

CHAPTER 2: STUDYING SOCIAL LIFE: SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. After formulating a general research question, what will a good researcher always do?
 - a. use the scientific method to evaluate his survey questions
 - b. review the literature in order to become familiar with earlier research that relates to his topic
 - c. clearly define his variables
 - d. look for correlations between two or more different phenomena
 - e. form a hypothesis

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 44 TOP: Research Methods (I)
MSC: Remembering

2. If the federal government conducts research on the value of checking batteries in home smoke detectors, what method will produce data that is most easy to transmit to many people?
 - a. ethnography
 - b. commercial research
 - c. quantitative
 - d. qualitative
 - e. interviews

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 43
TOP: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods (I.A) MSC: Applying

3. A famous social scientist tells you that the most important, though never totally successful, task in her research was to move from “total bewilderment” to “finding her feet” with the people she was studying. What can you say about this researcher?
 - a. She worries about ethical issues in her research.
 - b. She’s a qualitative researcher.
 - c. She cannot use interviews as a methodology.
 - d. She must not have selected her research method yet.
 - e. She exclusively uses quantitative methods.

ANS: B DIF: Hard REF: Page 43
TOP: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods (I.A) MSC: Creating

4. You want to conduct some sociological research on whether people on social networking sites are less likely to meet in person as a result of their online community participation. What is the next step in the sociological research method?
 - a. identify a problem or ask a question
 - b. conduct a literature review
 - c. form a hypothesis; give operational definitions to variables
 - d. choose a research design or method
 - e. collect data

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Understanding

5. Jai is conducting a sociological research study on differences in interactions between similar and dissimilar co-workers. After reviewing the literature, he developed a hypothesis that interactions between co-workers who are more similar will be more positive, and he has operationalized study variables. What is the next step Jai should take in the sociological research or approach or method?
- identify a problem or ask a question
 - analyze data
 - form a hypothesis; give operational definitions to variables
 - choose a research design or method
 - collect data

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

6. Lili is conducting a sociological research study on the underground music scene. She has just finished collecting data for the study. What is the next step Lili should take in the sociological research or approach or method?
- disseminate findings
 - analyze data
 - form a hypothesis; give operational definitions to variables
 - choose a research design or method
 - identify a problem or ask a question

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

7. What is the scientific method or approach?
- the use of statistics to analyze numerical data
 - the study of scientific processes
 - the standard procedure for acquiring and verifying empirical knowledge
 - the use of technology to understand the physical world
 - the study of nature

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 43
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Remembering

8. According to the scientific method, what are the steps in research, and in what order should they be completed?
- form a hypothesis, define variables, predict outcomes, collect data, analyze data
 - form a hypothesis, predict outcomes, define variables, collect data, analyze data
 - analyze data, review the literature, collect data, form a hypothesis
 - form a hypothesis, analyze data, make predictions, review the literature
 - collect data, analyze data, form a hypothesis, predict outcomes, define variables

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Remembering

9. You're doing a research project on the effects of contemporary media. If your hypothesis is that "watching violence on television causes an increase in violent behavior," then what are your variables?
- violence on television and violent behavior
 - number of violent acts and age of television watchers
 - watching television, violence on television, and violent behavior
 - violent behavior
 - violence in the media

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

10. You're conducting research on violence in the media. If you're trying to decide whether "violence" includes words as well as actions, in what part of the research process are you engaged?
- forming a hypothesis
 - analyzing the data
 - defining the variables
 - disseminating your research findings
 - reviewing the literature

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

11. What do you call broad theoretical models of the social or natural world?
- paradigms
 - hypotheses
 - interviews
 - grounded theory
 - prejudice

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 45
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Remembering

12. A paradigm shift is a major break in the assumptions that are used to understand the world. For social scientists, what causes a paradigm shift?
- the study of history
 - new data forces a new way of looking at the world
 - religion and theology
 - increased awareness of the current paradigm
 - objective knowledge of the world

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 45
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Understanding

13. A graduate student is almost done with his dissertation when he is informed that twenty years ago someone did a very similar project and already demonstrated what he had hoped to be the first to discover. What basic step of the scientific method could have saved him from this problem?
- developing an operational definition
 - selecting a research method
 - analyzing data
 - reviewing the literature
 - creating relevant variables

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

14. In the 1980s, many politicians argued that listening to heavy metal music led teenagers to commit suicide. While you might find this belief silly, it is a(n):
- variable.
 - paradigm shift.
 - hypothesis.

- d. research method.
- e. operational definition.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

15. A social research methods class wants to study smoking. First the professor asks how many people in the class are smokers. Two people say yes. Then she asks how many people have smoked a cigarette in the past week, and ten people say yes. From this the class decides that, for the purposes of its survey, a smoker will be anyone who has had a cigarette in the past week and currently owns a pack of cigarettes. This is a(n):
- a. operational definition.
 - b. ethnography.
 - c. hypothesis.
 - d. spurious correlation.
 - e. ethical challenge.

ANS: A DIF: Hard REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

16. A sociologist wants to study popular attitudes and perceptions about astrology among college students in California. She believes that people who have astrological signs identified with fire will have a greater knowledge of astrology because fire signs tend to have more interesting and attractive symbolism. What are the variables in this study?
- a. astrological signs and knowledge of astrology
 - b. college students and symbolism
 - c. popular attitudes and perceptions
 - d. astrological signs and symbolism
 - e. California and college students

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

17. In recent years, sociologists who study deviance have learned that they can measure the quantities of narcotics consumed by a community by testing its sewage before treatment. What part of the research process would the sociologists be carrying out when they visit the sewage treatment plant?
- a. analyzing data
 - b. disseminating the findings
 - c. forming a hypothesis
 - d. collecting data
 - e. developing an operational definition

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

18. One study found a strong correlation between parental bonding and adolescent drug use. Children with stronger bonds to their parents were far less likely to try drugs or alcohol. However, when the researchers examined their data more closely, they discovered that parental bonding was really a predictor for teen religiosity and that high levels of religiosity prevent drug use. This means that religiosity was:
- a. a spurious variable.
 - b. a qualitative factor.
 - c. an issue of reflexivity.

- d. a paradigm shift.
- e. the intervening variable.

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

19. A study showed a fairly high correlation between not smoking and having a high college grade point average. Although some people used this study as evidence that smoking is bad, if you accept that smoking doesn't cause someone to lose brain cells or study less, you would probably conclude that the study:
- a. had an invalid hypothesis.
 - b. used basic research.
 - c. was valid.
 - d. misused a control group.
 - e. employed a spurious correlation.

ANS: E DIF: Easy REF: Page 45
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

20. Karl Marx was influenced by the philosopher Georg Hegel but argued that in some fundamental ways Hegel's theories were mistaken about how the world worked. Marx said he needed to "stand Hegel on his head" because Marx believed that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness." For many who came afterward, Marx's argument represented a:
- a. problem with validity and reliability.
 - b. classic demonstration of reactivity.
 - c. participant observation.
 - d. paradigm shift.
 - e. justification of qualitative research.

ANS: D DIF: Hard REF: Page 45
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Creating

21. Charles Darwin suggested that, rather than being superior to the rest of the animal kingdom, human beings are simply one part of a larger system governed by natural laws. To the extent that this radically changed how people thought about almost everything, we would call it a(n):
- a. paradigm shift.
 - b. ethical issue.
 - c. example of reactivity.
 - d. hypothesis.
 - e. research proposal.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 45
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Applying

22. Which methodology most closely resembles the scientific method?
- a. ethnography
 - b. survey research
 - c. experimental research
 - d. interviews
 - e. content analysis

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 58

23. Which of the following affect the methods used by sociological researchers?
- what they want to accomplish
 - the methods they are trained in and feel comfortable with
 - the time available to complete their projects
 - the resources and funds available
 - all of the above

ANS: E

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 47

TOP: Which Method to Use (I.C)

MSC: Remembering

24. If you observe a group in order to determine its norms, values, rules, and meanings, then what kind of research are you doing?
- normative research
 - quantitative research
 - qualitative research
 - natural science research
 - geophysical research

ANS: C

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 47

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Remembering

25. What are the goals of ethnography?
- to explain ethnic differences using qualitative methods
 - to develop quantitative data sets that allow researchers to discover correlations
 - to conduct interviews with people who have very different ways of life
 - to describe activities sociologists observe and to understand what those activities mean to the people involved
 - to develop ethics and standards for sociological research

ANS: D

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 47

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Understanding

26. Which method of social research might involve shifting between participating in a social situation and being an observer?
- interviews
 - surveys
 - access negotiation
 - comparative-historical research
 - ethnography

ANS: E

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 47

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Applying

27. What does it mean if ethnographers are overt about their roles?
- They maintain narrow and limited definitions of appropriate research methodologies.
 - They spend a great deal of time reflecting on their roles in the research process.
 - They observe and record data without letting anyone know they are doing research.
 - They openly admit that they are doing sociological research.
 - They make their hypotheses explicit.

ANS: D

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 48

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Understanding

28. Ethnographers sometimes write down key words or quotations while they're interacting with people. Given that they will write much more detailed fieldnotes later, what is the advantage of these brief, sketchy notes?
- They are not as difficult to compile as comprehensive fieldnotes.
 - They are more ethical.
 - They are an aid to memory when writing more detailed fieldnotes.
 - They involve reflexivity.
 - They allow the ethnographer to achieve thick description.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

29. Clifford Geertz coined the term "thick description" to define good ethnographic fieldnotes. Which of the following is NOT associated with thick description?
- sensitivity to context
 - interactional details
 - the meaning events have for those participating in them
 - attention to tone of voice and facial expressions
 - a comprehensive list of events

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

30. Ethnographers using participant observation must always be aware of reflexivity, which occurs because:
- participants may not consider their own motivations and act out of reflex.
 - ethnographers' conclusions may not be applicable to any larger group.
 - ethnographers' prejudices or biases may slip into their work.
 - the presence of ethnographers may alter the behavior of the people they are observing.
 - ethnographers intervene in the lives of the people they're studying.

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

31. Which of the following is an advantage of using ethnography to study social life?
- Ethnography is a quick and easy form of social science research.
 - Ethnography requires the researcher to spend little time gaining familiarity with the research subjects.
 - Ethnography allows the researcher to gather abundant data on a small population.
 - Ethnography allows the researcher to hold on to rigid stereotypes about others.
 - Ethnography requires no training since it's something we all do as human beings.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 49 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

32. Which of the following is a disadvantage of using ethnography as a method of social research?
- It is very difficult to understand the meaning participants give to their own actions.
 - Participants are self-selected.
 - Participants are usually not completely candid when asked to describe their attitudes and behaviors.
 - It is very difficult for another researcher to repeat or replicate any particular ethnography.

- e. Ethnographies tend to have ethical problems that are of central concern to most sociologists.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Page 49 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

33. If a piece of sociological research is representative, it means that:
- the researcher has avoided any overt bias.
 - the research has been conducted systematically with the scientific method.
 - the smaller group of people studied can tell us something about a larger group.
 - the researcher found patterns of similarities and differences.
 - the researcher avoided using any double-barreled questions.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 50 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Remembering

34. Which of the following research techniques focuses on gaining an insider's perspective of the everyday lives of subjects under investigation, often dispelling stereotypes about the group being investigated?
- participant observation
 - surveys
 - analysis of existing data
 - experiments
 - content analysis

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Remembering

35. The sociologist Mitch Duneier wrote his ethnography *Sidewalk* about street vendors in New York City's Greenwich Village. While writing the book, Duneier was particularly concerned that the people he was studying would alter their behavior when he was present, especially since his background was very different from theirs, causing him to think critically about his action and role as a researcher. What do sociologists call this?
- bias
 - response rate
 - reflexivity
 - validity
 - thick description

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Applying

36. In her ethnography *Number Our Days*, Barbara Myerhoff investigated the daily lives of elderly Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who lived in Los Angeles. Most of her work took place at a senior citizen center. Before she could even start this research, Myerhoff had to convince the director of the center that it was a legitimate and worthwhile project, a process known as:
- gaining access.
 - participant observation.
 - fieldnotes.
 - thick description.
 - sampling.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 47 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Applying

37. In her ethnography *Wheeling & Dealing*, Patricia Adler investigates the social and professional worlds of midlevel cocaine and marijuana smugglers. Her research started serendipitously when she discovered that her next-door neighbor and friend was a drug smuggler; this was a huge advantage for her because it meant that she already had _____ with one of her informants.
- informed consent
 - rapport
 - thick description
 - sampling
 - causation

ANS: B

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 48

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Applying

38. Julie Bettie wrote her ethnography *Women Without Class: Girls, Race, and Identity* to examine the role of race and class in the lives of girls in California's Central Valley. She did most of her work at a high school, hanging out with and talking to students, but she felt very self-conscious about writing down her observations where the girls could see her, so she often ducked into a bathroom stall to write. What do ethnographers call her written observations?
- interviews
 - representativeness
 - nonverbal communication
 - fieldnotes
 - ethnographies

ANS: D

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 48

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Applying

39. One of Mitch Duneier's main conclusions in his ethnography of street vendors in New York City was that, despite the chaos and disorder they *seem* to bring to the street, the opportunity to sell something actually gave vendors a sense of purpose and dignity. Disputing aspects of New York's crackdown on petty and nonviolent crimes, Duneier argues that politicians have failed to distinguish between physical signs of decline, like graffiti, and street vendors who are working to improve their lives. Which of the following advantages of ethnography does Duneier's research demonstrate?
- The detailed nature of ethnographies can help to reshape the stereotypes that we hold about others and that are often the basis for social policy.
 - Ethnographies offer a means of studying groups that are often overlooked with other methods.
 - Ethnographies allow respondents to speak in their own words.
 - Ethnographies are not always representative.
 - Ethnographic research can be used to gather data on a population that is too large to study by other means.

ANS: A

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 49

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Applying

40. A sociologist wants a major national organization to fund her study of medical marijuana clubs in San Francisco but is turned down because the grant-makers don't see how her study would represent knowledge about anything more than the clubs that would be studied. What is the organization concerned about?
- representativeness
 - replicability

- c. bias
- d. sampling error
- e. the target population

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 50 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Applying

41. When he was writing *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture*, the ethnographer Walter Williams was always very open about his own sexual orientation because he believed that being open with the people he was studying was the only way to establish a trusting and sharing interaction with them. What was Williams concerned with?
- a. validity
 - b. thick description
 - c. reactivity
 - d. rapport
 - e. replicability

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Applying

42. Sociologists who conduct interviews can only gather data from a limited number of people because:
- a. it is impossible to find enough people through a random sample.
 - b. researchers are only allowed to talk to people who are 18 and older.
 - c. it is extremely difficult to guarantee confidentiality to large groups.
 - d. interviews are too time consuming.
 - e. it is hard to obtain informed consent from large numbers of people.

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 53 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Understanding

43. If a researcher has obtained informed consent from all his participants, it means that:
- a. they have all agreed to participate in the study for monetary compensation.
 - b. they all belong to the target population identified by the researcher.
 - c. they all understand the nature of the study and what will be asked of them.
 - d. their confidentiality has been guaranteed.
 - e. they have all read the prior literature on the subject area.

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Understanding

44. A closed-ended question is one that:
- a. allows for a wide variety of responses.
 - b. encourages respondents to answer creatively.
 - c. limits the possible responses.
 - d. is used as the final question in a survey.
 - e. can only be answered orally.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

45. Researchers should try to avoid double-barreled questions, or questions that:
- a. ask about multiple issues.
 - b. use emotional language that may bias the respondent.

- c. are vague or ambiguous.
- d. have a hidden agenda.
- e. allow for a wide variety of responses.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

46. What kind of question usually produces a wide variety of responses by allowing respondents to answer in whatever way seems appropriate to them?
- a. a closed-ended question
 - b. an open-ended question
 - c. a double-barreled question
 - d. a leading question
 - e. a loaded question

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

47. After researchers conduct a series of interviews, they usually transcribe the responses. The transcription process is fairly time consuming, but it is valuable in part because it allows researchers to:
- a. look for patterns in their data.
 - b. check for bias in how they asked questions.
 - c. think up new questions they didn't ask.
 - d. determine the average age of their interviewees.
 - e. determine if their sample was representative of the larger population.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Pages 51, 53 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

48. Which of the following is an advantage of using interviews as a research method?
- a. They allow the researcher to maintain strict control of the data collection process.
 - b. They reveal attitudes and beliefs a researcher has no access to without talking to people.
 - c. They can affirm preconceptions and stereotypes.
 - d. They allow researchers to analyze data statistically and draw correlations.
 - e. Finding respondents is fairly easy for most research topics.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 53
TOP: Interviews: Advantages and Disadvantages (III.B) MSC: Understanding

49. In her research for *The Second Shift*, Arlie Hochschild interviewed married couples to find out how they dealt with changing family roles as more women entered the workforce. What advantages came from her decision to use interviews as a research method?
- a. It allowed for a large group of people to be included in the study.
 - b. It ensured that the people who were interviewed were representative of the larger population.
 - c. It ensured that the respondents were always honest and forthcoming about their family life and marital roles.
 - d. It allowed her to gather direct quotations and construct an intimate portrait of married couples.
 - e. It created both a control group and an experimental group and allowed Hochschild to compare them.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Page 53 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Applying

50. Researchers are often worried that interviewees have not been completely honest or forthcoming, especially when asked about sensitive subjects. How did Arlie Hochschild attempt to deal with this problem?
- She asked each question in a different way to try to trap respondents in contradictions.
 - She interviewed each spouse separately to see if their stories matched.
 - She observed some respondents as they went about their daily routines to see if their actions matched their answers.
 - She confronted respondents when they gave answers that seemed dubious.
 - When respondents seemed to be giving questionable answers, she used leading questions.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 53 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

51. Which of the following is NOT a disadvantage of using interviews to conduct social research?
- Interviewees are allowed to speak in their own words.
 - Interviewees are not always truthful.
 - Interviewees can be difficult to talk to.
 - Interviews are time consuming.
 - It can be difficult to generalize from interviews because the sample size is usually small.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Pages 53–54 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

52. Why do social scientists who use interviews rarely speak with large numbers of people for a project?
- It is hard to find people willing to be interviewed.
 - The transcription process takes a long time.
 - There are usually very few people who are interesting enough to be interviewed.
 - Face-to-face interviewing is a very time-consuming process.
 - The data is so rich that few interviews are typically needed.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Pages 53–54 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

53. Arlie Hochschild was concerned that her sample of interviewees was too small to guarantee representativeness. How did Hochschild attempt to overcome this problem?
- by very carefully selecting only totally representative interviewees
 - by deciding that she didn't need to generalize to any larger population
 - by asking only open-ended questions
 - by doing follow-up interviews with each interviewee
 - by comparing demographic information about her interviewees with information about her target population

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Pages 53–54 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

54. A research team is curious about the relationship between diet and exercise habits and academic performance among American college students. In order to get their data, the researchers randomly select seventeen colleges by pulling names out of a hat and travel to campuses, where they stand in prominent public places and ask for volunteers until they have ten people from each campus willing to be interviewed. What is the researchers' target population?

- a. students at the seventeen colleges they visited
- b. the ten students who were interviewed
- c. Americans
- d. young people
- e. American college students

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
 MSC: Applying

55. Every four years when it's time to elect a new president, we pay much attention to surveys, which we usually call "polls." Even though there are more than three hundred million people in the United States, most political pollsters ask about a thousand people who it is they plan to vote for and use that information to predict how the election will turn out. Who is the sample for a presidential poll?
- a. every person who is planning on voting
 - b. every American
 - c. all those people who have strong political opinions
 - d. voters
 - e. the one thousand people who are asked whom they will vote for

ANS: E DIF: Easy REF: Page 51 TOP: Surveys (IV)
 MSC: Applying

56. Imagine that you're trying to rewrite a survey. You find a multiple-choice question that asks, "What is your favorite recreational activity?" and gives three response options: watching television, shopping, or sports. You add a fourth response option, "other," and invite respondents to write an activity of their choice. What kind of question have you just made?
- a. open-ended
 - b. quantitative
 - c. reductionist
 - d. closed-ended
 - e. spurious

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 51 TOP: Question Types (III.A)
 MSC: Applying

57. A professor has been commissioned by a college to do research on its new academic system. The college has moved from a semester system to block scheduling. He asks, "How have teachers and students responded to the new intensive block scheduling system?" This is an example of:
- a. a leading question.
 - b. a double-barreled question.
 - c. a closed-ended question.
 - d. a self-fulfilling prophecy.
 - e. reflexivity.

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: Page 51 TOP: Question Types (III.A)
 MSC: Applying

58. Some researchers suggest that interviews give "voice" to people who may never have been heard before and offer privileged access to authentic experience, private worlds, and true selves. How do interviews do this?
- a. Interviews may contribute to unfair stereotypes.
 - b. Interviews are relatively quick and economical and can provide a vast amount of data.
 - c. Interviews allow respondents to speak in their own words; they can reveal their thoughts,

feelings, and beliefs—internal states that would not necessarily be accessible by any other means.

- d. Respondents are not always forthcoming or truthful. Sometimes they are difficult to talk to, and at other times they may try too hard to be helpful.
- e. Researchers are able to work with interviews to describe the social world with complete accuracy.

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Applying

59. The anthropologist Ruth Behar traveled to San Luis Potosí to learn more about the everyday lives of Mexican women. Instead, she ended up conducting one very long, very intensive interview with a woman named Esperanza and wrote a book based upon more than a year of interview data. Which disadvantage of the interview methodology does this book highlight?
- a. Face-to-face interviewing is time consuming, and interviews are rarely used with large numbers of people. Thus, their representativeness is sometimes questionable.
 - b. Respondents are not always forthcoming or truthful. Sometimes they are difficult to talk to, and at other times they may try too hard to be helpful.
 - c. Interviews generally lack qualitative data that might better capture the social reality the researcher wishes to examine.
 - d. Interviews, although able to describe messages inherent in the media, do not illuminate how such messages are interpreted.
 - e. Interviews sometimes distance the researcher from the messy realities of the social world.

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Applying

60. Survey research tends to produce quantitative data. One key advantage of this kind of data is that:
- a. it is easy to transmit to the public.
 - b. it includes observations and informal interviews.
 - c. it allows the researcher to review the literature.
 - d. it affords easy access to the norms, values, and meanings held by members of a group.
 - e. it is the only kind of data that is useful.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

61. When survey researchers write closed-ended questions, they often use Likert scales to construct the possible answers. How do Likert scales allow respondents to answer?
- a. They allow respondents to answer along a continuum, from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”
 - b. They allow respondents to answer with their own opinions.
 - c. They allow respondents to answer in simple dichotomies, like true/false or yes/no.
 - d. They allow respondents to opt out of a question if they don’t have an answer.
 - e. They encourage respondents to include detailed responses.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

62. While it is always important to ask clear and unambiguous questions regardless of the method you use, it is especially important to avoid confusion when conducting surveys. Why?
- a. Survey research methods commonly use statistics.
 - b. When using survey research methods, the researcher is usually not present to clarify any

misunderstandings.

- c. Confusing and ambiguous questions create an ethical dilemma.
- d. Survey researchers talk to many people.
- e. Survey research tends to look at large-scale social patterns.

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

63. When writing questions for a survey, researchers must avoid all of the following EXCEPT:
- a. leading questions.
 - b. double-barreled questions.
 - c. negative questions.
 - d. bias.
 - e. open-ended questions.

ANS: E DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

64. When writing a survey, researchers must avoid negative questions, which are defined as:
- a. questions that ask about two different topics.
 - b. questions that let the respondent know how the researcher hopes they will answer.
 - c. questions that demean or insult a group or individual.
 - d. questions that ask a respondent about what they don't think rather than what they do think.
 - e. questions that are designed to elicit a negative response.

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

65. Why would mentioning a sensitive issue, such as divorce or infidelity, in a survey question influence how respondents answer later questions?
- a. Questions about sensitive issues are double-barreled.
 - b. The researcher may not be present to explain any confusing issues that may result from a sensitive question.
 - c. The respondents may think about the sensitive issue when answering later questions.
 - d. Sensitive questions make the questionnaire confusing and difficult to fill out.
 - e. Sensitive questions spoil the representativeness of the researcher's sample.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

66. Which of the following is NOT an advantage of survey research?
- a. A researcher can gather data on very large populations.
 - b. It's relatively quick and cheap.
 - c. Compared to other research methods, surveys are usually more reliable.
 - d. It's easier to ensure confidentiality.
 - e. Because survey research often allows for anonymity, respondents are more honest and often produce more valid data.

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

67. What is a pilot study?
- a. a study that guides other studies

- b. a smaller study used to investigate the feasibility of a larger one
- c. a study designed to improve the validity of a larger study
- d. a study that concerns itself with media use and popular culture
- e. a study that definitively answers a question that has been bothering sociologists

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

68. Why are respondents often more comfortable addressing sensitive subjects on surveys than in other research contexts?
- a. They know that many other people will also answer the same questions.
 - b. They know that their answers will only be analyzed statistically.
 - c. They can answer in private.
 - d. They don't take surveys seriously.
 - e. Surveys guarantee that their answers will be confidential, while other methods do not.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

69. When do sociologists most often use statistical tools to analyze their data?
- a. when they use ethnographic methods
 - b. when they use experimental methods
 - c. when they use interviews and participant observation
 - d. when they use historical research
 - e. when they use surveys

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

70. A sociologist uses a survey to study the attitudes of adults in the United States concerning premarital sex among teenagers. In this study, the target population consists of _____, and the group that is asked the survey questions is called the _____.
- a. all teenagers in the United States; reference group
 - b. all teenagers in the United States who have engaged in premarital sex; experimental group
 - c. all adults in the United States; sample
 - d. all adults in the United States who have teenage children; units of analysis
 - e. all teenagers and adults in the United States; control group

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Remembering

71. Imagine that you work at a local hospital and that it's your job to design a customer-satisfaction survey. One of the most important questions concerns patient satisfaction with care received, but you don't know how to compare responses. Which of the following is a common tool that survey researchers use to standardize answers?
- a. open-ended questions
 - b. quota sampling
 - c. leading questions
 - d. grounded theory
 - e. Likert scales

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Applying

72. When high schools want to ask students about sensitive subjects like drug use or sexual health, they often use surveys rather than a more direct form of communication like interviews. Why?
- Surveys allow respondents to speak in their own words; they can reveal their own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.
 - Surveys allow researchers to ask much more complex questions than they could with any other methodology.
 - Surveys allow students to answer the questions in private and assure the confidentiality of their responses.
 - Surveys are more expensive and allow for larger staffs and budgets.
 - Surveys produce far more honesty and are almost always more valid.

ANS: C

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 54

TOP: Surveys (IV)

MSC: Applying

73. In 2005 a commercial research firm carried out a study of hand washing in public restrooms. The researchers observed 6,336 individuals wash their hands, or not, in the public restrooms of major attractions in Atlanta, Chicago, New York City, and San Francisco. Ninety percent of the women observed washed their hands, compared with only 75 percent of the men. Interestingly enough, when asked via a telephone survey, 97 percent of women and 96 percent of men claimed they always washed their hands after using a public restroom. What disadvantage of survey research does this illustrate?
- Surveys suffer from a lack of replicability, meaning that it's hard for another researcher to repeat or replicate the study.
 - Survey research generally lacks qualitative data that might better capture the social reality the researcher wishes to examine.
 - Not all respondents provide honest self-reports, so survey research has comparatively less validity.
 - In this case, as in many surveys, the respondents are self-selected, which makes it difficult to generalize from these results.
 - It would be impossible to use these methods to gather data on a large population.

ANS: C

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 54

TOP: Surveys (IV)

MSC: Applying

74. Any time a social researcher is going to use sampling, they must first identify their target population. What is this target population?
- the group of people whose behavior they wish to change
 - the group of people from whom they will gather data
 - the group of people least often studied in the past
 - the larger group of people they wish to generalize about
 - the group of people who wish to be studied

ANS: D

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 54

TOP: Sampling (IV.A)

MSC: Applying

75. Which of the following is true about a sample?
- It is always smaller than the group it is used to generalize about.
 - It is always selected randomly.
 - It must always contain a large number of people.
 - It must be weighted to take into account the demographics of the target population.
 - It is only used with quantitative methods.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Sampling (IV.A)
MSC: Applying

76. A simple random sample is defined as:
- a sample with only one variable.
 - a sample in which other demographic variables are taken into account.
 - a sample in which one variable is weighted more than another.
 - a sample in which every member of the population has a chance of being included.
 - a sample that uses probability to determine who will be selected.

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Sampling (IV.A)
MSC: Remembering

77. Sometimes survey researchers reject randomness and instead use weighting techniques to construct a sample. How is a weighted sample different from a random one?
- The weighted sample does not target any specific group within the population.
 - The weighted sample more closely resembles the larger population.
 - A weighted sample excludes some members of the population.
 - A weighted sample draws from a larger target population rather than a random one.
 - A weighted sample is only used when a researcher needs to ask weighted questions.

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Sampling (IV.A)
MSC: Remembering

78. One of the key methods used to do political polling is random-digit dialing, in which every phone number in an area code has an equal chance of being selected to take part in a survey. However researchers have noticed that young people are more likely to only use a cell phone, and people with cell phones are less likely to answer a call from an unknown number. As a result, polling organizations often count responses from young people as being worth “more” than those from older people. What is this technique called?
- weighting
 - bias
 - probability sampling
 - Likert scales
 - leading questions

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Sampling (IV.A)
MSC: Applying

79. Which of the following is a disadvantage of using existing sources of data for research?
- Researchers often seek answers to questions the data doesn’t directly address.
 - Researchers have to spend a great deal of time and money to get the data.
 - Researchers do not always understand how the data was interpreted or what it meant in its original context.
 - Researchers do not have access to existing sources.
 - Existing sources of data are never relevant to the contemporary world because they emerged from a different time and place.

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 54 TOP: Existing Sources (V)
MSC: Remembering

80. When researchers use a social networking site like Facebook to obtain data, they are:
- ethically questionable.

- b. doing qualitative research.
- c. using interview data.
- d. likely to have issues with reflexivity.
- e. using existing sources.

ANS: E DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Existing Sources (V)
 MSC: Remembering

81. Why are social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace so exciting to sociologists who study social networks?
- a. For the first time, social networking sites offer sociologists a data set rich enough to test ideas that until now have only been theorized.
 - b. For the first time, sociologists have realized just how much the Internet has changed social networks.
 - c. For the first time, sociologists don't have to spend the time and money to go talk to people and can do all their work from a computer.
 - d. For the first time, sociologists can find out what young people's social networks look like.
 - e. For the first time, sociologists can track the spread of urban legends.

ANS: A DIF: Hard REF: Page 57 TOP: Existing Sources (V)
 MSC: Remembering

82. According to researchers who study online social networks, how are online networks different from social networks established through traditional, real-life, face-to-face contact?
- a. Online networks aren't different.
 - b. There tends to be greater racial diversity in our social networks online.
 - c. Family members are almost never part of our social networks online.
 - d. In face-to-face-based networks, we have far more shallow relationships.
 - e. Traditional social networks don't confer as many advantages in terms of employment and contacts as online networks do.

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Page 57 TOP: Existing Sources (V)
 MSC: Remembering

83. The analysis of documents—such as medical records, photographs, diaries, letters, newspapers, and song lyrics—uses which of the following types of data?
- a. ethnographic fieldnotes
 - b. interview transcripts
 - c. existing sources
 - d. experimental data
 - e. statistical analysis

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Page 56 TOP: Existing Sources (V)
 MSC: Applying

84. What is the primary goal of comparative and historical research methods?
- a. to enhance the validity of experiments
 - b. to understand relationships between parts of society in different times and different places
 - c. to uncover issues that have been neglected by mainstream social research
 - d. to select participants who are very similar so that the independent variable can be isolated
 - e. to produce data that can be used to encourage social change

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: Page 56

85. Why is the use of existing data, especially in comparative and historical research, especially helpful to students?
- It allows them to explore new topics.
 - It requires fewer resources than collecting original data.
 - It eliminates problems with sampling bias.
 - It lets them improve their interview and participant observation skills.
 - It is usually more valid than collecting new data.

ANS: B

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 57

TOP: Comparative and Historical Methods (V.A)

MSC: Remembering

86. The Yale sociologist Kai Erikson wrote a book called *Wayward Puritans* in which he drew on court records from colonial Massachusetts to understand deviance in the past. He learned that the rate of out-of-wedlock births was much higher than it is now and that the amount of alcohol consumed per capita was higher as well. What research methodology was Erikson using?
- ethnography
 - content analysis
 - comparative-historical
 - interviews
 - surveys

ANS: C

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 56

TOP: Comparative and Historical Methods (V.A)

MSC: Applying

87. If a sociologist watches a lot of television and counts the number of times women play roles with lower status than those played by men, what research method is he using?
- statistical analysis
 - experimental research
 - content analysis
 - ethnography
 - interview

ANS: C

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 57

TOP: Content Analysis (V.B)

MSC: Applying

88. If you were to conduct a research project investigating the relationship between the brands and shapes of gummy candy available in American convenience stores, what methodology would you use?
- quantitative
 - content analysis
 - existing sources
 - comparative or historical research
 - interviews

ANS: B

DIF: Hard

REF: Page 57

TOP: Content Analysis (V.B)

MSC: Applying

89. Which research method most closely resembles the scientific method?
- surveys
 - interviews
 - participant observation
 - experimental research

e. ethnography

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Remembering

90. When doing experimental research, why is it important to control for everything except the independent variable?
- so the experiment can be kept very simple
 - so multiple variables don't conflict with each other
 - so the researcher doesn't have to gather too much information about the subjects
 - so the experiment can be made more affordable
 - so a clear conclusion can be drawn about what influences the dependent variable

ANS: E DIF: Medium REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Remembering

91. When conducting experiments, how is the experimental group different from the control group?
- The control group is not part of the experiment.
 - The experimental group contains people who are different in many ways from the control group.
 - The experimental group receives the dependent variable, and the control group does not.
 - The experimental group receives the independent variable, and the control group does not.
 - The control group receives the independent variable, and the experimental group does not.

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Remembering

92. A sociologist performs an experiment designed to investigate the effect of marriage counseling on divorce. She divides research participants into two similar groups of troubled couples, provides one group with counseling, and observes whether, over time, the two groups eventually divorce at different rates. What is the independent variable in this experiment?
- divorce
 - troubled couples
 - dividing people into groups
 - the overall divorce rate
 - marriage counseling

ANS: E DIF: Easy REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Applying

93. What does it mean for a sociologist to control for a variable?
- Research subjects are divided into two groups.
 - Change over time is measured in a dependent variable.
 - One group is allowed to understand the nature of the experiment, while the other group is kept in the dark.
 - Precise tools are developed with which to measure a variable.
 - All factors except for the independent variable are taken into account.

ANS: E DIF: Easy REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Remembering

94. Which of the following is an advantage of replicability in experiments?
- Experiments can be performed again and again over time in order to measure change.

- b. Experiments are performed in isolation, away from the messy realities of everyday life.
- c. Experiments allow research subjects to speak in their own voices.
- d. Experiments are extremely cheap.
- e. Each experiment is unique and illustrates something new.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Remembering

95. A recent sociological experiment sought to determine the exact role social support plays in the health of expectant mothers. To conduct the experiment, the researchers asked midwives to flip a coin each time they received a new client, and if it came up heads to try as hard as possible to put the client in contact with others who could provide social support. If the coin came up tails, the midwives would not discourage the woman from receiving social support but would not facilitate it either. What is the dependent variable in this experiment?

- a. coin flips
- b. health
- c. social support
- d. midwives
- e. expectant mothers

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Applying

96. A recent sociological experiment sought to determine the exact role social support plays in the health of expectant mothers. To conduct the experiment, the researchers asked midwives to flip a coin each time they received a new client, and if it came up heads to try as hard as possible to put the client in contact with others who could provide social support. If the coin came up tails, the midwives would not discourage the woman from receiving social support but would not facilitate it either. Who is the control group in this experiment?

- a. sociologists
- b. expectant mothers
- c. expectant mothers whose coin comes up tails
- d. expectant mothers whose coin comes up heads
- e. midwives

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Page 58 TOP: Experimental Methods (VI)
MSC: Applying

97. What can an institutional review board do if it has reservations about the safety or ethics of a research project?

- a. It may appoint new researchers to complete the project.
- b. It may stop the project from going forward, at least until changes have been made.
- c. It can do nothing.
- d. It may issue recommendations for future research.
- e. It may provide assistance to any research subjects whose rights have been violated.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 67 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Remembering

98. When Laud Humphreys was a sociology graduate student at Washington University in St. Louis, he wrote his dissertation on the “tearoom trade,” anonymous homosexual encounters in the men’s rooms of public parks. To gather data, he acted as a lookout for his subjects, but he also surreptitiously noted license-plate numbers as the men left, so he could get their names and addresses. The next year, he picked about 50 men from the “tearooms” and interviewed them in their homes, claiming to be performing a health survey. His descriptions of the interviews made it possible for many of the men (and their families) to recognize themselves when the dissertation was published. Why do many sociologists consider this research method to be unethical?
- a. It used terminology that was confusing to the interview subjects.
 - b. It put Humphreys at risk for arrest or retaliation.
 - c. It harmed the reputation of the city of St. Louis.
 - d. It failed to protect the biographical anonymity of his subjects.
 - e. It investigated an extremely sensitive subject.

ANS: D DIF: Hard REF: Page 66 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Applying

99. Many kitchen tools today are made with easy-to-grip silicone handles, a vast improvement over old wire tools, which were often painful to use. Although the advantages of silicone over wire might seem obvious, kitchenware makers were unaware of the problems with wire tools until they hired ethnographers to visit people at home, see how they worked in the kitchen, and determine what sorts of things could be sold to them. This ethnography is an example of:
- a. a nonacademic use of research methods.
 - b. reflexivity.
 - c. a way to ensure validity and reliability.
 - d. stratified sampling.
 - e. reactivity.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: Page 61
TOP: Nonacademic Uses of Research Methods (VII.A) MSC: Applying

100. If a researcher allows his own values and opinions to affect his analysis, he is guilty of:
- a. theoretical incoherence.
 - b. bias.
 - c. sampling bias.
 - d. failing to obtain informed consent.
 - e. conducting research that lacks replicability.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 64
TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B) MSC: Remembering

101. What is the difference between basic and applied research?
- a. Applied research is the search for knowledge for its own sake.
 - b. Applied research attempts to translate knowledge gained through basic research into direct, practical action.
 - c. Basic research is almost always done by Marxists.
 - d. Applied research is usually quantitative.
 - e. Basic research doesn’t raise issues of bias, while applied research does.

ANS: B DIF: Hard REF: Page 61
TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B) MSC: Applying

102. Which of the following parts of a research project is always free of bias?

- a. identifying the project
- b. selecting the sample
- c. wording the questions
- d. analyzing the data
- e. none of the above

ANS: E

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 63

TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B)

MSC: Evaluating

103. What is reactivity?

- a. the way the experimental group reacts to the independent variable
- b. the independent variable in an experiment
- c. when researchers react to data by over-reporting the results
- d. the tendency of research subjects to change their behavior in response to being studied
- e. the goal of applied research, to create a reaction

ANS: D

DIF: Easy

REF: Page 64

TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B)

MSC: Evaluating

104. When Elton Mayo did his now-classic experiment on worker productivity, he found that he could increase productivity by changing variables in a work environment, but also that changing back variables increased productivity. What did he conclude was the true cause of the increase in productivity?

- a. a decrease in sick days
- b. his own bias
- c. the effect of being studied
- d. the effect of change in the workplace, because it broke workers' routines and made them more alert
- e. increased lighting and longer breaks

ANS: C

DIF: Medium

REF: Page 64

TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B)

MSC: Evaluating

105. For many years, researchers struggled to find a biological explanation for sexual orientation. However the vast majority of studies have focused on gay men and excluded lesbians, which might lead sociologists to question the _____ of such research.

- a. commercial uses
- b. objectivity
- c. reflexivity
- d. reliability
- e. validity

ANS: B

DIF: Hard

REF: Page 64

TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B)

MSC: Applying

106. Which of the following steps might help a researcher avoid problems associated with reactivity?

- a. using secrecy or deception
- b. being totally ethical at all times
- c. using random sampling techniques
- d. using properly constructed questions
- e. being objective

ANS: A

DIF: Hard

REF: Page 64

TRUE/FALSE

1. Thomas Kuhn, a philosopher of science, argues that truth is relative, in that it is dependent on the paradigm through which one understands the world.

ANS: T DIF: Medium REF: Page 45
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Remembering

2. Sociologists try to follow the steps of the scientific method or approach to gather new empirical data that can change and deepen our understanding of human social life.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: Pages 43–44
TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B) MSC: Remembering

3. Even if you pick your method carefully, you will still have to sacrifice some types of information in order to acquire others.

ANS: T DIF: Medium REF: Page 47 TOP: Which Method to Use (I.C)
MSC: Remembering

4. Ethnographic research projects can be designed to completely exclude outside interference.

ANS: F DIF: Medium REF: Page 47 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Analyzing

5. You are about to do a series of interviews about drug abuse and academic performance. In order to make people feel more comfortable, you tell them that these interviews are about student satisfaction with the university and have them sign a form showing that they've willingly agreed to participate. You have the informed consent of your research subjects.

ANS: F DIF: Medium REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Applying

6. Sociologists try to conduct interviews that are both more systematic and more scientific than those conducted by journalists.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: Page 51 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Remembering

7. The order in which a questionnaire asks about different issues cannot affect the way people respond.

ANS: F DIF: Easy REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Creating

8. Survey data is often less valid than that produced by other methods because respondents are not always honest when answering questionnaires.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: Page 55 TOP: Surveys (IV)

MSC: Understanding

9. A university decides to conduct a survey to learn if students like the lasagna and garlic bread in the cafeteria. It distributes questionnaires in three English classes and two sociology classes. This will produce a simple random sample of the student body.

ANS: F DIF: Hard REF: Page 54 TOP: Surveys (IV)
MSC: Applying

10. No harm can come to subjects as a result of completing a questionnaire.

ANS: F DIF: Easy REF: Page 64 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Remembering

11. Codes of ethics in the social sciences provide very strict, step-by-step guidelines for researchers to follow.

ANS: F DIF: Easy REF: Page 66 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Remembering

12. Market research is probably one of the most common uses of sociological research methods for nonacademic purposes.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: Page 62
TOP: Nonacademic Uses of Research Methods (VII.A) MSC: Applying

13. Marxists are among the strongest supporters of value-free sociology.

ANS: F DIF: Medium REF: Page 61
TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B) MSC: Remembering

14. Some “facts” sociologists once believed to be unambiguously true are now treated as opinions, biases, or speculation.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: Page 64
TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B) MSC: Remembering

15. Polls and surveys do not just reflect popular opinion; they can also be used to shape and change attitudes and beliefs.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: Page 64
TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B) MSC: Understanding

ESSAY

1. In everyday life, it is assumed that science provides access to objective truths that will never change. However, the philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn argues that truth is relative and dependent upon the paradigm through which you see the world. Explain what a paradigm is and how the scientific method can lead to paradigm shifts.

ANS:

Answers should begin by describing Kuhn's work, especially the idea that paradigms are broad theoretical models about how things work. A paradigm shift, a major break from the assumptions made by the previous model, occurs when new data force a new way of looking at the world, as in the shift from an earth-centered solar system to a heliocentric solar system. And it is through the use of the scientific method that new data is generated; the scientific method demands that assumptions be tested with empirical data.

DIF: Hard

REF: Page 45

TOP: The Scientific Method (I.B)

MSC: Applying

2. Each method of social research comes with its own advantages and disadvantages. This means that there is not necessarily a "right" answer to the question of which method should be used for a project. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using ethnographic methods.

ANS:

The broadest distinction students should be able to make is that ethnographic research is comparatively more valid, while survey research is comparatively more reliable. More specifically, ethnographies allow researchers to study previously overlooked groups, challenge taken-for-granted assumptions, and develop innovative methodologies. However, ethnographics are hard to replicate, not always representative, and easily affected by bias. Reflexivity must be taken into account when doing ethnographic research. This type of research is also time consuming and involves many hours of fieldwork.

DIF: Medium

REF: Pages 47–50

TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)

MSC: Evaluating

3. As far back as Auguste Comte, the theorist who coined the term "sociology," it has been assumed by many sociologists that objectivity is important in studying society. Describe the assumptions surrounding the role objectivity plays in sociology.

ANS:

Any answer should first point out that many "facts" from the past are now seen as distortions based on racism, sexism, class privilege, and even religiosity. Second, social researchers are human and therefore understand the world through their own subjective natures. Third, some postmodern theorists have suggested that there is no such thing as objective reality.

DIF: Hard

REF: Page 64

TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B)

MSC: Understanding

4. Every discipline that does research on humans needs a code of ethics in order to protect its research subjects. While it's easy to see that medical research could harm people if not carried out ethically, the risks associated with sociological research may seem more subtle. Describe these risks.

ANS:

This answer should mention breaches of confidentiality and issues of betrayal based on the way subjects are portrayed, as well as risks of physical and legal harm to researchers. Also, certain types of research questions may remind respondents of psychologically or emotionally harmful events or issues in their own lives. These types of questions could include asking an adult victim of child abuse about former family relationships or incidents, or more subtle questions, like asking someone with a history of eating disorders to recount their experiences with diet and exercise regimes. The researcher in this setting should pay close attention to cues of discomfort or distress from respondents.

DIF: Hard REF: Pages 64, 66 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Applying

5. Both interviews and surveys require a researcher to write clear, unambiguous questions in order to generate good data. What are the pitfalls and benefits of crafting specific types of questions?

ANS:

Answers should mention both leading and double-barreled questions. The text also mentions overly complex questions, ambiguous questions, and those that spark an emotional reaction on the part of the respondent. A discussion of open-ended vs. closed-ended questions should include information about close-ended questions being easier to code but not allowing respondents to fully answer in their own words. Open-ended questions allow respondents to fully answer questions with their own ideas but are much more time consuming for researchers to code.

DIF: Hard REF: Pages 51, 53 TOP: Interviews (III)
MSC: Applying

6. In physics, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle states that to measure something is also to change it. Sociologists have observed a similar phenomenon—reactivity. Describe the classic example of reactivity, observed and explained by Elton Mayo at the Western Electric Hawthorne Plant between 1927 and 1932.

ANS:

Mayo sought to examine the effect of varying work conditions on motivation and productivity in the factory. He changed various conditions—such as lighting levels, rest breaks, and even rates of pay—and found that each change resulted in a rise in productivity. However, returning to the original conditions also resulted in a rise in productivity. Mayo concluded that the variables he had manipulated were not the only or dominant causes of productivity. Rather, *it was the effect of being studied*, or what is now referred to as the Hawthorne Effect, that caused the increases. It was attention that had caused the improvement. The presence of researchers always affects those that they study.

DIF: Hard REF: Page 64 TOP: Values, Objectivity, and Reactivity (VII.B)
MSC: Understanding

7. In recent years, ethnography has expanded beyond academic and scientific disciplines and is now often used for commercial purposes. Explain how ethnographic methods can help advertisers.

ANS:

Advertisers are interested in the complex relationships between people and products, and ethnographic methods help them uncover the interpretive strategies and meaning systems used by consumers. The text mentions both Nissan, which used ethnographic methods to discover how American consumers defined “luxury,” and “cool hunters” who search for new and hip trends in popular culture by talking to trendsetters.

DIF: Hard REF: Page 61 TOP: Nonacademic Uses of Research Methods (VII.A)
MSC: Applying

8. Social researchers, especially ethnographers, sometimes find themselves faced with complicated moral dilemmas. Chapter 2 describes the case of the ethnographer John Van Maanen, who was subpoenaed to testify about the actions of police officers he had been studying. What did Van Maanen feel was his most important moral obligation? Why?

ANS:

The subpoena had asked that Van Maanen turn over his fieldnotes, which could have incriminated the police officers he was studying. This was problematic to him because it had taken months of fieldwork to gain the trust of his subjects. However, if he didn’t turn over the notes, it would doom the legal case of a victim of police brutality, a drifter whose only crime was being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Van Maanen felt a strong ethical obligation to protect his research subjects, whose confidentiality he had guaranteed, and he was able to keep his fieldnotes out of court.

DIF: Hard REF: Page 66 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Understanding

9. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz coined the term “thick description” to describe well-written fieldnotes. What does he mean by this term?

ANS:

Thick description should provide both a straightforward portrait of the activities and events in a given setting and resources from which the ethnographer can identify group members’ meanings in that setting. Making fieldnotes “thick” requires more than mere photographic details; it also requires sensitivity to context and to interactional details such as facial expressions and tone of voice, which enrich what might otherwise be just a list of happenings. To understand group members’ meanings, the researcher must be immersed in the setting with the members, usually for a sustained period of time, leading to a wealth of details as well as an understanding of the meaning behind those details.

DIF: Hard REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

10. Describe the series of steps that the scientific method or approach argues will allow researchers to acquire and verify empirical knowledge.

ANS:

Before even beginning a research project, there is a literature review. The first step in the scientific method is forming a hypothesis; second, the variables of the hypothesis are clearly defined (or *operationalized*); third, the hypothesis is used to predict an outcome; fourth, data are collected; and fifth, the data are evaluated, written up, and disseminated.

DIF: Medium REF: Pages 43–44 TOP: The Scientific Approach (I.B)

MSC: Remembering

11. A professor receives a grant to study local employment conditions and files the required paperwork with her university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Later, several graduate students are hired to take over the day-to-day management of the project, and, because they weren't around when the project started, they rename it when they complete the rest of the paperwork with the IRB. The IRB promptly cuts off the project's funding. Explain what an IRB does and why it would care about the name of a project being changed.

ANS:

The IRB is a group of scholars who review the research proposals of their colleagues at a school. It is the responsibility of the IRB to protect research subjects from any kind of harm. Although a name change is not problematic in and of itself, the IRB would be concerned that it might signal a larger shift in the nature of the project: from a research procedure that had been approved as safe and ethical to one that had not been reviewed.

DIF: Hard REF: Page 66 TOP: Research Ethics (VII.C)
MSC: Applying

12. Given what you learned in Chapter 2, why would interviewers' appearance, including clothing and hairstyle, make a difference in determining what they learn?

ANS:

Any good answer will mention reflexivity, the idea that ethnographers' presence affects how people respond around them. While the presence of anyone might change certain things about a setting, most of the important effects of reflexivity are based on the particular identity and activities of a particular researcher, so the way he chooses to present himself to his research subjects will affect their responses.

DIF: Hard REF: Page 48 TOP: Ethnographic Methods (II)
MSC: Understanding

13. Why should sociologists generally follow the steps of the scientific method or approach?

ANS:

Answers to this question should address how the scientific method or approach has been accepted as a standard procedure for acquiring empirical and measurable knowledge. It gives an important structure to the research process, without which data might be thought less rigorous or compelling. Using the scientific method helps researchers avoid common mistakes—such as neglecting to conduct a literature review—that might make a study pointless. Following the steps of the scientific method or approach helps researchers contribute to and build the field. For example, when their research findings are disseminated, this informs participants, other professionals, and interested parties, thus creating a research community. Finally, following Kuhn's line of thinking, we are constantly gathering data to understand what is true. However, truth is relative and depends on the paradigm, or worldview, we are using. Using the scientific method generates data that can help us see the world in different ways and can contribute to paradigm shifts and new ways of understanding what is true.

DIF: Hard REF: Pages 43–44 TOP: The Scientific Method (I.B)
MSC: Analyzing