

CHAPTER 1: AGING TODAY

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Which of the following is given in the text as a reason for studying aging?
- to help oneself live the best old age possible
 - to enable people to avoid or reverse the effects of aging
 - to enable people to make old age as inexpensive a time of life as it can be
 - to learn how to work with elderly clients

ANS: D REF: 2-3 BLM: REM

2. As of 2011, what percentage of the population comprised older Canadians?
- 16.0%
 - 15%
 - 9.1%
 - 6.8%

ANS: B REF: 2 BLM: REM

3. By 2036, approximately what percentage of the population will comprise older Canadians as predicted by Statistics Canada?
- 9%
 - 19%
 - 25%
 - 34%

ANS: C REF: 2 BLM: REM

4. As society ages, what will change in the Canadian social structure?
- Poverty will increase as more people enter old age.
 - The government will face economic crisis as pension costs rise.
 - The mass media will promote ageism.
 - The healthcare system will add programs to prevent illness before it occurs.

ANS: D REF: 2 BLM: HO

5. Which of the following is an example of a social structure?
- the education system
 - the aging process
 - the government
 - the police

ANS: A REF: 2 BLM: HO

6. What effect does an aging society have on the Canadian family?
- an increase in the number of people living in three- and four-generation families
 - a decrease in the number of people who become grandparents during their lifetime
 - an erosion of values as extended family structures fragment
 - an increase in financial responsibility placed on elder family members

ANS: A REF: 2 BLM: HO

7. How will the healthcare system have to adapt as Canadian society ages?
- by decreasing the attention given to chronic ailments such as diabetes and arthritis
 - by favouring the treatment of more acute illnesses
 - by changing public opinion about old age
 - by trying to prevent illness before it happens

ANS: D REF: 2 BLM: HO

8. Dr. Clarke is conducting a research experiment that is studying the process of aging among older Canadians. What is the name for this social science?
- tautology
 - ageism
 - gerontology
 - aeonology

ANS: C REF: 2 BLM: HO

9. What are the two points of view that gerontologists use to study aging?
- economics and social structures
 - the family and the education system
 - bioethics and economics
 - the individual and society

ANS: D REF: 2 BLM: REM

10. What did Unwin and colleagues' (2008) research find out about perceptions of aging?
- People know little about aging.
 - Old age is seen as a time of weakness and death.
 - Some attitudes towards the elderly have possibly worsened.
 - Most people's knowledge about older people is based on myth or fear.

ANS: C REF: 3 BLM: REM

11. Your uncle Ken has just retired from the workforce, and he needs to find an activity that will keep him in touch with his community. According to recent research found in your textbook, which of the following activities would be a beneficial activity for your uncle?
- reading books to his grandchildren
 - baking cookies
 - working in his woodshop
 - playing cards at a local library

ANS: D REF: 4 BLM: HO

12. Which of the following accurately describes stereotypes?
- They prevent discrimination and ageism.
 - They force people to confront the truth about the elderly.
 - They often have some basis in reality.
 - They exaggerate and distort the bad, while ignoring the good qualities of a group of people.

ANS: C REF: 5 BLM: HO

13. Which of the following presents a negative stereotype of aging?
- an elderly 84 year-old gentleman who plays with his grandchildren
 - a 95-year-old woman who drives erratically

- c. a 76 year-old male who lives in a nursing home but has an alert memory
- d. an 82-year-old female who learns to do yoga at her recreational centre

ANS: B REF: 5 BLM: HO

14. While playing shuffleboard at the local seniors club, Mr. Jones jokes about Mr. Smith's poor eyesight after Mr. Smith misses the scoring area. Mr. Jones' derogatory comment is an example of which type of insult?
- a. the old goat curse
 - b. the black sheep effect
 - c. elderspeak
 - d. ageism

ANS: B REF: 6 BLM: HO

15. What do gerontologists call prejudice against older people?
- a. a negative stereotype
 - b. geriatrics
 - c. age dichotomy syndrome
 - d. ageism

ANS: D REF: 6-7 BLM: REM

16. Which of the following describes ageism in our culture?
- a. It is acquired from experience with the aged.
 - b. It is a social component of the biological process.
 - c. It is learned from a variety of sources.
 - d. It is useful for maintaining cultural diversity.

ANS: C REF: 8-9 BLM: HO

17. Researchers including Henneberg, Gilbert, and Ricketts (2010, 2008) have studied the treatment of older people in literature. What have these studies found?
- a. Overall, positive views of older people predominate.
 - b. Negative traits in literature outnumber those in philosophy by two to one.
 - c. Older people are stereotyped and children then hold negative views about them.
 - d. Mysteries often portray older people as devious or manipulative.

ANS: C REF: 8-9 BLM: REM

18. Sally has been researching mass media and the portrayal of older Canadians in the media. Her studies have generally shown that the mass media (such as television and the newspapers) tend to create which type of common image of older people?
- a. positive
 - b. negative
 - c. neutral
 - d. colourful

ANS: B REF: 8-9 BLM: HO

19. What did Palmore's study of contemporary jokes find?
- a. that the elderly are always portrayed in a positive light
 - b. that the elderly are never referred to jokingly
 - c. that the elderly are stereotyped as impotent or unattractive
 - d. that the elderly are often background characters

ANS: C

REF: 10

BLM: REM

20. What is true of most humour connected to aging?
- a. It has a negative view of aging.
 - b. It glosses over the real problems of aging in modern society.
 - c. It has a neutral outlook on the aged.
 - d. It actually reflects real problems that the aged face.

ANS: A

REF: 10

BLM: HO

21. What did George (2006) find in a review of the literature on life satisfaction in old age?
- a. Life satisfaction in old age increased.
 - b. Life satisfaction in old age decreased.
 - c. Life satisfaction in old age did not change.
 - d. Life satisfaction in old age remains high.

ANS: D

REF: 10

BLM: REM

22. What did Cooke find in the observation of older workers?
- a. Most older workers did their work poorly.
 - b. Employers valued experience over strength.
 - c. Employers valued strong, young workers.
 - d. Employers try to force older workers to retire early.

ANS: D

REF: 10

BLM: REM

23. According to the AARP study, what is the largest barrier for those aged 50 years and older when it comes to finding a job?
- a. age discrimination
 - b. health status
 - c. lack of skills
 - d. higher absenteeism rates

ANS: A

REF: 10

BLM: REM

24. You are 49 years old and you were rejected for a job. You later find out that someone 10 years younger than you received the job because the employer thought that someone younger than you “would be more suitable to handle the rapid pace of the job environment.” What term is used to describe the excuse as to why an older person is rejected for a job?
- a. partiality
 - b. bias
 - c. euphemism
 - d. favouritism

ANS: C

REF: 11

BLM: HO

25. What does the research on sociological aging show about older people?
- a. Older people feel dissatisfied with life.
 - b. Older people live rich lives that contradict stereotypes.
 - c. Older people live a poor quality of life.
 - d. Older people view aging as a decline in lifestyle.

ANS: B

REF: 11

BLM: REM

26. Which of the following terms does Toni Calasanti believe contains a more subtle form of ageism?

- a. aged
- b. elderly
- c. senior
- d. older

ANS: D REF: 12-13 BLM: REM

27. According to research by Baker and Gringart (2009), what method do older men use to deal with aging?
- a. They go on dates.
 - b. They isolate themselves.
 - c. They engage in physical fitness.
 - d. They have cosmetic surgery.

ANS: C REF: 13 BLM: REM

28. According to Rozanova (2006), what do ageism and “positive aging” both promote?
- a. intergenerational equity
 - b. ageing as a worthwhile goal
 - c. a stereotyped, one-dimensional view of later life
 - d. a balanced view of later life

ANS: C REF: 13 BLM: REM

29. Your grandmother Lilley still loves to jog, to bake pies, to travel the world, and to babysit her grandchildren. Although she is 86 years old, she still possesses a vim and vigour for life, and she vehemently denies that she is aging. What term does Catherine Mayer use to describe someone like your grandmother Lilley?
- a. immoral
 - b. amortal
 - c. immature
 - d. amoral

ANS: B REF: 13 BLM: HO

30. What leads to a more positive view of aging?
- a. education
 - b. interaction
 - c. knowledge and satisfying contact
 - d. experience

ANS: C REF: 15-16 BLM: HO

31. Samantha’s grandmother lives alone in a large city. She has arthritis and struggles with meal preparation and mobility issues around the city. Samantha notices that many older people are in similar situations as the Canadian population ages. Sam is experiencing a common fear that is reflected in ageism as the Canadian population focuses on population aging. What is that fear?
- a. a fear of an aging society
 - b. a concern for the elderly
 - c. a lack of trust in the elderly
 - d. a fear of old age

ANS: A REF: 16 BLM: HO

32. How is the older population stereotyped?

- a. independent
- b. productive
- c. costly
- d. generous

ANS: C

REF: 16-17

BLM: HO

33. What do changes in Canadian society suggest will happen to ageism in the future?

- a. It will increase.
- b. It will decrease.
- c. It will remain the same.
- d. It will cease to exist.

ANS: B

REF: 18

BLM: HO

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. The textbook discusses the fact that many older people “live rich and complex lives that contradict the stereotypes.” Give examples of what this sentence actually means.

ANS:

Student answers should include the following:

- people aged 50–70 have good incomes
- people aged 50–70 have little or no mortgage
- people aged 50–70 have no children to support
- people aged 50–70 have money to spend
- people aged 50–70 have a better education
- people aged 50–70 have more active lifestyles

REF: 11

2. Helen is a worker in a retirement home. She uses elderspeak, and her clients do not like it when she uses this type of speech with them. What is elderspeak? List examples of elderspeak, and then explain the effects of elderspeak upon older individuals.

ANS:

Student answers should include the following:

“Elderspeak” is defined as a simplified speech like baby talk that some people use when they speak to older people. It stems from stereotyping older people as slow-witted.

This form of speech uses few clauses, shorter phrases, more filler phrases (e.g., “like,” “you know”), words with fewer syllables, slower speech, and longer pauses. Elderspeak also includes the use of words like “dearie,” “cutie,” and “sweetie.”

Elderspeak has a negative effect on the older person; it creates low self-esteem, it reduces a person’s ability to communicate effectively, it decreases the quality of interaction, and it reduces the older person’s sense of control.

REF: 6

3. The textbook discusses several methods by which older adults can become victims of fraud. List and briefly explain how older people can be victimized by fraud.

ANS:

Student answers should include the following:

Older people run a higher risk of being victims of fraud. Fraud is the number one crime against older Canadians (Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers 2010, 2).

Examples of fraud include the following:

1. Home repair con artists look for homes that need repairs, give a low estimate, and ask for payment upfront, before any work gets done. Once the crook has the money, the work may never get done or it is done poorly with cheap materials.
2. Slamming occurs when a person's phone is switched to another provider without the owner's permission.
3. Cramming occurs when a person gets charged for phone services that he/she never ordered.
4. Money offers come from Nigerian sources in the form of emails. They promise to transfer large amounts of money to a person's bank account but later demand money for transfer fees and other expenses.
5. Phishing targets older people with computers. The email will appear to come from a bank or a major online business. The person is asked to click on a link to verify information, and the thieves' computer then redirects the person to a fake site that collects the login and password, which gives the thieves access to the person's online account.

REF: 4-5

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. What is ageism? What types of ageism do you think are present in today's society? List and discuss three examples of ageism.

ANS:

Student answers will vary, but should include the following:

Ageism is defined as prejudice against older people. It is "a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young ..." Ageism can come in many forms against older people. Examples may include the following:

- Older people are weak, sick, and dying.
- People make fun of older people.
- Older people are mostly ignored or rejected in society.
- Older people are patronized or treated with less dignity.
- Older people are treated as though they have a physical limitation.
- Older people will be stereotyped in jokes, literature, and the media.

REF: Chapter 1

2. Imagine that you made yourself up to be a 75-year-old person, similar to what Paul Baker did in the textbook. What kinds of challenges or obstacles would you face in your community if you went out to learn about society's reactions to an older person? Discuss specific examples that you may encounter in your community, and how you would deal with them.

ANS:

Student answers will vary, but should include the following:

- Very few people go out of their way to help older people.
- Some people ignore older people.
- People offer to placate, rather than help older people.
- Older people feel like a burden to society.
- Older people can become frustrated and angry.
- Older people have to anticipate their every movement.

- “the world gets bigger and faster for an old man.”
- However, some communities engage older people, by the number of people that actually reside there (Baker discusses the differences between Vancouver and old Victoria).

REF: 9

- There were also the examples in Chapter 1 found earlier in the text regarding Jessie Taylor, found on pages 2 and 3.
3. Arrange an interview with your parents and/or your grandparents. Do they think they are aging well? How do your parents and/or grandparents feel about growing older? What kinds of challenges and obstacles do they face as they age?

ANS:

Student answers will vary, but should be related to concepts found within Chapter 1 of the text.

REF: Chapter 1