

Section A: Proofreading (15 marks)

This section tests your ability to identify and correct errors in grammar, sentence structure and language use.

- In the text below, there are fifteen **numbered** sentences. Each numbered sentence contains **one** error. **Underline** each error in the text; then write **your correction** in the corresponding numbered blank space in the column on the right.
- For clarity, write the complete clause/phrase/sentence that contains your correction as shown in the example (0) below.
- Read the whole text completely before you begin.
- You should spend about 30 minutes on this section.

(0) Obesity is epidemic <u>in United States.</u>	(0) <u>in the United States.</u>
--	----------------------------------

The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children

Paul R. Amato

<p><i>Comparisons of divorced and married individuals</i></p> <p>A number of studies published during the 1990s found that divorced individuals, compared with married individuals, experience lower levels of psychological well-being, including lower happiness, more symptoms of psychological distress, and poorer self-concepts (Aseltine & Kessler, 1993; Davies et al., 1997; Robins & Regier, 1991; Ross, 1995; Simon, 1998; Simon & Marcussen, 1999).</p> <p>(1) Compare with married individuals, divorced individuals also have more health problems and a greater risk of mortality (Aldous & Ganey, 1999; Hemstrom, 1996; Lillard & Waite, 1995; Zick &</p>	<p>(1) _____</p>
---	------------------

Smith, 1991). (2) Although the direction of these differences is consistent, but their magnitude varies across studies.

(3) Research also shows that divorced and married individuals differ on a number of variable that can be viewed not only as outcomes in their own right, but also as mediators of the long-term effects of marital dissolution on well-being. In comparison to married individuals, divorced individuals report more social isolation (Joung et al., 1997), less satisfying sex lives, and more negative life events (Kitson, 1992). (4) Divorced individuals also have a lower standard of living, possessing less wealth, and experience greater economic hardship than married individuals (Hao, 1996; Teachman & Paasch, 1994), although this particular difference is considerably greater for women than men. (5) For parents, divorce is associated with more difficulties in raising children, less authoritative parenting and greater parental role strain among noncustodial as well custodial parents (Rogers & White, 1998; Umberson & Williams, 1993). (6) But the general conclusion that emerges from studies published in the 1990s—that the divorced are worse off than the married in multiple ways—are consistent with research conducted in the 1980s (Kitson & Morgan, 1990) and in earlier decades (Bloom et al., 1978).

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

6) _____

<p>(7) Although the divorce-stress-adjustment perspective assumes that marital dissolution increase the risk of negative outcomes, it allows for the possibility that some individuals experience positive changes. Consistent with this notion, studies show that divorced individuals report higher levels of autonomy and personal growth than do married individuals (Kitson, 1992; Marks, 1996). (8) (Acock and Demo, 1994) found that many divorced mothers reported improvements in career opportunities, social lives, and happiness following divorce.</p> <p>(9) Similarly, in a qualitative study, Riessmann (1990) find that women reported more self-confidence and a stronger sense of control following marital dissolution, and men reported more interpersonal skills and a greater willingness to self-disclose. (10) In summary, although the majority of studies document the negative consequences of divorce, a small number of studies indicate that divorce also has positive consequences to many individuals. (11) If more studies explicitly searched for positive outcomes, then the number of studies documenting beneficial effects of divorce should almost certainly be larger.</p>	<p>(7) _____</p> <p>(8) _____</p> <p>(9) _____</p> <p>(10) _____</p> <p>(11) _____</p>
<p><i>Causation or selection?</i></p> <p>Studies in the 1990s indicate that divorce is associated with a variety of problematic outcomes. (12) Consistent with the divorce-stress-adjustment perspective and contrary to the selection perspective.</p>	<p>(12) _____</p>

Longitudinal studies show that people who make the transition from marriage to divorce report an increase in symptoms of depression, an increase in alcohol use, and decreases in happiness, mastery, and self-acceptance (Aseltine & Kessler, 1993; Hope, Rodgers, & Power, 1999). (13) Given that divorce is process rather than a discrete event, declines in well-being are likely to begin prior to the legal divorce. (14) In fact, Kitson's (1992) respondents reported that he had experienced the greatest level of stress prior to making the decision to divorce, the second highest level of distress at the time of the decision, and the least stress following the final separation. Consistent with Kitson's data, longitudinal studies show that reports of unhappiness and psychological distress begin to rise a few years prior to marital separation (Booth & Amato, 1991; Mastekaasa, 1994, 1997). (15) Furthermore, Johnson and Wu (1996) they used a fixed-effects model to control for all time-invariant individual variables, thus making it unlikely that selection could account for the increase in distress.

Adapted from: Amato, P. R. (2000). The consequences of divorce for adults and children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62, 1269-1287.

(13) _____

(14) _____

(15) _____

Section B: Reading Comprehension (15 marks)

This section tests your ability to understand an academic text, differentiate between main and supporting ideas, recognize how connectors function in context and show an understanding of content details.

- Read the following text and answer the questions that follow.
- You should spend about 45 minutes on this section.

The Consequences of Divorce for Children

by Paul R. Amato

Comparisons of children from divorced and two-parent families

Early in the 1990s, Amato and Keith (1991) published a meta-analysis of 92 studies that compared the well-being of children whose parents had divorced with that of children whose parents were married to each other. Their meta-analysis showed that children from divorced families scored significantly lower on a variety of outcomes, including academic achievement, conduct, psychological adjustment, self-concept, and social competence. The differences between groups of children (effect sizes) were small, however, ranging from .08 of a standard deviation for psychological adjustment to .23 of a standard deviation for conduct. For some outcomes, studies conducted in the 1980s yielded smaller effect sizes than earlier studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s. Amato and Keith (1991) speculated that the gap in well-being between children with divorced and non-divorced parents might have narrowed either because divorce became more socially accepted or because parents were making greater efforts to reduce the potentially disruptive impact of divorce on their children.

A large number of studies in the 1990s continued to find that children with divorced parents score lower than children with continuously married parents on measures of academic success (Astone & McLanahan, 1991), conduct (Doherty & Needle, 1991), psychological adjustment (Kurdek, Fine, & Sinclair, 1994), self-concept (Wenk, Hardesty, Morgan, & Blair, 1994), social competence (Beaty, 1995), and long-term health (Tucker et

al., 1997). Furthermore, effect sizes in the 1990s appear comparable to those of earlier decades. For example, across 32 studies of children's conduct published in the 1990s, the mean effect size was $-.19$, which is not appreciably different from the mean value of $-.18$ for studies conducted in the 1980s, as reported in Amato and Keith (1991). In general, the small but consistent gap in well-being between children from divorced and two-parent families observed in earlier decades persisted into the 1990s.

As with studies of adults, a few studies suggest that divorce also has positive consequences for some children. For example, a qualitative study by Arditti (1999) found that many offspring from divorced families, especially daughters, reported developing especially close relationships with their custodial mothers—a finding that is consistent with some quantitative work (Amato & Booth, 1997). In addition, Amato and Booth (1997), Hanson (1999), and Jekielek (1998) found that offspring were better off on a variety of outcomes if parents in high-conflict marriages divorced than if they remained married. When conflict between parents is intense, chronic, and overt, divorce represents an escape from an aversive home environment for children. Only a minority of divorces, however, appear to be preceded by a high level of chronic marital conflict (Amato & Booth, 1997). For this reason, divorce probably helps fewer children than it hurts.

Causation or selection?

The selection perspective holds that differences between children from divorced and non-divorced families are due to factors other than marital disruption, including parents' personality characteristics, inept parenting, or pre-divorce marital discord. Consistent with a selection perspective, Capaldi and Patterson (1991) found that mothers' antisocial personalities accounted for the association between mothers' marital transitions and boys' adjustment problems. In contrast, other studies found significant estimated effects of divorce even after controlling for aspects of parents' personalities, including depression (Demo & Acock, 1996a) and antisocial personality traits (Simons and Associates, 1996).

Longitudinal studies provide another type of evidence. Cherlin and colleagues (1991) found that children from maritally disrupted families had more post-divorce behavior problems than children from non-disrupted families. These differences, however, were

apparent several years prior to divorce, especially for boys. Amato and Booth (1996) found that problems in parent–child relationships (including parents' reports that their children had given them more than the usual number of problems) were present as early as 8 to 12 years before divorce. These longitudinal studies suggest that some of the negative outcomes observed among children with divorced parents are present years before the marriage ends and hence might be due to parental or family problems other than marital dissolution.

Nevertheless, several longitudinal studies show that many post-divorce child problems cannot be traced to a point in time prior to the divorce (Doherty & Needle, 1991). For example, Doherty and Needle found that substance abuse and psychological problems among adolescent boys were elevated after, but not prior to, divorce. Consistent with these findings, Hanson (1999) found that differences in behavior and well-being between children from divorced and non-divorced families continued to be significant even after controlling for children's pre-divorce levels of behavior problems. The results of these studies provide strong evidence for divorce rather than selection as the cause of the gap.

Divorce as crisis or chronic strain?

The crisis perspective holds that children from divorced families, although distressed at the time of marital disruption, show improvements in functioning in the years following divorce. Consistent with this view, some studies show that children's problems decline with time following divorce (Bussell, 1995; Jekielek, 1998). Other studies provide contrary evidence. For example, McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) found that the length of time in a single-parent family was not related to children's graduation from high school or risk of a teenage birth.

Furthermore, the longitudinal studies of Cherlin and colleagues (Cherlin et al., 1998) found that the gap in psychological well-being between offspring from divorced and non-divorced families grew larger—not smaller—with the passage of time. Consistent with this finding, a large number of studies have demonstrated that parental divorce is a risk factor for multiple problems in adulthood, including low socioeconomic attainment, poor subjective well-being, increased marital problems, and a greater likelihood of seeing one's own marriages end in divorce (see Amato, 1999, for a review). Why might these problems persist into adulthood? Two mechanisms seem likely. First, economic hardship due to parental

divorce might lead some children to abandon plans to attend college, resulting in lower occupational attainment and wages throughout adulthood. Other offspring who were exposed to poor parental models of interpersonal behavior might have difficulty forming stable, satisfying, intimate relationships as young adults. These considerations suggest that even if some children show improvements in functioning a year or two after marital disruption, delayed effects of divorce might appear only when offspring have reached young adulthood.

Adapted from: Amato, P. R. (2000). The consequences of divorce for adults and children. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62, 1269–1287.

Based on your understanding of the text, answer the following questions.

For Questions 1 to 5, circle the letter (a, b, c or d) in front of the best answer. (5 marks)

1. From the 1960s to the 1980s, the well-being of children with divorced parents compared to that of children with non-divorced parents _____
 - a. improved slightly.
 - b. worsened considerably.
 - c. remained exactly the same.
 - d. improved in some areas and worsened in others.

2. One of the factors contributing to the well-being of children with divorced parents is that
 - a. parents were more concerned with the well-being of their children.
 - b. people had a higher tolerance towards divorce.
 - c. parents were making greater efforts not to divorce because of their children.
 - d. people had a greater awareness of the disruptive impact of divorce on children.

3. With respect to the overall well-being of children with divorced and non-divorced parents, how do the results of studies in the 1990s compare with those in the earlier decades?
- a. They differ drastically.
 - b. They are too confusing to tell.
 - c. They show a similar trend.
 - d. They are not comparable.
4. Children with two-parent families tend to outperform those with divorced parents in ALL BUT ONE of the following areas:
- a. social ability
 - b. general behavior
 - c. health
 - d. intelligence
5. Which positive effect has been reported on children with divorced parents?
- a. They are emotionally tougher.
 - b. They have a higher self-esteem.
 - c. They live more harmoniously with custodial mothers.
 - d. They attain higher academic performance.

For Questions 6 and 7, write down your answers in the space provided.

6. In your own words, list two pieces of evidence each from the text for and against the selection perspective for the explanation of the differences between children from divorced and non-divorced families. Write down one study (for example, Hanson, 1999) that is cited for each piece of evidence you list. (5 marks)

Evidence <u>FOR</u> the Selection Perspective	
Evidence	Studies
1.	
2.	

Evidence <u>AGAINST</u> the Selection Perspective	
Evidence	Studies
1.	
2.	

7a. In your own words, list two pieces of evidence from the text in support of regarding divorce as chronic strain and write down one study that is cited for each evidence you list. (3 marks)

7a. Evidence FOR the Perspective of Chronic Strain	
Evidence	Studies
1.	
2.	

7b. List two reasons that are given to explain why problems arising from parental divorce continue to affect children even when they become adults. (2 marks)

7b. Reasons Problems Continue to Affect Children as Adults
1.
2.

Section C: Writing an Academic Text (70 marks)

This section tests your ability to write a clear and well-organized academic text.

- Write an academic text of 450 to 500 words that answers one of the questions below.
- You should spend about 1 hour and 15 minutes on this section.

1. Describe the current divorce situation in your country. In your opinion, what are some factors that contribute to the current situation of divorce in your country? Support your opinion with concrete examples.
2. In your country, what are the common views on marriage? What are the implications of these views for the society and children in your country?