Revision

Families and Households

Joan Garrod

This issue contains an exercise to make you think about what lies behind published statistics — in this case, statistics on domestic abuse. It is important to remember that statistics have to be interpreted and evaluated in order to judge their usefulness and also what they tell us about the issue in question.

There are also some specimen short-answer questions to help practise and revise the important topic of Families and Households.

The PowerPoint slides pick out some of the key findings from the latest British Social Attitudes report.

The lower-mark questions for the topic of Families and Households differ slightly depending on whether it is the AQA or OCR specification. The best way of ensuring that you are tackling these questions appropriately is to read carefully the report issued by each awarding body.

Here are some guidelines taken from these reports which offer general guidance on how to achieve good marks. In each case, this is followed by a couple of specimen questions for you to try, to see whether you can apply the guidance to your own answer.

AQA

The first 10-mark question typically follows the format, ‘Outline and explain two (somethings).’ These are some points taken from the report on the June 2018 examination.

- In this type of question, do not write introductory paragraphs and/or conclusions. These are unlikely to gain additional marks, and take up valuable time.
- If you are asked for ‘two’ somethings, then that is what you must offer — not one, or three or more.
- Make sure that you signal to the examiner that you are offering the two reasons/ways/explanations asked for. A good way of doing this is to state clearly, ‘One way is…’ then ‘A second way is…’ It is also helpful to leave a space and start each separate point in a new paragraph.
- ‘Outline and explain’ questions do not require evaluation. Rather, you should focus on using sociological concepts and present appropriate evidence and, if relevant, theory.
- In answering such questions, you cannot simply recycle knowledge. You need to bring together the relevant aspects of your knowledge and focus them on answering the question.

Now, bearing all these points in mind, answer the following questions:
Questions
1. Outline and explain two ways in which the role of children within families has changed since the 1950s.
2. Outline and explain two reasons for the increase in one-person households.

OCR
Comparable questions from OCR carry 12 marks, and a typical format is to be asked to ‘Outline two (somethings),’ but also has the instruction to ‘Illustrate your answer with examples.’ The guidance from the AQA report is also relevant, but here are some general points from the OCR Report for the June 2018 examination.

- In order to achieve marks in the highest band, you need to include a range of sociological evidence.
- ‘Anecdotal evidence’ is that bordering on common sense and is not rewarded.
- High-achieving candidates offer a range of sociological evidence, including sociological studies, concepts and theories where appropriate.

Now, bearing all these points in mind, answer the following questions:

Questions
1. Outline two ways in which patterns of marriage have changed over the past 60 years. Illustrate your answer with examples.
2. Outline two ways in which the rise in average life expectancy has led to changes in family relationships.

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