

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAM SAMPLE FOR SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

Date: 27/09/2024

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## PART 1:

### 1. Reading comprehension

Family and marriage are key structures in most societies, being fascinating research topics for sociologists. Family often has an incredibly important influence on one's life. Since our view of what a family is and should be is constantly changing, there's always something new to research. Here are a few topics of research: unconventional family structures, single parenting, teenage mothers, effects of divorce on the family, etc.

There's no denying that the concept of family has certainly changed in our society over the last few decades. Statistics continue to show that fewer people are getting married, and those who do so are having fewer children or none at all. More marriages are ending in divorce. More people are living alone, cohabiting with someone, or marrying more than once in a lifetime and creating step-families.

Traditional families once dominated every neighbourhood. A traditional or nuclear family consists of a husband and wife, plus their children, whether biological or adopted, if they have any. The family structure in which both parents and grandparents are present is referred to as the extended family, and may include aunts, uncles and cousins living in the same home.

Today, our society displays greater diversity, and many households can be considered non-traditional under this definition. Family structures that may be considered non-traditional or alternative include single parenthood, cohabitation, same-sex families and polygamy.

Single parenthood was fairly common prior to the 20th century due to the more frequent deaths of spouses, but at that time, there was a certain stigma surrounding being a single parent. Today, single parenthood is considered more acceptable. Single-parent families may still result from the death of the husband or wife, but now also come about through circumstances, including teenage pregnancy, out of wedlock pregnancy, a parent's choice or divorce.

Along with the increase in divorce and re-marriage, the number of step-families is growing rapidly. The stepfamily is also known as a reconstituted or blended family. Some children are adopted by their relatives (adoptive family), while others are placed with foster families because they do not have a family of their own, or because their family does not meet their safety and welfare needs. Due to the severe and abusive conditions in their home, in extreme cases, children are taken out of their biological families and placed into foster care.

Polygamy means being married to more than one person at a time and it is a family structure accepted in polygamous societies, almost exclusively in the form of polygyny, when a man is married to more than one woman at the same time. A less common form of polygamy is polyandry, when a woman is married to more

than one man at the same time. The act of entering into marriage while still married to another person is referred to as bigamy and is prohibited in most countries.

Cohabitation is the sharing of a household by an unmarried couple. This arrangement continues to gain popularity in the whole world. Cohabitation can be seen as an alternative form of marriage, and in many ways, it is similar to marriage. It can be used by couples wanting to test their compatibility before getting engaged or married, or by couples whose marriage would not otherwise be legal. However, it does not receive the same formal recognition or legal benefits as marriage.

With single parenting and cohabitation becoming more acceptable in recent years, people may be less motivated to get married. Furthermore, marriage will continue to be delayed as more people place education and career ahead of “settling down.” Another option for many young people nowadays is to stay single, without a spouse or domestic partner, feeling secure and happy with their unmarried status. Nevertheless, singlehood is still regarded by many people as only temporary.

Due to the change in the marriage laws and the growing social acceptance of homosexuality, the number of same-sex couples has also grown significantly in the past decade. These changes in the traditional family structure raise questions about the effects of such societal shifts upon children’s wellbeing and development. Sometimes, children raised in non-traditional families experience bullying, teasing, discrimination or harassment.

1. The text focuses specifically on...
  - a. family problems.
  - b. family habits.
  - c. family units.
  - d. family history.
2. Today, in terms of structure, what we consider to be a family...
  - a. is distorted.
  - b. is permanently altering.
  - c. is the traditional type of family.
  - d. is the same as in the previous centuries.
3. Some couples choose to cohabit before marriage, because...
  - a. they have doubts about making a marriage work.
  - b. they want to do a “trial run” for marriage before they commit for life.
  - c. they want to strengthen their bond.
  - d. they want to save money on living costs.
4. According to the text, single parenthood...
  - a. is a stigma.
  - b. was considered more acceptable in the past.
  - c. motivates people to get married.
  - d. historically resulted from the death of the husband or wife.
5. Today, a significant factor in delaying marriage is people’s...
  - a. lack of maturity.
  - b. lack of self-knowledge and confidence about their own and their partners’ potential characteristics.
  - c. focus on personal growth and career development.
  - d. fear of “settling down”.

6. Statistics show that...
- a. there has been a decline in divorce rates.
  - b. there has been a decline in marriage rates.
  - c. there has been a decline in same-sex marriages.
  - d. marriage rates have hit an all-time low.
7. What is the ideal family configuration for a child?
- a. One where both biological parents are present.
  - b. One where they are loved and taken care of.
  - c. A non-traditional one.
  - d. Not stated.

### Vocabulary task

8. A *non-traditional* family:
- a. is a nuclear family
  - b. is an unconventional family
  - c. consists of a husband and wife, plus their children
  - d. is constantly changing
9. The word *unconventional* means:
- a. atypical
  - b. ordinary
  - c. accepted
  - d. dominant
10. A woman being married to two men would be an example of:
- a. monogamy
  - b. polyandry
  - c. cohabitation
  - d. polygyny
11. *Foster care* refers to:
- a. an arrangement where children are adopted
  - b. a temporary arrangement where children are placed in the care of other families
  - c. the stimulation of childcare
  - d. an orphanage
12. *Cohabitation* means:
- a. cooperation
  - b. testing compatibility
  - c. living together without being married
  - d. formal recognition

13. *Polygamy* refers to:

- a. the practice or condition of having one spouse at a time
- b. the practice or condition of having more than one spouse at a time
- c. the practice or condition of having no spouse
- d. the practice or condition of living together without being married

14. The opposite of the adjective *prohibited* is:

- a. banned
- b. forbidden
- c. restricted
- d. permitted

15. *Settling down* means:

- a. to become less interested
- b. to sit in a comfortable position
- c. to live in one place and get married
- d. to stop socializing

### 3. Grammar Task:

16. If there (...) good weather next weekend, we (...) a barbecue.

- a. is / will have
- b. will be / have
- c. will be / will have
- d. is / have

17. Students regularly (...) snacks from vending machines during the breaks.

- a. buys
- b. buy
- c. is buying
- d. are buying

18. I stepped out of the building, and my car was nowhere. I found out that it (...) by the authorities.

- a. has removed
- b. had been removed
- c. has been removed
- d. was removing

19. We (...) a labour union, but they (...) to do much for us.

- a. were having / didn't seem
- b. had / didn't seem
- c. had / wasn't seeming
- d. were having / didn't seemed

20. I (...) in touch with him a few weeks ago.

- a. had
- b. took
- c. got
- d. made

21. I (...) up my mind. You can't change my opinion.

- a. 've already made up
- b. 've already make up
- c. has already made up
- d. already made up

22. 'Sorry, Lena, I (...) the glass if I (...) so nervous now about our guest.'  
'Stop worrying about him! Go wash your hands, and I'll pick up the shards.'

- a. wouldn't have dropped / weren't
- b. wouldn't drop / hadn't been
- c. won't drop / wasn't
- d. didn't drop / hadn't been

23. 'How long (...) him?' / 'Since high school. We're old friends. So can I speak to him?'

- a. did you know
- b. do you know
- c. have you known
- d. has you known

24. 'Well, he's bought an engagement ring to her. What more proof do you want? I'm telling you, they (...) married.'

- a. 're going to get
- b. 'll going to get
- c. will get
- d. get

25. By the time they found him, he (...) in the woods for 16 hours.

- a. was
- b. had been
- c. has been
- d. were

26. Not so fast! I just need to stop (...) my breath for a second.

- a. catching
- b. to catching
- c. catch
- d. to catch

27. If I (...) savings in the bank, we (...) able to prepare for our wedding. But I do, and I'm glad for that.

- a. don't have / won't be
- b. didn't have / wouldn't be
- c. hadn't had / wouldn't been
- d. wouldn't have / couldn't be

28. Pick the question that fits the answer:

'Simone's team. They are the best.'

- a. Which team did the competition win?
- b. Which competition did the team win?
- c. Which did the team win the competition?
- d. Which team won the competition?

29. You'd better (...) as she says. Don't rock the boat!

- a. to do
- b. doing
- c. to doing
- d. do

30. I had my phone turned off. I (...) when you called. It went pretty well, I think.

- a. was interviewed
- b. was being interviewed
- c. have been interviewed
- d. am being interviewed

## PART 2: Speaking

***The candidate randomly picks a card from the table. Each card has a topic and a set of questions:***

*Unconventional or non-traditional family structures*

*Personal Health*

*Social Media*

*Environmental Problems*

*Drug Abuse*

*Poverty*

*Homelessness*

*Disability*

*Domestic Violence and Abuse*

*Self-care: Strategies for Personal and Professional Success*

***Example of a set of questions:***

*Unconventional or non-traditional family structures:*

1. How do you see the change in the family pattern?
2. What do you like and dislike about the new types of family structures?
3. What effect does cohabitation have on marriage?
4. What is your opinion about single parenthood?
5. What effects may growing up in an unconventional family have on children?

**Assessment:**

- **Part 1:**  
30 multiple choice questions (Reading comprehension / Vocabulary / Grammar) → 30 points
  - 0-14 overall correct answers: FAIL
  - 15-30 overall correct answers: PASS
  
- **Part 2: (Only available if Part 1 results in PASS)**  
5 questions (Speaking)  
→ 30 points
  - 10 points for Content (Relevance and Quality of Answers)
  - 10 points for Language (Grammar and Vocabulary)
  - 10 points for Communication Skills (Fluency, Pronunciation, Style, Interaction)

**Source material to prepare for the exam:**

Izsák Hajnalka, Szabó Roland-Attila. *Partium Language Exams – English Language – 10 topics for students with specialisation in Sociology and Social Work*. Partium kiadó, 2023

***(The book is available at the Partium Language Center)***