



Essays on Families and Households Section B

Tip: Essays are always a debate. So, you must include argument here with lots of evaluation throughout your answer. Start with a plan of all of the points for and against.

Tip: Turn the command into a question, e.g. evaluate the view that traditional families are good for individuals and for society.

This could become: who says that traditional families are good for individuals and for society and are they right? This will enable you to sort the points for and against much more easily. But remember, don't just describe all of the points. You must explain and evaluate them.

Your essays must always be a debate which contain a spread of AO1, AO2 and AO3 skills.

Suggested writing framework for every section of your essay:

[D] escribe a point or a view that is relevant to the focus

[E] xplain what it means

[S] upport and criticise the point or view with evidence

[I] nterpret what each reference to evidence shows

[R] efer (apply) this to the debate

[E] valuate - point out the strengths and weaknesses of the specific idea (remember to make a judgement at the end)

Do:

- have a good spread of all 3 skills throughout your essays
- make a judgement based on the debate in the essay
- use evidence.

Don't:

- just evaluate at the end
- describe opposing views.

Revision tip

Using different coloured cards, summarise the main ideas and writers for each theory. Put studies that support each theory on matching coloured cards. Practice explaining how each study could be used to support the theory. Then, try and use the studies to criticise the other theories.

Organising ideas and evidence

Families & Households: A few examples (there are a lot more!)

Theory	Basic ideas	Key writers	Supporting evidence	Criticisms & evidence
Functionalism / New Right	Family is essential It performs important functions Nuclear families are best	Parsons Murdock Murray Fletcher	Universality of family Cockett & Tripp McLanahan & Booth South Asian families, Bhatti	Diversity of family types Bernades Stacy Feminist theory and studies Laing Leech Cooper
Marxist	Families help to maintain capitalism Marriage is a creation of capitalist society	Zaretsky Marx Engels	Evans and Chandler; pester power	Diversity Rapoport & Rapoport
Feminist	Traditional families exploit women and children	Benston Ansley Millett Oakley Delphey and Leonard	Stanko Duncombe and Marsden Delphey & Leonard Ferri & Smith Edgell Gershuny	Somerville Morgan Calhoun (same sex families) Dunne Weekes et al Diversity Rapoport & Rapoport Allen & Crow
Postmodernist	Traditional ideas about family are out of date Diversity and choice are relevant today	Stacy Beck-Gernsheim	ONS Dunne Weeks et al Co-habitation Inter-ethnic families	