

1. We are presented with so much detailed information that it would be difficult to make sense of it all if we didn't have schema to organize our perceptions.  
A) True  
B) False
2. When Bo gets in line to use the cash machine, he would use a schema to make choices about behaviors such as where to stand, where to look, and what to say.  
A) True  
B) False
3. Researchers have found that reduced cognitive activity is a common sign of selective perception.  
A) True  
B) False
4. Selective perception is a challenge to our perception but is also usually active, critical thought.  
A) True  
B) False
5. Imagine that your mother watched a horror film in which young people visiting a foreign country are abducted and killed. You tell her that you are interested in studying abroad next term and she begins to fret that something terrible will happen to you. Her perceptual challenge is caused by undue influence.  
A) True  
B) False
6. A teenage basketball player who purchases the shoes his favorite professional athlete endorses is probably making this choice because of the fundamental attribution error.  
A) True  
B) False
7. Attributing the success of a rival team to the referees making bad calls during the game may be an example of the fundamental attribution error influencing our perception.  
A) True  
B) False

8. When Michaela is not asked to interview for the part-time job she wants at her favorite store, she says, "I guess it's all about who you know and not what you know." Michaela's perception can be attributed to the self-serving bias.  
A) True  
B) False
9. Factors such as age and race can have a strong influence on our perception.  
A) True  
B) False
10. Communication scholars believe that if we all embrace cultural myopia, we will understand one another better.  
A) True  
B) False
11. Stereotypes by definition are negative and unflattering.  
A) True  
B) False
12. "Men don't like to talk about their feelings" is an example of a stereotype.  
A) True  
B) False
13. Negative stereotypes about a group often lead to prejudice against that group.  
A) True  
B) False
14. Communication researchers believe that social interaction is a key aspect in developing one's self-concept.  
A) True  
B) False
15. Social comparison theory helps to explain how media images may contribute to body image problems and eating disorders.  
A) True  
B) False

16. Self-esteem refers only to the positive feelings one has about oneself.  
A) True  
B) False
17. Self-esteem may be positive with regard to one attribute and negative with regard to a different attribute.  
A) True  
B) False
18. Research cited in the text finds that people who have high self-esteem are more likely than those who have low self-esteem to desire public signs of affection from their relational partners.  
A) True  
B) False
19. A student's choice of a major would probably be related to his or her feelings of self-efficacy.  
A) True  
B) False
20. A self-fulfilling prophecy can set us up for success in a particular situation.  
A) True  
B) False
21. Self-efficacy can be defined as a prediction that causes an individual to alter his or her behavior in a way that makes the prediction more likely to occur.  
A) True  
B) False
22. When you assess your communication competence as sufficient or acceptable, you are feeling a sense of self-actualization.  
A) True  
B) False

23. After a disagreement with his roommate over the cleanliness of their apartment, Dennis feels frustrated because he agreed to a solution he didn't find satisfying and decides that he needs to revisit the discussion and be more assertive about his needs. Dennis's evaluation of himself reflects self-denigration.
- A) True
  - B) False
24. Low-self-monitors lack the communication skills needed to form satisfying interpersonal relationships.
- A) True
  - B) False
25. Telling your new coworker that you prefer the color blue to red would count as self-disclosure but is not going to create much intimacy because it has so little depth.
- A) True
  - B) False
26. Communicators who have a low level of sensitivity to feedback are likely to incorporate others' feedback into their self-concept and modify their behavior based on that feedback.
- A) True
  - B) False
27. Spending time on Facebook may contribute to a distorted perception of the quality of one's own life.
- A) True
  - B) False

## **Answer Key**

1. A
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. B
11. B
12. A
13. A
14. A
15. A
16. B
17. A
18. B
19. A
20. A
21. B
22. B
23. B
24. B
25. A
26. B
27. A

1. Briefly describe how the use of stereotypes can become a challenge to a person's perception. Provide an example of a time when your own use of a stereotype prevented you from communicating effectively.
2. List and describe the three recommended ways for improving perception abilities and becoming a better communicator. Considering either a hypothetical cultural misunderstanding or one you have observed, illustrate how using these three steps could improve communication.
3. In your own words, explain how the fundamental attribution error impacts our perception. Provide a narrative example to illustrate how learning to recognize and overcome the fundamental attribution error could help a person grow.
4. Briefly contrast cultural myopia and prejudice using an example of each to illustrate the difference between them.
5. Discuss a time when challenges to your own perception prevented you from being able to communicate effectively. What happened? How did you perceive the information presented to you? What specific challenges did you experience in your perception of the event? If you had the opportunity to go back in time and rewrite the scenario, what would you do to improve your perception and communicate more effectively?
6. Your friend Maria has come to you for advice. She has two children, and she is concerned that playing violent video games and watching too much television are having a negative impact on them. Jose, who is ten, is getting into fights at school and is becoming more disrespectful to his parents every day. Christina, who is eight, now refuses to leave the house without wearing makeup and wakes nightly with nightmares about criminals breaking into their home. What would you say to Maria to help her make sense of her perceptions and the changes she sees in her children's perceptions and behaviors? What advice would you give her to improve her and her children's perceptions?
7. Considering what you have read throughout this chapter, why do you think many teens and their parents have difficulty understanding one another? How can teens and parents improve their perception skills to enhance intergenerational understanding?

8. Perceptual barriers like stereotyping and prejudice are still common in our culture. Using concepts discussed throughout the chapter, explain the role the media play in creating these perceptions. Explain how we, as a culture, can work to overcome these barriers.
9. Describe and provide a narrative example to illustrate how self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy come together to influence a person's communication choices and competence.
10. Explain how social comparison theory illuminates our understanding of why more and more boys and young men are using steroids today than in the past and why the number of men choosing to have elective cosmetic surgery has increased over the past several years. Identify specific examples to illustrate your ideas.
11. Jody is terrified of giving oral presentations and has consequently put off applying for a promotion at work that would require her to train other employees and deliver quarterly reports to the committee that oversees training and professional development at her company. Synthesizing information from throughout this chapter, what would you say to Jody to help her understand how her perception of both the activity as well as herself has influenced her avoidance of this opportunity for career growth?

## Answer Key

1. Stereotypes are fixed perceptions that do not adjust to varying interactions and circumstances. They apply generalizations about a group to the individual members of the group as if all members were the same. The generalizations may be erroneous to begin with, but they also ignore the unique characteristics the individual possesses. Finally, negative stereotypes about a group may discourage interaction with members of the group and can lead to prejudice. Examples will vary but should accurately reflect the use of a stereotype and should reflect a genuine challenge to communication competence.
2.
  - Be thoughtful when you seek explanations. Look beyond the most obvious explanation for what you observe.
  - Look beyond first impressions. Don't rely completely on your first impressions because these often lead to inaccurate conclusions.
  - Question your assumptions. Don't assume that you know what others think, feel, or believe based on their group affiliations or a host of other cultural factors. The application will vary but should clearly illustrate considering alternate explanations, questioning of first impressions, and questioning of assumptions.
3. Ideal answers to this question will reflect an understanding of what is meant by attribution and fundamental attribution error. Central to this understanding should be an awareness that the meanings attributed to behaviors are subjective and that we make choices about the conclusions we draw regarding others' behaviors and our own experiences. Fundamental attribution errors can create misunderstandings in our relationships and prevent us from being able to learn from our experiences. The narrative examples provided will vary but should focus either on individuals coming to understand themselves and others better by challenging their attributions or on individuals growing as a result of considering their own culpability in a particular situation.
4. Cultural myopia involves a failure to consider other cultural perspectives, whereas prejudice refers to deep-seated feelings of unkindness and ill will toward particular groups. Prejudice is usually based on negative stereotypes and feelings of superiority over certain groups. The examples students provide will vary but should be true to the definitions of the concepts.
5. The narrative examples students provide will vary but should represent at least a few critical perceptual challenges including mindlessness (not paying critical attention to the information presented to them); selective perception (hearing only what they wanted to hear); undue influence (giving more credibility to a message than should be the case); and problems with attributions including fundamental attribution error, use of stereotypes, and cultural myopia. Not all examples will involve all of the challenges, but the student should correctly identify the challenges presented in his or her narrative. The recommendations for rewriting the experiences will vary as well. Although a student may not reference every recommendation made within the chapter, he or she should identify at least one recommendation to help overcome each of the challenges presented in the narrative.
6. Ideal answers will synthesize concepts from throughout the chapter including the schemas Maria has for family interactions and how children should behave, the



attributions she is making with regard to her children's behavior (the meanings she assigns to Jose's "disrespectful" behaviors and attributing the cause of his behavioral changes to the media) and cultural myopia (she may not recognize the cultural experiences her children encounter in their daily lives). The advice that students provide might focus on helping Maria overcome selective perception and the fundamental attribution error as well as helping her minimize the distorted perception and undue influence that can be attributed to media and other outside forces.

7. Ideal answers to this question will synthesize concepts from throughout the chapter including a discussion of schemas (based on our experiences, we have expectations of how common interactions between teens and parents will play out), selective perception, and undue influence from the media, friends, and other family members (teens and parents are presented in the media as being at odds with one another, and friends and family members may exert pressure on either the teens or their parents), as well as attribution theory (the meaning we attribute to behaviors) and fundamental attribution error (we attribute behavioral differences to internal forces like age instead of to external forces such as culture). Ideal answers will also relate the concepts of cultural myopia and stereotyping to the specific topic of age and generation. Recommendations for how to improve intergenerational perception should synthesize recommendations for how to verify our perceptions, thoughtfully explain others' behaviors, and look beyond first impressions with recommendations that are more specific to intercultural communication discussed later in the chapter.
8. Ideal answers to this question will synthesize concepts from throughout the chapter, including a discussion of schemas, mindlessness (failure to question the schemas/stereotypes that the media portray), selective perception (negative stereotypes we get from the media may discourage us from interacting with members of a group, so the stereotypes are never challenged), and undue influence (the pervasive nature of twenty-first-century media means the stereotypes are virtually inescapable). Attention might also be given to issues such as the fundamental attribution error as well as to discussing narrow perspective and cultural myopia. Discussion of how to overcome these barriers should reflect the recommendations given in the text but with an emphasis on challenging the influence of the media. Finally, ideal answers will synthesize ideas presented throughout the course emphasizing our role as active participants in our interaction with the media (we choose to watch certain programs, listen to certain musical artists, and so on, and these choices provide feedback to the originators of such messages).
9. Ideal answers will indicate comprehension of the interdependent nature of self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. In addition, strong answers will focus on both cognition and behavior, demonstrating a comprehension of how these cognitions influence a person's self-presentation and communication. The example provided may focus on a person with positive self-esteem and high levels of self-efficacy or with low self-esteem and lower levels of self-efficacy but should reflect the interdependent nature of these concepts as well as how the person's cognition influenced his or her behavior choices.
10. Ideal answers will either provide a concrete definition of social comparison theory or demonstrate understanding of the theory through the application of it to this specific case. Strong answers will identify ways in which the media's portrayal of men has changed over recent years and how that has influenced men's self-concept and

self-esteem. Additionally, strong answers may focus attention on the role of athletes as role models for boys and how recent discussion of steroid use among professional athletes may contribute to the problem.

11. Ideal answers will synthesize a comprehension of the selective nature of perception as well as the schemas Jody has for effective speakers, with an understanding of self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. For example, low self-esteem may have made Jody more sensitive to others' feedback, influenced her to pay greater attention to her shortcomings than others do, and prevented her from identifying her own strengths. In addition, social comparison and the resulting undue influence of the media may have created flawed schemas and a misunderstanding of others' expectations. Self-fulfilling prophecies may prevent Jody from becoming a good speaker and receiving feedback from others that contradicts her current perceptions. If Jody is a poor speaker, her low self-esteem and low self-efficacy have probably led her to avoid opportunities to develop her skills, in addition to avoiding the promotion itself. Self-denigrating assessments may have prevented Jody from seeking out self-improvement.

1. "A cognitive process through which we interpret our experiences and form our own unique understandings" defines which of the following terms?
  - A) perception
  - B) information selection
  - C) mindfulness
  - D) communication
  
2. *Communication processing* means
  - A) the encoding and decoding of messages between two or more communicators.
  - B) the use of technology such as cell phones or Internet chat programs to process and transmit information.
  - C) the means by which we gather, organize, and evaluate information.
  - D) the formation of chunks of information into patterns to create meaning at a more complex level.
  
3. People sometimes feel uncertain in new situations when they do not know what to expect. This uncertainty develops when people do not have a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ to guide their perception of the new event.
  - A) stereotype
  - B) schema
  - C) attribution
  - D) context
  
4. Which theory helps explain how people change their attributions of someone's physical appearance as they communicate with them more?
  - A) interaction appearance theory
  - B) fundamental attribution theory
  - C) communication processing theory
  - D) cultural myopia theory
  
5. Reduced cognitive activity, inaccurate recall, and uncritical evaluation are all signs that a state of \_\_\_\_\_ is challenging one's perception.
  - A) selective attention
  - B) undue influence
  - C) narrow perspective
  - D) mindlessness

6. Edgar, who is a communication major, finds himself frustrated by the number of times his professors say “umm,” mispronounce words, and use awkward gestures—so much so that he often misses the point of their lectures. Edgar's perceptions are best attributed to which of the following?
- A) interaction appearance theory
  - B) selective perception
  - C) mindlessness
  - D) fundamental attribution theory
7. Brianna is planning a vacation, and even though she really wants to go some place quiet and relaxing, she has settled on a trip to Miami because her older sister told her she should go some place with a great night life. Which of the following seems to be challenging Brianna's perception?
- A) interaction appearance
  - B) narrow perspective
  - C) undue influence
  - D) selective perception
8. When Joe shows up late to meet his friends for dinner, he explains that he is late because he was held up in traffic. His friend Maggie reminds him, though, that they all drove in the same traffic but that everyone else left early to accommodate the rush hour. Maggie's dismissal of Joe's situational excuse for being late may be the result of which common perceptual error?
- A) mindlessness
  - B) interaction appearance theory
  - C) mindfulness
  - D) fundamental attribution error
9. What three recommendations have been made for improving perception?
- A) Be thoughtful when you seek explanations, look beyond first impressions, and question your assumptions.
  - B) Narrow your perspective, verify your perceptions, and be careful of stereotyping.
  - C) Remove barriers to your perception, be mindful of others' feelings, and consider your first impressions.
  - D) Stick to the facts, ask questions, and adjust your perspective when needed.

10. Failing to consider other cultural perspectives because of a belief that one's own culture is appropriate and relevant in all situations and to all people is associated with which term?
- A) stereotyping
  - B) prejudice
  - C) cultural myopia
  - D) undue influence
11. Assuming that individuals, because they belong to certain groups, have a particular set of attitudes, behaviors, skills, morals, or beliefs is called
- A) prejudice.
  - B) cultural myopia.
  - C) ignorance.
  - D) stereotyping.
12. “Politicians lie” and “young people are lazy” are both examples of
- A) mindless assumptions.
  - B) stereotypes.
  - C) narrow perspectives.
  - D) deconstructed schemas.
13. Which barrier to intercultural communication competence is considered to be the most severe because it involves deep-seated feelings of unkindness and ill will toward particular groups?
- A) stereotyping
  - B) prejudice
  - C) narrow perspective
  - D) cultural myopia
14. Homophobia is an example of \_\_\_\_\_ based on negative \_\_\_\_\_ about gay and lesbian people.
- A) selective perception, stereotypes
  - B) stereotypes, interactions
  - C) prejudice, stereotypes
  - D) racism, schemas

15. Your awareness and understanding of who you are, as interpreted and influenced by your thoughts, actions, abilities, values, goals, and ideals, is referred to as your
- A) self-esteem.
  - B) self-concept.
  - C) self-actualization.
  - D) self-efficacy.
16. While getting ready to go out for a night on the town, your roommate says, “You have a really great sense of style; you make any outfit look great.” This compliment serves as \_\_\_\_\_, which you may choose to incorporate into your self-concept.
- A) self-actualization
  - B) self-esteem
  - C) direct evidence
  - D) indirect evidence
17. Our tendency to internalize our admiration for film and TV stars, models, famous athletes, and political figures by comparing what we like about them to our own self-concept is addressed by which of the following theories?
- A) social comparison theory
  - B) self-efficacy theory
  - C) media interaction theory
  - D) social penetration theory
18. Which of the following terms refers to the way a person feels about himself or herself?
- A) self-concept
  - B) self-esteem
  - C) self-efficacy
  - D) self-actualization
19. Jim chooses to invite two people he met in his English class over to watch a movie instead of going to a larger party with his fraternity brothers. He says, “I feel like I'm better one-on-one than I am in big groups.” Jim's decision is based on his sense of
- A) self-esteem.
  - B) self-actualization.
  - C) self-worth.
  - D) self-efficacy.

20. Because she believes she is no good at speaking in public, Deanna puts off choosing and researching her topic and doesn't have adequate time to prepare and practice for her presentation. Ultimately, she earns a failing grade on her speech and walks away with her perception confirmed: she's just not a good speaker. Unfortunately, Deanna's \_\_\_\_\_ set her up for failure.
- A) self-esteem
  - B) self-concept
  - C) self-fulfilling prophecy
  - D) self-denigration
21. When you feel as though you have negotiated a communication situation as well as you possibly could, you experience
- A) self-presentation.
  - B) self-denigration.
  - C) self-adequacy.
  - D) self-actualization.
22. Joe watches other people's nonverbal behavior carefully for cues to what topics they find interesting and what personality traits they consider desirable, and he modifies his behavior in order to create a positive impression on them. We would refer to Joe as a person who
- A) has low self-esteem.
  - B) is a high self-monitor.
  - C) has low self-efficacy.
  - D) has low self-monitoring skills.
23. Intentional communication designed to show elements of our self for strategic purposes is referred to as
- A) self-monitoring.
  - B) self-fulfilling prophecy.
  - C) self-presentation.
  - D) self-disclosure.
24. What, according to your text, is true of low self-monitors?
- A) They lack self-esteem.
  - B) They have positive self-esteem.
  - C) They think that controlling their communication style would be false.
  - D) They implement situation-appropriate communication.

25. The act of revealing information about ourselves to others is called
- A) self-monitoring.
  - B) self-fulfilling prophecy.
  - C) self-presentation.
  - D) self-disclosure.



## **Answer Key**

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. D
6. B
7. C
8. D
9. A
10. C
11. D
12. B
13. B
14. C
15. B
16. C
17. A
18. B
19. D
20. C
21. D
22. B
23. C
24. C
25. D

1. Briefly describe the process of selecting information as a step in the perception process.
2. Define the term *schema*.
3. Describe how using schemas assists us in the perception process.
4. Briefly describe three elements of your schema for how people will behave in a college classroom.
5. List and define three of the four challenges we face when using schemas.
6. Briefly state why mindless perception might be described as a benefit to a communicator.
7. Provide a brief example to illustrate how mindlessness can negatively influence our perception.
8. What theory explains why others may become more physically attractive to us after we have had positive social interactions with them?
9. Define the term *attribution*.
10. Describe the fundamental attribution error.
11. Define the term *stereotype*.
12. Provide an example of a stereotype that people often have of police officers.
13. Define *self-concept*.
14. Provide an example of indirect evidence that has affected your self-concept.

15. In your own words, describe the difference between self-concept and self-esteem.
16. In your own words, describe social comparison theory.
17. The ability to predict actual success in a communication context from our self-concept is referred to as \_\_\_\_\_.
18. When we evaluate our expectations, execution, and the outcomes of our behavior in a communication encounter, we may experience a sense of self-actualization, self-adequacy, or self-denigration. Define each of these three evaluations.
19. Define *self-disclosure*.
20. Provide a brief example of self-disclosure.

## Answer Key

1. Selecting information involves sifting through detailed information to determine what is important. People often come to different conclusions when exposed to the same information because they choose to pay attention to certain pieces of information and ignore others. This process is related to the schemas a person has for the situation.
2. A schema is a mental structure that puts together individual but related bits of information.
3. When you recognize one component of the schema, the entire schema is activated and tells you what should happen next. Schemas help us determine what to expect when we encounter a new situation.
4. Answers will vary.
5.
  - Mindlessness: A passive perceptual state characterized by reduced cognitive activity, inaccurate recall, and uncritical evaluation.
  - Selective perception: Active, critical thought resulting in succumbing to the biased nature of perception.
  - Distorted perception: Distortion due to bias or the sensational nature of the information received.
  - Undue influence: Greater credibility or importance given to something shown or said than should be the case.
6. Mindlessness allows us to go through certain communication transactions automatically without having to think consciously about how we and others should behave.
7. Answers will vary but should represent passive or mindless perception that creates a challenge to the communication process.
8. interaction appearance theory
9. Attributions are personal characteristics that are used to explain other people's behavior.
10. We have a tendency to overemphasize the internal and underestimate the external (situational) causes of other people's behaviors. Conversely, we usually attribute our own failures or negative circumstances to situational effects (external) and downplay our own culpability in the attribution.
11. The term *stereotype* refers to fitting our perception of individuals into an existing schema without adjusting the schema appropriately.
12. Answers will vary.
13. Self-concept may be defined as your awareness and understanding of who you are—as interpreted and influenced by your thoughts, actions, abilities, values, goals, and ideals.
14. Answers will vary.
15. Self-concept refers to your awareness and understanding of who you are—as interpreted and influenced by your thoughts, actions, abilities, values, goals, and ideals, whereas self-esteem refers to your evaluation of those attributes.
16. Social comparison theory says the media influence the development of our self-concept. We tend to internalize our admiration for film and TV stars, models, famous athletes, and political figures by comparing what we like about them to our own self-concept.
17. self-efficacy
18.
  - Self-actualization: feeling as though we have negotiated a communication situation as well as we could.
  - Self-adequacy: feeling as though we have done a sufficient or adequate job in a

communication situation. Self-adequacy may result in a feeling of contentment or in a desire for improvement.

- Self-denigration: criticizing or attacking ourselves due to a perception of inadequacy in a communication situation.

19. Self-disclosure is revealing the self to others by sharing information about oneself.
20. Answers will vary.