facilitating the organization of human activities. But we should not get too mercantile before I have expanded the general point that the problems of the modern world are organizational. Let me do so by example. Today, few would deny that overpopulation is a problem², but many still do not realize that the problem cannot be resolved by simply handing out birth-control pills (the doctor's approach), or by creating economic disincentives (the economist's solution), or by forced sterilization (many a politician's inclination). Rather, population control can only come about with changes in people's family patterns, modes of economic sustenance, and other social factors, as well as in their basic values and beliefs. These considerations make the issue sociological. To take another example, world pollution and potential ecological disaster³ are not likely to be resolved by a "new technology"; the technologies to solve the problem already exist. What is required are new systems of financing for these expensive technologies, new procedures for monitoring and administering pollution control, new ways of producing and consuming products, and new attitudes and behaviors on the part of the public. Again, these considerations make the problem sociological.

Yet another example can be found in the controversy over nuclear power. There are great fears among many that the operation of nuclear power plants is dangerous, that their construction is faulty, and that their wastes cannot be safely contained. Much of this fear is about "nuclear technology" and "nuclear engineering," but in reality, the problems are mostly sociological. They center on how to organize human activity around a lethal process. The construction of huge nuclear power plants involves coordination among government agencies, a general contractor and builder, a designer, hundreds of subcontractors, and many workers of every kind. And because the plants are so large, the problems of coordinating everyone--workers, government inspectors, the lowest-bid contractors, profit-seeking general contractors, and designers--are enormous. They are thus sociological. Moreover, problems of disposing of wastes are in large part sociological; communities do not want radioactive materials passing through or being dumped in their towns, because they do not trust the organization of the transportation or the containment procedures. Once again, these fears revolve around sociological problems.⁴

So it is for many issues that Americans confront.⁵ How do we deliver welfare? How do we organize medical services in a less costly way? How do we educate students better in the Atari age? How are we to reindustrialize and reorganize American corporations in the face of world economic competition? How can we create work settings that are more meaningful for workers? How can we transport people to work in a less congested way? How can we house everyone? How are we to reduce poverty? How can we mitigate racial and ethnic tensions? How are we to plan more efficiently the growth of cities? How is government to be made more efficient and less unwieldy?

These and other questions are real, immediate, and relevant to all of us. They are sociological because an answer to each will require understanding of the ways that people are organized. While doctors, lawyers, accountants, and MBAs may be involved in resolving each of these problems, they also are part of the problem in many cases. Their professional training is highly specialized and not suited for looking at and analyzing larger sociological issues. Indeed, even in their areas of expertise, their training will not be very useful. For example, doctors are not likely to resolve the problems of medical care delivery; lawyers will not help us deal with the overadjudication of everything; accountants will not increase productivity or organizational efficiency; and the training of a new generation of MBAs will not completely resolve the larger problems of the American economy in the world system.

The reason that these specialists will not resolve the problems is that narrow professional training puts blinders on people. Of course, such blinders are often necessary if professionals are to be good at what they do; but as a result, many of our best-trained people cannot see the forest for the trees. They cannot see the larger social context in which they operate. And we should not expect them to do so, since that is the job of a sociologist. To be sure, I would not want a sociologist to take out my appendix, raise capital for my enterprise, keep my books, or take my case to court. But I would want one to help me to organize my operation more efficiently, to see its impact on the larger community, to coordinate its relations with government, and to improve worker morale.

Of course, I am not saying that sociologists have all the answers. Nor am I asserting that sociologists do not have their own sets of blinders. They do. We argue, debate, and insult each other over the best way to interpret social processes and events.⁶ But in this very dialogue--even when it gets a bit nasty--is an effort to get at the answers to humans' organizational dilemmas. We still have very few real answers to most organizational questions. But we have a diversity of perspectives and approaches that facilitate looking for these answers and dealing with organizational dilemmas and problems. One should beware of people who offer simple answers to organizational problems--whether they are economists, politicians, embattled capitalists, social reformers, religious prophets, or your next-door-neighbor. Currently, economists and accountants hold sway in dealing with most organizational problems in America, but unfortunately, the social world does not always operate in accordance with the laws of supply and demand, the "bottom line," or "the rational man"⁷ (or person, if you like). Too bad the social world does not march to these drummers, since solving our problems would be much easier--almost as easy as economists and politicians keep telling us it is.⁸ But alas, the social world is not so easily bent to our will, and so we will have to muddle along and deal with our problems by using frameworks of a more sociological nature.

You are probably still very skeptical about what I am saying. And there are good sociological reasons for your feelings. You and I have been raised in a society where there is a great deal of suspicion about social planning and a justifiable distrust of big government. Despite economic problems, you have lived in relative affluence created by capitalism, capitalists, free markets, and incidently, by our winning World War II (thereby giving us little competition, for a generation, in the world market). Thus, you will be suspicious of a discipline that asks you to look at the social context of an issue; to suspend blind faith in laissez-faire capitalism; to recognize that people are not always rational, nor free to be so; to perceive the tendency of markets to become less than free; and to accept the fact that government planning and regulation are realities of the modern world.

But as you approach the study of sociology, try to suspend your biases and look at sociology with a more sympathetic eye. There are at least two reasons for doing so. First, you can learn a great deal about yourself and the social forces that have made you what you are. Second, you can learn much about how the social world around you operates. And, just maybe, you can begin to appreciate the relevance of a sociological perspective for dealing with the organizational problems and dilemmas of the modern world--both those immediately ahead and those enduring social issues that lurk in the background.

You should not begin the study of sociology with any misconceptions, however. Sociologists by and large do not devote great efforts to dealing *directly* with your problems or those of the world. Some sociologists do,⁹ but most study human behavior, interaction, and organization *in general*. Sociology is not the study of social problems, then; it is the science of human organization. But since most of the big problems, dilemmas, concerns, and issues of the world, as well as those smaller but immediate problems that you face, are organizational in nature, sociology is the discipline that will prove most relevant to them. In many cases, however, you yourself will have to take