

CHAPTER 2: Research Methods in Anthropology

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The method of _____ shows that a theory seems to be wrong.
- A) guessing
 - B) proving
 - C) falsification
 - D) testing

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Whiting predicated that societies with a _____ would have long postpartum sex taboos.
- A) low-protein diet
 - B) high-protein diet
 - C) means of birth control
 - D) history of overcrowding

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

3. Which theorist was pivotal in the theoretical approach of evolutionism?
- A) Julian Steward
 - B) Franz Boas
 - C) Clifford Geertz
 - D) Lewis Henry Morgan

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

4. Which of these fields focuses on the relationship between a society and its environment?
- A) cultural biology
 - B) cultural ecology
 - C) social ecology
 - D) social biology

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. Dual-inheritance theory relates to the roles of _____ and _____ in transmitting traits to future generations.
- A) genes; culture
 - B) culture; lineage
 - C) genes; diet
 - D) diet; lineage

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

6. How a researcher describes the procedure that will be followed to measure a variable is _____.
- A) only a guess
 - B) the theory
 - C) the hypothesis
 - D) the operational definition

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. To measure something is to say how it compares with other things on some scale of _____.
- A) society
 - B) classification
 - C) variation
 - D) quality

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. Which of the following is true of the archive known as the Human Relations Area Files?
- A) Its collections have been indexed to make them easier to consult.
 - B) It specializes in providing information on social problems in societies around the world.
 - C) It is available only to qualified researchers.
 - D) It contains information only on present societies.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Difficult

9. Participant-observation refers to the _____.
- A) practice of immersing oneself in the language and customs of a society
 - B) use of a laboratory to standardize measurements
 - C) observation of how people interact in carefully contrived situations
 - D) employment of natives to gather information from their peers

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

10. From where do we derive most anthropological data?
- A) accounts of early explorers
 - B) government censuses and reports
 - C) ethnographic fieldwork
 - D) controlled studies

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

11. Anything made or modified by a human is called a(n) _____.
- A) fossil
 - B) artifact
 - C) ecofact
 - D) feature

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Easy

12. Some estimate that there have been around 6,000 primate species in existence. What percentage of these has been found in the fossil record?

- A) 3
- B) 5
- C) 10
- D) 20

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

13. An explanation is an answer to a _____ question.

- A) “who”
- B) “what”
- C) “why”
- D) “where”

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Easy

14. How is a law defined in the physical sciences?

- A) It is a narrative statement.
- B) It is a relationship between variables whose existence is suggested by repeated observation.
- C) It is a statement about how things ought to be if we are right in our theories.
- D) It is a detailed explanation about why things occur the way they do.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Difficult

15. What is a statistical association?

- A) It is a relationship between two variables that may be meaningful, but that may equally well be due to chance.

- B) It is a chance association between two variables.
- C) It is an organization devoted to the documentation of numerical information from different societies.
- D) It is a relationship between two variables that is unlikely to be due to chance.

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Difficult

16. Theories are _____.
- A) explanations of laws and statistical associations
 - B) ideas which explain untested hypotheses
 - C) guesses as to how things are related
 - D) precise answers to a question that had been unanswerable

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

17. What was one of the ways that Franz Boas brought about the end of the evolutionism period in early anthropology?
- A) He was strongly opposed to “race” theory, and emphasized the importance of cultural context.
 - B) He disagreed with the dependence on fieldwork and encouraged more theoretical research.
 - C) Boas was the first to consider adaptation to environmental conditions as a major factor for cultural traits.
 - D) Boas was the only anthropologist to work with subjects from developing nations.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Difficult

18. The goal of interpretive anthropology is to _____.
- A) explain why cultures vary
 - B) understand what it means to be a person living in a particular culture
 - C) identify cultural universals
 - D) determine why people in different cultures have different ethics and morals

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

19. Interpretive anthropology can be contrasted with more _____ approaches.
- A) aesthetic
 - B) philosophical
 - C) traditional
 - D) scientific

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

20. In any field of investigation, _____ are generally the most plentiful commodity.
- A) tests
 - B) data
 - C) theories
 - D) formulae

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

21. How are cases chosen for a random sample?
- A) to ensure that each case has an equal chance of being selected
 - B) by preconceived ideas of which cases will support the hypothesis
 - C) on the basis of some standard criterion, such as size of population
 - D) from among materials the researcher happens to have available

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

22. Anthropologists have realized that _____ their experiences and personal interactions is an important part of understanding.
- A) documenting
 - B) reflecting on
 - C) reporting
 - D) theorizing on

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

23. In _____, anthropologists compare ethnographic information obtained from societies found in a particular region.
- A) regional-controlled comparisons
 - B) within-culture comparisons
 - C) cross-cultural research
 - D) historical research

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

24. What type of research allows anthropologists to generate interpretations on the basis of worldwide comparisons of particular characteristics?
- A) within-culture comparison
 - B) non-historical controlled comparisons
 - C) historical research
 - D) cross-cultural research

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

25. _____ is the study of descriptive materials about a single society at more than one point in time.
- A) Ethnography
 - B) A within-culture comparison
 - C) Ethnohistory
 - D) Cross-cultural research

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Difficult

26. What is one major impediment to historical research?
- A) There is no historical data for most of the world.
 - B) Collecting and analyzing historical data is very time consuming.
 - C) Historical data is less respected than ethnographic data.

D) There is no way to statistically analyze historical data.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

27. What is the difference between a feature and an artifact?

A) A feature is an artifact that cannot be removed from the archaeological site.

B) An artifact is a feature that cannot be removed from the archaeological site.

C) A feature is an item made by humans, while an artifact is something that was only modified for use.

D) An artifact is an item made by humans, while a feature is something that was only modified for use.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

28. Why is Pompeii such a well-preserved site?
- A) It is in a particularly arid region of the world.
 - B) It was covered quickly by a volcanic eruption.
 - C) It was sunk deep under the sea by an earthquake.
 - D) Local superstition prevented anyone from disturbing the remains.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

29. What is the benefit of stratified archaeological sites?
- A) Stratification provides a relative date for materials as they are excavated.
 - B) Stratified sites are better preserved than non-stratified sites.
 - C) Stratified sites are easier to locate than non-stratified sites.
 - D) Stratification allows for absolute dating of the artifacts.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

30. To whom do anthropologists have the most important ethical obligation?
- A) their colleagues
 - B) the public
 - C) the people they study
 - D) their students

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.6 Describe the ethical requirements of anthropological research.

Topic: Ethics in Anthropological Research

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

Difficulty Level: Moderate

31. Which of the following is an example of a hypothesis?
- A) Democracy is the best form of government.
 - B) We will interview 400 people for this study.
 - C) Our data support the idea that English and German are in the same language family.
 - D) Kinship terminology is associated with marital patterns.

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Difficult

32. Why can theories not be proven?
- A) Human behavior is basically unpredictable.
 - B) Many of the concepts and ideas in theories are not directly observable.
 - C) They are too complex to be tested.
 - D) Theories are too vague to be tested.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Moderate

33. Which of these gives an accurate example of a researcher’s sampling universe?
- A) An investigator wants to understand high school dropout rates, so she draws her sample from all the high school students in her city.
 - B) An investigator wishes to understand parent’s vaccination decisions, so he reads a selection of papers already published on the anti-vaccination movement.
 - C) A researcher hopes to explain the relationship between divorce rates and religious belief, so she interviews one divorced couple about their faith.
 - D) A researcher plans to teach safe sex to teens, so he provides leaflets and workshops to local clinics.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Difficult

34. When would you use a statistical test of significance?
- A) to definitively prove a theory
 - B) to determine the level of importance to attach to a theoretical construct
 - C) to measure the differences among variables
 - D) to determine whether your conclusion was right or wrong

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Difficult

35. Which of these is an example of cultural lag?
- A) A sedentary society relies on more grains than a nomadic society in the same environment.
 - B) Women in one society learn new trends later than men, because they are less likely to be literate.
 - C) A community adopts English words for pop culture but not for other aspects of language.

D) A society has recently changed their diet but still maintains a food-related taboo.

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.3 Explain the process of operationalization, the importance of measurement, and the value of statistical evaluation in testing explanations.

Topic: Evidence: Testing Explanations

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Difficult

36. What should be taken into account when using ethnographic information from multiple cultures?

- A) You should make sure that all of the information was gathered in the same time period.
- B) It is important that all information was collected by the same anthropologist.
- C) It is necessary for all of the cultures to live in the same type of environment.
- D) You must ensure that all of the ethnographies are written from the same theoretical perspective.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Difficult

37. Anthropological research can be classified by its _____ and _____ scope.

- A) temporal; ecological
- B) spatial; temporal
- C) ecological; economic
- D) economic; spatial

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Moderate

38. Which of these is a common ecofact found at archaeological sites?

- A) broken pottery
- B) human skeletons
- C) pollen
- D) tools

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Moderate

39. Archaeologists are concerned with recovering intact _____, while paleoanthropologists are

- concerned with recovering intact _____.
- A) features; fossils
 - B) ecofacts; artifacts
 - C) fossils; artifacts
 - D) features; ecofacts

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Moderate

40. Potassium-argon dating is an example of a(n) _____ dating technique.
- A) comparative
 - B) complete
 - C) relative
 - D) absolute

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Moderate

41. Why is it incorrect to explain a cultural feature by saying it is “traditional”?
- A) It is incorrect because, by definition, traditions are not cultural features.
 - B) Cultural features are too variable to be considered traditional.
 - C) It is an unsatisfactory answer because it is tautological.
 - D) Tradition always precedes the adoption of cultural features.

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

42. What is the relationship between associations and theories?
- A) Theories are more complicated explanations for observed associations.
 - B) Associations are required before theories can be made.
 - C) Theories are required before associations can be made.
 - D) Associations are more complicated explanations for observed theories.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Moderate

43. What influence did the theory of evolution have on 19th-century anthropology?
- A) Early anthropologists believed that cultures develop in a uniform and progressive manner.
 - B) It was assumed that only European societies were humans, and that other peoples constituted different species.
 - C) Their acceptance of evolution placed early anthropologists in a position of conflict with the church.
 - D) Cultural anthropology was approached from the perspectives of biologists.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Moderate

44. What method should be used to test a theory concerning only one society?
- A) regional controlled comparison
 - B) within-culture comparison
 - C) cross-cultural research
 - D) historical research

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Moderate

45. When making sampling decisions in human research, what factor becomes very important?
- A) who makes the sampling decision
 - B) how the files will be taken care of
 - C) how convenient the sampling population is
 - D) choosing which population to study

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Moderate

46. How did the goals of archaeology change in the 1950s?
- A) Anthropology was changing, shifting from historical particularism to a variety of new approaches.
 - B) It took on a new focus on culture history.
 - C) It shifted from a theoretical science to a field-based science.
 - D) It began to ignore material culture in favor of human skeletal remains.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

47. How does archaeology differ from other approaches to cultural anthropology?
- A) Only archaeology can look through long stretches of time and directly examine evolutionary trends.
 - B) Archaeology is the only approach that uses historical records in addition to studying living peoples.
 - C) Archaeology studies both humans and other animals, which aids our understanding of evolutionary trends.
 - D) Only archaeology uses cultures around the world to explain global trends.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

48. What is the major difference between relative dating and absolute dating methods?
- A) Absolute dating is an outmoded technique, while relative dating is state-of-the-art.
 - B) Relative dating compares the age of an artifact with things around it, while absolute dating provides the actual age of the artifact.
 - C) Absolute dating compares the age of an artifact with things around it, while relative dating provides the actual age of the artifact.
 - D) Relative dating is an outmoded technique, while absolute dating is state-of-the-art.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

49. While anthropologists often use pseudonyms to protect their study populations, what problem might arise from this practice?

- A) It is difficult to conduct follow-up research if the community has been disguised.
- B) Using a fake name for the community reduces the credibility of the study's findings.
- C) Most anthropologists find the practice disrespectful to study populations.
- D) It is unethical to conceal the locations of illegal or otherwise improper behaviors.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.6 Describe the ethical requirements of anthropological research.

Topic: Ethics in Anthropological Research

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

50. Why are archaeologists, in particular, ethically obligated to publish the results of their research?

- A) There are more ethical concerns in archaeological research than in research on living populations.
- B) Archaeological research is of greater interest to the general public than other anthropological pursuits.
- C) The very act of excavating a site destroys it for future archaeologists.
- D) There is very little published information on archaeological research, and this gap in the publication record must be corrected.

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.6 Describe the ethical requirements of anthropological research.

Topic: Ethics in Anthropological Research

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Essay Questions

51. What are anthropological theoretical orientations? Explain this term using your newly developed understanding of the scientific definitions of theories, hypotheses, and laws. Give specific examples to support your essay.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Define theoretical orientations
2. Show a clear understanding of the difference between theories, hypotheses, and laws
3. Give specific examples from evolutionism, Boasian anthropology, or other anthropological paradigms

Learning Objective: 2.1 Define “explanation” and discuss its role in anthropology.

Topic: Explanations

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Moderate

52. Choose either ecological anthropology, interpretive anthropology, or Boasian anthropology. Describe what sorts of questions an anthropologist following this theoretical perspective would be interested in if they were to study the social life of American university students.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Appropriately define the focus of the chosen theoretical perspective
2. Give specific examples of what one might study, and explain why these topics are of interest

Learning Objective: 2.2 Describe some of the main theoretical approaches in anthropology.

Topic: A Brief History of Anthropological Theory

Skill Level: Apply What You Know

Difficulty Level: Difficult

53. How does the sampling universe vary based on the types of research in anthropology? Explain what a typical sampling universe would look like for within-culture comparisons, cross-cultural research, and historical research.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Distinction between within-culture, cross-cultural, and historical research
2. Clear definition of sampling universe
3. Understanding of variability in practicality and need with different types of research

Learning Objective: 2.4 Differentiate the types of research in anthropology.

Topic: Types of Research in Anthropology

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

54. In your opinion, do the results of archaeological research justify the inevitable destruction of archaeological sites through excavation? Support your answer.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Lists the goals of excavation as (1) to find all evidence about the past that a site holds, and (2) to record the location of the evidence within the site
2. Show an understanding of why excavation destroys pristine archaeological sites

3. State a position and support it with evidence-based arguments

Learning Objective: 2.5 Describe the four kinds of evidence that archaeologists and paleoanthropologists find and how they analyze it.

Topic: Studying the Distant Past

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult

55. Discuss the pros and cons of anthropologists using pseudonyms and fake community names when publishing their research.

Answer: The ideal answer should include:

1. Pros: respect informants' privacy; protect them from outsiders' judgments
2. Cons: people may wish to have their story told; it makes follow-up research difficult

Learning Objective: 2.6 Describe the ethical requirements of anthropological research.

Topic: Ethics in Anthropological Research

Skill Level: Analyze It

Difficulty Level: Difficult