

Teacher guide and answers

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • L007 • 90 minutes • v1.0

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Purpose and curriculum position

Why might society need families?

Develop a functionalist explanation of families through Murdock's four functions, then evaluate whether a contribution establishes universality, necessity or equal benefit. Keep Parsons' account of industrial society for L008.

Explain functionalism as a structural consensus approach; distinguish Murdock's four functions; apply two functions to a fictional case; develop a challenge using alternatives or unequal effects.

Preparation and materials

Slides 1–30 total 90 minutes; slides 31–32 support optional 15-minute practice. The separate 15-mark mini-test sits outside the lesson. Supply the workbook, organiser and six-mark sheet. Retrieve L003 perspectives, L002 socialisation and L006 distinctions between a claim, evidence and method. Use L006 flipped readings on institutions, contributions and evaluation.

Test local saving before teaching. Export a backup at the end. This standalone HTML file has no connected teacher dashboard or synchronised classroom control. A teacher or facilitator should lead delivery and review extended writing.

Emotional safety and access

Use the supplied fictional cases. Avoid inferring personal characteristics from appearance. No learner needs to disclose family circumstances. Offer private writing, verbal rehearsal, read-aloud prompts and a scribe where appropriate. Describe the photograph aloud. Research tasks are design exercises using supplied material, not instructions to collect personal information.

Delivery and adaptation

Minutes	Slides	Focus
0–9	1–4	Retrieve institutions, claims and socialisation
9–23	5–10	Functionalist framework and four functions
23–34	11–14	Mechanisms, overlap and the universality claim
34–41	15–18	Functional alternatives and unequal effects
41–60	19–23	Photograph enquiry and Vale case
60–71	24–26	Retrieval and evaluation of necessity
71–84	27–28	Independent six-mark response and feedback
84–90	29–30	Exit and preparation for Parsons

Access

Pre-teach function as contribution. Provide the four labels during guided work, then remove them for retrieval. Read the case aloud and identify only details it actually supplies.

Scaffold

A functionalist would identify... The case detail shows... This may contribute to... However... This challenges the claim because...

Core

At D4, test whether learners confuse useful with uniquely necessary. In A2, require a case detail, function and mechanism before evaluating.

Stretch

Distinguish an example that illustrates a claim from evidence that tests a universal claim. Ask whether alternatives weaken uniqueness, universality or the claim of equal benefit.

Answers for Recall and Discover

R1

Learning norms, values and roles; for example, a carer teaching a child to take turns.

R2

What contribution does it make to the continuity or order of the wider society?

R3

Usefulness does not establish uniqueness or necessity; other arrangements may perform a similar contribution.

D1

Structural: the explanation links family activity to wider institutions. Consensus: shared expectations learnt in family life may help people cooperate.

D2

Teaching turn-taking is an activity. Explaining how it helps transmit shared expectations links that activity to wider social order.

D3

Sexual: socially approved regulation of relationships in Murdock's account. Reproductive: a succeeding generation. Educational: transmission of culture. Economic: cooperation to meet material needs.

D4

No. A similar contribution may be shared or performed elsewhere; usefulness does not establish exclusivity.

D5

If another arrangement performs the contribution, the claim that one family form is uniquely necessary is weakened.

D6

Benefits and burdens may be distributed unequally. A contribution to continuity need not improve each member's experience.

Answers for Apply and Challenge

A1

Adults examining materials are visible. Their relationship, purpose and effect on a wider system are not established.

A2

Teaching turn-taking illustrates educational socialisation. Sharing income to meet food and housing needs illustrates economic cooperation.

A3

The school also teaches, challenging exclusivity. One parent's greater unpaid care limits paid-work time, challenging an assumption of equal benefit.

C1

No. It is fictional and omits sexual and reproductive details. A universal claim needs clearly defined, credible comparative evidence and consideration of counterexamples.

C2

Families may make contributions such as socialisation and material provision. The effects and distribution of burdens require investigation; a contribution does not establish universal benefit.

Retrieval answers

Q1 A: Functional explanation links an activity to a wider system. Q2 C: These are the four functions in Murdock's account. Q3 B: It transmits an expected way of behaving. Q4 A: Pooling resources can meet material needs. Q5 C: Alternatives challenge the claim that an arrangement is uniquely necessary. Q6 B: A possible contribution can coexist with unequal burdens.

Answers for Prove and preparation

P1

See teacher-only guidance.

P2

Use two distinct Murdock functions. Explain how the activity contributes rather than listing activities.

P3

For example, socialisation can contribute to order, while schools and other institutions also socialise.

F1

Changes in work, residence and mobility may alter family activities and connections with other institutions.

F2

Primary socialisation and stabilisation of adult personalities.

F3

Historical and comparative evidence on changes in family arrangements and economic organisation, with attention to exceptions.

Content checks and sources

Function does not mean every outcome is beneficial. Murdock's four functions are not Parsons' two functions. Educational includes socialisation beyond formal schooling. Economic includes cooperation and unpaid provision, not only wages. A function is not evidence that one form is uniquely necessary.

Murdock's nuclear-family universality claim concerns societies, not a claim that every individual household has the same composition. Murdock's comparative account is presented as a claim, not a proven rule applying to every present-day family. His historically narrow model must not become a judgement of learners' families. The sexual function concerns socially approved regulation in his account; it is not classroom advice or a claim that all sexual relationships occur in marriage. Reproduction concerns a succeeding generation, not an obligation on each family or adult to have children. Do not infer sexual or reproductive details from the Vale case or the photograph. Parsons and functional fit are developed in L008.

All fictional cases, questions and models are original. Source and assessment-format checks: 27 September 2026.

AQA Families and Households

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/a-level/sociology-7192/specification/subject-content/topics-in-sociology>

OpenStax overview of Murdock and functionalism

<https://openstax.org/books/introduction-sociology-3e/pages/14-2-variations-in-family-life>

Cambridge: Families Across Cultures, discussion of Murdock

https://assets.cambridge.org/052182/2971/excerpt/0521822971_excerpt.htm

HRAF bibliographic record: Murdock, Social Structure (1949)

<https://hraf.yale.edu/ehc/documents/585>

AQA Theory and Methods

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/a-level/sociology-7192/specification/subject-content/education-with-theory-and-methods>

AQA Paper 2 specimen format

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/sociology/AQA-71922-SMS.PDF>