

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Methodology is best described as:
 - a. the science of knowing
 - b. the science of finding out
 - c. the discovery of reality through agreement
 - d. the discovery of reality through personal experience
 - e. the logical aspect of scienceANS: B PG: 4 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
2. Epistemology is best described as:
 - a. the science of knowing
 - b. the discovery of reality through experimentation
 - c. the discovery of reality through agreement
 - d. the science of finding out
 - e. the logical aspect of researchANS: A PG: 4 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: New
3. Professor Rodgers found that the average level of happiness reported by people under 65 years of age declined from 1957 to 1970. However, for this same group, the average level of happiness increased slightly from 1970 to 1978. Rodgers also found that the average level of happiness reported by people age 65 and older increased from 1957 to 1978. A(the) variable(s) in this study is(are):
 - a. aged 65 and older
 - b. less than age 65
 - c. age
 - d. age 65
 - e. all of these choices are variablesANS: C PG: 16 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup
4. Assume that Professor Rodgers from the previous question had studied only three people aged 65 or older. Suppose he concluded that the average level of happiness increased for people aged 65 and older. Rodgers would be committing:
 - a. the error of overgeneralization
 - b. the error of inaccurate observation
 - c. the error of illogical reasoning
 - d. the error of selective observation
 - e. no errorANS: A PG: 6-7 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup
5. Our attempts to learn about the world we live in come from:
 - a. direct experience
 - b. tradition
 - c. direct, personal inquiry
 - d. authority
 - e. all of these choices

ANS: E PG: 4-6 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup

6. Social scientific theory addresses:
- a. what should be
 - b. what is
 - c. matters of value
 - d. what should be and why
 - e. what is and why it should be that way

ANS: B PG: 7 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup

7. Which of the following would a sociologist be LEAST likely to study?
- a. Why crime rates are increasing in rural areas
 - b. The incidence of child abuse in middle-income families
 - c. Why Mr. Smith quit his job
 - d. The incidence of unemployment among white collar workers
 - e. Why unemployment rates are higher for Black teens than White teens

ANS: C PG: 18-19 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup

8. A probabilistic explanation takes the form:
- a. x is always y
 - b. x is never y
 - c. x tends to be y
 - d. x is y if a and b are true
 - e. y is always x

ANS: C PG: 4, 10-11 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup

9. One of your friends scored in the 90s on her last ten exams. Although she has been studying for this exam and feels prepared, she told you, "I know I'm going to flunk this exam. I've been doing too well on exams." Your friend is committing the error of:
- a. illogical reasoning
 - b. theory
 - c. inaccurate observation
 - d. selective observation
 - e. overgeneralization

ANS: A PG: 7 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup

10. A form of human interference in which what we learn about society can change reality so what we learned is not true is known as being:
- a. trivial
 - b. exceptional
 - c. recursive
 - d. dismissive
 - e. evolutionary

ANS: C PG: 11 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: New

11. A study reported in American Sociological Review (1994) was entitled "Race Differences in Sexual Activity Among Adolescent Women." The dependent variable was probably:
- a. race
 - b. sexual activity
 - c. adolescence
 - d. women
 - e. there is no independent variable

ANS: A

PG: 16

TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Modified

12. Which of the following is NOT an aim of social science?
- a. Judging social values
 - b. Predicting social phenomena
 - c. Understanding social regularities
 - d. Explaining social regularities
 - e. All of these choices are aims of social science

ANS: A

PG: 18-19

TYPE: Factual

SOURCE: Pickup

13. Interviewing an exceptionally talented and noteworthy athlete about his physical training regimen is what kind of research?
- a. aggregate
 - b. deceptive
 - c. nomothetic
 - d. idiographic
 - e. longitudinal

ANS: D

PG: 20-21

TYPE: Applied

SOURCE: New

14. After examining divorce court records, Jenny concludes that Moms are more likely than Dads to obtain custody of their children. This type of statement is:
- a. nomothetic
 - b. idiographic
 - c. probabilistic
 - d. nomothetic and probabilistic
 - e. idiographic and probabilistic

ANS: D

PG: 20-21

TYPE: Conceptual

SOURCE: Pickup

15. Safeguards against error in social research include:
- a. making observations more deliberate
 - b. replications under slightly varying circumstances
 - c. the use of simple and complex measurement devices
 - d. totally independent replications by other researchers
 - e. all of these choices

ANS: E

PG: 6-7

TYPE: Factual

SOURCE: Pickup

16. In comparison to nonscientific inquiry, scientific inquiry:

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- a. takes special precaution to avoid error
- b. is a semiconscious activity
- c. is an activity where we are less concerned about making mistakes
- d. guards against all errors
- e. none of these choices

ANS: A PG: 6-7 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup

17. An independent variable is a:
- a. theoretical concept
 - b. variable influencing other variables
 - c. variable influenced by other variables
 - d. set of attributes
 - e. either a variable influencing other variables or a variable influenced by others

ANS: B PG: 16 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup

18. Which of the following is(are) a probabilistic statement(s)?
- a. When serving as jurors, women always vote for acquittal.
 - b. When serving as jurors, women never vote for acquittal.
 - c. When serving as jurors, women tend to vote for acquittal.
 - d. When serving as jurors, women do not vote for acquittal.
 - e. None of these choices

ANS: C PG: 4, 10-11 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup

19. Which of the following is most likely to be a list of variables?
- a. Female, Jewish, educational level
 - b. Plumber, professor, dentist
 - c. Occupation, political party preference, birthrate
 - d. 21, violent, social class
 - e. Dishonest, conservative, farmer

ANS: C PG: 16 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup

20. Which of the following is TRUE of quantification?
- a. It often makes our observations more explicit
 - b. It can make it easier to aggregate data
 - c. It can make it easier to summarize data
 - d. It opens up the possibility of statistical analysis
 - e. All of these choices are TRUE

ANS: E PG: 24-25 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup

21. The ability to have two different, conflicting ideas in one's mind simultaneously without denying or dismissing either of them is known as:

- a. nomothetic thinking
- b. tolerance for ambiguity
- c. idiographic thinking
- d. probabilistic thinking
- e. free will

ANS: B PG: 24 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: New

22. Pregnant at age 15, Tammy decided to have her baby. Her parents were upset with her decision and threatened to “cut her off” if she did not complete high school. A difficult pregnancy and embarrassment resulted in Tammy’s dropping out of school. After the baby was born her parents said that they would raise the baby but that she would have to leave the house. At age 16 Tammy was on her own and without any money or job market skills. She began to work as a prostitute. This explanation of Tammy’s prostitution is:
- a. idiographic
 - b. nomothetic
 - c. probabilistic
 - d. quantitative
 - e. based on agreements

ANS: A PG: 20-21 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup

23. Steve had a hunch that female students were more punctual than males in the classes that he taught. So, he began to keep track for a week in each class, how many male and female students came in after the class was scheduled to begin. His results supported his hypothesis. Steve is using:
- a. inductive reasoning
 - b. qualitative analysis
 - c. deductive reasoning
 - d. ordinary human inquiry
 - e. all of these choices

ANS: C PG: 22-23 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: New

24. Qualitative explanations tend to be ____ and quantitative explanations tend to be ____ :
- a. both tend to be idiographic
 - b. both tend to be nomothetic
 - c. idiographic, nomothetic
 - d. nomothetic, idiographic
 - e. there is no tendency.

ANS: C PG: 25 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup

25. The development and implementation of simple and complex measurement devices is a safeguard against:
- a. overgeneralization
 - b. abuse of authority
 - c. selective observation
 - d. illogical reasoning
 - e. tradition

ANS: C PG: 7 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: New

26. Which of the following is FALSE concerning the use of tradition in inquiry?

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- a. It helps avoid the task of starting from scratch in our search for regularities
 - b. It demonstrates that knowledge is cumulative
 - c. The jumping off part for the development of knowledge is often the inherited body of information
 - d. It enables us to seek a different understanding of what we all know to be true
 - e. All of these choices are TRUE
- ANS: D PG: 5-6 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
27. Fred's biology teacher told him about the "birds and the bees." By relying on his biology teacher's explanation, Fred relies on _____ as a way of knowing.
- a. experience
 - b. tradition
 - c. authority
 - d. the misuse of authority
 - e. none of the above choices
- ANS: C PG: 5-6 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup
28. The analysis of deviant cases – cases that do not fit the general pattern – helps guard against:
- a. illogical reasoning
 - b. inaccurate observation
 - c. overgeneralization
 - d. selective observation
 - e. it does not help guard against anything
- ANS: D PG: 7 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
29. Female, ages 18-25, brown hair, and teacher are examples of:
- a. variables
 - b. social regularities
 - c. aggregates
 - d. attributes
 - e. nomothetic analyses
- ANS: D PG: 13 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Modified
30. The dichotomy of scientific research in which we exert our free will or are the product of our environment is the duality of:
- a. idiographic versus nomothetic thinking
 - b. determinism versus agency
 - c. induction versus deduction
 - d. epistemology versus methodology
 - e. qualitative versus quantitative
- ANS: B PG: 23 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: New

TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

1. If an exception is found to a sociological pattern, the pattern is invalid.
ANS: F PG: 10-11 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup
2. Theory that is logically inconsistent is acceptable as long as it is empirically accurate.
ANS: F PG: 7 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
3. Patterns of cause and effect are probabilistic in nature.
ANS: T PG: 5 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
4. Idiographic explanations are inductive and nomothetic explanations are deductive.
ANS: F PG: 22-23 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
5. The variable *age* has the attribute of 18 to 24.
ANS: T PG: 13 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Modified
6. A misuse of authority occurs when experts publicly discuss their area of expertise.
ANS: F PG: 5 TYPE: Applied SOURCE: Pickup
7. Social scientific theory aims at the determination of logical and persistent patterns of regularities in social life.
ANS: T PG: 12 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
8. We can predict without understanding.
ANS: T PG: 5 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup
9. There is never a time that we should generalize
ANS: F PG: 6 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: New
10. Every observation is quantitative at the outset.
ANS: F PG: 24 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
11. If you do not do research, the study of social science research methods is of little use in your life.
ANS: F PG: 12 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
12. The basis of knowledge is agreement.
ANS: T PG: 4 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
13. The concept of free will is also known as determinism
ANS: F PG: 23 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: New
14. Social regularities are probabilistic patterns.
ANS: T PG: 11 TYPE: Factual SOURCE: Pickup
15. Nomothetic reasoning is more useful than idiographic reasoning.
ANS: F PG: 20-21 TYPE: Conceptual SOURCE: Pickup

SHORT ANSWERS/ESSAYS

1. **Discuss how scientific inquiry tries to avoid the common pitfalls that produce error in nonscientific inquiry.**

A typical answer might include the following:

Inquiry is a natural human activity and much of what we know, we know via agreement. In our every-day inquiries we often fall prey to the errors of overgeneralization, illogical reasoning, inaccurate observations, and selective observation.

Scientific inquiry seeks to avoid these common pitfalls by making observation a careful and deliberate activity.

Seeking to avoid inaccurate observation we make our observations more deliberate and use both simple and complex measurement devices.

To help guard against overgeneralization we seek a large sample of observations and if possible, we replicate the study

To help guard against selective observation we use research designs that specify, in advance, the number and kinds of observations that we will make. In addition, we might analyze cases that do not fit the pattern – deviant case analysis.

To help guard against illogical reasoning we attempt to use systems of logic consciously and explicitly.

PG: 6 -7

SOURCE: Pickup

2. **Name five sociological variables and their attributes.**

Answers to this question will vary. Typical answers might include:

The variable is gender and the attributes are male and female.

The variable is political party preference and the attributes are Democrat, Republican, Independent, Other.

Note: Be sure that students develop schemes that are mutually exclusive and exhaustive.

PG: 13 – 17

SOURCE: Pickup

3. **Define and give an example of inductive reasoning versus deductive reasoning**

A typical answer might include:

Inductive reasoning moves from the specific to the general, in which a series of observations are combined to generate a theory.

Deductive reasoning moves from the general to the specific, starting from a single explanation and then justifying it through observations.

PG: 22-23

SOURCE: New