



**Social Studies  
School Service**

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# **SOCIOLOGY**

# **ACTIVITIES**

**Volume 2:**  
**Social Institutions**

- Family
- Education
- Religion

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## LESSON 1: DEFINING FAMILY


### PURPOSE:

- Introduce students to differences in perception of “family”
- Stimulate discussion on the changing role, function and definition of “family”
- Encourage active participation by making verbalization a constant part of the classroom experience

### MATERIALS:



- Copies of definitions of “Family,” page 2
- Transparency of “Types of Families,” page 3
- Butcher paper and markers

### PROCEDURE:

- Break students into 3-5 member groups.
- Distribute copies of the definitions of “Family” (p. 2) and read them out loud.
- Distribute a large sheet of butcher paper to each group and instruct students to come to an agreement on four to six core qualities of a family.
  -  Students should write these at the top of their butcher paper.
- After appropriate time, show the transparency of the different types of families there are today (p. 3), and ask students to evaluate the definitions and their core qualities.



**HINT:** The list of “Types of Families” can be altered to include or eliminate family structures.

-  On their butcher paper, students should write each type of family and a brief assessment of whether it “fits” each definition given and each core quality.
-  One representative from each group should present an overview of their paper and their discussion.
- As students present their papers, pose discussion questions as they are applicable.

### DISCUSSION:

- What assumptions are commonly made when the word “family” is mentioned?
- If you had to guess, what percentage of families today are the traditional “married male and female parent of the same race, with only their offspring from this marriage living together?”



**HINT:** Research on data to answer this question could be given as extra credit or a general research assignment for accelerated programs.

- What other types of families are there?
- Is the changing structure of families inevitable? Are the consequences good or bad for our society?

## STUDENT HANDOUT: DEFINITIONS OF “FAMILY”

The following are various definitions of “Family.”

- 1) A fundamental social group in society typically consisting of one or two parents and their children.
- 2) Two or more people who share goals and values, have long-term commitments to one another, and reside usually in the same dwelling place.
- 3) All the members of a household under one roof.
- 4) A group of persons sharing common ancestry.
- 5) The group comprising of a husband and wife and their dependent children, constituting a fundamental unit in the organization of society.
- 6) The collective body of persons who live in one house, and under one head or manager; a household, including parents, children, and servants, and, as the case may be, lodgers or boarders.
- 7) Those who descend from one common progenitor; a tribe, clan, or race.
- 8) A unit of people related through blood ties and genetics.
- 9) A social group of people consisting of a parent, or parents, and their children, or your husband/wife and children, or your parents, brothers and sisters and sometimes grandparents, uncles, aunts, etc.
- 10) A basic social group united through bonds of kinship or marriage, present in all societies. Provides members with protection, companionship, security and socialization

TRANSPARENCY: TYPES OF FAMILIES

FAMILIES WITH:  
ADOPTED CHILDREN  
TWO HETEROSEXUAL PARENTS  
TWO HOMOSEXUAL PARENTS  
SURROGATE PARENT  
GRANDPARENTS AS “PARENTS”  
SINGLE PARENTS  
DIVORCED PARENTS  
PARENTS OF DIFFERENT RACES  
DUAL PARENTS WORKING  
PARENTS IN LONG-DISTANCE  
RELATIONSHIP