

How diverse are families?

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • L016 • v1.0

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

Connect & Check → Share → Present → Apply → Recall & Review. Explain the key concepts, apply them accurately to the supplied case and answer the enquiry with a qualified, evidence-led judgement. Use fictional examples; no personal family disclosure is required.

Recall and connect

Missed the preparation? What can a household count miss about personal life? Meaningful ties, care and obligations across addresses. How is family display different from publicity? It concerns the recognition of a relationship's meaning by relevant others. Why should resources remain part of a relational explanation? Money, time and access shape how relationships can be sustained in practice.

Retrieve the previous lesson, then record a view you can revisit.

R1

What can a household count miss about personal life?

R2

How is family display different from publicity?

R3

Starting judgement: "Knowing a family's structure tells us everything important about it." Explain your view.

A multidimensional map

The Rapoport identified organisational, cultural, class, life-course and cohort dimensions of family diversity. These are analytical lenses, not five boxes into which every family fits once. Organisation includes composition and divisions of labour. Cultural expectations and class resources can vary within the same family form. Applying several dimensions helps explain what a single label leaves out.

D1

Identify the five dimensions and explain why they can overlap.

D2

Give an organisational difference within one family form.

Lives change; generations differ

Life-course diversity concerns transitions within a life, such as moving from living with parents to sharing accommodation or becoming a carer. Cohort diversity concerns the historical experiences of groups born or entering life stages at different times. Comparing younger and older people at one moment cannot automatically distinguish ageing, cohort and period influences. Historical and longitudinal evidence can help.

D3

Explain class diversity without reducing it to personal taste.

D4

Distinguish life-course and cohort diversity using separate examples.

Use categories carefully

A cultural label does not predict every person's values or practices. Families within an ethnic, religious or class category can differ, and individuals negotiate expectations. Diversity also exists in care and power within apparently similar forms. The aim is a more precise description, followed by an explanation supported by evidence, not a ranking of families or an assumption that every variation is equally common.

D5

Why should a cultural explanation avoid predicting everyone's practices from a label?

D6

Why can a younger-versus-older comparison at one time be ambiguous?

Apply the evidence

Fictional comparison: Asha and Ben share paid work and care; another couple, Cara and Dan, divide those activities differently. Asha's irregular hours limit childcare options. Cara and Dan negotiate two inherited celebration traditions. At 22, Lee lives with friends; at 35, Lee lives with a partner and child. Older and younger residents describe entering housing markets in different historical periods. The accounts illustrate overlapping dimensions, not population frequencies.



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

A1

Describe what is visible in the photograph. What further evidence would be needed to apply this lesson's concepts?

Apply the case evidence

Fictional comparison: Asha and Ben share paid work and care; another couple, Cara and Dan, divide those activities differently. Asha's irregular hours limit childcare options. Cara and Dan negotiate two inherited celebration traditions. At 22, Lee lives with friends; at 35, Lee lives with a partner and child. Older and younger residents describe entering housing markets in different historical periods. The accounts illustrate overlapping dimensions, not population frequencies.

A2

Apply three diversity dimensions to distinct case details.

A3

Separate the life-course example from the cohort example.

Optional scaffold: Name the concept → select a precise case detail → explain the connection → state what the detail cannot establish. Rehearse aloud, then write independently.

Challenge and judge

Make a precise claim, connect it to evidence and state its limits.

C1

How could a study investigate change without treating a snapshot as a whole life?

C2

Improve: “All couple families are alike, while cultural groups determine behaviour.”

Prove and improve

Complete retrieval, then write independently for eight minutes.

P1

Explain two dimensions of family diversity identified by the Rapoport. [6 marks]

P2

Identify the two points in your response. Improve one missing explanation or example.

P3

Return to R3. Give a qualified judgement and identify one piece of evidence still needed.

Prepare for Lesson 17

Read the three short passages and answer the preparation questions.

Different meanings of normal

Normal can mean common, socially accepted or desirable. These meanings should not be exchanged without argument. Counts can show the prevalence of categories, but they do not establish whether everyone approves of them or whether one form produces better experiences. Diversity can increase while a particular category remains common, and acceptance can vary between settings.

Two connected concepts

Descriptive normality: What is common or statistically typical in a specified context. Normative normality: What people regard as acceptable, proper or expected.

A question to bring

Distinguish statistical prevalence from social acceptance. Prevalence describes how common a category is. Acceptance concerns judgements and treatment; attitudes or experiences need separate evidence.

F1

Summarise the main idea in the first passage in one or two sentences.

F2

Define descriptive normality and give an original fictional example.

F3

What evidence would you need to test the opening claim? Retrieve two current-lesson concepts 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 meaning best fits family diversity?

A Variation between groups shaped by different historical experiences. B Variation in family forms, practices, meanings and experiences. C A statistical living unit defined by shared accommodation and facilities.

Q2

Which meaning best fits life-course diversity?

A A statistical living unit defined by shared accommodation and facilities. B Observation of a population at a particular point in time. C Variation linked to stages and transitions within people's lives.

Q3

Which meaning best fits life stage?

A A position or phase within a person's changing life circumstances. B Differences among families sharing a broad compositional label. C Variation in family forms, practices, meanings and experiences.

Q4

Which meaning best fits cross-sectional view?

A Variation in beliefs, values and practices connected with cultural contexts. B Observation of a population at a particular point in time. C People grouped by a shared timing characteristic, such as birth period.

Q5

A person moves from living with parents to living with friends. What is directly illustrated?

A A life-course transition. B Proof that every birth cohort has different values. C The question can be answered from a person's appearance alone.

Q6

What can the supplied fictional case establish?

A It proves what all UK families do. B It establishes a causal law without further evidence. C It illustrates a mechanism to examine with further evidence.

Self marking key

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