2.3 The Personal Life Perspective and Late Modern Family Diversity: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For at least five questions you must write full sentences. Spend about 15 minutes on this pack.

1 Which one of the following best describes the personal life perspective on families in contemporary society?

- ☐ A) It treats the family as a fixed social structure with universal roles
- ☐ B) It focuses on individuals meanings, relationships and everyday practices within family life
- ☐ C) It argues families are in inevitable moral decline and society is collapsing
- ☐ D) It explains family behaviour only in terms of economic class relations

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Define what sociologists mean by a 'late modern' society in discussions of family change.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Identify and explain one way Carol Smart criticises structural theories that impose a single, fixed definition of 'the family' in sociological research on family diversity.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Item A: A short vignette about Priya and her close network. Priya is in her thirties and lives alone. She spends Sunday evenings cooking and eating with two close friends who consider themselves 'chosen family'. Priya also visits her elderly neighbour each week and is officially registered as that neighbour's emergency contact. Priya has a strained relationship with her biological sibling and does not invite them to family events. Using Item A and your own knowledge, identify two ways this vignette illustrates concepts from the personal life perspective.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.3 The Personal Life Perspective and Late Modern Family Diversity: Test Pack

Question 1

B (focuses on individuals meanings, relationships and everyday practices within family life) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies late modern as a recent phase of modernity marked by rapid social change, individualisation and greater choice (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. in family studies it highlights greater instability and diversity in relationships and household forms **B1**

Answer: Late modern refers to a recent phase of modernity characterised by rapid social change, individualisation and greater choice; in family studies it highlights increased instability and diversity in relationships and household forms.

Question 3

identifies a criticism, e.g. structural theories impose a fixed, monolithic view of family that ignores people contributions and meanings **B1**

explains how this is a problem, e.g. it overlooks diverse forms and the ways individuals define and live their relationships, so research misses important lived experience **B1**

identifies second development, e.g. Smart argues this leads to imposing the researchers assumptions, rather than describing how people themselves experience family **B1**

further explanation linking to consequence, e.g. as a result policy and theory based on such definitions may be inaccurate or exclusionary **B1**

Answer: Smart criticises structural theories for imposing a fixed definition of family that ignores how people actually experience and define relationships; this is problematic because it overlooks diverse lived forms and meanings, and can lead to inaccurate or exclusionary theory and policy.

Question 4

identifies one concept illustrated, e.g. Priya's friends are an example of families of choice or chosen kin **B1**

development, e.g. their Sunday evenings and mutual care show how everyday practices produce family bonds **B1**

identifies second concept, e.g. Priya being the neighbour's emergency contact shows kin-like obligations created through social ties rather than blood **B1**

development, e.g. this reflects how personal life perspective values relationships and care beyond biological family **B1**

Answer: Priya's Sunday meals with friends illustrate families of choice, showing how everyday practices produce family bonds; her role as emergency contact for a neighbour shows kin-like obligations created through social ties rather than biology, both key ideas in the personal life perspective.

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