

1.3 Norms and social status

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS norm 社会规范 • status 地位 • ascribed status 先赋地位
• achieved status 自致地位

Objective

Use norms and status to explain how groups organise social behaviour.

You must be able to:

- define a social norm
- distinguish ascribed and achieved status
- apply these ideas to a social situation

1 Worked examples

■ Rules can be unwritten

Norms 社会规范 are unwritten group rules, such as waiting your turn to speak. We often notice a norm only when someone breaks it.

Ascribed status 先赋地位 is given, such as age or family background. **Achieved status** 自致地位 is earned, such as a qualification or team position.

2 Practice

2.1 Define a social norm. [1]

2.2 State whether a university qualification is ascribed or achieved status. [1]

2.3 Explain why someone breaking a norm may be described as rude. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Compare ascribed and achieved status. [4]

3.2 Explain how norms can make group behaviour predictable. [4]

Solutions

2.1

- An unwritten rule or expectation in a group.

2.2

- Achieved status.

2.3

- The person acts against an expected group rule.
- Others may judge the action negatively because it disrupts the normal interaction.

3.1

- Both are positions a person has in a group.
- Ascribed status is given, such as age or birth.
- Achieved status is earned, such as a job or qualification.
- The difference is whether the person gained it through achievement.

3.2

- Norms show group members what behaviour is expected.
- People can anticipate how others will act in common situations.
- Shared expectations reduce uncertainty in interaction.
- Breaking a norm becomes noticeable because the usual pattern changes.