



**Social Studies
School Service**

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SOCIOLOGY

ACTIVITIES

Volume 2:
Social Institutions

- Family
- Education
- Religion

Table of Contents

Introduction..... i

Family

Lesson 1: Defining Family	1
Lesson 2: Marital Problems - Skits.....	4
Lesson 3: Evaluating Family Structures.....	8
Lesson 4: Intergenerational Family Survey.....	11
Lesson 5: Traditional Family Debate	14

Education

Lesson 6: Situations for the School Board	17
Lesson 7: Peer Guidance Group	19
Lesson 8: Inequality Organizer.....	25
Lesson 9: Intergenerational School Survey.....	28
Lesson 10: School Workload Debate	31

Religion

Lesson 11: Functionality of Religion	34
Lesson 12: Religion Issues - Skits	36
Lesson 13: Religion and Society	39
Lesson 14: Religious Quotes Survey.....	41
Lesson 15: Religion Debate.....	43

Glossary 46

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