

4 Family structures

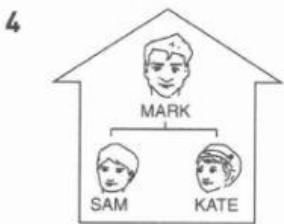
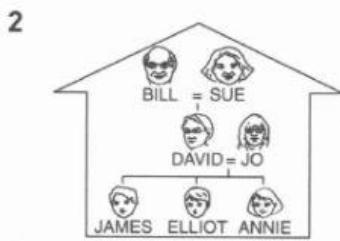
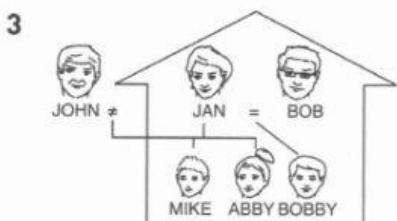
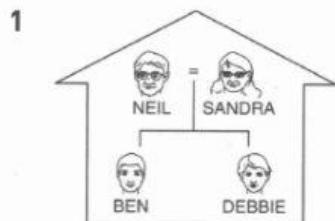
Aims: Signposting and structuring | Using dependent prepositions
Answering short questions | Completing sentences/summaries
Selecting from a list

Part 1: Vocabulary



1 Match the words a-d with the family trees 1-4 below.

- a an extended family ____
- b a step-family ____
- c a nuclear family ____
- d a one-parent family ____



2 Read 1–8 and complete the words.

1 a member of your family	r__at__(n)
2 to legally become husband and wife in a special ceremony	m__y(v)
3 a father or mother	p__nt(n)
4 money or property which you receive from someone who has died	in__an__(n)
5 all the people in a family or group who live together in a house	h__h_d(n)
6 when two people are this, they have agreed to marry each other	e_a_ed(adj)
7 take someone else's child into your own family and make him/her legally your son or daughter	a_pt(v)
8 the child of your uncle or aunt	c_s_(n)

3 Match the verbs 1–10 with the prepositions a–j that usually follow them.

1 participate _____	a with (person) about (thing)
2 struggle _____	b with
3 disapprove _____	c from
4 concentrate _____	d of
5 succeed _____	e in
6 care (look after) _____	f at
7 refer _____	g to
8 suffer _____	h on
9 agree _____	i in
10 aim _____	j for

Exam tip: In the IELTS Listening exam, your answers will need to be grammatically correct. It is important to read the questions carefully and decide what kind of word is missing. For example, some words must be followed by specific prepositions, and knowing which these are will help you write a grammatically correct answer. When you learn new verbs, make sure you know if they have a dependent preposition. A good dictionary will usually tell you this.

4 Complete the sentences 1–8 with verbs and prepositions from Exercise 3. You may need to change the verb form.

- 1 Family members don't always _____ each other. In fact, they often argue!
- 2 Marion _____ her elderly mother, who is very frail.
- 3 Some people _____ unmarried couples living together; they think it's wrong.
- 4 The government plans are _____ helping poor families.
- 5 Young mothers often _____ looking after their newborn babies; the first couple of months can be very difficult.
- 6 Children should _____ many physical activities when they are young to keep them fit and healthy and help them socialise.
- 7 Parents can _____ many government websites for information about family support.
- 8 Today, some mothers are the main earners in families while the father stays at home and _____ raising the children as his main responsibility.

5

Here are two people talking about their families. Guess the missing words 1–9. They are all from Exercises 1–4.



Jenny

My family isn't very big. There's just my son and me. I'm a single (1) _____. For the last ten years I've been (2) _____ on looking after my son James, who is now fourteen. But now I've met someone special and we've just got (3) _____. My fiancé has four kids of his own and we're going to get married in July. James is really excited about it; he's looking forward to having brothers and sisters in his new (4) _____ family!



Sheila

We live as one big (5) _____ family. There are seven of us in our (6) _____. Besides my husband and me and our children, there's my aunt and two of my (7) _____. I stay at home and (8) care _____ my mother because she's quite old and can't look after herself. Obviously, we (9) _____ from a lack of space in the house, but we all get on well.



Now listen and check your answers.

Part 2: Practice exercises

Exam tip: In Section 4 of the IELTS Listening exam, you will hear an academic lecture. When you listen to a lecture, it is important to be able to identify the key points and understand which direction it is taking. You can do this by identifying signposting words and phrases. For example, the function of 'but' is to introduce contrasting information.

1 What is the function of the signposting words in italics in the sentences 1–8?

a to give further information	e to indicate order
b to contrast	f to give a reason/reasons
c to emphasise	g to repeat or clarify
d to give an example/examples	h to indicate a result/results

- 1 *Firstly*, I am going to talk about the role of the parent. *Secondly*, ..., and *lastly*, ...
- 2 Parenting is a difficult job *because* ...
- 3 Families are important *because* they form the basis for socialisation. *Additionally*, ...
- 4 The family structure has varied greatly over time. *That is*, ...
- 5 Many argue that less traditional structures are not as effective. *However*, ...
- 6 Many people are having families later in life. *Consequently*, ...
- 7 Families in other parts of the world differ from the western norm. *For instance*, ...
- 8 Although there are many arguments for trying to keep the traditional family structure strong, I feel *the key issue is* ...



22

CD1 2

Now listen to how the sentences end and how they fulfil the functions a–h.

Draw a table like the one below and put the signposting words and phrases in the correct category according to their function.

a case in point is	for example	next
also	for instance	on the other hand
the reason for this is	furthermore	the crucial factor is
an illustration of this is	however	the main point is
as a result	in addition	thus
due to	in other words	what I am essentially
firstly	lastly	arguing is

Order	Reason	Result	Repetition/Clarification
Contrast	Addition	Example	Emphasis

i**Exam information: Short-answer questions (1)**

In the IELTS Listening exam, you may have to answer questions by giving short answers. This question type can be found in any section of the exam.

You have to give your answer in no more than the stated number of words and/or a number. You do not write sentences for your answer.

3 Match the question words 1–8 and the type of answer a–h that each requires.

1 Where?	a a reason
2 Who?	b a place
3 When?	c a number
4 Why?	d a thing
5 What?	e a method/way
6 How?	f a person
7 Which?	g a thing (choice)
8 How many?	h a time

Exam tip: In short-answer questions, it is important to be sure what the question is asking. One way to help you focus is to underline the key words before listening. Do not look only at the question words; the words in the rest of the sentence are also important. For example:
What reasons did he give for his choice? =
Why did he choose it?

4 Read the questions 1–4 and underline the key words. The first one is done for you. Then match the questions to the answers a–j. There is more than one correct answer for each question. Assign all letters a–j to one question.

- 1 On average, when do people get married? _____
- 2 What is the key reason given for the increase in divorce numbers? _____
- 3 Who believe that families are the key to the functioning of wider society? _____
- 4 What is the average number of family members in the UK? _____

a People usually get married in their thirties.	f Sociologists believe families are the key to the functioning of wider society.
b The average family has five members.	g 5
c Sociologists	h Because there was a change in the law.
d Legal changes	i Because of legal changes.
e In their thirties	j Five

5 You are going to hear a lecture about adults who continue to live with their parents. Before listening, underline the question words and the key words in the questions 1–4. The first one is done for you.

- 1 What percentage of women in their early thirties still live with their parents?
- 2 When were house prices only three times the average yearly income?
- 3 What is the reason that people return to their parental home after university?
- 4 Who does the Affordable Housing Scheme aim to help?

Now listen and answer the questions in NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER.

23
CD1

Exam information: Sentence and summary completion (1)

In the IELTS Listening exam, you may have to complete sentences or a summary. This question type can be found in any section of the exam.

You have to complete the sentences or summary by writing the information yourself or choosing the answer from a list of options. The missing words must fit the space grammatically.

6 You are going to hear a lecture about family structures. What kind of information is needed to complete the sentences 1–4?

Example: Nowadays, the elderly are less likely to rely + on + noun.

- 'on': The verb 'rely' is usually followed by the dependent preposition 'on'.
- a noun: This sentence has a subject and a verb. To complete the sentence we need an object. This needs to be a noun because the verb 'rely on' is followed by an object. There may be a possessive adjective in front of the noun (e.g. 'their siblings'), or an article (e.g. 'the government').

- 1 The _____ family structure has changed greatly in the last fifty years.
- 2 Strong family structures used to be necessary due _____.
- 3 People often _____ the wealth of their parents.
- 4 More than _____ children have no siblings nowadays.

Now listen and complete the sentences using NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER.

24
CD1

Exam information: Choosing answers from a list (1)

In the IELTS Listening exam, you may have to answer a question by choosing a number of correct answers from a list. This question type can be found in any section of the exam.

You have to write the correct letters (A, B, C, etc.) and you may write these in any order.

7 Look at the photo and question below. Then underline the key words in sentences 1–5. Which of the following are myths about upper-class Victorian* families?

- 1 Families lived with servants.
- 2 Children were mainly home schooled.
- 3 Fathers occasionally taught their children Latin.
- 4 The Victorians were not generous to the poor.
- 5 Parents were strict with their children.

*The Victorians were the British people who lived in the time of Queen Victoria, i.e. 1838–1901.



8 In the IELTS Listening exam, you probably will not hear the same words on the recording. You will hear paraphrases or synonyms.

Complete the sentences 1–5 with the words a–f so that they have the same meanings as the sentences in Exercise 7. The sentences are not in the same order.

a resided
b given

c taught
d fortunate

e hard
f give

- 1 Children were often _____ at home.
- 2 The servants _____ in the family home.
- 3 Mothers and fathers were _____ on their children.
- 4 The children were _____ lessons in Latin by their fathers.
- 5 These families didn't _____ to those less _____ than themselves.



You are going to hear a lecturer describing life for Victorian families. Listen and choose TWO letters (a–e) to answer the question.

Which of the following are myths about upper-class Victorian families?

- a Families lived with servants.
- b Children were mainly home schooled.
- c Fathers occasionally taught their children Latin.
- d The Victorians were not generous to the poor.
- e Parents were strict with their children.

Part 3: Exam practice

SECTION 4
QUESTIONS 1–4

Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

- 1 Recent changes in society are eroding the traditional _____ structure.
- 2 Slightly fewer than 50% of American children under 13 live in _____.
- 3 Statistics show that cohabiting couples are more liable _____ than married couples.
- 4 DINKS focus on _____ rather than having children.

QUESTIONS 5–8



Answer the questions below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

- 5 How many children in the UK now live in single parent families? _____
- 6 According to some sociologists, who are responsible for the rise in single parenting?

- 7 What have the largest group of lone parents never done? _____
- 8 Where are single parent families more likely to live? _____

QUESTIONS 9–10



Choose **TWO** letters, A–E.

Which two points does the lecturer give as disadvantages for living alone?

- A People living alone will need help from the community.
- B It is more likely to foster a fragmented population.
- C It creates an accommodation shortage.
- D It is more expensive for an individual to live alone.
- E People may have children too late.

9 _____

10 _____