

Knowledge organiser

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L009 • v1.0

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Does the family benefit everyone?

Concept	Meaning
Function	A contribution an activity or institution makes to a wider social system.
Dysfunction	An effect that disrupts a system or harms its operation.
Consensus	Shared expectations or agreement, emphasised in functionalist explanations.
Conflict	Opposed interests or struggles over resources and power.
Distribution	How benefits, resources or burdens are allocated among people.
Unpaid care	Support for others' needs without direct payment.
Opportunity cost	An option forgone when time or resources are used elsewhere.
Power	Capacity to influence decisions, actions or access to resources.

A fair test of a theory

Concept	Meaning
Functional alternative	Another arrangement that may perform a similar contribution.
Universality	A claim that something exists across all relevant cases.
Necessity	A claim that an outcome requires a particular arrangement.
Evaluation	Reasoned assessment of an explanation's strengths and limits.
Counterexample	A case that challenges a general claim.
Evidence	Information used to support or question a claim.
Scope	The situations or cases to which an explanation applies.
Qualified judgement	A conclusion that states its conditions and limits.

Worked explanation

Pooled income may meet material needs. Jo's forgone training illustrates an opportunity cost that is not shared equally; link the claim to the specified detail.

Avoid these confusions

Functionalist contributions are represented fairly before evaluation. Unequal care, conflict and affection can coexist; none is inferred from a family label. Critiques of universality, necessity and equal benefit are kept distinct. Personal disclosures are not required; if a learner raises a safeguarding concern, follow the setting's established process privately.

Retrieve later

Tomorrow: define function and dysfunction. In one week: explain a case mechanism and one limit without notes.