

L024 Domestic labour - Workbook

AQA A Level Sociology 7192 • Families & Households • Couples • 90 minutes

Connect & check

Define the core concept and identify one relevant perspective before the new teaching begins.

Focus	Detailed notes
Key terms	domestic labour, division of labour, conjugal roles, symmetrical family, gender socialisation, time-use evidence, responsibility
Theory reminder	Functionalism: family roles may be presented as complementary, but this risks treating inequality as natural.; Feminism: unpaid work can reproduce patriarchy when women do more routine work and carry responsibility.; Interactionism: couples negotiate meanings in everyday routines, but negotiation happens within structural constraints.
Study focus	Young & Willmott; Ann Oakley; Jonathan Gershuny; Oriel Sullivan

Study organiser

Young & Willmott: Symmetrical family thesis: more companionate marriage, shared leisure and gradual movement toward joint roles. Evaluation: Useful for analysing change, but “more shared” is not the same as equal responsibility.

Ann Oakley: Challenged the symmetry claim: housework remained gendered and routine domestic labour still fell mainly to women. Evaluation: Powerful for exposing hidden inequality, but must be updated using contemporary evidence.

Jonathan Gershuny: Lagged adaptation: men may increase domestic work as women’s employment rises, but household practice changes slowly. Evaluation: Explains change without assuming full equality; still needs evidence about care and mental load.

Oriel Sullivan: Time-use studies can show gradual change in men’s participation, but measurement choices matter. Evaluation: Encourages methodological evaluation: minutes do not capture responsibility alone.

Apply

Choose ACCESS, SCAFFOLD, CORE or STRETCH. Use the fictional case and write a developed paragraph. Include one concept, one named study and one evaluative sentence.

ACCESS: _____

SCAFFOLD: _____

CORE: _____

STRETCH: _____

Exam practice

Applying material from Item A, analyse two ways domestic labour may remain unequal in contemporary couples. [10 marks]

Plan: point 1 / point 2 / evidence / evaluation.

Evaluate the view that domestic labour in couples has become equal. [30 marks]

30-mark judgement plan: argument, counter-argument, evidence, conclusion.

Sources: AQA specification:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/a-level/sociology-7192/specification/subject-content/topics-in-sociology>; ONS Time Use in the UK 2023:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/bulletins/timeuseintheuk/23septemberto1october2023>; ONS Families and the Labour Market:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/familiesandthelabourmarketengland/2021>; British Social Attitudes gender roles:

<https://natcen.ac.uk/publications/british-social-attitudes-40-gender-roles>; AQA assessment materials:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/a-level/sociology-7192/assessment-resources>