

# Family and Households Question Bank



Family and Households is examined in both the AS and the A Level.

In the AS exam you will be asked you will be asked 3 short answer questions:

- 2 mark definition question
- 2 mark – using one example.....
- 6 mark – outline three.....

You will then be asked 2 extended answer questions:

- 10 marks – outline and explain two.....
- 20 marks – using the item and your own knowledge, evaluate / assess.....

In the A Level exams you will be asked 3 extended answer questions

- 10 marks – outline and explain two..... (same as AS)
- 10 marks – Using the item outline and explain two.....
- 20 marks – using the item and your own knowledge, evaluate / assess..... (same as AS)

This booklet contains multiple example questions for both the AS and the A Level exams, along with generic mark schemes which can be used for assessment or for private practice.

## AS Question Type 1: Define the term..... – 2 marks

### Generic Mark Scheme

**Two marks** for a satisfactory definition.

**One mark** for partial definition or only an example given.

*This is not an exclusive list but some of the key terms that could come up.*

Age	Kinship
Aging Population	Life Course
Arranged Marriage	Life Expectancy
Ascribed Status	Living Alone Together (LAT)
Authority	Lone Parent Family
Bean Pole Family	March of Progress Theory
Birth Rate	Marriage
Cereal Packet Family	Marriage Rate
Child Centeredness	Matrifocal Family
Childhood	Meritocracy
Civil Partnership	Migration
Confluent Love	Modified Extended Family
Cohabitation	Net Migration
Conjugal Roles	Neo Conventional Family
Culture	Patriarchy
Dark Side of the Family	Polyandry
Death Rate	Polygamy
Demographics	Polygyny
Dependency Ratio	Primary Socialisation
Dependency Culture	Pure Relationship
Division of Labour	Reconstituted Family
Divorce	Roles
Divorce Rate	Scapegoating
Domestic Labour	Secularisation
Domestic Violence	Segregated gender roles
Duel Burden	Serial Monogamy
Emigration	Social Construction
Empty Shell Marriage	Stabilisation of adult personalities
Expressive Role	Structural Differentiation
Extended Family	Symmetrical Family
False Consciousness	Triple Shift
Family	Toxic Childhood
Family Diversity	Warm Bath Theory
Fertility Rate	Underclass
Fit Thesis	Urbanisation
Gender	
Globalisation	
Household	
Immigration Individualisation	
Infant Mortality Rate	
Instrumental Role	
Joint Coniuaal Roles	

## AS Question Type 2: Giving one example, briefly explain.. – 2 marks

### Generic Mark Scheme

**Two marks** for a clearly explained example  
**one mark** for a partially explained example

1. Using one example, briefly explain how family life may benefit men more than women.
2. Using one example, briefly explain how family life may vary between ethnic groups.
3. Using one example, briefly explain how family life may disadvantage women's careers.
4. Using one example, briefly explain how there may be a loss of Childhood in Contemporary Britain.
5. Using one example, briefly explain why women may choose to postpone having children until they are older.
6. Using one example, briefly explain how globalisation may influence Families
7. Using one example, briefly explain how increased life expectancy may affect household structures.
8. Using one example, briefly explain how the modern family could be seen as patriarchal.
9. Using one example, briefly explain how migration may affect the structure of a population.
10. Using one example, briefly explain how the increases in family breakdown can affect household structure.
11. Using one example, briefly explain what is meant by maternal deprivation.
12. Using one example explain why the pooling system of managing household finances may not always show equality between spouses.
13. Using one example, explain how the difference between Adulthood and childhood may be becoming less clear.

14. Using one example, explain how liberal feminists see gender inequality in the family being overcome.
15. Using one example, explain how migration may affect the age structure of the population.
16. Using one example explain how changes in the position of women have led to changes in patterns of marriage.
17. Using one example, explain how great gender equality may lead to family instability.
18. Using one example, explain how functionalists see the role of social policies.

## AS & A Level Question Type 3: Outline three ways .... – 6 Marks

### Generic Mark Scheme

**Two marks** for each of **three** appropriate reasons clearly outlined or **one mark** for appropriate reasons partially outlined

1. Outline 3 reasons why lone parents are usually headed by the mother.
2. Outline 3 characteristics of a symmetrical family.
3. Outline 3 ways in which children in our society occupy a separate status to adults.
4. Outline 3 ways in which children's and adults leisure, dress and food are now similar.
5. Outline 3 ways in which adults control children's time, space or bodies.
6. Outline 3 functions that functionalists see the family as performing
7. Outline 3 reasons why manual workers have higher death rates than professionals.
8. Outline 3 factors that may affect the dependency ratio, **apart** from migration.
9. Outline 3 reasons why the total number of marriages has been declining.
10. Outline 3 types of diversity suggested by the Rappaports.
11. Outline 3 reasons why there is now greater gender equality in the family and society.
12. Outline 3 social policies or laws that may affect household or family size.
13. Outline 3 reasons for the increase in the divorce rate in the last 50 years or so.
14. Outline 3 reasons for the increase in lone person households.
15. Outline 3 ways in which childhood could be said to be toxic.
16. Outline 3 ways in which childhood could be said to be disappearing.
17. Outline 3 characteristics of child centeredness.
18. Outline 3 ways a child might be brought up other than in a family.
19. Outline 3 reasons for the increase in the proportion of births taking place outside marriage.
20. Outline 3 reasons why domestic labour is often not regarded as real work compared to paid employment.
21. Outline 3 reasons for the continuing inequality between men and women in contemporary society.
22. Outline 3 reasons why the experience of children may differ between children in contemporary British Society.
23. Outline 3 reasons for the decrease in family size since 1900.
24. Outline 3 reasons for the decline in infant mortality rate in Britain since 1900.

## AS / A Level Question Type 4: Outline and explain **two....** – 10 marks

### Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
8 – 10	Answers in this band will show very good knowledge and understanding of the topic in question. There will be two applications of relevant material. There will be appropriate analysis.
4 - 7	Answers in this band will show a reasonable to good knowledge and understanding of the topic in question. There will be one or two applications of relevant material and there will be some basic analysis.
1 – 3	Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and understanding of the question or the material. There will be limited focus on the question, and there will be limited or no analysis

**Please note that these questions should not be marked in terms of 5 + 5 but as a response as a whole**

1. Outline and explain 2 reasons for the increase in family diversity.
2. Outline and explain 2 reasons for the increase in the divorce rate since 1960's apart from legislation.
3. Outline and explain 2 reasons why the position of children might be changing in the UK.
4. Outline and explain 2 reasons for patterns in domestic violence.
5. Outline and explain 2 ways in which the family supports capitalism.
6. Outline and explain 2 reasons for the changes in family size in the last 50 years or so.
7. Outline and explain 2 social policies or laws that have affected the position of children in the family.
8. Outline and explain 2 functions of the family according to functionalist theorists.
9. Outline and explain 2 ways in which changes in society may have weakened the traditional nuclear family unit.
10. Outline and explain 2 changes in society which have contributed to the increase in single person households.
11. Outline and explain 2 changes in society that have contributed to women's changing roles within the families.

12. Outline and explain 2 ways in which the distinction between childhood and adulthood is blurring.
13. Outline and explain 2 ways in which the ageing population may contribute to family diversity
14. Outline and explain 2 ways in which social policies have shaped family life.
15. Outline and explain 2 ways in which power relationships are expressed.
16. Outline and explain 2 ways in which relationships are becoming more equal.
17. Outline and explain 2 ways in which society has become more child centred.
18. Outline and explain 2 ways in which childhood has changed in the past 50 years.
19. Outline and explain 2 factors which might have led to declining birth rate.
20. Outline and explain 2 factors which have led to a rise in cohabitation.

## A Level Question Type 5:

**Applying material from Item ? outline and explain TWO. – 10 marks**

### Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
8 – 10	Answers in this band will show good knowledge and understanding of relevant material on the topic of the question. There will be two developed applications of material from the Item. There will be appropriate analysis/evaluation of two differences.
4 - 7	Answers in this band will show a basic to reasonable knowledge and understanding of one or two points on the topic of the question. There will be some successful application of material from the Item and there will be some analysis/evaluation
1 – 3	Answers in this band will show limited knowledge and understanding of one or two points on the topic of the question. There will be limited application of material from the Item. Some material may be at a tangent to the question and there will be limited or no analysis/evaluation.

**Please note that these questions should not be marked in terms of 5 + 5 but as a response as a whole and only points from the item can be credited.**

#### Item A1

*Almost a third of households in the UK, 7 million in total, are now one person households. However, people living alone do not form a group sharing the same characteristics. For example, there are more women than men in this group, except in the 35 to 49 age group, and Whites are more likely than Asians or British Asians to live alone.*

Applying material from Item A1, analyse two reasons for the increase in one person households.

#### Item A2

*Marriage as an institution in the UK remain strong, there have been many changes. Most marriages are now civil ceremonies, and for many they are remarriages for at least one of the partners. The average age for those getting married has also risen.*

Applying material from item A2, two changes in patterns of marriage over the past 70 years.



**Item A3**

*Functionalist sociologists believe that the extended family structures are best suited to pre industrial societies when work was based on the household and the people needed to the support of the kin in most areas of life. Their anticipated that with industrialization, extended families would be replaced by nuclear families. Others, however, believe the extended family structures have changed rather than disappeared.*

Applying material from item A3, analyse two changes in extended family structures over the past so tree.

**Item A4**

*As divorce has increased, so too has the number of reconstituted or blended families. When families blend, they are likely to have to cope with a number of tensions not present in unblended families. The 'wicked stepmother' of fairy tales they may well be a caricature, but nevertheless hints that challenges involved when people take on parenting responsibilities for children to whom they are not related.*

Applying material from item A4, analyse two sources of potential conflict in blended families.

**Item A5**

*In the last 50 years or so, they have been major changes in the position of women in society. For example, girls now outperform boys in education and more females than males go to university. Major changes in the Labour market and the economy, such as the expansion of the service sector, have benefited women. So to have equal rights laws and equal opportunities policies in many areas of society. These include sexuality, where they have been moved towards equality between heterosexual and lesbian women. Women now also have much greater access to reliable contraception.*

Applying material from item A5, analyse two ways in which changes in women's position in Society in the last 50 years have affected family patterns.

**Item A6**

*Social policies have greatly shape family life over the past 40 years. For example, there have been policies to increase equality between men and women. Policies have had a number of intended and unintended effects on family structures as well as the roles and relationships in families.*

Applying material from item A6, analyse two ways in which policies encourage the nuclear family.

**Item A7**

*The death rate has dropped from 29 per 1000 of the population in 1901, to 12 per 1000 of the population in 2013. The cause of the decline includes better Healthcare, improve sanitation and safer working environment. This has had a number of effects on the family, both in terms of the size of the family and the rules of relationships that exist within the family too.*

Applying material from item A7, analyse two effects of the decline in death rate on the family.

**Item A8**

*Domestic violence accounts for up to a quarter of all recorded violent crime. Victims are more likely to be female and offenders male: domestic violence is linked to gender roles in patriarchal Society. However, not all women are equally likely to suffer domestic violence. Victims - both male and female - are more likely to belong to disadvantaged social group and live under difficult circumstances.*

Applying material from item A8, analyse two reasons the patterns of domestic violence.

**Item A9**

*A popular view is that childhood is a fixed, universal, biological stage of physical and psychological immaturity that is common to all human beings. Everyone will pass through it on the way to biological maturity and adulthood. However, evidence shows that what counts as childhood, what experiences children undergo and what roles they play, are far from universal.*

Applying material from item A9, analyse two arguments against the view that childhood is a fixed, universal stage.

**Item A10**

*Capitalist Society is based on a wealthy capitalist class exploiting the labour of the propertyless working class in order to extract a profit. However, to obtain the profit, capitalists must sell what has been produced and this requires people who are willing to buy it. For capitalism to continue, the proletariat must be persuaded to accept their exploitation. Capitalist also need to retain control of their wealth in order to maintain the privileged position.*

Applying material from item A10, analyse two functions that the family May perform for capitalism.

**Item A11**

The different cultural traditions, migration patterns and economic circumstances of different minority ethnic groups are reflected in the ethnic differences in family and household patterns seen in the United Kingdom today. These include differences in the proportions of people from different ethnic groups who live in single person, nuclear family, lone parent and extended family households.

Applying material from item A11, analyse two reasons for ethnic differences in family and household Patterns.

**Item A12**

*According to the individualisation thesis, greater individual choice has transformed family and intimate relationships. Unlike in the past when individuals lives were governed by tradition, today both men and women are free to make their own choices about relationships, sexuality and so on, following their own self-interest. Class, gender and family structure no longer limit our are choices.*

Applying material from item A12, analyse two criticisms of the individualisation thesis

## AS / A Level Question Type 6: Using material from the item and your own knowledge, evaluate the view.... – 20 marks

### Generic Mark Scheme

Band	Descriptor
17 - 20	Answers in this band will show sound, conceptually detailed knowledge of a range of relevant material on the topic of the question. Sophisticated understanding of the question and of the presented material will be shown. Appropriate material will be applied accurately and with sensitivity to the issues raised by the question. Analysis and evaluation will be explicit and relevant. Evaluation may be developed for example through a debate between different perspectives. Analysis will show clear explanation. Appropriate conclusions will be drawn.
13 - 16	Answers in this band will show accurate, broad and/or deep but incomplete knowledge. Understands a number of significant aspects of the question; good understanding of the presented material. Application of material is largely explicitly relevant to the question, though some material may be inadequately focused. Some limited explicit evaluation, some appropriate analysis, e.g. clear explanations of some of the presented material.
9 - 12	Answers in this band will show largely accurate knowledge but limited range and depth. Understands some limited but significant aspects of the question; superficial understanding of the presented material. Applying listed material from the general topic area but with limited regard for its relevance to the issues raised by the question, or applying a narrow range of more relevant material. Evaluation will take the form of a juxtaposition of competing positions or one to two isolated stated points. Analysis will be limited, with answers tending towards the descriptive.
5 - 8	Answers in this band will show limited undeveloped knowledge, e.g. two to three insubstantial points about the question topic. Understands only limited aspects of the question; simplistic understanding of the presented material. Limited application of suitable material, and/or material often at a tangent to the demands of the question. Very limited or no evaluation. Attempts at analysis are thin and disjointed.
1 - 4	Answers in this band will show very limited knowledge, e.g. one to two very insubstantial points about the topic in general. Very little/no understanding of the question and of the presented material. Significant errors and/or omissions in application of material. No analysis or evaluation.

**Item B1**

*March of progress sociologists argue that the family is becoming more equal. Increasingly today, both partners are likely to have jobs outside the home and they both carry out household chores and provide childcare. However, feminists sociologists reject this claim. They argue that the family is still patriarchal and that women today carry a dual burden.*

Applying material from item B1 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the division of labour in couples.

**Item B2**

*According to some sociologists, children in today's supposedly child centred society lead lives that are segregated and controlled, but childhood was not always like this. Aries describes a medieval world where there was a little distinction and adults in either work or leisure. According to this view, industrial society brought major changes. Children's lives became increasingly confined and regulated by adults. Not all sociologists share this view. Some argue that the distinction between childhood and adulthood is again becoming blurred.*

Applying material from item B2 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological explanations of changes in the status of childhood.

**Item B3**

*Despite their disagreements, functionalists, Marxist and Feminists approaches to the family share certain similarities. They are all structural approaches: they see the family as a structure that performs certain functions – although they disagree about what these functions are and who benefits from them. Similarly they all assume that by 'family' we mean the conventional nuclear family. Other sociologists reject this structural approach. For example, the personal life perspective takes a bottom up view that focuses on people's meanings and how they themselves define what counts as 'family'.*

Applying material from item B3 and your own knowledge, evaluate the usefulness of structural approaches to our understanding of families and households

**Item B4**

*In modern society, people's lives were made up of fixed age-stages, with the final stage defined by compulsory retirement and, for many, poverty. The old also face prejudice and discrimination. By contrast, some sociologists argue that the position of the old in today's postmodern society is changing for the better. In postmodern society, individuals can choose a lifestyle and identity that does not depend on their age. This has freed many of the old from their previous disadvantaged status in society.*

Applying material from item B4 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the position of the old in today's society is changing for the better.

**Item B5**

*There has been a significant increase in the number of divorces since 1970. One important factor behind the increase has been the changes in the law relating to divorce. However, legal changes alone might not be enough to explain the trend and sociologists have suggested a number of possible causes of a higher divorce rate. One of these is a decline in the influence of traditional norms about marriage that used to stigmatise divorce.*

Applying material from item B5 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological contributions to our understanding of the trends in divorce in the UK since 1970.

**Item B6**

*Recent decades have seen a move to a more diverse range of family arrangements. Whilst some sociologists see this as harmful for society, others welcome it because they see it as bringing greater individual choice about relationships. However some sociologists argue that the extent of the change should not be exaggerated: most people live in something resembling a conventional family, and many individuals still find their choices limited. For example, while being gay or lesbian is less stigmatised than in the past, it is not always easy for people to 'come out'*

Applying material from item B6 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological contributions to our understanding of family diversity.

**Item B7**

*According to feminist sociologists, the main function of laws and policies on family and households is to support the conventional heterosexual nuclear family and reproduce patriarchy. For example, policies concerning the care of children or the old often make the assumption that these are women's responsibility. Even policies seemingly designed to benefit women, such as paying child benefit to the mother, may have the effect of reinforcing their gender roles. By contrast, New Right thinkers argue that many policies offer 'perverse incentives' that actually undermine rather than support the conventional family.*

Applying material from item B7 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the main function of laws and policies on families and households is to reproduce patriarchy.

**Item B8**

*There have been important changes in the position of men and women in couple roles and relationships in the last 50 years or so. For example, it is now the norm for married women to take paid work, although often this is part-time rather than full-time. There are also signs of a 'new man' who is more involved in housework and childcare. However, feminists argue that such changes have done little to change the family from a patriarchal institution based on male power and female subordination.*

Applying material from item B8 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the family today remains a patriarchal institution.

**Item B9**

*There has been a significant increase in the number of divorces since 1970. One important factor behind the increase has been the changes in the law relating to divorce. However, legal changes alone might not be enough to explain the trend and sociologists have suggested a number of possible causes of a higher divorce rate. One of these is a decline in the influence of traditional norms about marriage that used to stigmatise divorce.*

Applying material from item B9 and your own knowledge, evaluate sociological contributions to our understanding of the trends in divorce in the UK since 1970

**Item B10**

*In the view of Marxist sociologists, all of society's institutions contribute to maintaining the capitalist system. These institutions include the family, which Marxists see as performing important functions for capitalism. For example, its role in socialising the young helps to ensure that capitalism is provided with the next generation of docile workers.*

*However critics argue that the Marxist view of the family ignores issues such as family diversity as well as inequalities within the family.*

Applying material from item B10 and your own knowledge, evaluate the usefulness of Marxist sociologists for the study of families and households.

**Item B11**

*Feminist approaches to the family tend to emphasize the harmful effects of family life upon women. They provide a healthy antidote to functionalist and New Right accounts, which stress the functional and beneficial side of family life, and downplay the way families may have negative consequences for the lives and opportunities of women.*

Applying material from item B11 and your own knowledge, evaluate the contribution of feminist views to our understanding of the family.

**Item B12**

*In Britain, the traditional family life course have changed dramatically, there have been huge changes in family formation, and young people face growing uncertainty as they encounter a range of choices in their personal lives, and are less guided and constrained by traditional norms and values surrounding family life and relationships.*

Applying material from item B12 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that changing norms and values have contributed to growing diversity in personal and family life today.

**Item B13:**

*In contemporary Britain, families are often thought to be more "Symmetrical", whereby the relationship between married and cohabiting couples has become less patriarchal, or male dominated, and much more equally balanced partnership. Both partners share household chores, childcare and decision making, and both partners are more likely to be involved in paid employment.*

Applying material from item 13 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that contemporary families have become partnerships of equals.

**Item B14**

*Some sociologists suggest that contemporary families have become more child-centred than in the past. Parents today spend much more time with their children, and spend a great deal of money to ensure they give their children the most fulfilling upbringing possible. Many parents want their children to have opportunities that they never had themselves as children. Critics of this point to children's lack of control over their lives, child abuse and other problems that children today may face.*

Applying material from item B14 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that contemporary families have become more child-centred

**Item B15**

*Since 1900, there have been significant declines in birth rates and death rates, and greater life expectancy in the UK. More women are choosing to have fewer or no children, and many delay having children until they are older. Such demographic changes are influencing the size and shape of families and households, and contributing to greater family and household diversity.*

Applying material from item 15 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that demographic changes are leading to more family and household diversity in contemporary UK.

**Item B16**

*Marxists take a conflict view of society and argue that the main role of the family is to reinforce and maintain capitalism. Others, however, disagree and take a more positive view the role of the family, both for the individual and society.*

Applying material from item B16 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the main role of the family is to reinforce and maintain capitalism.

**Item B17**

*One reason for the increase in the family diversity is that the majority of women now participate in paid employment. Some now claim that the nuclear family is in decline, being replaced by other family structures. For instance, there has been an increase in reconstituted families.*

Applying material from item B17 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the nuclear family is in decline.



**Item B18**

*According to research carried out by Jonathan Gershuny (2008) relationships are gradually becoming more equalitarian. Gershuny claims that as women are increasingly working full time, men gradually begin to increase their contribution to housework. However, feminists suggest that women today experience a dual burden and continue to take responsibility not simply for housework but for many other areas of family life as well.*

Applying material from item B18 and your own knowledge, evaluate the ways in which relationships have changed over the past 40 years.

**Item B19**

*According to the conflict view of childhood, children today are more likely to be controlled by adults. As well as this, conflict theorists argue that children remain exploited and unhappy. However, march of progress theorists take a different view and argue that today children are more protected and valued, which is linked to their closer relationships with family members.*

Applying material from item B19 and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the experience of childhood has improved

**Item B20:**

*The death rate has dropped from 29 per 1000 of the population in 1901, to 12 per 1000 of the population in 2013. The cause of the decline includes better health care, improved sanitation and safer working environments. This has had a number of effects on the family, both in terms of the size of the family and the roles and relationships that exist within the family too.*

Applying material from item B20 and your own knowledge, evaluate the factors which have led to the decline in death rates.