LEARNER WORKBOOK

Is there a ‘normal’ family?

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L005 • v1.0

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

Connect & Check → Share → Present → Apply → Recall & Review. Distinguish descriptive and normative uses of normal; interpret a percentage with its correct denominator; explain diversity within and between family forms; challenge an unsupported inference. Use fictional examples; no personal family disclosure is required.

Recall and connect

Missed the preparation? Common describes frequency. Correct expresses a judgement. A percentage needs a defined total, and a snapshot cannot show every person’s life course.

Retrieve L004, then consider what a claim about normality actually means.

R1

Explain the difference between family and household.

R2

What did the flipped readings say about common, correct and denominators?

R3

Starting view: “The most common family must be the best family.” Agree, unsure or disagree? Explain.

Discover meanings of normal

Normal can refer to frequency, a social expectation or a judgement of desirability. These meanings must be distinguished before examining evidence.

D1

Write one descriptive statement and one normative statement about family life.

D2

Explain how a family expectation can vary between settings.

Discover evidence and denominators

Official evidence: ONS estimates for the UK in 2025, published 17 April 2026. One-family households formed 66.8% of households; people living alone formed 29.5% of households. Married-couple families formed 65.3% of families. These percentages have different denominators. A one-family household may include a couple without children or a lone parent, and may contain an additional resident. These are population estimates, not measures of care or relationship quality.

D3

Write one accurate sentence using 66.8%, and one using 65.3%. Name the denominator each time.

D4

Hinge: “29.5% of UK people lived alone in 2025.” Does the supplied evidence support this wording?

Discover forms practices and change

Family diversity includes differences in composition, in what people do and in relationships over a life course. A category may contain considerable variation.

D5

How can two families have the same form but different experiences?

D6

Why can a snapshot and a study following the same people answer different questions?

Apply the evidence

Fictional cases, designed for comparison rather than representing UK frequencies. A: two parents and a child share care equally. B: two parents and a child have the same family form as A, but one parent does most unpaid care. C: a lone parent and child receive regular support from a relative living elsewhere. D: an adult lives alone after previously cohabiting; the adult maintains family ties across addresses. No case establishes which arrangement is best.

Observe the visible activity and identify what further evidence is needed. This photograph also appears on slide 19.

A1

What can the photograph show, and what would you need to ask before describing the people as a family?

Apply the case evidence

Fictional cases, designed for comparison rather than representing UK frequencies. A: two parents and a child share care equally. B: two parents and a child have the same family form as A, but one parent does most unpaid care. C: a lone parent and child receive regular support from a relative living elsewhere. D: an adult lives alone after previously cohabiting; the adult maintains family ties across addresses. No case establishes which arrangement is best.

A2

Compare A with B, then use C to explain a different limit of a family-form category.

A3

Use D to explain why “living alone” does not mean “has no family”.

Optional scaffold: The claim uses normal to mean… The evidence measures… In this example… It cannot establish… To investigate further, we need…

Challenge the claim

Separate what the evidence measures from what a headline adds.

C1

Does the 65.3% estimate establish that married-couple families provide better care? Explain and propose useful further evidence.

C2

Improve: “One-family households are normal, so other households are wrong.”

Prove and improve

Complete retrieval before writing independently for eight minutes.

P1

Explain two ways family life may be diverse. [6 marks]

P2

Check that your two dimensions differ. Improve one example and its explanation.

P3

Return to R3. State a more precise conclusion and one question for further research.

Prepare for Lesson 6

Read the passages about questions, sources and ethical design.

A research question

A question about how often something happens needs different evidence from a question about what it means. Define unpaid care before collecting accounts of it.

Different sources

A questionnaire can collect comparable answers from many people. An interview can explore meanings in depth. Each design has limitations; method labels alone do not guarantee quality.

Ethical design

Participation should be informed and voluntary. Family research may involve private relationships. For our next lesson, use the supplied fictional research proposals rather than questioning classmates about their homes.

F1

How would a question about the amount of care differ from a question about its meaning?

F2

Suggest one reason for combining a questionnaire with an interview.

F3

Write one ethical question for a family researcher. Retrieve two L005 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

Which statement is a normative judgement?

A One type is the most frequent B One type ought to be preferred C A survey counts households

Q2

What is the denominator for the 66.8% estimate?

A UK households in 2025 B All UK people C Only couples with children

Q3

What can a one-family household contain?

A Only married parents and children B Only relatives with identical needs C A couple without children or a lone-parent family

Q4

What do cases A and B illustrate?

A Identical experiences in every family B Different practices within the same form C A representative UK survey

Q5

What would best follow one person's changing relationships?

A A single photograph B One population total C A study following that person over time

Q6

Does being common establish that a form is best?

A No; that conclusion needs a separate argument B Yes, automatically C Only when the percentage exceeds 50

Self marking key

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