

SOCIOLOGY EXAM SKILLS

How to answer 2 marks questions

There are two different types of 2 mark questions

1. The question that requires you to **define** a concept e.g. "define the term..."
 - To gain both marks you must give a clear definition or explanation of the term. Simply giving an example is not sufficient
 - Avoid repeating the term you are defining as part of your explanation
 - Your definition should be a whole sentence/s and no more than a sentence.

For example

Define the term *warm bath theory*

Warm bath theory is Parsons' theory that one of the family's functions to relieve the burden or tension of society

2. The question that requires you to **explain** a concept
 - Give an idea of the idea or concept in the question e.g. define the concept of industrialisation and explain the impact of it e.g. how has affected the family
 - Avoid only giving an example - you will only be awarded one of the two marks
 - Your answer should not be more than one or two sentences long

For example

Using one example, briefly explain... how industrialisation may affect family structure

Industrialisation has led to companies developing in different places in the country. This has affected the family as it has to be geographically mobile to move to where the jobs are.

How to answer 6 mark questions

- These questions require you to outline three things e.g. factors, features, reasons, causes, effects, functions, ways, problems, advantages, disadvantages, criticisms, etc... Your answer should be short, 1-2 sentences for each point is enough
- Start each point on a separate line. This is the only question you can bullet point
- If you're unsure of your answer you can give a fourth point but try to avoid this as you'll waste time

For example

Outline 3 ways functions that functionalists see the family as performing
The family socialises the young by teaching them society's norms and values

How to answer 10 mark questions

- 10 mark questions require you to "Outline and explain two... factors, features, reasons, causes, effects, functions, ways, problems, advantages, disadvantages, criticisms, etc..."
- The instruction to explain, rather than just outline, means you need to show your knowledge and understanding by going into each reason, factor, etc in some detail
- You should do this by creating a chain of reasoning to link your ideas into a clear explanation

For example

One function the family performs for society according to Murdock is the primary socialisation of the young. Socialisation refers to the teaching and learning of society's norms and values. Murdock believes the family is responsible for the initial socialisation of children and then other institutions such as the education system is responsible for secondary socialisation.

Primary socialisation benefits society as it means that children are prepared to enter society and know how to behave in a socially acceptable manner.