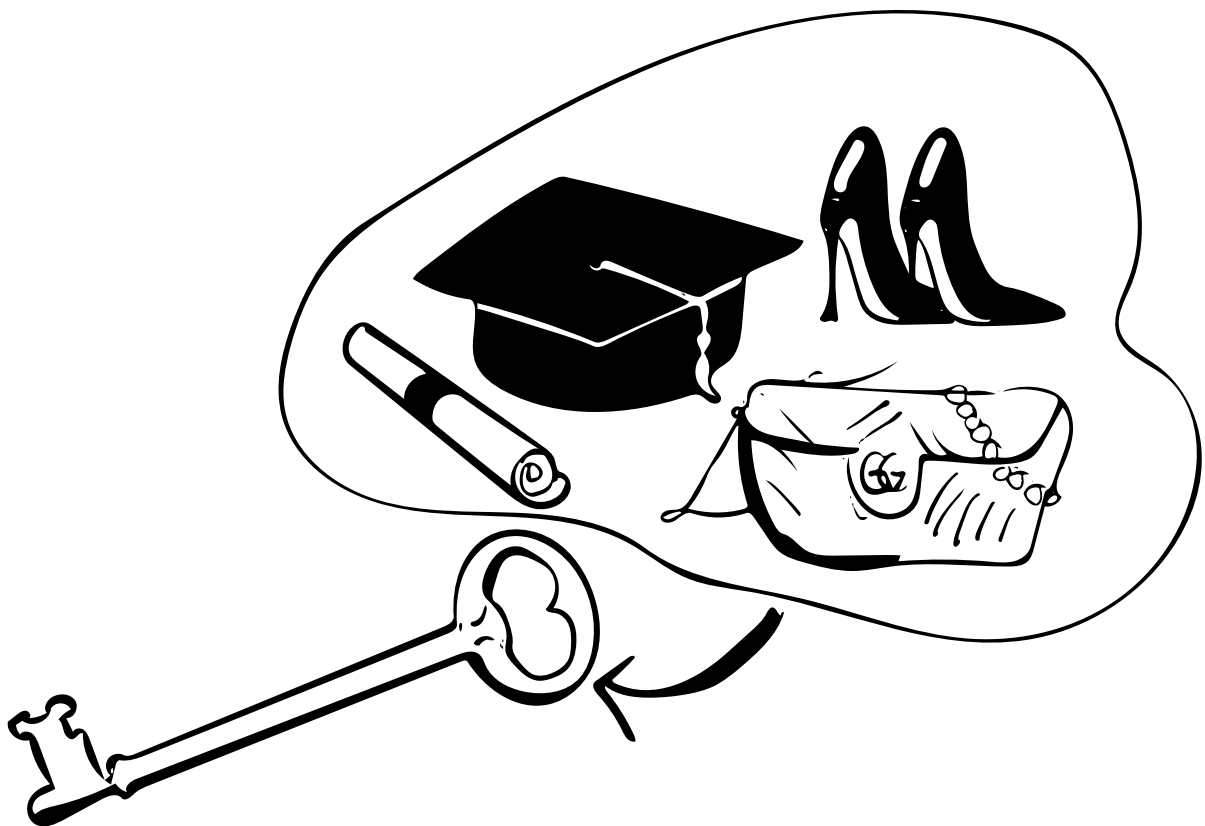
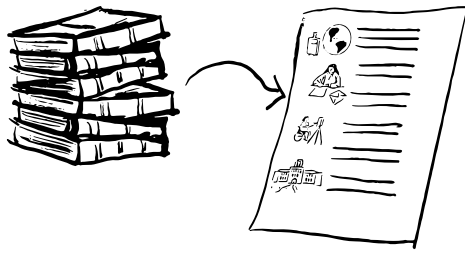


Social and cultural capital.

An Easy Read.





This is an Easy Read about the theories of social capital and cultural capital.



A theory is a way of understanding the world.



There are a lot of different theories.



They don't always agree about how the world works.

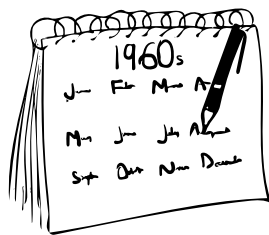
They often describe how things are and why, not how they should be.



Pierre Bourdieu was an important French thinker.



He created the theories of social capital and cultural capital.

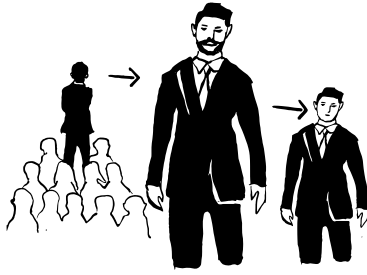


He started writing about his ideas in the 1960s.

He died in 2002.



Bourdieu knew some people in society had more power than others.



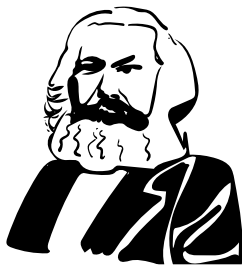
These were usually people whose parents also had power.



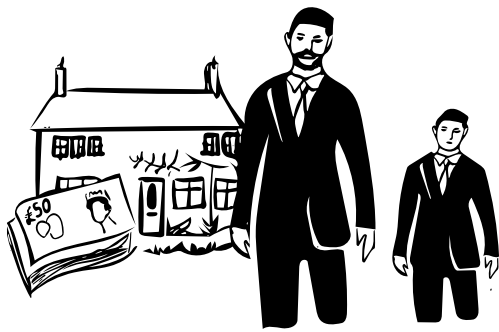
He wanted to explain why.



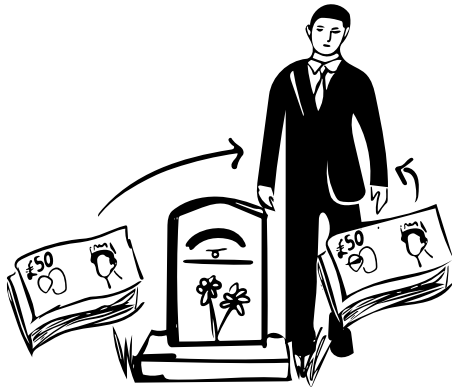
To start with, he used the ideas of other thinkers.



One of these thinkers was Karl Marx.



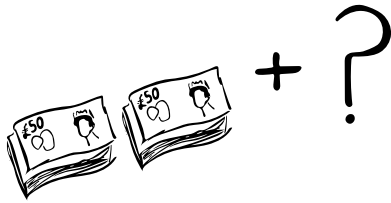
Marx said these families were powerful because they had money and property.



When they died, they gave that money to their children.

He called this economic capital.

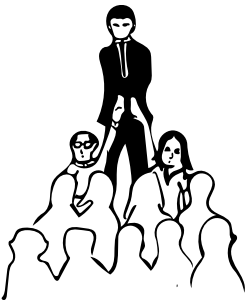
Social capital.



Bourdieu said it was not just about money.



People could be powerful because of who they know.



They could use their family and friends to help them.
He called this social capital.



Social capital is the people you know and the groups you belong to.

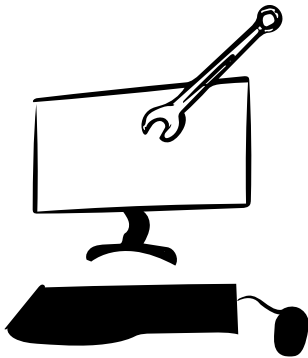


Social capital is different in different groups.

Living in the same place for a long time can give you social capital.



Your neighbours might help you when you are sick.

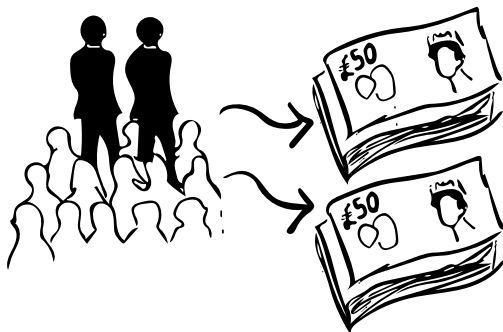


You might help them fix their computer.



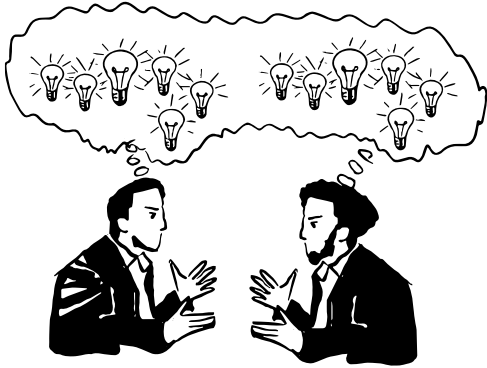
But you have more social capital if your friends are powerful.

If they are powerful, they can help you get a better or easier life.



Having lots of social capital can help you get more money and power.

Cultural capital.

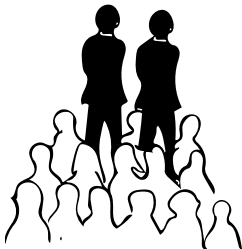


Bourdieu said another kind of capital could help people get better lives.

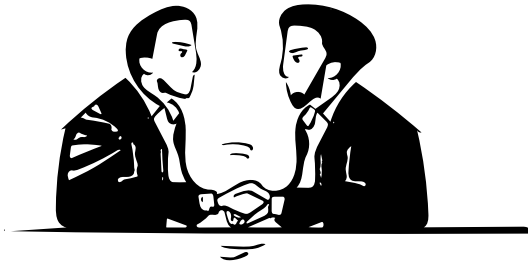
Powerful people often share the same knowledge.



They often talk like each other and like the same things.



Doing these things shows that they belong to the powerful group.



It makes them feel comfortable with each other.
Bourdieu called this cultural capital.



Bourdieu described three ways to have cultural capital.



First, you can own objects that suggest you are rich, powerful or cool.

This might be really expensive clothes or a fast car.
He called this objectified capital.

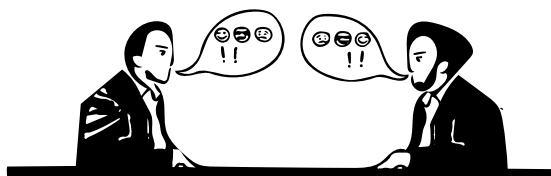


Second, you can have titles that suggest you are clever or important.

This might be a university degree.



It might be being called Dr Patel instead of Miss Patel. Bourdieu called this institutionalised capital.



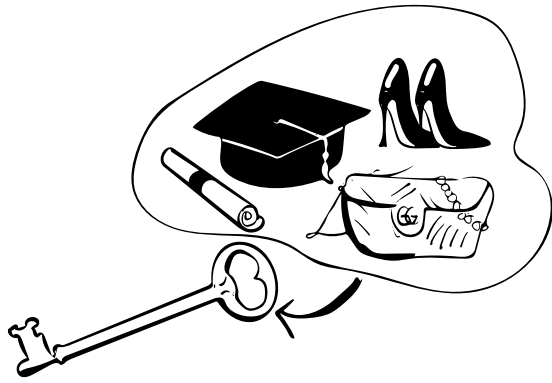
Third, you can show that you are like the powerful people.

This might be talking with the same words or accent.

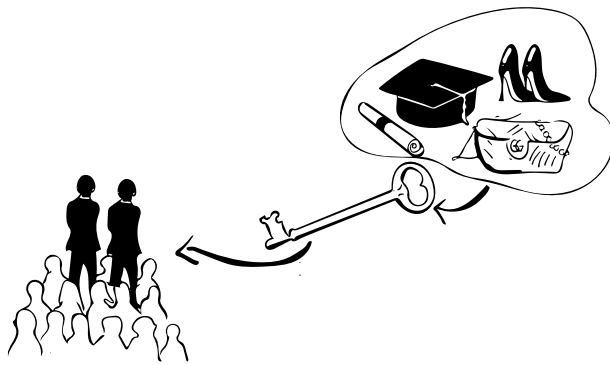


It might be liking the same food and drink.

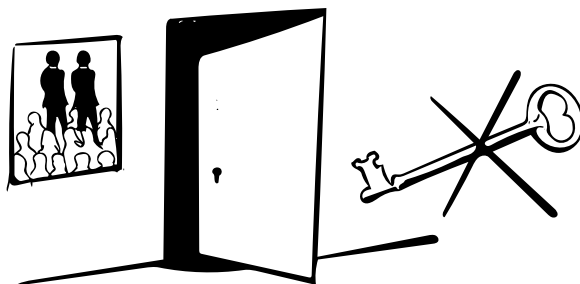
Bourdieu called this embodied capital.



Having expensive clothes, a posh accent and a university degree is like having keys.




It lets you into powerful groups.



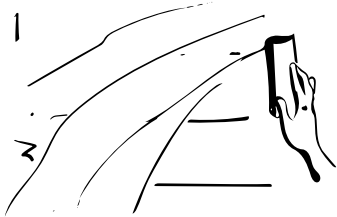
If you don't have the key, it is much harder to get in.

RULES

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- 

Cultural capital is different in different groups.
Groups each have their own rules about how to behave.

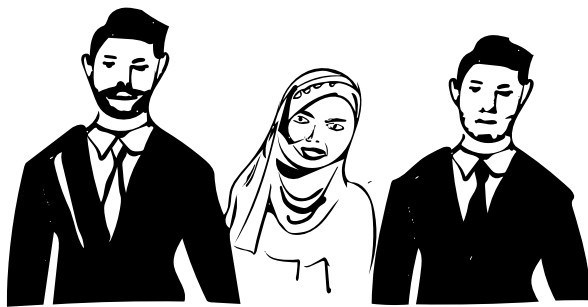
RULES



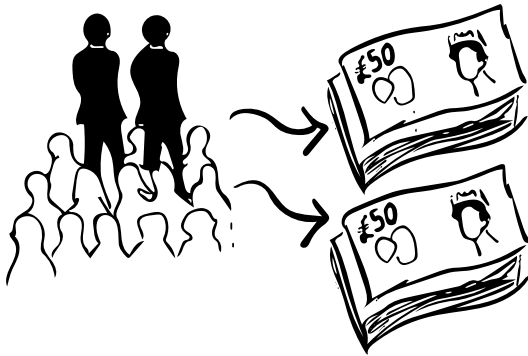
But often no-one tells you the rules.



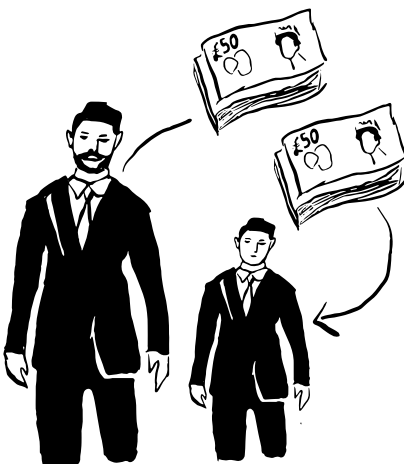
Wearing a headscarf could give you cultural capital in your religious group.



But the headscarf could give you less cultural capital in other groups.

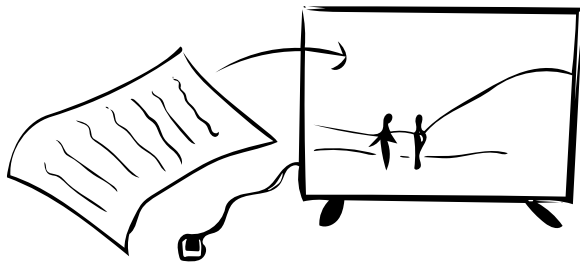


If you are in a powerful group, they can help you to get more money.

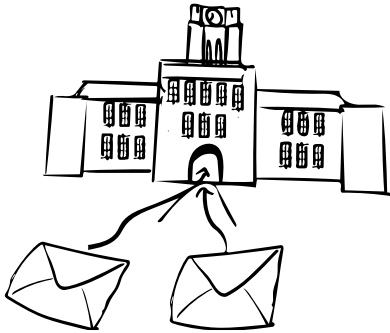


You can then use this money to help your children.

This is an example of how it works.



Lucy and Alex are both brilliant at writing.
They both want to write television programmes.



Alex and Lucy apply to study TV at university.



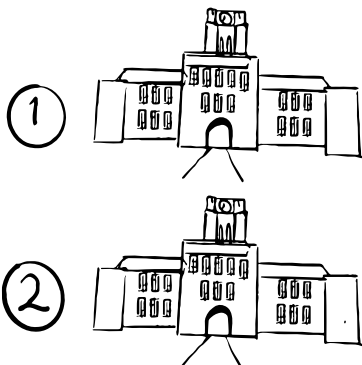
Lucy's mum works at a university.



She tells Lucy exactly what to write on her forms.



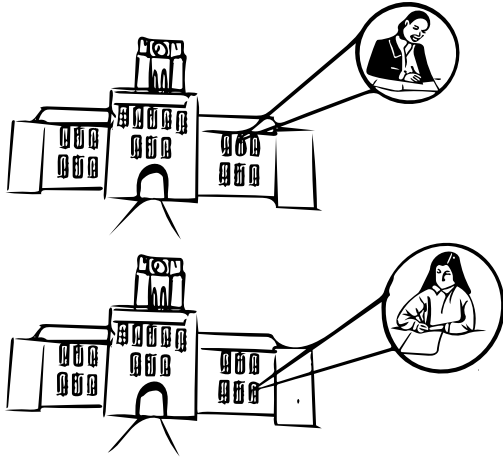
Alex doesn't know anyone who goes to university.
She writes the forms without help.



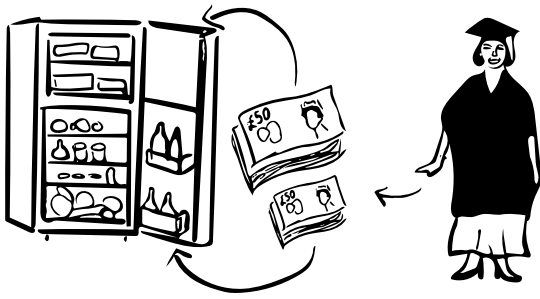
Lucy gets a place at the best university.

Alex gets a place at the second best university.

Alex is just as good, but Lucy has more social capital.



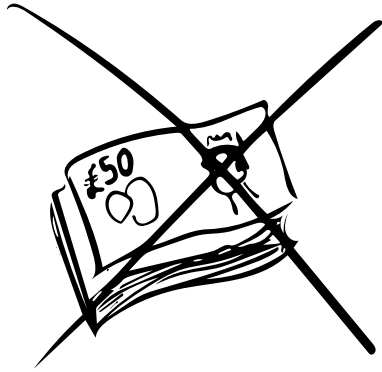
Alex and Lucy both work very hard at university.



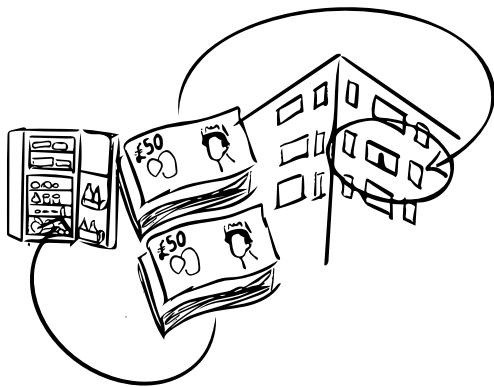
Lucy's mum gives Lucy plenty of money for food and rent.



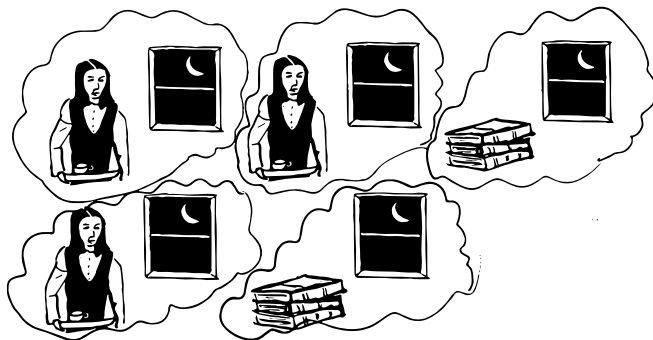
This means Lucy can study every night.



Alex's mum doesn't have lots of money.



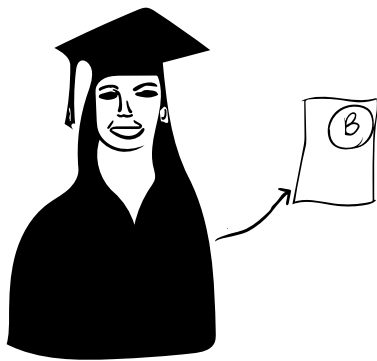
Alex needs to get a job to pay for food and rent.



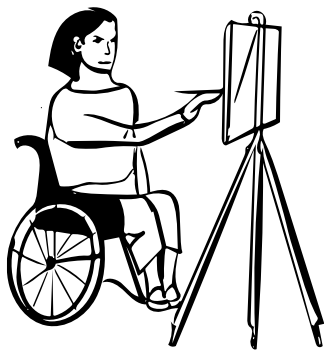
She works at a café three nights a week and studies the other nights.



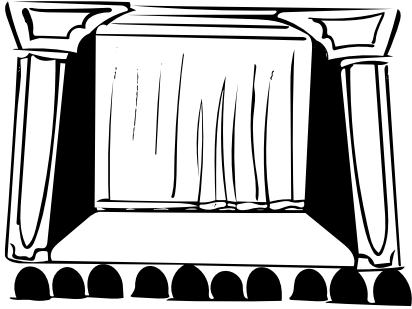
Lucy gets a very high mark on her degree.



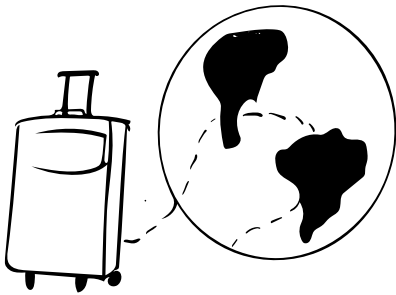
Alex gets a good mark, but not the very best.
They are both clever, but Lucy has more economic capital.



Because she doesn't have to work so much, Lucy has more free time.

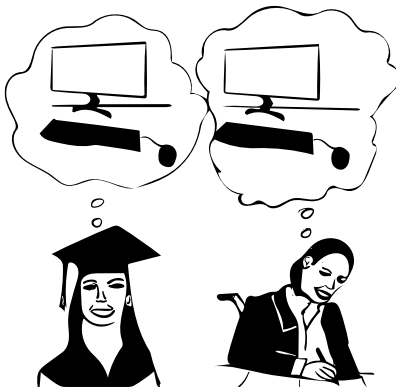


She goes to watch plays at the theatre.



She goes on holiday to different countries.

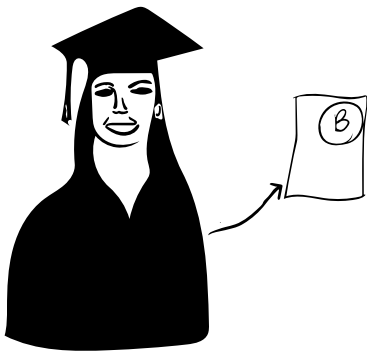
This gives Lucy more cultural capital.



After university, Lucy and Alex go for the same job.



The TV company reads their forms.



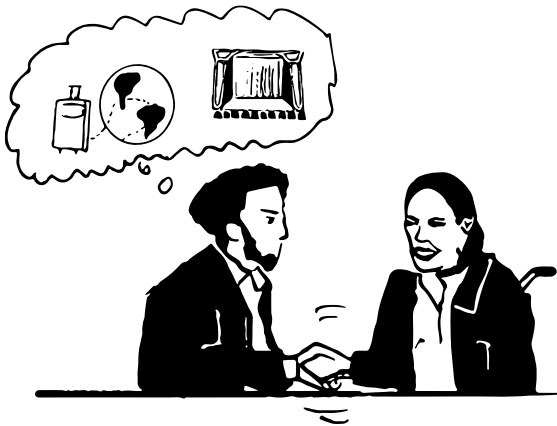
They can see that Alex has a good degree from a good university.



They can see that Lucy has an excellent degree from an excellent university.



In the interview, they really like Lucy.

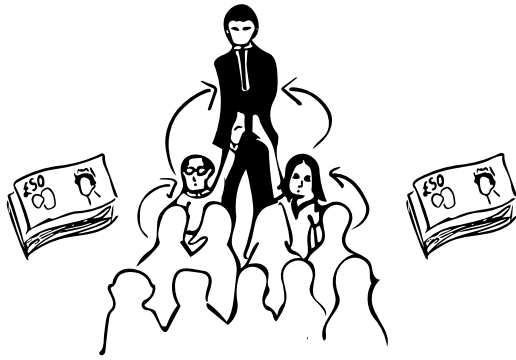


They have seen the same plays and been to the same countries.

They feel like they have a lot in common.



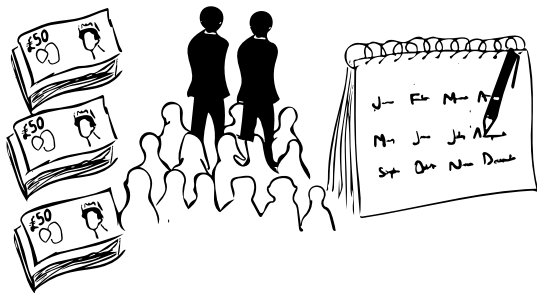
Lucy gets the job.



The example shows how powerful groups use their capital.



They use it to help themselves, their children and their friends.



This means that the same kinds of people stay rich and powerful over time.



If you would like to read a traditional academic version of this text, you can access it by scanning this QR Code.

This Easy Read was written by Abdullah Daya, Angie Sibley-White, Gillian Page, Gisela Oliveira, Rosi Smith and Sam Metz. Illustration is by Sam Metz.

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