



Worksheet 7: Applying sociological theories

This activity focuses on Topic 4: Family. Some key ideas from the functionalist, Marxist and feminist views of society are given in the first column.

Complete the activity by showing how these ideas can be applied to the family in the second column.

1	Marxist ideas about society	Marxist ideas applied to the family
	Capitalism is...	<i>The family benefits capitalism.</i>
	Capitalism ensures that existing social classes are reproduced.	<i>The family helps to reproduce class inequalities.</i>
	The ruling class control how people think through ideologies.	<i>The family transmits capitalist ideologies.</i>

2	Functionalist ideas about society	Functionalist ideas applied to the family
	Society needs stability and order from one generation to the next.	<i>The nuclear family gives stability across the generations.</i>
	The organic analogy shows that each institution is functional for society as a whole.	<i>The family has several functions which allow society to run smoothly.</i>
	Gender is built upon natural sexual differences between men and women which means that they are suited different roles in society ... men are instrumental and women expressive.	<i>The 'warm bath' theory shows that the sexual division of labour is functional for both family members and society.</i>



3

Feminist ideas about society

Feminist ideas applied to the family

Society is a patriarchy where males have power over and dominate women.

The family benefits patriarchy and male power.

Males use violence or the threat of violence to maintain their power.

The family illustrates the use of male violence to maintain power in domestic violence and abuse.

Patriarchy uses gender stereotypes to oppress women and preserve male privilege.

Children are socialised into gender stereotypes from an early age.