

U.K. now has 7 social classes

6th April, 2013



A new survey shows there are seven social classes in the United Kingdom. This is four classes more than the traditional class system. Last century, there

were just three classes in Britain – upper, middle, and working class. This system centered around people's wealth, education and job. The new survey, from the BBC, shows how the times have changed. The BBC says the old model is too simple and a new one is needed to show someone's class. This new model includes how rich you are, your schooling and your occupation, but adds several more points. These include savings, how many people you know, social networking and cultural interests and activities.

The BBC study is called the Great British Class Survey. More than 161,000 people answered questions about their life. The researchers looked at all the information and decided that Britain's way of measuring class needed modernising. The top class is the "elite" – the richest people. This is followed by the "established middle class," the "technical middle class," and the "new affluent workers". The three bottom classes are the "traditional working class," the "emergent service workers," and the poor. Six per cent of Britons are in the elite class. They have savings of more than \$200,000 and went to a top university. Fifteen per cent are in the poor class. These earn less than \$12,000 a year.

Sources: BBC / Mirror.co.uk

Writing

"I'm happy with my social class." Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

survey / class system / last century / wealth / education / occupation / savings / researchers / modernizing / middle class / traditional / service workers / university

True / False

- A new survey shows the UK has four more social classes than before. T / F
- Class in Britain used to be about how many friends you had. T / F
- The survey says Britain different is from before. T / F
- Social networking does not affect class in the new BBC survey. T / F
- Over one hundred thousand people participated in the survey. T / F
- The top class is called the "modernising" class. T / F
- The "emergent service workers" class was second from bottom. T / F
- The "poor" class in the U.K. make up 10 ten per cent of the population. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. survey | a. higher |
| 2. traditional | b. rich |
| 3. upper | c. hobbies |
| 4. wealth | d. calculating |
| 5. interests | e. study |
| 6. answered | f. upper class |
| 7. measuring | g. riches |
| 8. elite | h. make |
| 9. affluent | i. usual |
| 10. earn | j. replied to |

Discussion – Student A

- Is class important?
- What questions do you think the researchers asked?
- Are there class barriers in your country?
- Do you think everyone should be middle class?
- Who do you think the "new affluent workers" might be?
- How might going to a top university change your life?
- How do you feel about people in other classes?
- Should the upper classes do more to help the poor?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. the traditional | a. your occupation |
| 2. how the times | b. are in the elite class |
| 3. your schooling and | c. and activities |
| 4. social | d. answered questions |
| 5. cultural interests | e. university |
| 6. 161,000 people | f. class system |
| 7. middle | g. less than \$12,000 |
| 8. Six per cent of Britons | h. class |
| 9. went to a top | i. networking |
| 10. earn | j. have changed |

Discussion – Student B

- What kind of class system is in your country?
- Is a class system good or bad?
- Is it possible for everyone in a country to be the same class?
- What do upper class people think about working class people?
- Is it easy for people to move up a class or two?
- What is your class? Are you happy with it?
- Do people in each class speak differently in your country?
- What do you think of the elite class?

Spelling

- A new evysur shows...
- the traditional class etsmsy
- Last yeurtnc
- centered around people's alethw
- your nlohcgos and your occupation
- rutalulc interests and activities
- people enwdarse questions
- grmaenisu class
- hecintacl middle class
- evsceri workers
- vgsnisa of more than \$200,000
- These aenr less than \$12,000 a year

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. i	3. a	4. g	5. c
6. j	7. d	8. f	9. b	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Elite class person

You don't understand why the elite class is so small. Tell the others three reasons why. You think many more people can join the elite class if they study and work harder. Tell the others to aim higher in life and that it's their public duty to do this.

Role B – Poor class person

You think society isn't kind to poor people. Tell the others three reasons why. The richer classes have an easy life. They don't have to work so hard. They get everything from their rich parents. Tell them how hard it is to be poor. Tell them the rich should help poor people.

Role C – Middle class person

You think in a fair society everyone should be middle class. Tell the others three reasons why. You think the elite class should give more of their money to the poor. You also think the poor need to study and work harder. Tell them you studied and worked hard to be middle class.

Role D – Sociologist

You think governments do not help the poor. Tell the others three reasons why. You think governments want to keep many people poor so they can do the jobs no one else wants. The rich should pay more money for education for the poor. This will make society more equal.

Speaking - Life

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| • job | • cultural interests |
| • wealth | • good education |
| • savings | • social networking |
| • social life | • social status |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.