

A LEVEL
Delivery Guide

SOCIOLOGY

H580
For first teaching in 2015

Theme: Families and Relationships

Version 2



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Introduction

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:

- Content: A clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;
- Thinking Conceptually: Expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;
- Thinking Contextually: A range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected which best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

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KEY



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AS Level content only

Introduction

This option focuses on the family as a central agency of socialisation and a main transmitter of culture in contemporary society. It allows learners to explore contemporary family structures and relationships in the UK. This option is broken down into two subtopics, the first exploring the extent and nature of family diversity. This is developed into an exploration of the ideology of the family, looking at various theoretical views on the role and function of the family in contemporary society. The second section explores the ways in which roles and relationships are changing in the family.

1. How diverse are modern families?

This section looks at the extent of family diversity in the UK. Family diversity relates not just to different family structures but also to diversity in terms of roles and relationships within family structures. This will involve exploring definitions of the family as well as contemporary alternatives to these definitions. This topic involves an exploration of up to date research which reveals new and interesting emergent family types, such as beanpole families. This is followed by an exploration of the reasons for changes in family structure. This involves looking at the changing nature of relationship patterns such as marriage, cohabitation and divorce. Various types of diversity will be applied to different variables such as social class, ethnicity and sexuality.

These changes are interpreted from a number of theoretical perspectives; both consensus and conflict theories of the family, as well as considering the extent to which traditional social theories, are useful in helping us to understand contemporary family life. The theme of this section considers the extent to which the ideology of the nuclear family continues to shape attitudes, roles, relationships and structures of family life in the UK.

2. To what extent are roles and relationships within families and households changing?

This section takes a detailed look at the nature of change in relationships in the family, focusing on adult relationships. This involves discussing classical debates about the domestic division of labour but also developing these ideas to explore more contemporary measures of power within relationships. In this section, students should be engaged in thinking about a variety of dimensions of relationships within the context of closer emotional relationships between men and women, as well as considering the impact of alternative relationship arrangements on deciding who is responsible for which roles. Exploring the nature of relationships in families also extends to relationships between adults and children, where there is emerging research about the nature and variety of new and traditional arrangements. As well as this, relationships with extended family members and non-family members should be considered.

Thinking Conceptually

There are central concepts which run throughout the course such as socialisation, identity, power and stratification, which are discussed in various ways in this topic. These core concepts are discussed in the context of changing families and relationships and in particular of the shift in attitudes that has occurred over the past 30 years. This will involve a brief look at the historical context from which the ideology of the nuclear family emerged. Students might want to consider their own perceptions and assumptions about family life before they research and examine current patterns in the UK. It is important to encourage students to be critical of some concepts, such as reconstituted families, since there are such a variety of relationship types that have emerged in recent years from this one family type.

Students can and should be encouraged to make links with the concepts found in this topic and wider changes in society such as the changing role of women, greater individualism and the shift from modernity to postmodernity. This also applies to theories; students might want to consider how useful traditional social theories and concepts are in explaining contemporary family life.

The following list contains some of the basic concepts for this topic. This list, however, is not exhaustive and teachers may wish to add to this list as they progress through the course.

Age patriarchy	Single parent/Lone parent family	Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)
Child centred society	Living apart together (LAT)	Institutions
Commodities	Beanpole Families	Life expectancy
Dependency culture	Cohabiting couples	Migration
Economic asset	Empty Shell family	Modernity
Economic burden	Empty Nest family	Monogamous nuclear family
Emigration	Lone person household	Moral decay
Household	Reconstituted families	Nanny state
Matrifocal family	Symmetrical family	Natural change
Patriarchal family	Neo Conventional Family	Patriarchal family
Same sex families	Immigration	Patriarchal ideology

Thinking Conceptually

Policies	Social blurring	The Fertility Rate
Postmodernity	Social policy	The state
Power relationships	Social solidarity	Theoretical perspectives
Primary socialisation	The ageing population	Total Fertility Rate
Proletariat	The Birth Rate	Toxic childhood
Push and Pull factors	The Death Rate	Unit of consumption
Secondary socialisation	The dependency ratio	Value consensus

Common misconceptions or difficulties students may have

Students often lack an awareness of the historical context that led to the changes in the family in the past 30 years. Therefore it is important to encourage students to understand what family life was like before, in other words to understand the prevailing ideology of the nuclear family. Although the focus is on contemporary society, it is also important to acknowledge important social changes such as the second wave of feminism, which influenced many of the changes that we see in the family today. Similarly, students do not need to have in depth knowledge about the history of the role of the state but they need to be aware that the state has not always played such an extensive role in shaping family life.

The theory section of this topic needs to be approached in an applied way, otherwise students are at risk of feeling that the theories are abstract. Therefore it is a very good idea

to encourage students to carry out role-plays and engage with other application activities that enable them to see how theories of the family can be drawn upon. Students' knowledge of sociological theories can then be developed in further depth throughout the course.

The key to overcoming students' difficulties in approaching this topic is to develop their higher-level skills rather than focus on a knowledge driven approach. Encouraging students to consider the links between various issues such as the causes of changes in the family being linked to wider social changes gives them a much better chance of applying their knowledge more successfully in the exam. For example, if students understand the significance of the changing role of women in society then this can be applied to changing patterns of divorce, cohabitation, marriage, the increase in family types such as single parent families and so on.

Thinking Conceptually

Conceptual links to other areas of the specification – useful ways to approach this topic to set students up for topics later in the course

There are many links to the core themes of socialisation, culture, identity, norms and values that are also in component 1, as well as debates such as the nature/nurture debate. It is advisable to teach the unit in the order it is written so that the study of the family can be seen as building upon the foundational first part of the component. This will help reinforce students' understanding of the core concepts and provide them with different examples and applications.

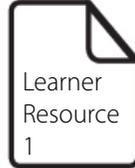
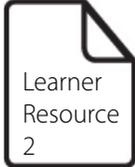
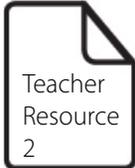
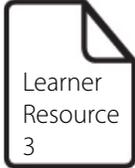
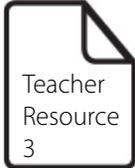
The families and relationships section links to further areas of the AS and full A level course. Within component 2, methodological issues are explored, so students should be encouraged to conduct small scale research into family and relationship issues so that they can become aware of how sociologists 'know' about social issues. For example, if a piece of research is being taught, it may be worth briefly discussing the methods used and the potential issues with the research. Further, there are issues of inequality throughout the families and relationship topic, which can develop the students' sense of the inequalities that exist in UK society. For example, when considering the impact of social class on family life and relationships, it is worth discussing the way that economic inequalities affect many different aspects of a person's life chances, for example the increased risk of family instability for

the poor, as evidenced in the increased risk of divorce. These inequalities can be developed by considering theoretical explanations such as Marxist or feminist interpretations.

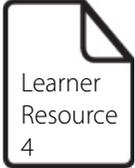
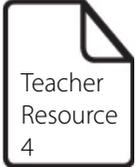
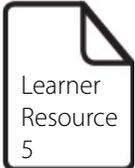
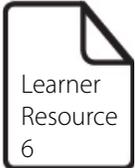
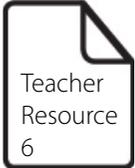
In terms of component 3, the ideas, concepts and broader grasp of changes in wider society will help to inform and support the skills and knowledge needed for debates in contemporary society, for example, the connection between globalisation and immigration, cultural diversity within the family and the impact of new social media on children's lives, feeding into the debate regarding the improvement of childhood or the exploitation of children.

There are links to crime and deviance through socialisation or inadequate socialisation, which is alleged by some to be a cause of law breaking and antisocial behaviour. This topic links well to education, which is a form of secondary socialisation. In education, the role of primary socialisation is considered in relation to the role that parents play in a child's educational success. Family life is understood and explained through the declining influence of religion, therefore there are key links to this topic as well, which the families and relationships option can help lay the foundation for.

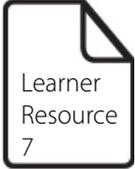
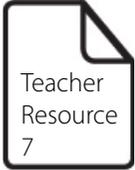
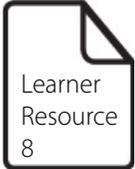
Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p>Family structure This activity introduces students to the various types of family structure that exist in UK society. It also encourages students to challenge these definitions of family and consider new, alternative interpretations of traditional family structures.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 1</p>
<p>Pie chart task Teachers can ask students to work through the Learner Resource 2 task and consider proportions of different family types in the UK today. Teacher Resource 2 gives some suggested answers / further teaching guidance.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 2</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 2</p>
<p>Emerging types of families activity This activity focuses on two types of emerging family structures: beanpole families and living apart together families. Students read the articles and complete the worksheets. Suggested answers are given in Teacher Resource 3.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 3</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 3</p>

Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p>Family diversity Part 1: Reasons for family diversity</p> <p>A number of tasks follow that explore some of the reasons for the increase in family diversity:</p> <p>a) Shift from modernity to postmodernity</p> <p>Teachers can ask students to cut out the statements from the Learner Resource 4 worksheet and complete the blank table.</p> <p>b) Changes in the law.</p> <p>In this activity, teachers will need to construct a washing line in the classroom, so that the students can sort out the following policies into date order using the learner resource sheet provided. These could be laminated and/or enlarged. Once they have done this, they should then suggest the possible effects of each policy on family life and record these on the worksheet.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 4</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 4</p>  <p>Learner Resource 5</p>  <p>Learner Resource 6</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 6</p>

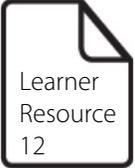
Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p>c) Changing attitudes Teachers issue the Learner Resource 7 worksheet and ask students to fill in the gaps using the key words given. Teacher Resource 7 shows the completed task.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 7</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 7</p>
<p>d) Secularisation Teachers ask students to summarise the effect of secularisation on increased family diversity.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 8</p>

Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p>Key demographic trends in family life and how these have contributed to increasing diversity Divide students into small groups and ask them to select one of the following topics in the left hand column of the table to research. Students are not expected to remember large amounts of statistical data about each trend, but they should be aware of the overall trend and any significant changes.</p> <p>Once they have carried out their research, use the worksheet to ask students to share their findings. Then ask students to work in pairs and consider the impact of these changes on family diversity, in terms of the structure, roles and relationships found in the UK. This sheet could be blown up to A3 for more detail. http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons is a good place to start.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 9</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 9</p>
<p>Nuclear Family Teachers ask students to read the introductory text in Learner Resource 10 which gives an overview of social theories and then to complete the table. Teacher Resource 10 shows a completed table.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 10</p>  <p>Teacher Resource 10</p>

Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p>Social Theory Role Play</p> <p>Teachers provide the worksheet which outlines various social theories about the family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functionalist• New Right• Marxist• Feminist• Interpretivist• Postmodernist. <p>In this activity students should be encouraged to consider their own interpretation of each theory to apply it to each issue. They should be encouraged to consider the problems with each theory and discuss these after. For example, functionalists ignored the dark side of the family. Encourage students to see links between theories for example functionalism and the New Right is their shared view of the desirability of nuclear families.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 11</p>
<p>To what extent are roles and relationships within families and households changing?</p> <p>Teachers can encourage students to consider all of the possible areas of relationships that might reveal important information about what changes have taken place over the past 30 years. It is a good idea to introduce the idea that in the past sociologists have tended to focus on researching housework, whilst, more recently there are studies emerging in more subtle and complex areas of relationships which relate to power.</p> <p>Using a range of research, weigh up the evidence for and against relationships becoming increasingly egalitarian. This evidence can be evaluated with recent studies exploring the emergence of new forms of relationships with new or adapted ideas about relationships.</p>	 <p>Learner Resource 12</p>

Learner Resource 1 Family Structure

Using the images below, link each picture with the correct family structure. Underneath, describe the types of roles and relationships that might occur within these families.

Remember that there is a key difference between a family and a household. There has been a growth in the different types of families and households not just in terms of structure, but also in terms of the roles and relationships that people have.

A family: a group of people related by blood, marriage and/or a commitment to each other to support each other in some way. They may or may not live under the same roof.

A household: a group of people living together, who do not necessarily share a commitment to each other.

See page 9

Lone parent families
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:

Student Household
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:

Living apart together (LAT)
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:

Multicultural Families
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:



Extended families
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:

Nuclear families
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:



Reconstituted families
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:

Same-sex families
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:



Empty nest family
Structure:
Roles:
Relationships:

Learner Resource 2 Pie chart task



There are several new forms of family emerging:

Beanpole families - multigenerational families where each generation has a very small number of children.

LATs – Living apart together. Couples who for various reasons, have a relationship and commitment towards each other but choose not to live together.

Neo conventional families – the idea that the nuclear family continues to exist but has changed as women now work.

Lone person households – due to greater affluence, longer life expectancy and increasing individualism, choice and increased divorce, more people live alone today.

Questions

1. What does the activity Learner Resource 1 reveal about family structures in the UK today?

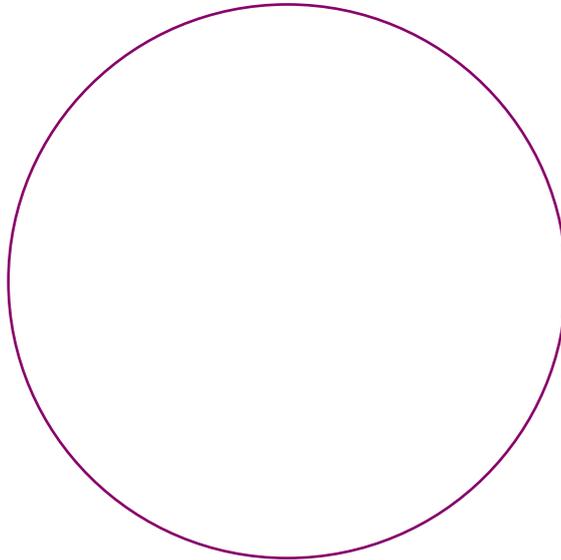
2. Can you think of any problems with putting all reconstituted families in one category?

3. Look at the list of new forms of families that are emerging. Suggest reasons for their emergence.

Learner Resource 2 Pie chart task

4. Fill in the Pie chart beneath to reflect the proportions of family types in the UK today

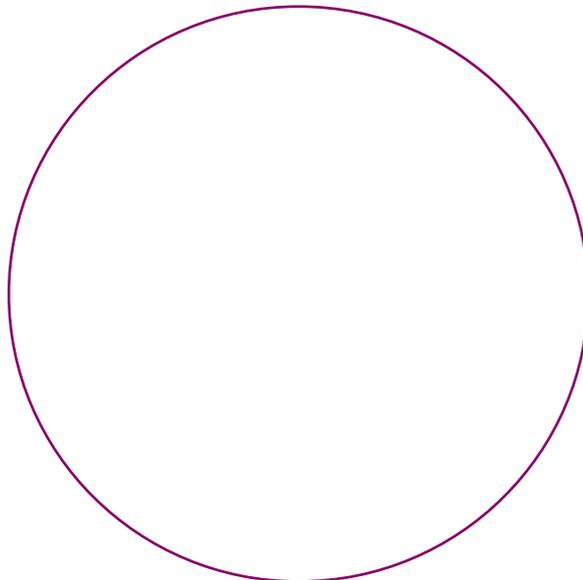
Nuclear, married
Single parent families
Reconstituted families
Lone Person Households



Family Structure 2010
Households and families Jen Beaumont Social Trends 41 ONS

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/index.html?pageSize=50&sortBy=none&sortDirection=none&newquery=household+and+families+Jen+Beaumont+Social+Trends+41>

Can you produce a pie chart with the composition below?



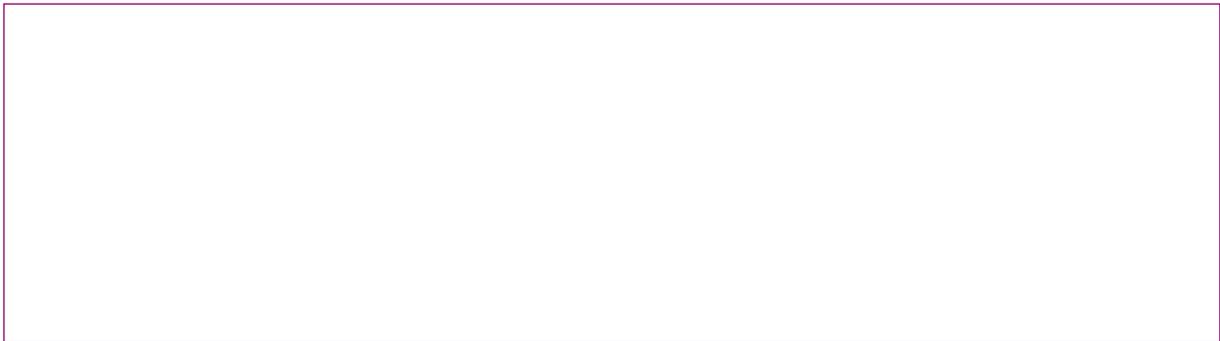
One person households 29 %
One family household: couple 28 %
One family household: with Dependent children 21 %
**One family household: with
Non-dependent children 6 %**
One family household: lone parent 10 %
Other 4 %

Learner Resource 2 Pie chart task

5. Look at the second pie chart with the actual pattern of family diversity. Compare the first chart with the second. Are they different?



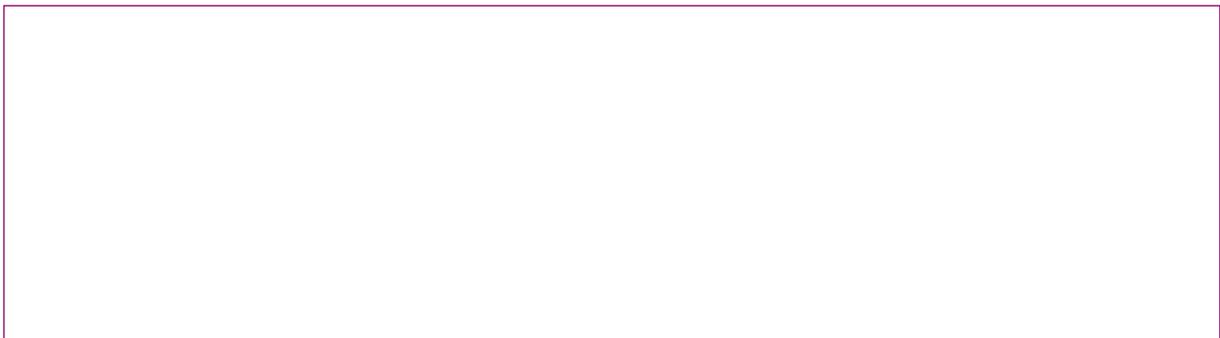
6. What do you think this pie chart will look like in 40 years? Why?



7. What does this tell sociologists about the nature of family life today?



8. What do you think 'other' means?



Learner Resource 3 Emerging types of families

This activity explores some of the different family types that have emerged recently in more detail.

Consider the reasons for these family types emerging and compare these, are there similar reasons for the emergence of new family types?



Beanpole families

Read the following article on beanpole families to be found here: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2002/may/05/johnarlidge.theobserver> and answer the following questions:

Questions:

1. Describe beanpole families.

2. Name two reasons for the increase in beanpole families.

3. What are the problems with the effect of beanpole families on children?

4. What is the sandwich generation?

5. What are boomerang children?

6. Why are beanpole families more damaging to women potentially?

Learner Resource 3 Emerging types of families

Living Apart Together: A New Family Form

Traditionally, according to Irene Levin (2004), marriage has been the social institution for couples that have been together for a long period. However, some decades ago, non-marital cohabitation began to appear in the western world as a new social institution. 'Living apart together' – the LAT relationship – is the most recent development, which seems to have the potential of becoming the third stage in the process of the emerging forms of close emotional relationships. In contrast to couples in 'commuting marriages', who have one main household in common, couples living in LAT relationships have one household each. Levin carried out research on data on the frequency of LAT relationships in Sweden and Norway, and explores the variation which exists within LAT relationships. Levin argues that the establishment of LAT relationships is the natural progression from a society where cohabitation has been established as a family structure.

Adapted from Current Sociology March 2004 vol. 52 no. 2 223-240

Questions

1. What are the three stages of close emotional relationships according to Levin?

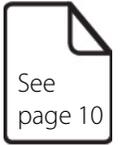
2. Give two reasons why people choose LAT as a family structure.

3. What does this suggest about how priorities have changed in family life?

4. Why do you think that Levin argues that cohabitation has to be established before LAT becomes commonly practised?

Learner Resource 4 Shift from modernity to postmodernity

Changes in the family reflect wider changes in society. In the past, the family was stable, nuclear and roles were largely traditional, with men going out to work and women caring for the children. Ideas about the family were based on religious and traditional ideas. In contrast to this, in the postmodern era, the family became far more fluid and flexible and based on individualism.



Sort the statements below out into the correct column of the table

Grandparents living longer and playing more of a role in their grandchildren's lives as both parents are likely to work	1980's to today
Stability: Formal, distant, based on women's economic dependence on men, empty shell marriage	Negotiated, dual worker families, dual burden, gender scripts, egalitarian
Instability and Choice: Closer and deeper, confluent love (Giddens) greater individualism	Less important, nuclear family more geographically and socially mobile, family wage.
1900-1970's	Nuclear (two generation family, heterosexual couple, married with one or more children)
Traditional, expressive and instrumental roles, the development of the housewife role	Diverse: nuclear, Single parent families, cohabitating couples and families, homosexual families, co-parenting, reconstituted families, beanpole families, lone person households, LATS, empty nest families , class and ethnic diversity, extended families

Learner Resource 4 Shift from modernity to postmodernity

CHARACTERISTIC	MODERN FAMILY	POSTMODERN FAMILY
Approximate dates		
Family structure		
Roles within the family		
Relationships		
Role of extended family		

Learner Resource 5 Changes in the law

There have been some significant changes in the law, which have had impact on family life. These are known as social policies. Social policies can be defined as a law, guideline or plan of action, created by the government which seeks to address a social problem in society.

Place these laws into chronological order on your washing line and suggest the impact they may have had on family life. You may need to look up the dates on the internet as well as the intentions of the policy. Write your work up on the worksheet which follows.



Civil Partnership Act

Similar to marriage, a legally binding relationship for same sex couples.
Non-religious.

The Equality Act

This law makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against employees because of their gender.

Divorce Reform Act

Made it possible for people to divorce on the basis of 'irretrievable breakdown' rather than there having to find one partner at fault.

Same Sex Marriage

Full marriage rights extended to same sex couples.

Learner Resource 5 Changes in the law

Working families tax credit

Designed to encourage women back to work after having children, by giving low income families tax breaks.

Rape made illegal in marriage

Challenging domestic violence and turning it into a public issue.

Adoption for gay couples

Making it possible for gay couples to adopt children.

The Child Support Agency

Set up to make sure that parents take responsibility for their children, financially.

Children's Act

Prioritising the needs of the children over adults, with an emphasis on the desirability of traditional nuclear families.

Learner Resource 6 Changes in the law worksheet

Summarise key changes in social policy that have had impact on family life.



Definition of social policy:

Policy & year	Description	Effects on family life/family diversity
1969		
1989		
1991		
1993		
1997		
2002		
2004		
2010		
2014		

Learner Resource 7 Changing attitudes

There has been a huge shift in attitudes, which you have seen are reflected in the policy changes and the choices that people make about their roles and relationships. This shift in attitudes is summarised below. Using the words below, **fill in the gaps**.



In the earlier part of the 1900's, women were effectively squeezed out of the _____, and made responsible for the care of children while men earned the _____. During the Second World War, women were seen as a _____; they were used to work in factories and in other positions to support the war effort. However, women found themselves back in the home in the _____, when the ideology of the housewife role was at its height. This set of ideas encouraged women to see themselves as caregivers whose priorities were in the home, known as the _____. The man continued to be considered as the primary breadwinner, supporting the family financially, known as the _____.



It was not until the 1960's when there was a shift in social attitudes towards relationships and gender. This was partly due to the second wave of _____, which resulted in greater legal rights for women as well as changes to the way women perceived roles and relationships in the family and beyond.

For the past 30 years, men and women have begun to have _____ of relationships, for example, expecting marriage to be based on _____ rather than practical arrangements alone. _____ became more of a norm, which means to have one faithful relationship after another. Divorce _____ as women in particular felt less obliged to stay in unhappy, oppressive relationships. This is reflected by the fact that two thirds of divorces are petitioned by women. This coincided with the fact that women were participating in _____ at a much higher rate.

At the same time, children's rights were expanding and families were becoming smaller. This reflects _____ society where children are valued and listened to. This is due to the fact that parents have much closer relationships with their parents. Also, childhood takes place over a much longer period today.

The increasing focus on individual fulfilment has led to the search for emotional fulfilment. There is less pressure on people to conform to _____ which were previously upheld by _____, the state and other institutions. Today there is a greater tolerance towards _____, for example. This represents a significant shift away from the recent past. For example, it was not until 1967 that homosexuality was decriminalised.

work place paid labour child centred religion 1950's
traditional family values increased emotional intimacy
Same sex relationships feminism expressive role
Serial monogamy higher expectations instrumental role
Reserve army of labour family wage

Learner Resource 9 Key demographic trends

Key demographic trends in family life and how these have contributed to increasing diversity:



Demographic change	General trend Note any significant changes and suggest reasons for it	Explain what effects that this might have had on family diversity (roles and relationships)
Birth Rate Definition:		
Death Rate Definition:		
Family size:		
Age at first marriage:		
Age when first child is born:		
Ageing population:		
Define dependency ratio:		
Marriage rate Definition:		
Divorce rate Definition:		

Learner Resource 10 Nuclear Family



An introduction to the ideology of the nuclear family

An ideology is a set of ideas. Ideology about the family has shifted from traditional ideas about the dominance of the traditional nuclear family to the emergence of a more complex set of ideas about the family and relationships. The emergence of the traditional nuclear family occurred within the context of several huge changes in society, which sociologists sought to explain. These explanations of change are known as social theories.

Social theories fall into certain groups. There are theories which regard society as working in consensus, or agreement, such as functionalism. On the other hand there are theories which regard society as being based on conflict and inequality, such as Marxism (class conflict) and feminism (inequalities between men and women). More recently other theories have emerged such as interpretivism which seeks to understand family life through the meanings, and postmodernism which as we have seen reflects the shift into a post industrial society where the focus is on greater individualism, choice and diversity.

Some theories see the social world from a structural perspective, claiming that social forces shape the individual. These are known as structural theories such as functionalism, Marxism and feminism. Whilst other theories such as interpretivism see society as shaped by the individual, through a number of social interactions.

Furthermore there are some theories which look at change on the large, macro scale, such as functionalism, Marxism and feminism and others like interpretivism which explore change on the micro, small scale, taking into account interactions between individuals or small groups.

Postmodernism is different; it claims to have moved on from traditional social theory and all of the categories that go with it. It rejects all forms of label. It seeks to describe changes and offer characteristics of society today, rather like themes.

The New Right is a little different; it is not quite a social theory, rather a collection of political and social ideas which are sometimes known as 'political functionalism'. The New Right broadly agrees with functionalist views that the nuclear family is desirable and positive, but go a step further to suggest that alternatives to traditional nuclear families are inadequate. The New Right therefore do not fit into the categories of consensus or conflict, micro/macro as they are not trying to explain change in a sociological sense.

Learner Resource 10 Nuclear Family

These 'types' of theory are shown below. **Fill the gaps, based on the information on the previous page.**

Theoretical perspective	Consensus or conflict?	Structure or action?	Micro or macro?
Functionalism			
New Right			
Marxism			
Feminism			
Interpretivism			
Postmodernism			

Learner Resource 11 Social Theories role play

The following activity summarises the different views that sociologists have on the role of the family.



Functionalist
Functionalist theories were developed in the modern era and so reflect the attitudes and assumptions of the period. Functionalism is a consensus theory, which regards the nuclear family as being positive for both the individual and for wider society. Functionalists argue that the family is beneficial for both the individual and society. The functionalist Parsons argues that the family has two main functions, the primary socialisation of children and the stabilisation of adult personalities.
New Right
The New Right regard the nuclear family as the ideal family form. They argue that traditional roles and relationships provide positive socialisation for children who have clear role models. Within the family, New Right thinkers argue that the mother should take the caregiving expressive role while the father should take the instrumental or breadwinning role. The New Right are critical of alternatives to the nuclear family and express strong concerns with the breakdown of traditional family life, seeing it as leading to problems in wider society such as an increase in antisocial behaviour and crime.
Marxist
Marxists take a conflict view of the family, arguing that it functions to maintain and reinforce capitalist society. Capitalism is the type of society that we live in today. It is based on the ownership of private property and the nuclear family reinforces capitalist ideology and keeps people in their class positions, either working class or middle class. The nuclear family does this through preventing children and adults from questioning the unfairness of the system and providing a place where the frustrations with the system can be vented.
Feminist
Feminists regard the nuclear family as the key site for the reproduction of gender inequalities, reflecting patriarchal ideology. There are various forms of feminism, however feminists share the view that the family is oppressive and damaging for women who end up taking responsibility for domestic work and the mundane jobs and at the same time having less power than their male counterparts. Feminists are in favour of family diversity as they regard new forms of relationships as providing women with a chance to negotiate their roles and relationships in a more egalitarian way.

Learner Resource 11 Social Theories role play

Interpretivist

Interpretivists explore the ways that individuals attach meaning to their behaviour, arguing that it is the small scale interactions which create and express wider changes in society. Interactionists look at the way family members interact with each other and consider the ways that family members make decisions about the kinds of roles and relationships they have.

Postmodernist

Postmodernists focus on post industrial society and argue that there is no such thing as 'the family' today. Instead, people can make a range of decisions about the kinds of relationships and family structures which they prefer as individuals. They claim that there is less social pressure on people to conform to expected norms of what is considered appropriate or acceptable. Postmodernists do not regard the family today as positive or negative, rather, they reflect on some of the changes that have occurred. Some postmodernists reflect on the changes and argue that greater choice and individualism has resulted in greater risk or instability within the family.

Role play activity

In groups of six, allocate a social theory to each individual. Then, discuss the following issues from the perspective of that social theory. What is the cause of each change or issue? What solutions or suggestions might each theory offer?

- High divorce rates
- Antisocial behaviour (such as the cause of the riots that took place in the UK in 2011)
- Women choosing not to have children
- Increase in same sex families
- Domestic violence within the family.

Learner Resource 12 To what extent are roles and relationships within families and households changing?

- d) There is a range of evidence on roles and relationships in the family, summarised below. Sort the evidence into three groups:
- evidence that relationships are becoming more egalitarian
 - evidence that relationships remain patriarchal
 - other evidence.

Cut out the studies and stick them in groups onto a piece of paper, with the question at the top 'Are relationships becoming more egalitarian?' Leave some space at the top and at the bottom.

- e) Taking it further: add a criticism of each piece of research.
Write a summary of the debate from a feminist perspective.
Colour code the research evidence into two categories: is it about housework or is it related to power relationships?
Write a list of all the important concepts in the grid.
- f) Look at the evidence for and against this argument and write an introduction and a conclusion to the debate.

Research evidence on roles and relationships in families

Dunne (1999) carried out research into lesbian couples and found an absence of gender scripts meant that relationships were far more equal and negotiated. Gender scripts are ingrained ideas about what men and women should do according to gender stereotypes.	Oakley (1974) strongly criticised the methodology of Willmott and Young and went on to do her own research to prove them wrong. She found that women remain primarily responsible for domestic labour, despite working in paid labour, resulting in women feeling oppressed by the dual burden of paid work and housework.	Silver and Schor (1993) argue that an increase in technology has led to more labour saving devices which has meant that they have more time to pursue their own careers and interests meaning that relationships have become slightly more equal.
Willmott and Young (1973) carried out a large scale piece of research which they suggested showed that relationships are becoming more symmetrical , meaning that men and women increasingly share the same roles and take joint responsibility for tasks such as housework.	Duncombe and Marsden (1993) carried out research on 40 middle class couples and found that women felt emotionally deserted by their husbands. They found that women felt that they were carrying out a demanding triple shift ; paid work, housework and emotion work. Emotion work includes caring for family members.	Pahl and Vogler (1993) investigated who controls money in relationships and found that there are increasing numbers of couples who share a joint account, despite the dominant pattern being men controlling the finances. This suggests that there is a shift towards greater egalitarianism.
Giddens (2004) a postmodernist sociologist, explains how before modernity, there was little or no intimacy in love relationships. Today, Giddens argues that it has become possible to create and sustain long term loving relationships. He claims that modernity led to greater equality and respect between adults. He calls this type of relationship a ' pure relationship '.	Gershuny (1994) used a longitudinal study over a period of time to measure the effect of women going to work full time. Gershuny found that there was lagged adaptation, that is, when women start to work full time there is a time delay before men begin to contribute more to the housework. Gershuny argues that men are doing more even if it is taking time.	Hardill, Green and Owen (1997) carried out research into decision-making in middle class couples and found that women tend to look to their male partners when making a decision. This includes decisions about the mortgage, moving and buying cars. This, they discovered was common where the men earned more than the woman.

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Teacher Resource 2 Pie chart task



1. What does the activity Learner Resource 1 reveal about family structures in the UK?

There is a lot of family diversity. The Nuclear family is not the dominant family structure.

2. Can you think of any problems with putting all reconstituted families in one category?

They can take many different forms, for example, some children are really close to their step parents or step siblings, whilst others are not. They include a whole range of different arrangements and roles.

3. Look at the list of new forms of families that are emerging. Suggest reasons for their emergence.

*Greater affluence, people can afford to live alone today.
People are living longer so multiple generations are becoming more of a norm.
People live and work in a greater range of places today so LAT may suit this
More people are going to university and living in student households.*

Question 4 involves drawing the pie chart.

5. Look at the pie chart with the actual pattern of family diversity. Compare the first chart with the second. Are they different?

Encourage students to consider why they made those particular assumptions about the composition of families.

6. What do you think this pie chart will look like in 40 years? Why?

Ask students to consider the increasing number of alternatives to the nuclear family and discuss why this is, suggesting greater individualism, secularisation, the changing role of women.

7. What does this tell sociologists about the nature of family life today?

That it is increasingly diverse and that the ideology of the nuclear family is not as dominant as it once was.

8. What do you think 'other' means?

LAT, Co-parenting arrangements, multiple family households.

Teacher Resource 3 Emerging types of families



Beanpole families (Julia Brannen 2002)

1. Describe beanpole families.

Multiple generation families with few children being born in each generation.

2. Name two reasons for the increase in beanpole families

Increased divorce, increased life expectancy, increasing numbers of women working.

3. What are the problems with the effect of beanpole families on children?

Isolated family members, especially children who do not have relatives of their own or a similar age to share experiences with. This could make the children more selfish and individualistic.

4. What is the sandwich generation?

The generation aged 40-60 years old who have to care for their children as well as their parents placing great stress on them and their time.

5. What are boomerang children?

Children who leave home but return after their marriage/relationship breaks down.

6. Why are beanpole families more damaging to women potentially?

They are taking more responsibility/more demanding jobs and yet still have to care for their parents and their children, placing an unrealistic demand on their time.

7. Living Apart Together (LAT)

1. What are the three stages of close emotional relationships according to Levin?

Marriage – cohabitation – LAT.

2. Give two reasons why people choose LAT as a family structure.

Allows flexibility in working arrangements, allows greater individualism, time to spend on individual pursuits, more time for careers. Plus, people are having less children today so they are not necessarily needed at home as much.

3. What does this suggest about how priorities have changed in family life?

Work/career is much more important than home life/having a large family. Living together is not important. Greater priority given to emotional relationships rather than practical – based relationships.

4. Why do you think that Levin argues that cohabitation has to be established before LAT becomes commonly practised?

Because LAT is very different to marriage and cohabitation is progression – mid way between marriage and LAT.

Teacher Resource 4 Shift from modernity to postmodernity

Teachers can ask students to cut out the statements from the Learner Resource 4 worksheet and complete the blank table as follows:

CHARACTERISTIC	MODERN FAMILY	POSTMODERN FAMILY
Approximate dates	<i>1900-1970s</i>	<i>1980s to today</i>
Family structure	<i>Nuclear (two generation family, heterosexual couple, married with one or more children).</i>	<i>Diverse: nuclear, single parent families, cohabitating couples and families, homosexual families, co-parenting, reconstituted families, beanpole families, lone person households, LATS, empty nest families, class and ethnic diversity, extended families.</i>
Roles within the family	<i>Traditional, expressive and instrumental roles, the development of the housewife role.</i>	<i>Negotiated, dual worker families, dual burden, gender scripts, egalitarian.</i>
Relationships	<i>Stability: Formal, distant, based on women's economic dependence on men, empty shell marriage.</i>	<i>Instability and Choice: Closer and deeper, confluent love (Giddens) greater individualism.</i>
Role of extended family	<i>Less important, nuclear family more geographically and socially mobile, family wage.</i>	<i>Grandparents living longer and playing more of a role in their grandchildren's lives as both parents are likely to work.</i>



Teacher Resource 6 Changes in the Law

In this activity, teachers will need to construct a washing line in the classroom, so that the students can sort out the following policies into date order using the learner resource sheet provided. These could be laminated and/or enlarged.

Once they have done this, they should then suggest the possible effects of each policy on family life and record these on the worksheet



Policy & year	Description	Effects on family life/family diversity
1969 Divorce Reform Act	<i>Making divorce possible without blame, making it possible to divorce someone on the basis of 'irretrievable breakdown of marriage'.</i>	<i>Made it possible to divorce more easily. Divorce rates went up dramatically after this law came into effect in 1971, leading to a range of different family structures.</i>
1989 The Children's Act	<i>Giving children the right to make decisions about their life.</i>	<i>This law reflects the increasingly child centred society. Closer relationships with children feeling increasingly valued and protected by the state.</i>
1991 Rape is made illegal in marriage	<i>A law making it possible for a spouse to bring charges against his or her spouse for rape, which made what was considered a private issue, public.</i>	<i>This made a public acknowledgement about domestic violence which made it much easier for people to speak out about their experiences.</i>
1993 The Child Support Agency	<i>This was established to make parents take financial responsibility for their children.</i>	<i>This was a reaction to concerns about promiscuity and designed to return to traditional family values.</i>
1997 Working families tax credits	<i>This was designed to encourage women back to work after having children, giving tax breaks to low earning families.</i>	<i>Encouraging dual worker families and helping women in particular to work. Generous support from the state showing how family life is shaped by the state.</i>
2002 Adoption rights extended to homosexual couples	<i>This made it possible for same sex families to adopt children.</i>	<i>Public recognition of social acceptance of same sex families as a viable alternative to the nuclear family.</i>
2004 Civil Partnership Act	<i>Same sex couples could now have a legally binding contract in recognition of their relationship. Non-religious.</i>	<i>A result of various campaigns to reduce homophobia, and recognition of the increasingly socially acceptable alternatives to the heterosexual relationship.</i>
2010 The Equality Act	<i>This law makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against employees because of their gender.</i>	<i>An attempt to legislate against various forms of discrimination, direct, indirect, harassment and victimisation.</i>
2014 Same sex Marriage	<i>Full marriage rights extended to gay couples, who can now marry in a religious setting.</i>	<i>Full rights given to same sex couples, demonstrating acceptance of the state of this family structure as an alternative to the traditional nuclear family.</i>

Teacher Resource 7 Changes attitudes



Teachers issue the Learner Resource 7 worksheet and ask students to fill in the gaps.

There has been a huge shift in attitudes, which you have seen are reflected in the policy changes and the choices that people make about their roles and relationships. This shift in attitudes is summarised below. Using the words below, **fill in the gaps**.

In the earlier part of the 1900's, women were effectively squeezed out of the work place, and made responsible for the care of children while men earned the family wage. During the Second World War, women were seen as a reserve army of labour; they were used to work in factories and in other positions to support the war effort. However, women found themselves back in the home in the 1950's, when the ideology of the housewife role was at its height. This set of ideas encouraged women to see themselves as caregivers whose priorities were in the home, known as the expressive role. The man continued to be considered as the primary breadwinner, supporting the family financially, known as the instrumental role.

It was not until the 1960's when there was a shift in social attitudes towards relationships and gender. This was partly due to the second wave of feminism, which resulted in greater legal rights for women as well as changes to the way women perceived roles and relationships in the family and beyond.

For the past 30 years, men and women have begun to have higher expectations of relationships, for example, expecting marriage to be based on emotional intimacy rather than practical arrangements alone. Serial monogamy became more of a norm, which means to have one faithful relationship after another. Divorce increased as women in particular felt less obliged to stay in unhappy, oppressive relationships. This is reflected by the fact that two thirds of divorces are petitioned by women. This coincided with the fact that women were participating in paid labour at a much higher rate.

At the same time, children's rights were expanding and families were becoming smaller. This reflects child centred society where children are valued and listened to. This is due to the fact that parents have much closer relationships with their parents. Also childhood takes place over a much longer period today.

The increasing focus on individual fulfilment has led to the search for emotional fulfilment. There is less pressure on people to conform to traditional family values which were previously upheld by religion, the state and other institutions. Today there is a greater tolerance towards same sex relationships, for example. This represents a significant shift away from the recent past. For example, it was not until 1967 that homosexuality was decriminalised.

Teacher Resource 9 Key Demographic trends

Divide your students into small groups and ask them to select one of the following topics in the left hand column of the table to research. Students are not expected to remember large amounts of statistical data about each trend, but they should be aware of the overall trend and any significant changes.

Once they have carried out their research, use the work sheet to ask students to share their findings. Then ask students to work in pairs and consider the impact of these changes on family diversity, in terms of the structure, roles and relationships found in the UK. This sheet could be blown up to A3 for more detail. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons> is a good place to start.



Demographic change	General trend Note any significant changes and suggest reasons for it.	Explain what effects that this might have had on family diversity (roles and relationships)
Birth Rate Definition: The number of live births per 1000, per year	<i>Generally declining, UK born mothers have a birth rate of 1.7, whereas immigrants have a slightly higher birth rate, or 2.3 bringing the overall birth rate to 1.9.</i>	<i>Smaller families, having less children means women are more likely to be able to pursue careers. More time and energy spent on each child.</i>
Death Rate Definition: the number of deaths per 1000 per year	<i>Declining due to increasing affluence and quality of life, better education, better healthcare and medical knowledge.</i>	<i>More older people, leading to an ageing population and an increased dependency ratio. Puts greater pressure on women in families to care for elderly relatives. On the other hand, grandparents may be active for longer and play more of a role in their grandchildren's lives, as well as helping with childcare while both parents work.</i>
Family size:	<i>Decreasing due to the cost of raising children. Immigrant families typically have larger families however.</i>	<i>More beanpole families, the family is more geographically mobile which suits being flexible to move for work. Some argue smaller families lead to them being more isolated and possibly more conflict ridden, due to the lack of support from the extended family.</i>
Age at first marriage:	<i>Much later due to the cost of weddings, cohabitation being seen as an acceptable alternative, people especially women attending university and being more career-centred.</i>	<i>More cohabiting couples, greater number of people choosing to live alone, greater expectations about marriage mean people are less willing to commit until they have lived with their partner first. Marriage less valued in society?</i>
Age when first child is born:	<i>Later, on average now. Due to increasing career centredness, more effective contraception.</i>	<i>Less children being born due to later starting age, lower fertility rates contributing to an increasing dependency ratio.</i>
Ageing population Definition of dependency ratio: the difference between the number of people working and those not working	<i>Decreasing rate of first marriage but increasing numbers of subsequent marriages.</i>	<i>Greater strain on women who usually take care of the older family members, older people playing a greater role in the lives of their grandchildren. More beanpole families.</i>
Marriage rate Definition: The number of people getting married per 1000, per year	<i>Increased due to laws making divorce easier, greater expectations, women being financially self sufficient.</i>	<i>An increase in serial monogamy. Greater instability/change in family life, greater expectations about relationships, perhaps greater emotional fulfilment, greater numbers of people cohabiting/LATs/choosing to be single.</i>
Divorce rate Definition: The number of people divorcing per 1000, per year	<i>Increased due to laws making divorce easier, greater expectations, women being financially self sufficient.</i>	<i>An increase in people living alone after their divorce or returning to their parents (boomerang families) more cohabiting couples, more lone parent families, greater instability in family life, more remarriage.</i>

Teacher Resource 10 Nuclear family

Teachers ask students to read the worksheet and complete the table.

Suggested answers for types of theory



Theoretical perspective	Consensus or conflict?	Structure or action?	Micro or macro?
Functionalism	Consensus	Structure	Macro
Marxism	Conflict	Structure	Macro
Feminism	Conflict	Structure	Macro
Interpretivism	Neither	Action	Micro
Postmodernism	Neither	Neither	Neither



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