

Chapter 2: Ethological and Cultural Perspectives

Test Questions

* Note to the instructor: Multiple choice, true/false, short answer/fill-in-the-blank, and essay questions are available for each chapter. Answers are provided after all types of questions have been listed.

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following statements about play in lower animal species is not true?
 - a. Play is found in all animal species.
 - b. Play is rarely found among adult animals.
 - c. Play is characteristic of only the most sophisticated life forms.
 - d. Human adults play more than the adults of other species.
 - e. The connection between human and lower animal play is difficult to establish.
2. As is true of human play, the play of lower animals is characterized by an element of
 - a. consciousness.
 - b. rationality.
 - c. free choice.
 - d. rigidity.
 - e. pretense.
3. Play among birds is most typically found in those that have the
 - a. largest brains.
 - b. least degree of behavioral complexity.
 - c. least amount of fine motor control.
 - d. shortest growth period before adulthood.
 - e. largest number of offspring.
4. Which is true of the relationship between animal play and skill in "real world" situations?
 - a. Animals who play the most when young have better motor skills as adults.
 - b. The amount of juvenile play is in no way related to adult skills.
 - c. Juvenile play causes an improvement in later "real world" skills.
 - d. Animals who play a lot when young fail to develop necessary "real world" skills.
5. Which statement about aggression in lower animal play is correct?
 - a. Unlike humans, lower animals are rarely aggressive when they play.
 - b. Aggressive play decreases as the animal matures.
 - c. Animals rarely hurt one another when playing aggressively.
 - d. Animals engage in aggressive play only when rejected by their peers.
 - e. Mature animals discourage aggressive play in their offspring.

6. Rhesus monkeys raised without an opportunity to interact with their peers
 - a. will never learn to play.
 - b. are hostile towards their peers.
 - c. are no different in their play from normal monkeys.
 - d. are delayed in their social and sexual development.
 - e. are able to play normally, but choose not to.
7. In her research on Mayan children in the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, Suzanne Gaskins found that Mayan parents valued play because it
 - a. taught children about social interaction.
 - b. helped children learn about the properties of objects.
 - c. helped children to become skilled hunters.
 - d. distracted children so mother could get her work done.
 - e. made children happy.
8. In cultures in which children participate regularly in the life of the community, which roles are they most likely to assume in make-believe play?
 - a. Realistic adult social and work roles
 - b. Fantasy roles
 - c. Roles that are very different from what their parents do
 - d. Roles usually taken by members of the other sex
 - e. No roles, because they don't engage in make-believe play
9. When Japanese mothers play with their toddlers, they are more likely to emphasize _____ than American mothers do.
 - a. communication skills
 - b. the functional use of toys
 - c. exploration of the physical environment
 - d. independence
 - e. assertiveness in their children
10. In Farver and Shin's (1997) study of the play of Korean-American children in preschool settings, it was found that, compared to Anglo-Americans, these children
 - a. begin to play at an earlier age.
 - b. engage in a greater amount of rough-and-tumble play.
 - c. are particularly interested in creative play materials, such as clay and paints.
 - d. spend most of their day in quiet solitary play.
 - e. involve themselves less often in social pretend play.
11. When Madsen and Shapira compared children from various cultural groups as they played with the Cooperation Board, they discovered that
 - a. Mexican children were the most competitive of all.
 - b. Anglo-American children refused to play the game.
 - c. American children would cooperate if they saw competition as clearly counter-productive.
 - d. children from less technologically-advanced cultures cooperated more than did children from advanced Western cultures.
 - e. children from simpler cultures could not understand the rules of the game.

12. Cross-cultural research on competition and cooperation in play seems to suggest that children play more cooperatively when their parents
- choose difficult goals for them.
 - encourage them not to admit defeat.
 - set high expectations for them.
 - praise them for at least trying even if they fail.
 - all of the above
13. Which group of children have been found to be the most competitive in studies that used the Madsen Cooperation Board?
- Israelis
 - Mexicans
 - Mexican-Americans
 - Anglo-Americans
 - Mayans
14. Lower socioeconomic status children in the United States engage in _____ symbolic play than middle class children do.
- more frequent
 - more complex
 - less sophisticated
 - more realistic
15. The most reasonable interpretation of socioeconomic differences in symbolic play is that
- lower SES children are less intelligent than their middle class peers.
 - lower SES children have different attitudes toward and experiences with the school environment.
 - middle class children are less frightened by games of make-believe.
 - middle class children watch more television than lower class children.
 - middle class children have fewer siblings, and therefore have to resort more often to games of make-believe.
16. In cultures with limited technological sophistication, for whom survival is a day-to-day affair, one is likely to find
- games of physical skill only.
 - games of chance only.
 - games of chance and physical skill.
 - games of strategy only.
 - all three types of competitive games.
17. Cultures whose fortunes depend on uncontrollable factors, such as weather conditions, are likely to emphasize
- games of physical skill.
 - games of chance.
 - games of strategy.
 - all three types of games.

18. A game such as Checkers, Chess, or Twenty Questions is a game of
- chance.
 - physical skill.
 - strategy.
 - cooperation.
19. Which is not true of the relationship between competition and cooperation in games?
- Most cultures play one or the other, but not both.
 - Some games involve both competition and cooperation.
 - Cultural differences exist in the proportions of competition and cooperation that are observed.
 - Most cultures play competitive games.
 - The balance of competition and cooperation found in children's games reflects the values of their culture.
20. Cultures that emphasize _____ are the most likely to value cooperation in the games of their children.
- individual identity formation
 - the right to private property
 - collectivism
 - loyalty to self
 - independence

True or False

- True or False. Children in cultures in which there is little fantasy play are at a later disadvantage socially and cognitively.
- True or False. If the frontal lobes of young rats are reduced in size by surgery, the result is in an decreased level of playfulness and hyperactivity.
- True or False. While it is common in human children, aggression is rare in the play of other animal species.
- True or False. Animals who have to assume specific positions within a social order established by their peers are the most likely to engage in play.
- True or False. While cultures may differ in symbolic play, the object play of toddlers is the same throughout the world.
- True or False. In their make-believe play, American children are more likely to assume fantasy roles (e.g., television characters) than they are to assume realistic adult roles.
- True or False. When they play with their toddlers, Japanese mothers are more likely than Americans to try to teach about the physical properties of objects.

8. True or False. Unlike Americans, Korean teachers put the major emphasis of the education of young children on encouraging them to play.
9. True or False. It has often been found in the research that children of lower socioeconomic status are less likely to engage in sociodramatic play.
10. True or False. Children in poorer underdeveloped countries are more likely to emphasize cooperation than competition when they play.

Short Answer

1. Like human play, the play of animals is characterized by aggression and by an element of _____.
2. One of the intriguing features of animal play, particularly that of mammals, is the frequency with which it contains elements of _____.
3. The Harlow research at the University of Wisconsin indicated that monkeys raised by their natural mothers but prevented from playing with peers later appeared to be delayed in their _____ and _____ development.
4. Play in animals is related not only to their phylogenetic position, but also to the extent to which they must adapt to their _____.
5. In cultures in which they are separated from the world of adults, children are more likely to play out the roles of _____ characters.
6. There is no relationship between the quality of pretend play and measures of children's _____ abilities.
7. A foot race and a weightlifting competition are examples of games of _____.
8. Cultures whose common characteristic is that their fortunes depend on factors they cannot control are likely to engage in games of _____.
9. Games of _____ are games whose outcomes are determined by the rational choices made by the players.
10. _____ involves a stress on the importance of group goals, group loyalty, and group identification.

Essay

1. There are a number of obvious similarities between the play of human beings and the play of lower animals. Describe four of these similarities.

2. What is the most probable function of the aggression that occurs in animal play? Describe four ways in which animal aggressive play differs from serious aggression.
3. Discuss the evidence that play has an important role in the socialization of primates. What are some consequences of being denied the opportunity to play?
4. List and describe the three types of competitive games discussed by Sutton-Smith in his cross-cultural analysis of children's play. In which type of culture is each type of game usually found?
5. What do cultural comparisons reveal about the relative importance of cooperation and competition in American children's play? How do our attitudes about cooperation and competition reflect our political beliefs?
6. What are the common features of cultural groups whose children engage in limited amounts of symbolic play? Is it fair to speak of symbolic play "deficits" in such groups? Give reasons for your answer.
7. It has been suggested that children's school experience can influence the quality of their symbolic play. In what ways has such an influence been demonstrated?

Answers

Multiple Choice

1. a
2. e
3. a
4. a
5. c
6. d
7. d
8. a
9. a
10. e
11. d
12. d
13. d
14. c
15. b
16. a
17. b
18. c
19. a
20. c

True or False

1. False.
2. False.
3. False.
4. True.
5. False.
6. True.

7. False.
8. False.
9. True.
10. True.

Short Answer

1. pretense
2. aggression
3. social, sexual
4. peer groups
5. fantasy
6. cognitive
7. physical skill
8. chance
9. strategy
10. Collectivism

Essay

1. *There are a number of obvious similarities between the play of human beings and the play of lower animals. Describe four of these similarities.*
 - In all species of mammals, play is characteristic of the young in each species and is seen in adults to a much lesser degree.
 - Play involves an element of pretense and an application of behaviors or skills out of context (e. g. pretending to cook, pretending to fight).
 - Play provides an opportunity to safely practice skills that will be needed in the real world (language, building, conservation of volume). This allows for changing roles as children develop into adults.
 - Play allows for children to interact socially and experiment with a variety of social roles.
 - Play allows for various acts of aggression that may be a part of role playing and social posturing.

2. *What is the most probable function of the aggression that occurs in animal play?*

- Aggression during play may stimulate and promote development of the frontal lobes in the brain.
- Aggression in play also may help children learn about different society roles or hierarchal positions within a group. Play aggression may help adults use or understand aggression more effectively.

Describe four ways in which animal aggressive play differs from serious aggression.

- Aggressive play seems to be a joyful experience rather than a scary or painful experience.
- Aggressive play is altered so that the players are not actually hurt (play biting, play wrestling, etc.).
- It is characterized by role changes: players may change from the role of the aggressor to the victim and back again as they experiment with the different roles.
- There are pauses in aggressive play. Players may stop and explore other roles and scenarios before resuming aggressive play.

3. *Discuss the evidence that play has an important role in the socialization of primates.*

- Research with primates found that young monkeys who were not allowed to play with peers later seemed to be socially and sexually delayed in their development. Peers rejected them and displayed aggressive behavior toward them.
- Research also suggested that play serves different developmental functions at different ages.
- During social play animals can try out certain behaviors in a safe setting.

What are some consequences of being denied the opportunity to play?

- Play provides socialization experiences. Without these experiences, primates may lack in social maturity as adults.
- Without play experiences, primates may not fit in socially with same age peers and may be treated with rejection and aggression from other primates.
- Without play, primates may not be able to develop close relationships with peers in adulthood, or with parents or offspring.

4. *List and describe the three types of competitive games discussed by Sutton-Smith in his cross-cultural analysis of children's play. In which type of culture is each type of game usually found?*

- Games of physical skill: the outcome is determined by the physical skills of the players, as seen in racing or weightlifting. This type of play is typically found in cultures with limited technological sophistication and in which survival depends on specific motor skills. This type of play may be seen in hunting-and-gathering societies.
- Games of chance: the outcome is determined by sheer luck. This type of play may be seen in societies in which fate plays a large role in everyday life. That is, their fates may depend on factors beyond their control. This may be found in nomadic cultures that depend on uncontrollable variables, such as the weather.
- Games of strategy: the outcomes are determined by rational choices made by the players. This type of play may be found in cultures that are technologically advanced and highly complex. Success in these cultures is dependent on the individual's ability to make correct rational choices.

5. *What do cultural comparisons reveal about the relative importance of cooperation and competition in American children's play?*

- Children in most cultures engage in play that has features of both competitiveness and cooperation.
- Children in the United States do engage in a great deal of competitive play, but their society values determination and achievement are highly valued. The ability to compete for success is a necessity.
- Cultures, such as that of the United States', that are affluent, technologically advanced, and highly complex are the most likely to have the highest levels of competitive play.

How do our attitudes about cooperation and competition reflect our political beliefs?

- The United States values individual self-determination and individual achievement while also placing value on cooperation and team work.
- In the United States, greater emphasis is placed on individualism rather than collectivism. Therefore, our goal is to raise children who have a sense of autonomy and individual initiative.
- Cooperation is valued, but competition is also. Through competition children can demonstrate personal accomplishments and enhance personal status.

- Children in the United States may use competitive approaches to draw attention to their own uniqueness and individuality.
- We place great emphasis on creating strong, autonomous citizens with personal initiative while still being part of a community and demonstrating loyalty to our country.

6. *What are the common features of cultural groups whose children engage in limited amounts of symbolic play?*

- Limited amounts of symbolic play may be seen in groups of children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, however the reasons for this are not known.
- Children in these groups may not be encouraged to take part in this type of play.
- Children who engage in limited amounts of symbolic play may not have access to toys or materials to support the play.
- Children may not be given the time to engage in symbolic play in favor of spending more time on academic pursuits, task perseverance, or skill building.

Is it fair to speak of symbolic play "deficits" in such groups? Give reasons for your answer.

- No, they should not be considered deficits because there are multiple factors used to determine social class and these are loosely defined and may vary from study to study. Also, there seems to be no correlation between the quality of pretend play and children's cognitive abilities. There is no evidence to suggest that these children are at a disadvantage socially later on. Until more is known, these may be viewed as differences, but not deficits that need to be corrected.

7. *It has been suggested that children's school experience can influence the quality of their symbolic play. In what ways has such an influence been demonstrated?*

- School may be a more natural and comfortable environment for a middle-class than a lower-class child. Middle-class children may more easily display his or her imaginative skills.
- Lower class children display a larger variety of verbal and social skills outside school than within it.
- Children of lower socioeconomic status may not be familiar with the tools and toys available for use in play at schools and therefore may need to become acquainted with them before their symbolic play is assessed.