

**Lesson
Two****Family****Aims**

By the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- consider what the word 'family' means and why we have them
- compare and contrast families from 1911 to families in 2011
- look at the advantages and disadvantages of different family forms
- consider the varieties of family situations in *Great Expectations* and explore the different types of families
- identify qualities of a strong family such as affection, attention and commitment
- learn the six building blocks proposed by Barnardos

Context

We have considered your personality and likes and what things have made you the way you are. Now we will look at the issues of family. Your childhood memories are probably full of recollections of various relatives or siblings. You are a product of your family and a product of its strengths and weaknesses. In this lesson we will begin to think about why we need to have families and how family life has changed drastically over the past 100 years.



Oxford Home Schooling

Starter Activity

Answer the following questions about your family. If some questions are not applicable to your family, just miss them out. The whole purpose of this starter is to get you thinking about what the term 'family' means:


- How many people are in your family?
- List the members of your family:
- Who is your closest family member? Which family members do you live with?
- How did you get your first name (or names)?
- Does your family have stories about when you were born?
- Where have you lived? What were the houses, the neighbourhoods, and the town like?
- Where are you in your family birth order? Do you remember any of your brothers or sisters being born?
- Have you spent time with your grandparents? What are your best memories of going to grandma's house?
- Do your aunts, uncles, or cousins make time to have fun with you?
- What is special and unique about you and your family?
- Does your family have holiday traditions? Do you have a favourite memory of a family holiday?
- What does the word 'family' actually mean?
- What is it that makes a family?
- Do you need parents and children for a family?
- Is a home a requirement? Can you be a homeless family?
- Is blood relation necessary?
- Do you have to live together to be a family?
- What do you like about your family?

How do you define the term family?

The term ‘family’ is not easily defined. People in Britain and in other countries have very different beliefs about what makes up a family. The term **family** can be parents and children living together or wider group of people linked by blood relationships and marriage who know they are related but live apart and may not even spend much time together except at family gatherings.

Generally the family is a basic social unit consisting of parents living with their child or children. A family will share the work and responsibilities of raising and supporting the children. The shared responsibilities and relationships are what make a family different to a **household**.

A **household** is a group of people living together in a single dwelling unit and sharing eating and living space.

Activity 1	What do families provide for their members? List reasons why we have families. You can divide your answer into emotional and practical reasons.	
	EMOTIONAL REASONS 1. Support 2. 3. 4. 5.	PRACTICAL REASONS

As you probably know, as humans we have social, emotional and practical demands that the family should provide for.

It is not difficult to see why most societies are based on the family unit. Babies are completely dependent on the adults to learn the skills of survival. The family should take on the role of teaching babies and children how to live, grow up and survive in society. The family should produce confident and responsible citizens.

Here are the basic roles of the family in society. The family:


1. Should be responsible for reproduction;

2. Should provide love, affection and support for its members;
3. Most importantly, should be responsible for education, care of children and socialisation.

Family life has changed in this country in the past 100 years. This is due to a number of factors: increasing affluence of families, change in work patterns (in the UK people work an average 44.9 hours a week, it is the culture to work long hours and take work home, the changing role of women and the availability of day care, etc. Look at the following table which depicts some of the differences between families in 2011 and the family unit around a hundred years ago, 1911:

1911	2011
In 1911 women encouraged to stay at home and look after the children.	Now 'career women' and 'career mother' are terms that are common in society. The fastest growing segment of the work force is women with children under the age of three. Day care can cost up to a quarter of the family budget.
Divorce was very rare- it was discouraged heavily.	Divorce rates have increased. One third of all marriages in Britain end in divorce. Approximately 60% of all divorces involve couples with children in the home.
The average lifespan in 1911 was only about fifty years.	Greater longevity means there are more elderly people. More families will need to look after and accommodate elderly parents or grandparents.
Contraception wasn't widespread so families could have as many as ten children. Medical care was not so good so more children and babies died.	Most families have fewer children nowadays due to the use of contraception. Those children that are born are more likely to be healthier and live longer. Intensive care units can now help premature babies and ill babies survive in incubators.
Pregnancy could be dangerous. Mothers were also more likely to die in childbirth.	Medical improvements mean that mothers are less likely to die in childbirth. Numerous tests are available to guard against problems in childbirth and pregnancy as a whole.

Family life was harder in 1911- there were no modern conveniences.	Our lives are generally more comfortable, easier and productive with items such as a fridge, microwave and a car.
Children were taught to 'know their place' and 'be seen and not heard.'	Nowadays children are definitely given a voice in society.

Activity 2	What will family life be like in another 100 years? Try and write a short description of a typical family living in Britain in 2111.
	

Family structure is the make-up of a family, including the size, relationships and others living in a household.

What are the strengths/roles of members of your own family?

Create your own table similar to the one below. Obviously, your table may need to be bigger or smaller than the example below depending on your own family structure.

Family member	Role
Mother	Cooks, takes me to school, practises the piano with me
Father	Mends things in the house, works, takes me to football
Grandmother	Takes me to the park, knits me jumpers!
Auntie	Babysits, cooks
Brother	Plays Lego with me, reads stories with me
Me	Spend time with our neighbour who doesn't get out much, go shopping for him, wash dishes. Family joker - make people laugh!

Your Family member	Their Role

Families are part of every society but you probably know from experience and the media that not all families are the same.

A **Blended family** means a stepfamily/ a reconstituted family in which one or both members of the couple have children from a previous relationship:

Activity 3

In the space provided in the table below list an advantage and a disadvantage of each family form. You should be familiar with these terms. If not, ask your guardian or look in the dictionary.

Family form	Advantage	Disadvantage
Living alone		
Marrying later in life		
Single-parent family		
Couples with no children		
Grandparents living with families		

Blended families		
Working mothers		

Great Expectations

This novel which we mentioned in Lesson One is full of family relationships. It provides a glimpse of nineteenth century English family life. Charles Dickens was one of eight children and additionally was a father to ten children. Dickens wrote about the family, he knew what he was writing about and he had respect for the family unit, like the large one below:



This section of the lesson will discuss some of the family structures in the novel.

Dickens was aware that the family unit may become broken or fragmented for whatever reason, e.g. Pip's mother and father dying. Pip is looked after by his sister and her husband, Joe Gargery. Family life for young Pip is a challenge in this household. Mrs Joe, Pip's sister, is much older than Pip and treats her husband and her brother as the chief chores of her life. She rules the house with her hand and uses 'Tickler' which is a wax-ended piece of cane to discipline her younger brother.

Here is a description of Mrs Joe Gargery from the perspective of a young Pip:

'My sister, Mrs Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than I, and had established a great reputation with herself and the neighbours

because she had brought me up 'by hand'. Having at that time to find out for myself what the expression meant, and knowing her to have a hard and heavy hand, and to be much in the habit of laying it upon her husband as well as upon me, I supposed that Joe Gargery and I were both brought up by hand.'

'She was not a good-looking woman, my sister; and I had a general impression that she must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand.'

Compare the following two descriptions of Pip's immediate family and underline the adjectives Dickens uses. Use a different colour pen or highlighter for positive and negative words.

Joe Gargery

'Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seemed to have somehow got mixed with their own whites. He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow – a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness.'

Mrs Joe Gargery

'My sister, Mrs Joe, with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin, that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soap. She was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron, fastened over her figure behind with two loops, and having a square impregnable bib in front, that was stuck full of pins and needles.'

Word Bank:

Coarse = rough

Impregnable = invincible/bulletproof!

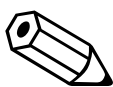
By the positive adjectives Dickens uses, we can tell that Joe is an honest and good man. He is a blacksmith by trade. He is the average man of nineteenth century England who works hard all day and then goes to the local tavern at night to get away from his wife! Pip treats Joe more as a friend than as a father-figure.

The fact that Mrs Joe doesn't have a first name makes her seem a little inhuman. The pins and needles at her bib would not make it a comfortable place to lay your head if you were sad and she doesn't show any qualities of a loving wife. The word 'impregnable' implies she doesn't let anyone get close to

her. Her rough treatment of Pip makes us feel sympathetic to Pip's experience of life in her care.

Activity 4

Answer these factual questions about the family we have just discussed in *Great Expectations*. Your answers must be in full sentences.



1. What has happened to Pip's mother and father?
2. Who does Pip live with?
3. How is Mrs Joe described?
4. What job does Mr Joe do?

Also, in *Great Expectations* there is a symbol of a "bad" family – well, one that is not working very well, anyway. As we discussed in Lesson One, Pip makes frequent visits to Miss Havisham's house. Miss Havisham lives with her adopted daughter Estella. Dickens tells us that some of Miss Havisham's family are very greedy and are waiting for her death so they can inherit her fortune.

This elderly would-be bride is a symbol of a bad family situation, not because she is unmarried but because she raises her daughter Estella to break men's hearts. She creates an extension of her own attitude towards men and creates a monster! In fact, Pip is led through the novel by his love for Estella and by his need to be her equal. This shows how families can pass values and attitudes from generation to generation but sadly they may not always be good values.

In *Great Expectations* there is also the portrayal of a **nuclear family**. This term means a group consisting of a mother, father and their children (biological, adopted or 'step'). Members include those who have grown up and moved away or are living elsewhere. A nuclear family is viewed as a **stereotypical type** of family with a working dad, stay at home

mum and one or more children. Actually only 10% of all households today are in this specific family form.

The nuclear family are Matthew and Belinda Pocket. This is a comical portrayal compared to some of the previous familial relationships we have looked at.

'Mr and Mrs Pocket's children were not growing up or being brought up, but were tumbling up. Mrs Pocket was sitting on a garden chair under a tree, reading, with her legs upon another garden chair; and Mrs Pocket's two nursemaids were looking about them while the children played.'

When Pip describes meeting the Pocket family he doesn't see any real familial love, just mass confusion. The family needs two nursemaids just to care for home and the children. Belinda Pocket, the mother, keeps her head in the clouds not really noticing what her children are doing or even where they are.

Family life can be difficult sometimes. You can't choose your family yet they are with you for life so you must find a way to stay a strong group and work through any problems that may arise.

How can we build strong families?

The ancient Chinese proverb tells us that 'in a united family happiness springs of itself'. What are some of the ways you can help unite and strengthen your family unit?

Remember these three terms are important in creating a strong and happy family:


Affection- show your family members you love and care for them. Ask your mum how her day has been. Phone your grandmother to see if she is feeling better.

Appreciation- say thank you for everything your family do for you. For example, say thank you when your food arrives at dinner time. Say thank you to your father when he drops you off to football practice.

Commitment- Spend quality time together, maybe going to the cinema or having a games evening at home. Make it special, uninterrupted time when you can catch up and have fun! Quality time together will strengthen your relationship.

Enjoy the peak experiences such as holidays and days out as much as you enjoy the regular experiences such as eating together and doing chores. Go and support your sister if she is performing in a show. Be committed to making your family the best and happiest!

Finally, realise that it is OK to have problems, everyone does! Try to solve the problems quickly by talking through together calmly.

Activity 5	Make a list of some issues that can cause problems within families.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Money 2. Illness 3. 4.

Dealing with family problems

Although every family has problems, unfortunately some children leave home due to these problems and arrive on the streets of major cities in Britain. Barnardos reports that some of these children have been as young as nine years old.



Barnardos is a charity that tries to tackle family problems such as abuse, poverty and homelessness. Look at the six building blocks that they organise their work around. They believe that these blocks are what every child needs in order to build a positive future.

The six building blocks are:

- A family that can cope
- Protection from harm
- Emotional, physical and mental health

- A sense of belonging in the community
- Opportunities to learn
- A stake in society

A family that can cope

Barnardos tries to keep families that are under pressure together. There may be a number of reasons for the pressure such as illness, unemployment, drug abuse; the list goes on. If it proves impossible to keep the family together the charity will try to find a secure place for the children where they will be loved and cared for.

Protection from harm

Barnardos works hard to keep all children safe – protecting them from physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The charity can arrange a counsellor for the child to talk to and it runs safe centres.

Emotional, physical and mental health

If a child is born into a poor and disadvantaged family, they are less likely to have a healthy lifestyle and may get ill in later life. The charity works to help poor and disadvantaged children get healthy and stay healthy.

Opportunities to learn

The charity believes that every child has a right to education. They will help young children catch up who have fallen behind in their schoolwork due to family problems or bad behaviour. Barnardos strives to include disabled children in mainstream schools, schools that everyone in the local community goes to.

A sense of belonging in the community

Barnardos runs a number of schemes and projects to help young people who are homeless, disabled, leaving care or out of work. The charity will help them find and keep a job. They also own houses for young people who are leaving care but want to be independent.

A stake in society

Barnardos runs a number of projects where locals can get involved in their communities and improve their way of life.

Families may need some help from their community either financially or just help finding a job.

Barnardos believes in children, no matter who they are. Thomas Barnardo had a vision in 1866 London that the lives of all children and young people should be free from poverty, abuse and discrimination. By the time Barnardo died in 1905 the charity he started had helped more than 8,500 children and he ran 96 care homes.

You can find out more about this amazing charity and their founder by visiting the main website for the charity:- www.barnardos.org.uk.

Self-Assessment Test (Lesson Two)

This self-assessment test will involve you answering a few questions about families. Try to answer the questions without looking back at your folder.

- 1) Give two differences between the family structure in 1911 and the family structure in 2011. (2 marks)
- 2) What does the term nuclear family mean? ((1 mark)
- 3) What does the term blended family mean? (1 mark)
- 4) What are the three terms we looked at that can help us make our family unit strong? (3 marks)
- 5) What is the difference between a family and a household? (2 marks)
- 6) What are the six building blocks proposed by Barnardos? (6 marks)

Total = 15 marks