

UNIT 3

HOME & FAMILY

composition of the family
overcrowding
supporting beam
sieve
to fly the nest
flux
to bring up
step-parent
stigma
half-sibling
economic hardship
makeover
the wow factor
canvas



W tym rozdziale:

- ★ poznasz słownictwo związane ze zmianami zachodzącymi we współczesnej rodzinie;
- ★ nauczysz się posługiwać konstrukcjami porównawczymi (comparisons).

**14 Listen to the text and do the exercises below.****For better or for worse**

We can divide the people of the world into progressives and conservatives. For progressives the idea of change is linked fundamentally to the idea of freedom – as time marches on, they desire for society to develop in such a way that an ever larger number of people see their freedom grow. The same ideas are not held dear by the average conservative.

The ideologies of progressiveness and conservatism lie at the heart of our thoughts on family form, and yet they are secondary to the norms of the society we have been brought up in. In the UK, the traditional composition of the ideal family is mother and father plus two children – a standard which goes hand in hand with the belief that people ought to get married and never divorce.

In other countries, things are not necessarily the same. In Islamic countries, the family unit might consist of a husband and several wives, with a commensurate number of children. In countries subject to economic hardship, a family might consist of a mother and several children, and an absent father, working overseas somewhere. In yet other countries, of a more liberal persuasion, the idea of marriage is less sacred and a family might consist of a mother and several children, plus a man who is the latest in a line of sires living in the household.

The UK has historically been a society in demographic flux, and with so many models of the family available for people to choose from, change might be expected. And yet, to listen to the Conservative voices from Westminster, filtered through a conservative media, the British family model, although under threat, is being preserved. But, it is only an illusion – the reality is somewhat different and suggests that those with progressive tendencies are winning the fight. The number of couples getting married has been falling steadily for the last fifteen years, while the number of children born to single or divorced mothers has been steadily rising. Similarly, the number of children with a step-parent is on the rise, as is the number of children with a half-sibling.

What is perhaps most interesting about these changes is the way that society views those involved. Whereas once there was no small amount of stigma and shame attached to non-conformists, now there is general acceptance and tolerance of individual circumstances.

That said, such developments in the composition of families in the UK don't mean that there is a liberal free-for-all gripping the nation. Take, for example, the issues of same-sex marriage and adoption by same-sex couples. Change comes in stages, and each change leads to pressure for further change. Most people in the UK are conservative to some degree. With worries over the demoralisation of society lurking somewhere at the back of their minds, they will accept only so much before they cry, 'enough is enough'.

EXERCISE 1

Decide if the sentences are true or false.

1. The average conservative links the idea of change to the idea of freedom. **T/F**
2. Progressiveness and conservatism form our ideas of family composition and shape. **T/F**
3. In the UK a family usually consists of a mother, father and several children. **T/F**
4. According to the conservatives the British family model hasn't changed. **T/F**
5. In fact, the British model of a family has been undergoing changes over the past 15 years. **T/F**
6. Society does not welcome and refuses to put up with the latest trends in family life. **T/F**
7. The British are ready to welcome the idea of same-sex marriage and adoption by same-sex couples. **T/F**
8. All in all, British society tends to be conservative at heart. **T/F**

EXERCISE 2

Choose the answer that best paraphrases the sentence/phrase.

1. The same ideas are not held dear by the average conservative.
 - a) The average conservative doesn't stick to the same ideas.
 - b) The average conservative isn't familiar with the same ideas.
 - c) The average conservative isn't fond of the same ideas.
2. ...a standard which goes hand in hand with the belief that people ought to get married...
 - a) a standard which is compatible with the belief that people ought to get married
 - b) a standard which is relevant to the belief that people ought to get married
 - c) a standard which is closely associated with the belief that people ought to get married
3. ...the idea of marriage is less sacred...
 - a) the idea of marriage has lost its religious meaning
 - b) the idea of marriage isn't as popular as it used to be
 - c) the idea of marriage has lost its importance and value
4. ...once there was no small amount of stigma and shame attached to non-conformists...
 - a) once there was a little amount of stigma and shame attached to non-conformists
 - b) once there was a great deal of stigma and shame attached to non-conformists
 - c) once non-conformists were regarded as a source of shame