



OPEN SCHOOL BC

## Housing and Living Environments Introduction Assignment

This assignment is intended to familiarize you with some of the basic concepts and skills related to *Housing and Living Environments*. This is the first meaningful assignment for *Housing and Living Environments*, so complete it with care.

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student No.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postal Code** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following *Interpersonal and Family Relationships* Assignment independently and return it to your teacher based on the instructions provided by your school. No external resources are required to complete this assignment.

**There are two parts to this assignment:**

Part A: Critical Reading	9 marks
Part B: Written Response	6 marks
Part C: Matching	5 marks

**Contents:**

10 pages

**Assignment time:**

2 hours

**Before you start, read these important tips.**

1. Read each question carefully before answering.
2. Answer all questions to the best of your ability.
3. Take your time. Check your work before handing in the test.
4. Write neatly and watch your spelling.

## Part A: Critical Reading

Read the article on how housing meets the needs of individuals and answer the questions that follow. (9 marks)

### How Does Housing Meet Needs?

It has been said that, “It takes hands to build a house, but only hearts can build a home.”

Houses are the structures we build for shelter, but the house, townhouse, condominium, or apartment we live in becomes our home as we fill with our possessions, mementoes, and the people and pets we love.

A home is not just a place to sleep, eat, and stay warm. We also entertain friends, escape from the world—maybe do the laundry, use the telephone, or learn.

We depend on our homes to meet human needs. These needs have been divided into four categories: **physical**, **social-emotional**, **mental**, and **derived**.

### Physical needs



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These are the needs that have to be met so that we can stay alive and healthy. Physical needs include food, exercise, clean air, sleep, and protection. These needs are met by nature (food), structures (shelter, home), and people (care of small children for their protection and survival). The home is an important resource for meeting physical needs. A home protects physical health when it is maintained properly, i.e., clean and well ventilated.

### **Social-emotional needs**

Our needs for social acceptance and self esteem have to be met in order to feel worthwhile as an individual and a member of society. Our home environment gives us a place in which to belong. It provides security. By feeling secure, people feel better about themselves and are more ready to try out new things, e.g., relationships, activities.

### **Mental needs**



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The living environment satisfies mental needs by providing conditions favourable for learning. This learning begins when the infant is surrounded by stimulating objects at home. The toddler is encouraged to learn by exploring the environment that has been made safe by the parents, e.g., gates at the top of stairs, glasses out of reach, dangerous objects put away, violent television turned off. As the child grows older and attends school, a study area in the home allows the child to pursue mental development.

In the home, the family may play games or prepare meals together, or do other things as a unit. Interaction on a positive level encourages learning.

### **Derived needs**

These are needs that we have as a result of our cultural expectations, such as the need for hot water, fuel for cars, electricity, public transportation, entertainment, recreation, or telephones. The strength of these needs varies with individuals according to their cultural expectations, tastes, values, attitudes, family, and economic circumstances. These needs are not absolutely necessary for survival. But we expect to have them met, because we have become accustomed to a certain way of living.

## Changes

### Young and Single

While the social-emotional aspects of needs met by housing may not change over time, the physical, mental, and derived needs may. For example, a young family with children has different housing needs than a widowed senior whose children have moved away from the home. Derived needs may also change as society changes, and as technological advances and environmental conditions influence our choices.

A young, single person wishing to live independently of parents may move into an apartment with a friend, or with several friends. By splitting the cost of the rent, she will more easily meet her housing needs at this stage. Another less expensive option is a studio apartment, which is basically one room that serves as kitchen, living, dining, and bedroom, and a bathroom.

Because this is the beginning stage of independent living, young people will have few **financial** resources, so they will have to use **personal** resources to their fullest for such things as decorating.

Young people often like to socialize a great deal, and because they may have limited money, they often like to be close to the centre of social life. Therefore, many young people look for affordable apartments close to the centre of town. From here they can walk to the theatre, restaurants, and maybe even their place of employment. If the individual does not have a car, then access to public transportation will be a requirement.

The lifestyle of the typical young person does not usually lend itself to lots of housework and home maintenance. An apartment is a good choice of living accommodation. The landlord will be responsible for repairs and garden upkeep. Apartments often provide facilities which are lacking in most houses, such as a sauna, hot tub, swimming pool, or entertainment room.

## Becoming a Family



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If a couple decides to marry or move in together, they may have to decide whose apartment to move into, or they may decide to move somewhere else entirely.

As the family expands (with children), housing needs may also change. An apartment is not always the best choice for a couple with small children. Supervising their outdoor play may be difficult, or there may be no suitable safe play area. Noise from children can create conflict with neighbours, particularly in apartments with thin walls. Flights of stairs in walk-up apartments could be dangerous, or too difficult for small children.

Some apartment buildings do not permit children to live there. This means that a couple expecting a baby would have to look for alternative housing.

Young families in the expanding stage often try to find a house to live in, either to rent or to buy. In a house there are only neighbours to the sides, not above and below also. If they are able, some parents or grandparents may help a young family with the down payment on their first home. The B.C. Government has some helpful programs for families purchasing their first homes.

Young children need a play area, so a safely fenced back yard and a park close by would be bonuses. Many families with children look for housing in proximity to other children, and make community a high priority in their choice of home.



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As children grow older, they like to have private space. The parents also may feel the need for their own space inside the home. The family may be able to finish off a basement to provide a family room or recreation room. This can give two generations a little more freedom from each other when needed.

As a couple grows older, they often become more financially stable. They may build up some savings and purchase a home if they were renting, or move to a better home. The starter home may not fill their needs and wants any longer. As financial pressures ease, wants can be given more attention.

### **Shifting Needs**

Needs may change because of unhappy circumstances, such as a family break-up or loss of employment. In cases such as these, income often drops, and the family members may have to compromise their wants considerably. If a marriage fails and a home is sold, then each may have only half the proceeds from that home. In order to move into something equivalent, both individuals may have to borrow money for a higher mortgage than if they were sharing a home. The mortgage responsibility would put added strain on the family finances.

## Empty Nesters



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When the children leave home, the couple may find that their house is too large. Two people may find a three-bedroom home with a family room or recreation room feels empty. At this stage in their life, they may want more time to pursue interests, instead of doing a lot of yard work and maintaining a larger home. This may encourage couples with houses to move to a smaller house or apartment.

By the retirement stage, many people want to have an easy-care home. Easy-care may be a small house and yard, or an apartment, or a condominium. What they choose will depend on their interests, wants, needs, and what they can afford. If they enjoy gardening, or wood-working, an apartment may not be a good choice; however, housing for retired people now reflects the needs for hobbies and gardens.

Housing needs change several times during the life cycle of the typical family. They may change many more times if there are disruptions in the normal events of family life. By evaluating needs and planning carefully, it should be possible to live in a satisfactory, satisfying home environment.



**Article Questions:**

Circle the best response for each of the following questions based on the reading of the article. (5 marks)

1. Physical needs include food, exercise, air, and protection.

True

False

2. The home environment may provide a way for people to feel secure.

True

False

3. Mental needs in the home are met by providing spaces near the television for doing homework.

True

False

4. Derived needs are the result of individual expectations.

True

False

5. An example of a derived need is hot water.

True

False

## INTRODUCTION ASSIGNMENT

### Instructions:

Circle the housing need that would probably most influence the choice of housing for each individual or family grouping below: (4 marks)

1. A retired couple:
  - a. Close to work
  - b. Easy care
  - c. Large yard ( )
  
2. Three friends who all work and want to share a house or apartment. None of them have cars:
  - a. Close to work or public transport
  - b. Large yard
  - c. Studio apartment ( )
  
3. Single dad with two young children:
  - a. High rise apartment near downtown
  - b. Townhouse or row-house with other families nearby
  - c. Studio apartment ( )
  
4. Young married couple who do a lot of entertaining:
  - a. Two bedroom with large kitchen/living area and a big deck
  - b. Large house with a small kitchen, several bedrooms and bathrooms, and a big yard
  - c. Small apartment ( )

**Part B: Written Response—Writing an Expository Paragraph**

In a well-developed paragraph of approximately 125 words, write on the following topic. (6 marks—Paragraph Scoring Guide × 1—see Course Overview)

*We sometimes use the word “house” and “home” interchangeably. In a paragraph of approximately 150 words, describe how you see “house” as different from “home.”*

**Organization and Planning**

Use this space to plan your ideas before writing the response.

This area will not be marked.

**Tips for Writing:**

- have a good topic sentence
- explain yourself clearly
- check your work

## Part C: Matching—Changing Needs for Housing

Complete the following matching activity to test your knowledge on the changing needs for housing over the lifespan. Match the families to the housing ad that may best meet their needs. Refer to the Rental Reference Abbreviations provided to help you understand the abbreviations used in housing advertisements. (5 marks)

### Rental Reference Abbreviations

ba	bathroom with toilet, sink and tub and/or shower; a 1/2 bath has a toilet and sink
a/c	air conditioning
appls	appliances
apt	apartment
bldg	building
br	bedrooms
dbl	double
dlx	deluxe—may be nicer than similar apartments, but is the owner’s opinion
flr	floor
f/pl	fireplace
furn	furnished—sofa, bed, basic furniture provided
hse	house
hwh	hot water heat—usually means heating cost is included in rent
h/w	hardwood floors
incl	included
lg	large
mgr	manager
N/P	no pets
nr	near
N/S	no smoking
refs	references—means the landlord wants letters recommending you as a tenant, or showing that you are employed and have an income
req	required

rm	room
sblt	sublet—you are allowed to rent the place to someone else if you are away
sec dep	security deposit—amount you must pay to cover possible damages; by law, cannot be more than 1/2 the rent
sf	square feet
sgl	single
u/g prkg	underground parking
util	utilities—usually refers to electrical, heating, and perhaps cable
w/	with
w/d	washer and dryer
w/w	wall-to-wall carpeting

Li Ting just graduated from high school and wants to rent an apartment with a friend she works with. They would prefer not to share a bedroom. Neither of them has a car, so they would like to be close to shopping and their work and transportation.	1250sf hse on large lot, two min walk from school, close to all amenities & bus. 3 br/2ba w/ fridge, stove, dishwasher, w/d, dbl garage, a/c.  Family oriented quiet neighborhood. N/S, pets negotiable. Utils not included.
Jose and Maria just got married and are moving into their first apartment. They want a small, affordable place near their jobs while they start to save for a place of their own.	2 br/2 ba lg ground floor condo. F/pl, w/d, hwh. Mgr on site. Small pets OK. N/S. Refs & sec dep req.
Peter and Sarah have been living together for five years and have a two-year-old son. They would like a home with a yard and room for their family to grow.	2 br/1 ba walk-up apt on 2nd flr. Nr bus, shopping, amenities. Hwh and cable incl. Refs & sec. dep. req.
Francois uses a wheel chair. He needs a home that is accessible and has enough space for his chair to move around. He would also like a room for out-of-town guests when they visit.	Studio apt in secure bldg. Would suit sgl. Laundry in bldg. N/S, N/P. Util incl in rent. Refs req.
Sam is retired and on a low income. His children live in the same community, and he spends a lot of time with them. He needs an inexpensive apartment with a small kitchen.	1 br/1 ba apt in high-rise bldg. Nr bus. N/S, N/P. Laundry in bldg. Refs, sec dep. Util not incl.

## INTRODUCTION ASSIGNMENT

/9	Part A: Critical Reading
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/6	Part B: Written Response
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/5	Part C: Matching
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	<b>Total</b>