1. Outline and explain two ways that education can be seen to be 'ethnocentric' [4]

One way in which education can be seen to be ethnocentric is through the organisation of school calendars. Most school calendars are organised based upon Christian holidays and so pupils from non-Christian religions will miss time in education to celebrate their own religious and cultural festivals.

A second way in which education can be seen as ethnocentric is through the organisation of the curriculum. Subjects such as history are focused on events and people that are revered by the white middle-class and as a result do not reflect the wider diversity of ethnic groups in the education system.

2. Outline and explain three ways in which out of school factors impact on the achievement of different ethnic groups [6]

One way in which out of school factors impacts of the achievement of different ethnic groups is through parental cultural capital. Indian pupils achieve higher as their parents have higher amounts of residual cultural capital which means they are more able to 'play the system' and get their children into better performing schools.

A second way in which out of school factors impacts on the achievement of different ethnic groups is through parental involvement. Chinese pupils before better than their peers in assessments as their parents invest more time into education as children's education is seen as a family project and reflects upon parents.

A final way in which out of school factors reflects on the achievement of different ethnic groups is through material factors. Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black-Caribbean families are over-represented in measures of deprivation and this impacts on their ability to afford additional resources, such as private tuition and laptops and this has a negative impact on their children in comparison to other ethnic groups.

Item A
There are broad trends in educational achievement across ethnic groups. Some sociologists suggest that the reason for these differences is due to the interactions that pupils have with their teachers and their peers. Others suggest that differences in achievement are down to the organisation of the education system itself.

3. Applying material from item A, analyse two ways in which in-school factors influence ethnic differences in experience of education. [10]

One way in which in-school factors influences the experiences ethnic differences in the experience of education is through 'organisation of the education system' (Item A). Sociologists, such as Ball, have suggested that the organisation of the curriculum is based upon 'little Englandism' as subjects such as history and literature are focused on the accomplishments of the white upper class. This acts to alienate pupils from non-white ethnic groups as they do not see themselves represented in a positive light throughout the curriculum. This can lead to pupils becoming demotivated or assuming that their cultural background is not worthy of academic study. Evidence for the existence of an ethnocentric curriculum can be drawn from reforms to the history curriculum under then education secretary Michael Gove, who suggested that there was a need for pupils to learn of the 'island story' of British achievements.

A second way in which in-school factors influence ethnic experiences of education is through interactions with 'teachers and peers' (Item A). The development of different subcultures based upon ethnicity has been studied by various sociologists, with Archer studying Pakistani and Bangladeshi boys who developed Afro-American subcultural identities in response to who they perceived as teacher racism. Furthermore, Shain found that Asian girls adopted a range of different subcultural responses to teachers, with the development of 'gang girls' who perceived education as racist and 'rebels' who adopted more western values in opposition to gender inequality in their home communities. In both of these pieces of research, pupils turned to peers as a reaction to negative interactions with teachers, developing an alternative identity which was a result of their experience in education. This can be further supported by Fuller's research that suggested Black-African girls turned to peers for support as a response to teachers racialised expectations.