

What do we mean by family?

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L004 • v1.0

CONNECT & CHECK | SHARE | PRESENT | APPLY | RECALL & REVIEW

What do we mean by family?

Connect & Check → Share → Present → Apply → Recall & Review. Define the concepts, classify fictional cases and judge what each rule includes or misses. Use fictional examples; no personal family disclosure is required.

Recall and connect

Missed the preparation? Residence describes where people live; family ties can cross addresses; a research rule must state who is included.

Use L003 to ask what different perspectives would want to know before classifying a relationship.

R1

Compare one structural question and one social-action question about a family.

R2

What did the flipped readings suggest about residence, relationships and counting rules?

R3

Starting view: “Everyone sharing a home is one family.” Agree, unsure or disagree? Explain.

Discover family and household

There is no single definition suitable for every sociological question. Household is a residential concept. Family may refer to different combinations of kinship, partnership, care and belonging. Always state which meaning you are using.

D1

Explain family, household and kinship using different examples.

D2

Can a person live alone and still have meaningful family relationships? Explain the distinction.

Discover a statistical rule

ONS families-and-households statistics count married, civil-partnered or cohabiting couples living together, with or without children, and lone parents living with a child. Children can be dependent or non-dependent under specified rules. A household can contain no family, one family or more than one. This is a counting convention, not a ranking.

D3

Apply the ONS rule to a couple without children and case B: three friends with no couple or parent–child relationship.

D4

Hinge: use case B, where no resident lives with their partner or child. A: automatically one family; B: one household, no ONS family. Choose and explain.

Discover forms and boundaries

Nuclear, extended, lone-parent and reconstituted describe different arrangements; they do not rank care or worth. A chosen-family account asks about lasting care and belonging. A category describing form does not tell us how power is exercised.

D5

Why can extended kinship and separate households exist together?

D6

Explain one strength and one limit of a precise counting rule.

Apply definitions to cases

Four fictional cases. In A, B and C, all residents share one address, cooking facilities and a living room. A: Leila and Jo are a couple living with their dependent child. B: three unrelated adult friends live together; no resident lives with their partner or child. C: a couple and their dependent child live with one unpartnered grandparent. D: a separated parent lives alone; their child has their usual home elsewhere, with regular care and contact across addresses. Classify without ranking relationships.



Observe what is visible, then identify what you would need to ask. Photograph also appears on slide 19.

A1

Can the photograph establish that the people are relatives? Identify one observation and one question.

Apply: classify the four cases

Four fictional cases. In A, B and C, all residents share one address, cooking facilities and a living room. A: Leila and Jo are a couple living with their dependent child. B: three unrelated adult friends live together; no resident lives with their partner or child. C: a couple and their dependent child live with one unpartnered grandparent. D: a separated parent lives alone; their child has their usual home elsewhere, with regular care and contact across addresses. Classify without ranking relationships.

A2

Classify cases A, B and C as households and ONS families. Then describe a wider relationship each rule might miss.

A3

Use case D to explain why a map of care might differ from a map of addresses.

Optional scaffold: Using [definition], this case [does / does not] fit because... This rule makes [feature] visible, but may miss...

Challenge the definition

Judge a definition against the research question. A useful rule for counting residential units may be insufficient for studying belonging or care.

C1

A researcher wants to understand who provides care. Is counting family forms sufficient? Give a reasoned judgement.

C2

Improve: “They live together, so they must be one family.”

Prove and improve

Complete retrieval, then write independently for eight minutes using the local classroom rubric.

P1

Explain two reasons why family and household are not the same concept. [6 marks]

P2

Check that each reason uses a clear definition and a different example. Improve one link.

P3

Return to R3. State one definition, one boundary and one question to investigate next.

Prepare for Lesson 5

Read the passages below about normality, denominators and change.

Two meanings of normal

A claim that a family form is common describes a frequency. A claim that it is the correct form makes a judgement. These are different claims and need different reasoning.

Different denominators

The percentage of households of a given type and the percentage of families of a given type use different totals. A person living alone is a household but is not counted as a family in the ONS families-and-households publication.

Evidence and change

A snapshot can describe patterns at a date. It does not show that every individual follows the same path, why patterns arose or which relationships are supportive.

F1

Explain the difference between “common” and “correct”.

F2

Why must a percentage say whether it counts people, families or households?

F3

Write one question about a “normal family” claim. Retrieve two L004 terms tomorrow and next week.

Retrieval check for self-study

Complete before the extended response. Cover the key while answering. One mark per correct answer; total 6. Correct insecure ideas and retry tomorrow. Extended writing needs teacher review.

Q1

What makes the friends in case B one household?

A Shared residence and specified facilities B A shared surname C All being relatives

Q2

Under the stated ONS rule, which counts as a family?

A Any person living alone B Any two friends C A co-resident couple without children

Q3

What is an operational definition?

A A theory that cannot be challenged B A rule for deciding what to count or measure C A judgement about the best lifestyle

Q4

Which is a careful statement about wider family ties?

A They can connect people across households B They always require one shared address C They can be inferred from appearance

Q5

Case C is best classified how under the ONS rule?

A No household because a grandparent lives there B Two families automatically C One household with one family and another resident

Q6

Why might counts from two studies differ?

A One must be dishonest B Their inclusion rules may differ C Definitions never affect findings

Self-marking key

Q1: A. Q2: C. Q3: B. Q4: A. Q5: C. Q6: B.