

Facts about 1990s Britain

Here are some facts about life in 1990s Britain. Read the facts and answer the questions below.

Between 1971 and 1991 households in Britain got smaller. In 1971 the average household had 2.91 people, and in 1991 the average household had 2.48 people. By 1998, the average household had just 2.32.
In 1971, only 17% of households were made up of one person. In 1998, 31% of households were made up of just one person.
In 1979, 4% of households were made up of one parent and children (single parent households). In 1993, 7% of households had just one parent.
In 1972, 8% of households had two cars and 1% had three or more cars. By 1995 22% had two cars and 4% had three or more.
In 1972, just 42% of all households had a telephone. In 1999, 98% had a phone.
(A household is all the people who live in a flat, house or other place.)

Questions

1. Why do you think households got smaller between 1971 and 1998?



2. Were more people living alone in the 1990s than in the 1970s?



3. (i) What percentage of households had two or more cars in 1972?



(ii) What percentage had two or more cars in 1995?



4. What is the percentage increase in single parent households from 1979 to 1993?



5. Who had more phones, households in 1972, or households in 1999?



6. Make a bar graph of this data.

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Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

Resources

Copies of the worksheet, graph paper.

Using the worksheet

This is a chance for students to learn a few facts about the 1990s and also to practise some of their maths skills. These facts also point up a few trends that students may be interested in. The big trend is that households got smaller. Students may find it funny to have a household consisting of fractions of people, but you can explain that this number is an average of all the households, and because each household has a different number of people, the overall figure is going to be a fraction.

There are many reasons for the decrease in household size, but the big reason is that people were having fewer children. There are also many reasons why people were having fewer children. One is that women were waiting longer to have children and focusing more on having a career first. Also, many people felt that children were expensive, so they chose to have fewer children and spend more money on each child (for education especially). Also, more people were living alone, and this decreases the average household size.

The statistics on phones and cars show that people had more money, or that cars and phones became cheaper and easier to buy, or both.

households getting smaller?

Outcomes

The students can:

- Compare some facts about 1970s Britain and 1990s Britain.
- Understand what a household is and how households have changed from 1970s to 1990s Britain.
- Learn a few more facts about 1990s Britain.

Answers

1. Answers will vary, but may include: People had fewer children, more people lived alone.

2. Yes

3. 8%; 22%

4. 3%

5. 1999

Younger students

You may like the students to answer the questions as part of a class discussion.

Outcomes

The students can:

- Compare some facts about 1970s Britain and 1990s Britain.
- Understand what a household is and how households have changed from 1970s to 1990s Britain.
- Learn a few more facts about 1990s Britain.

Older students

You may like to ask students what the meaning of each statistic could be. For example, why were