



**Home Economics
Leaving Certificate
Social Studies and
Family Notes
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Family in Society

Learning Outcomes:

Sociological terms.

Concept of the family.

Historical developments of the family in Ireland.

1. *Characteristics of the modern family and the different types of family.*
2. *Social, economic and technological changes affecting modern family structures.*

Family functions – physical, economic, emotional, educational and social.

Sociological Terms:

1. **Culture:** way of life of a society e.g. religion, music, customs.
2. **Society:** used to describe a group of people who share a similar life.
3. **Kinships:** family relations based on blood.
4. **Norms:** expected behaviours within society.
5. **Values:** beliefs and attitudes which indicate what is right and wrong.
6. **Mores:** norms and values considered most important e.g. honesty, fidelity.
7. **Role:** behaviours considered normal for an individual depending on their position within society e.g. Gardaí are expected to behave in a particular way.
8. **Socio-economic group:** classification of people in society based on their wealth. Three main classes: lower, upper and middle class.
9. **Social mobility:** movement of people from one socio-economic group to another e.g. by education.
10. **Social groups:** 1. Primary social group = family and close friends and 2. Secondary social group = schools and workplaces.
11. **Social institution:** organised common social arrangements e.g. marriage.
12. **Social change:** changes that occur in society due to e.g. technology, new laws etc.

Social Studies and the Family:

Family = a group of people related through blood, marriage or adoption.

United Nations Definition of Family = basic unit of society, which acts as a support for its members and which transmits values from one generation to the next.

Universality of the Family:

- Family is identified as the oldest social institution and is present in all societies. Concept of the family is universal.
- Individuals who are born into families are known as “**family of orientation**” and the family formed when with a partner is known as the “**family of procreation**”.

Structures in Family:

Main types:

● **Nuclear:**

- Consists of **parents & children**.
- **Usually small** with **relatives widely dispersed**.
- **Economically self-sufficient**.
- **Mobile** (may move for career).
- Integrated **conjugal roles** (male & female role overlaps).
- **Democratic** in decision making.
- **Isolated in times** of crisis.
- **Same sex families** are similar to nuclear families, except that the two parents are of the same sex.

● **Extended:**

- Consists of **parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles** etc.
- Usually **large family living together in one home or nearby** – extremely prevalent in Asian and African countries.
- Often **economically inter-dependent**.
- **Immobile** (many working on farm or family business).
- More segregated roles for men/females.
- **Authoritarian usually patriarchal**
- **Strong and supportive** in times of crises.
- Generally **long lasting family**.

1. **Lone Parent:**

- Can occur due to **divorce, separation, death, imprisonment, unplanned pregnancy** etc.
- **More women than men**.
- May suffer from **poverty, isolation, stress, increased workload, childcare problems** etc.
- **Often dependent on state**.

2. **Blended Families:**

- Consist of **partners with children from previous relationships and their kids**.
- Increasingly **more common** because of **divorce and separation**.
- **Large extended family**.
- Can be **conflict** within families.
- **Relationships** with the **absent biological parent** may be difficult.
- May be extra **financial pressure**.
- **Discipline** may be source of conflict.

Historical Development of the Family in Ireland:

	<u>Early 20th Century (Pre-Industrialised)</u>	<u>Late 20th Century (Post-Industrialised)</u>	<u>Contemporary Irish Families</u>
<u>Family Form:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family tended to be extended. Family relationships were close older children often had close relationships with younger brothers/ sisters. Most socialisation & education happened within the family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A decline in the extended family and an increase in the Nuclear family can be seen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in separation/divorces leading to introduction of single parent and blended families.
<u>Family size</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People had large numbers of children to have to work. Mortality rate was high - many children died young – due to lack of sanitation and healthcare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller in size. Children no longer seen as economic assets. Regulations were put in place to reduce child labour. Life expectancy increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of contraception allows people to plan families – decrease in number of kids.
<u>Economic Status/ Work</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1900's clear rich & poor people. Poor families faced high unemployment. Work was badly paid – mainly agricultural work. Families also ended up in workhouses when they were in poverty. Father controlled finances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families began to travel more- gap between high & low income groups began to decrease as a result of increase in wages and a decrease in working hours. Work was now not all agricultural. Geographical mobility became more widespread & necessary for work No longer necessary for everyone in the family to work. Better standard of living. More women working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State is more involved in financial, educational and nurturing functions of family. Some families have dual income.
<u>Roles:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women had an inferior role in family (homemaker). Authority was father's job and all decisions were his (patriarchal). Sons had higher status than daughters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women became involved in a wider range of jobs and had a more egalitarian role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some men now homemakers and women breadwinners. Demand for greater equality in the home.
<u>Marriage:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many marriages were arranged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romantic love became the basis for marriage. Number of arranged marriages decreased. Numbers of children in families began to decrease – equality for male and female children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer marriages more cohabitating couples. Number of interracial partnerships has increased.
<u>Education :</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education was not widely available. Finance was needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education became widely available for all and eventually compulsory= increase in literacy. Education initiatives and opportunities for all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education is compulsory.
<u>Religion:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strict religious upbringing. Elderly people held in high esteem & respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in the influence of religion occurred. Old people have a lower status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further decrease in the influence of religion occurred.
<u>The Home:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural electrification in 1946 and water schemes in 1960's improved home life for women and children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology began to enter the workplace & influence of Media increased. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entertainment technology e.g. WII has changes pastimes in families. Security technology e.g. alarms are more common place in homes.