



Identify and discuss the various reasons why the family is still thought to be one of the most important institutions in society. (10 marks)

Read through your unit “*Why have families?*” for ideas.

Look at some of the sociology texts in the LRC.

Defining your terms.

1. What is a **family**? Explain in two or three sentences.
2. What do the terms **kinship** and **institution** refer to? Explain in one or two sentences.

The body of the essay

Write a simple paragraph explaining how families have changed in recent years. Describe some of the changes and the reasons for them. Do not go into too much detail.

The next few paragraphs should summarise some of the functions of the family and give examples of how families carry out these functions:

- socialisation of children
- to help us feel loved and secure
- providing us with a sense of identity
- controlling adult sexual behaviour
- reproduction of children
- to provide economic support for each other

You could give a short personal paragraph explaining why you think families are important. You could refer to the research that you did on this topic in class.

If you wish, you could add a final paragraph to explain that although people have tried to abolish families, or set up alternative family systems, most people still prefer to live the way that their culture says is normal. Give examples of some of these other systems and explain why they failed.

Conclusion

How important is the family in our society? Give a simple answer summarising the points you have made in the previous paragraphs.