

Chapter 1: Culture and Meaning

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. People who belong to the same society have similar ways of seeing the world because they share _____.

- a. life events
- b. culture
- c. genes
- d. their environment

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.1 Why Do Human Beings Differ in Their Beliefs and Behaviors?

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Why do people in the United States of America rarely eat insects?

- a. Insects are fundamentally dangerous to consume
- b. Americans are more civilized than people who live in other places
- c. Consuming animals is frowned upon in the United States
- d. Insects are not categorized as "good to eat" in the United States

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Question 1.1 Why Do Human Beings Differ in Their Beliefs and Behaviors?

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. American ideas about which technically edible items are good to eat come from _____.

- a. direct experience of items as dangerous or safe
- b. Biblical designations of edible or inedible
- c. observations of animals eating some items but not others
- d. interpretation of the taste of items

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Question 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.1: Why Do Human Beings Differ In Their Beliefs and Behaviors?

Difficulty Level: Easy

4. A cultural belief that deceased ancestors are still involved in the lives of their descendants will most likely lead people to _____ upon the death of any member.

- a. seek vengeance
- b. catch and consume a salmon
- c. add mementos of the deceased to a shrine
- d. place heavy stones upon the deceased

Ans: C

Learning Objective: Learning Objective: 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Question 1.1 Why Do Human Beings Differ in Their Beliefs and Behaviors?
Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Which of the following statements is true about interpretations of death?

- a. They are universally similar
- b. They vary widely from culture to culture
- c. They are irrational among some cultures.
- d. They always involve belief in an afterlife

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Learning Objective: 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Question 1.1 Why Do Human Beings Differ in Their Beliefs and Behaviors?
Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Why did the Wari of western Brazil consume the flesh of the dead prior to Western contact?

- a. They did not have alternative protein sources.
- b. They had to placate their bloodthirsty gods.
- c. They wanted to show respect and compassion.
- d. They believed they would consume the strength of the deceased.

Ans: C

Learning Objective: Learning Objective: 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.1 Why Do Human Beings Differ in Their Beliefs and Behaviors?
Difficulty Level: Easy

7. The belief that _____ is an example of the ethnocentric fallacy.

- a. people in different societies have different beliefs
- b. cannibalism is tolerable as long as it has ritual significance
- c. those who practice arranged marriage are barbaric
- d. anthropologists should be activists

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy
Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Which of the following beliefs is an example of a relativist fallacy?

- a. Human sacrifice is acceptable when people believe it will save the world
- b. Female genital mutilation must be abolished
- c. Western culture is superior to other ways of living
- d. Death is part of a cycle rather than an end

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy
Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Anthropologists reject ethnocentrism on a/n _____ basis.

- a. moral

- b. comparative
- c. intellectual
- d. judgmental

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. Virginity testing in traditional Turkish villages is one result of _____.

- a. Turkish moral inferiority to Europeans
- b. agricultural metaphors of reproduction
- c. matrilineal kinship patterns
- d. increasing secularization

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Virginity Testing in Turkey and Cannibalism Among the Wari

Difficulty Level: Medium

11. Which of the following includes both an ethnocentric and a relativistic interpretation of the consumption of insects?

- a. It is disgusting to eat insects, but it makes sense as a source of nutrition in some places.
- b. Insects are nutritious and tasty sources of food.
- c. Insects are nasty, and those who eat insects are barbaric.
- d. Insects are as valid a food source as steak, lettuce, or rice.

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy

Difficulty Level: Hard

12. The ethnocentric perspective is _____ the relativism perspective.

- a. better than
- b. more problematic than
- c. the same thing as
- d. just as bad as

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Question 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. Which of the following is goal of cultural anthropologists?

- a. understand each cultural practice as part of the larger whole
- b. spread Western ideals across the world
- c. teach those from various cultures better ways to live
- d. decide which cultural practices are best

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy
Difficulty Level: Medium

14. An ethnocentric interpretation of the northern Sudanese practice of genital mutilation would be that _____.

- a. sexual modesty is crucial for family honor
- b. Sudanese people are barbarians who hate women
- c. genital mutilation protects girls from sexual assault
- d. women who do not undergo the process are unlikely to marry

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Question 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy

Difficulty Level: Medium

15. A relativistic interpretation of the traditional Turkish virginity test would be that _____.

- a. it is a reflection of patrilineal descent practices
- b. human rights groups should end the practice
- c. it helps women by giving them an incentive to remain chaste
- d. it is an outdated way to think

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Virginity Testing in Turkey and Cannibalism Among the Wari

Difficulty Level: Medium

16. Anthropologists serve as _____ between different cultures.

- a. translators of meaning
- b. guides of morality
- c. agents of development
- d. teachers of skills

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.3: Is It Possible to See the World Through the Eyes of Others?

Difficulty Level: Easy

17. Cultural anthropology differs from other social sciences in its use of the _____ method.

- a. survey
- b. secondary source
- c. scientific
- d. ethnographic

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.3: Is It Possible to See the World Through the Eyes of Others?

Difficulty Level: Easy

18. Which of the following is an example of ethnographic fieldwork?

- a. Interviewing a tourist who has visited the Marshall Islands
- b. Writing a newspaper article about drug use in the inner city

- c. Reading scholarly articles about polygamy in Tibet
- d. Helping women dig sweet potatoes in Papua New Guinea

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Question 1.3: Is It Possible to See the World Through the Eyes of Others?

Difficulty Level: Medium

19. Anthropologists who face danger as they conduct fieldwork learn _____.

- a. something about the dangers faced by the people they study
- b. to be as obedient to local authority as they would at home
- c. to hide their true objective from the locals
- d. that they should have chosen a different place to study

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Confronting Witchcraft in Mexico

Difficulty Level: Medium

20. Cultural anthropologists experience _____ during their fieldwork as a result of misunderstanding something about the people they study.

- a. communication
- b. embarrassment
- c. stage fright
- d. participant observation

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Question 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: The Embarrassed Anthropologist

Difficulty Level: Medium

21. Which of the following demonstrates the importance of ethnographic fieldwork in understanding other cultures?

- a. Michael Kearney's fear that he had been bewitched by his neighbor after he helped Delfina's sister-in-law
- b. The murder of anthropologists such as Ruth First, Myrna Mack, Arnold Ap, and David Webster
- c. Clifford Geertz' rapport with the Balinese
- d. Sherlock Holmes' analysis of Watson's brother's watch

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Confronting Witchcraft in Mexico

Difficulty Level: Medium

22. The ethnographic technique of participant observation is crucial because _____ a member of the culture under study.

- a. it turns the anthropologist into
- b. the anthropologist can interview
- c. anthropologists are less likely to meet

d. it helps the anthropologist see the world like

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Question 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Question 1.3: Is It Possible to See the World Through the Eyes of Others?

Difficulty Level: Medium

23. Communication requires _____.

a. each party to have the same background

b. a suspension of relativism

c. participant observation

d. shared meanings

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Question 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Confronting Witchcraft in Mexico

Difficulty Level: Easy

24. Anthropologists are similar to detectives like Sherlock Holmes in that both _____.

a. 'read' deeper meanings into ordinary objects

b. are concerned with solving problems

c. study other cultures

d. measure time by completed task

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Question 1.4: How Can the Meanings That Others Find in Experience Be Interpreted and Described?

Difficulty Level: Medium

25. How are anthropologists different from detectives like Sherlock Holmes?

a. Anthropologists use deductive reasoning and detectives use inductive reasoning.

b. Anthropologists are concerned with cultures as a whole and detectives are concerned with the actions of individuals.

c. Detectives study the actions of individuals to interpret cultural meaning rather than individual action.

d. Detectives use ethnographic methodology and anthropologists use participant observation.

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Question 1.4: How Can the Meanings That Others Find in Experience Be Interpreted and Described?

Difficulty Level: Medium

26. Which of the following statements best describes a Balinese cockfight?

a. It is a way for marginal Balinese to profit economically

b. It acts as an expression of Balinese bloodthirstiness.

c. It is a form of entertainment for the elite.

d. Its primary function is the nonviolent release of social tension.

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Deciphering the Balinese Cockfight

Difficulty Level: Medium

27. Understanding the 'cultural text' of other societies is an ability that _____ have.

- a. only the best anthropologists
- b. not even anthropologists
- c. all humans
- d. only children

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.4: How Can the Meanings That Others Find in Experience Be Interpreted and Described?

Difficulty Level: Easy

28. Something is a symbol if it _____.

- a. has no functional purpose
- b. is the same across cultures
- c. represents only one thing
- d. carries meaning

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Question 1.4: How Can the Meanings That Others Find in Experience Be Interpreted and Described?

Difficulty Level: Medium

29. Balinese cockfights involve the negotiation of _____.

- a. status
- b. business deals
- c. political alliances
- d. marriages

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Deciphering the Balinese Cockfight

Difficulty Level: Easy

30. Balinese anthropologists might analyze the American practice of _____ in a similar manner to Geertz' analysis of the Balinese cockfight.

- a. dining etiquette
- b. football
- c. Groundhog Day
- d. livestock farming

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: A Balinese Anthropologist Studies Football

Difficulty Level: Medium

31. _____ is an important step in analyzing cultural practices like the Balinese cockfight.

- a. Analyzing the language associated with the practice
- b. Training a cock to fight or joining a football team
- c. Concluding that each practice is solely for recreation
- d. Seeking oral histories of the practice

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: A Balinese Anthropologist Studies Football

Difficulty Level: Medium

32. Someone who had never heard of American football would be most likely to interpret it as a _____.

- a. form of warfare
- b. festival
- c. rite of passage
- d. example of religious worship

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: A Balinese Anthropologist Studies Football

Difficulty Level: Medium

33. Which 'outsider' interpretation of the Happy Meal would be most surprising to the average American?

- a. Happy Meals are delicious but not very nutritious.
- b. Happy Meals reflect the environmental destruction inherent in American patterns of consumption.
- c. Happy Meals are made by workers who do not make a living wage.
- d. Happy Meals, like many other American meals, feature meat as the main course rather than vegetables or carbohydrates.

Ans: B

Learning Objective: Question 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: An Anthropologist Looks at a "Happy Meal"

Difficulty Level: Medium

34. Renato Rosaldo understood the rage of the Ilongots only when _____.

- a. his wife died
- b. he returned from the field
- c. he got into a fight with a fellow anthropologist

d. the Ilongot expelled him from their territory

Ans: A

Learning Objective: Question 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Question 1.5: What Can Learning About Other Peoples Tell Americans About Themselves?

Difficulty Level: Application

35. Renato Rosaldo's experience with the Ilongots illustrates how _____.

a. spectator sports are a form of status negotiation

b. experiences of rejection are universal

c. gender roles differ from culture to culture

d. learning about others can help anthropologists understand themselves

Ans: D

Learning Objective: Question 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Question 1.5: What Can Learning About Other Peoples Tell Americans About Themselves?

Difficulty Level: Medium

True/False

1. People in different societies experience natural events like the death of a loved one in the same way.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Question 1.1: Why Do Human Beings Differ in Their Beliefs and Behaviors?

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. Politically engaged anthropologists remain objective about their research communities.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Objectivity and Morality

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Every cultural practice is equally moral.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: Question 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. Anthropologists remain outsiders during the course of their ethnographic fieldwork.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: The Endangered Anthropologist
Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Cultural anthropologists can study their own cultures.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Question 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Question 1.5: What Can Learning About Other Peoples Tell Americans About Themselves?

Difficulty Level: Medium

Short Answer

1. Is it valid to say that one culture is superior to another from an anthropological perspective? Why or why not?

Ans: Answers may vary but should include a robust defense that includes discussion of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. Complete relativism leads to the idea that all cultural practices are morally equal, an idea which should be rejected. Ethnocentrism leads to the idea that there is one 'right' way to do things, an idea which should also be rejected. Ideally, students will conclude that a benefit of relativism is the ability to see cultural practices in their full context while rejecting human rights abuses.

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: The Ethnocentric Fallacy and the Relativist Fallacy

Difficulty Level: Hard

2. Discuss the moral dilemma faced by anthropologists who study the disenfranchised, poor, and powerless.

Ans: One goal of the anthropologist is to describe and explain the ways of life in various places. This includes being truthful about the totality of their observations. However, fieldwork often includes observation of immoral or morally questionable behavior. The anthropologist has a duty to report this, too, but should be aware that their work can be weaponized against the poor or otherwise oppressed. Some anthropologists have even advised against studying the poor at all to avoid this, though likely out of dismay rather than as a real recommendation.

Learning Objective: 1.2: How do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others?

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Objectivity and Morality

Difficulty Level: Hard

3. Is it possible for an anthropologist to fully understand the cultures they study? Support your answer.

Ans: Answers may vary, but should include a discussion of the difficulty of communication when few meanings are shared. Answers should also include the strength of participant observation as a methodology that allows anthropologists to immerse themselves into a culture, at which point they can learn about the group under study in a similar way to that which children use to acquire their own culture. Strong answers may include Levi-Strauss' assertion that

anthropologists are 'marginal' or Keesing's characterization of anthropologists as outsiders who know what it is like to be an insider.

Learning Objective: 1.3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others?

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Question 1.3: Is It Possible to See the World Through the Eyes of Others?

Difficulty Level: Hard

4. Choose one of the following items or cultural practices and discuss how it can reveal meaningful information about both individuals and a culture as a whole: clock/watch, classroom, cockfight, or football game.

Ans: Answers will vary depending on which object or practice was chosen. An example answer follows: The classroom can be 'read' in a multitude of ways, revealing important information about both individuals and culture as a whole. An individual classroom reflects something of the preferences of the teacher as well as what is valued by society as a whole. A fifth grade classroom likely has desks all in a row, reflecting that the society wants students to face forward and pay attention to the teacher, who is likely to stand at the front of the room. Decorations on the walls are likely to be educational in nature, reflecting the subject matter taught but also something of the personality of the teacher. Some teachers choose inspirational posters and others emphasize factual or informational posters. The classroom may have an American flag, reflecting ideals that the society wants to impart to children. By interpreting each part of the classroom as well as the classroom as a whole, an observer can learn much about what is valued by the culture as a whole as well as individual teachers. Classrooms can be read at various levels from the micro to the macro.

Learning Objective: 1.4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described?

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Question 1.4: How Can the Meanings That Others Find in Experience Be Interpreted and Described?

Difficulty Level: Hard

5. Would the anthropological (outsider) explanations of the Happy Meal resonate with the average American Happy Meal consumer (insider)? Which perspective, the insider or the outsider, is more useful in understanding the Happy Meal and why?

Ans: Answers may vary, but should include that the average consumer would not read their Happy Meal consumption as a story of environmental degradation, but would instead emphasize the cheapness, tastiness, and convenience. Both the insider and the outsider perspectives are important, and both are essential to an understanding of the Happy Meal.

Learning Objective: 1.5: What can learning about other peoples tell Americans about themselves?

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: An Anthropologist Looks at a "Happy Meal"

Difficulty Level: Hard