2.1 Functionalist and Marxist Perspectives on the Family: Test Pack

AQA 7192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For full-credit answers in short questions write in full sentences where asked. Spend about 15 minutes on this pack.

1 Which sociologist argued the family performs four universal functions: reproduction, sexual regulation, economic support and education?

- ☐ A) Talcott Parsons
- ☐ B) George Murdock
- ☐ C) Louis Althusser
- ☐ D) Zygmunt Bauman

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 State one strength of a Marxist analysis of the family in explaining links between family structure and capitalism.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Item A: A short extract on family roles. Researchers interviewed workers in a medium-sized town. Several respondents said that after industrialisation more families had one person working in paid employment and the other focusing on home life, which respondents linked to the need for stable, geographically mobile wage earners. Using Item A and your own knowledge, identify and explain two ways Parsons linked family structure to industrial society.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Item B: Zaretsky and the family as a support for capitalism. Item B: An extract summarises Zaretsky's claim that the family offers emotional support to workers and so helps maintain a stable, exploitable workforce, and that the family is also a unit of consumption, buying goods produced under capitalism. Using Item B and your own knowledge, explain two ways Zaretsky argues the family supports capitalist production.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.1 Functionalist and Marxist Perspectives on the Family: Test Pack

Question 1

B (George Murdock) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies a genuine strength, e.g. highlights how the family can reproduce class inequality and economic relations across generations **B1**

brief development, e.g. this draws attention to power and ownership rather than assuming family roles are natural **B1**

Answer: A strength is that Marxist analysis highlights how the family can reproduce class inequality and economic relations across generations, focusing on power and ownership rather than treating family roles as natural.

Question 3

identifies one Parsons link, e.g. the move to a nuclear family fits industrial societies requiring geographical mobility **B1**

explains why this link matters, e.g. smaller, geographically mobile nuclear families are easier to move for work and support an isolated wage-earner **B1**

identifies a second Parsons link, e.g. segregated conjugal roles with instrumental and expressive roles **B1**

explains why this link matters, e.g. the instrumental role focuses on paid work and economic support while the expressive role provides emotional care and socialisation, stabilising adult personalities **B1**

Answer: Parsons argued industrial society favours nuclear families because they are more geographically mobile, fitting the need for workers to move for jobs; he also argued a division into instrumental and expressive roles helps the family stabilise adults and provide efficient socialisation for children.

Question 4

identifies the first way from Item B: the family provides emotional support to workers **B1**

explains the first way: support helps workers cope with exploitation and restores their capacity to return to work, maintaining the workforce capitalism needs **B1**

identifies the second way from Item B: the family acts as a unit of consumption, buying goods produced under capitalism **B1**

explains the second way: household spending sustains demand for these goods, enabling capitalist firms to sell their output and realise profits **B1**

Answer: First, as Item B suggests, the family provides emotional support to workers. By helping them cope with exploitation and restoring their capacity to return to work, it maintains the workforce capitalism needs. Second, Item B describes the family as a unit of consumption. Families buy goods such as household products; this spending sustains demand, enabling capitalist firms to sell their output and realise profits.

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