

**‘examine the view
that childhood is a
social construction’
(24 marks)**

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



' Examine the view that childhood is a social construction' (24 marks) Some sociologists see childhood as socially constructed: in other words, as something created and defined by society. They argue that what people mean by childhood, and the status of children in society, is not fixed but differs between different times, places and cultures. This can be illustrated by comparing the western idea of childhood with childhood in the past and in other cultures. Childhood can however, be seen a social construction as the minute a baby is born it is fed clothed and bathed for 10 years, which shows how social construction takes place, as society forces us to take care of kids. So children now have to do nothing but have fun where as 100 years ago they were making children work 15 hours shift from the age of 4. This shows how society has changed to help children so this shows how a social construction has happened. Now day's people are saying childhood is the " golden age" and that it is the best time of our lives. They are saying this because society has changed for children, so now children are loved and looked after instead of being born to work and to make money. Children not working from young ages means that now children can have a nice fun childhood instead of 100 years ago when they were made to work 15 hours a day. This would also mean the IMR would decrease so their will be more children being born, so society can change for them. Childhood however, may not be seen as a social construction as even today some children are being born into violent, abusive households, so not all children are having their so called " golden age". Story's such as ' Baby P' shows us how there is still violence towards children in the household even today. Baby P was brought up into a violent family and ended up dying, this shows how there is

still some construction to take place as incidents like this are still happening. So in order for society to be seen as a social construction they still need to fix things like violence in the household, as this means some children are growing up in bad places which isn't fair to the child. Another reason why childhood may not be viewed as a social construction is because there is still a lot of work to be done surrounding childhood, this includes education, as children do not have to go to school until their 4 which means for them 4 years instead of learning they have been doing nothing. It also needs more construction as some children in Britain are growing up in a dangerous world full of bad people, so something bad can happen to them for example in the story of Jamie Bulger who was a young child who got abducted, tortured and died, this shows how Britain is unsafe for children, so this needs construction. In conclusion childhood is mostly seen as a social construction as a lot of things in society has been done to help children growing up. Social construction helps children as it now allows them freedom and most importantly rights, so they no longer have to work from a young age, they no longer have to get up at early hours and work until the evening, instead they can be care free and fun, which is all because of social construction. Contrastingly it may have made childhood to easy for the child as it now means they are not working until they are 18. I also think that childhood is a social construction as it has changed a lot in the last 100 years which shows the difference there is in childhood today and in childhood back then, so it shows a clear change towards the children and for the better which proves that now days childhood is a social construction.