

## Social Sciences: Content Knowledge (0951)

### Test at a Glance

Test Name	Social Sciences: Content Knowledge		
Test Code	0951		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	120		
Format	Multiple-choice questions		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percentage of Examination
	I. Sociology	48	40%
	II. Psychology	48	40%
	III. Cultural Anthropology	24	20%

## About This Test

The Social Sciences: Content Knowledge test is designed to provide evidence that an examinee has the knowledge and skills necessary for a beginning teacher of the social sciences in a secondary school. The test requires the examinee to understand and apply social science knowledge, concepts, methodologies, and skills across the fields of sociology, psychology, and cultural anthropology.

The examinee will be required to answer 120 equally weighted multiple-choice questions that address a broad range of topics across the areas of sociology, psychology, and cultural anthropology.

This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

## Topics Covered

Representative descriptions of topics covered in each category are provided below.

### I. Sociology

- Basic concepts
- History of sociology
- Research methods
- Sociological theory (e.g., functionalism, conflict theory, the interactionist perspective)
- Culture and cultural change
- Social processes
- Process of socialization and its consequences (e.g., concept of role, ethnocentrism, knowledge of folkways, mores, laws, beliefs, and values)
- Conformity and deviance
- Groups and organizations (e.g., primary and secondary groups, group norms)
- Social institutions
- Roles of institutions, including family, educational, political, religious, economic, and medical
- Interactions among institutions
- Social stratification
- Social class
- Variation in race, ethnicity, and religion (e.g., pluralism, discrimination, and prejudice)
- Sex, gender roles, aging, power, and social inequality
- Social mobility (e.g., vertical, horizontal, intergenerational, and intragenerational)
- Professions and occupations
- Social patterns and issues
- Populations (e.g., migration and immigration, changes in growth)
- Demography, rural/urban patterns, community, and human ecology
- Contemporary social problems (e.g., globalization, technology, causes, consequences, and proposed solutions)

### II. Psychology

- Basic concepts
- Defining psychology
- Major approaches (psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, sociocultural, biological, and evolutionary)
- Psychology as a science (history and research methods)
- Biological and cognitive processes
- Biological influences on behavior (e.g., basic nervous system structure and function)
- Sensation and perception (e.g., basic concepts in vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch)
- Learning (e.g., classical and operant conditioning, observational learning)
- Cognition (e.g., information processing, short-term and long-term memory, interference, attention, problem solving, reconstructive memory, decision making)
- Human growth and development throughout the life span
- Nature versus nurture influences on development
- Physical growth and maturation (prenatal, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood)
- Cognitive developmental processes (e.g., cognitive stages, Piaget)
- Social and emotional developmental processes (e.g., temperament, psychosocial and moral stages)
- Personality, individuality, and social behavior
- Social psychology (e.g., group processes, attitudes, and social cognition)
- Intelligence, achievement, and assessment
- Personality theory and self-esteem
- Motivation and emotion
- Intervention and prevention in dealing with adjustment problems and exceptional behavior common in the classroom
- Understanding and interventions with other atypical behaviors (mood disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism, anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders, personality disorders, etc.)

### III. Cultural Anthropology

- Distinctive aspects of cultural anthropology as a discipline
- Subfields of cultural anthropology
- History of cultural anthropology
- Theory and method
- Human culture
- Characteristics of culture (e.g., shared, learned, integrated, symbol-based)
- Development and functions of language
- Belief systems and the supernatural (e.g., practices, rituals and ceremonies, function)
- Organization of society
- Marriage and the family, kinship, lineage, descent groups, residence patterns
- Social stratification (e.g., race, class, gender, common interest, age)
- Political organization
- Economic systems (e.g., resources, distribution and exchange, patterns of subsistence)
- Culture change
- Origins and evolution of human culture (e.g., human ancestors, tool use)
- Mechanisms of change (e.g., invention, innovation, cultural diffusion, adaptation, acculturation, assimilation, and extinction)
- Effects of globalization

## Sample Test Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the types of questions in the test. They are not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Answers with explanations follow the questions.

**Directions:** Each of the questions or statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

- Which of the following would be most likely to maintain that cultural taboos against food are ecologically adaptive?
  - An interpretive anthropologist
  - A Marxist
  - A cultural materialist
  - A postmodernist
- If Mary from group A marries Bob from group B and Bob's sister is subsequently married to Mary's brother, the society to which they all belong can be described as practicing
  - endogamy
  - asymmetric exchange
  - generalized exchange
  - symmetric exchange
- Elena is tired of hearing her father nagging, so she finally cleans her room to stop the nagging. Because of this experience, Elena is more likely to clean her room in the future. This is an example of
  - modeling
  - punishment
  - positive reinforcement
  - negative reinforcement
- Harry Harlow's studies on infant attachment included a cloth monkey that did not provide food and a wire monkey that did provide food. These studies demonstrated that attachment is based on
  - feeding
  - contact comfort
  - imprinting
  - self-awareness
- The inability of Harriet to remember her locker combination from last year because she has memorized her new combination is an example of
  - flashbulb memory
  - motivated forgetting
  - reconstructive memory
  - retroactive interference
- A Freudian psychotherapist is likely to encourage patients to talk about everything that comes to mind. This process describes which of the following methods?
  - Age regression
  - Free association
  - Dream analysis
  - Transference
- A set of expectations governing the behavior of a person holding a particular position in society is called
  - values
  - a role
  - culture
  - status
- Religious movements that are new and unconventional in society are called
  - cults
  - sects
  - revivals
  - religious pluralism
- Which of the following was a major change in the elites of developed countries between the early and late twentieth century?
  - A shift from birth characteristics to achieved credentials as the basis of legitimate authority
  - A shift from similar educational socialization to similar family background as a source of solidarity among a country's elites
  - A decline in average elite education levels and rise in average elite wealth levels
  - A decrease in the relative importance of cross-border cultural flows as the basis of elite cooperation worldwide

10. Which of the following is an example of structural social mobility?
- (A) Younger sons of farmers move to the cities because there is not enough land to support them in the countryside.
  - (B) Urban professionals move to the suburbs to take advantage of lower property prices.
  - (C) Half of the children of parents who were manual workers in the United States in the 1950s became white-collar workers in the 1980s.
  - (D) Some children of upper-class parents are not admitted to college because some children of lower-class parents do better on the admissions exams.
11. Two important external mechanisms for social control in small-scale societies are
- (A) physical punishment and imprisonment
  - (B) public shaming and ridicule
  - (C) fear and guilt
  - (D) fines and taxes
12. Which of the following correlation coefficients represents the weakest relationship between two variables?
- (A) 1.00
  - (B) .19
  - (C) -.43
  - (D) -.79
13. Generalized reciprocity is a system of distribution in which goods are
- (A) bought and sold in a public marketplace
  - (B) exchanged only among extended family members
  - (C) shared in public settings with everyone in the group
  - (D) given as gifts with no expectation of return
14. The process of injuring an image of someone with the goal of effecting real injury is an example of
- (A) animism
  - (B) a rite of passage
  - (C) sympathetic magic
  - (D) contagious magic
15. As a result of a sudden housing price increase in cities, with no corresponding cost-of-living increase in salaries, homebuyers travel to the suburbs and smaller satellite communities to find cheaper housing. This phenomenon is referred to as urban
- (A) renewal
  - (B) sprawl
  - (C) out-migration
  - (D) legend
16. What is being described when people are referred to as British, Japanese, or East Indian?
- (A) Ethnicity
  - (B) Citizenship
  - (C) Race
  - (D) Language
17. Tina turns in her term paper three weeks late to her teacher. If the teacher commits the fundamental attribution error, the teacher will most likely conclude that Tina turned her paper in late because
- (A) The assignment was too difficult
  - (B) Tina's parents have set unrealistic goals for Tina
  - (C) Tina has too many responsibilities
  - (D) Tina is lazy
18. Vanessa experiences a manic episode. She will most likely be classified as exhibiting which of the following disorders?
- (A) dissociative identity
  - (B) major depressive
  - (C) attention-deficit/hyperactivity
  - (D) bipolar

## Answers

1. The best answer is C. C is correct because cultural materialists focus on the relationship between the environment and society. A is not correct, because interpretive anthropologists try to interpret and uncover the deep, emotional, and psychological structure of societies. B is not correct, because Marxist anthropologists focus on class struggles and conflicts among groups in a society. D is not correct, because postmodernists view culture and society as a battleground in which individuals fight for power.
2. The best answer is D. D is correct because symmetric exchange refers to sister exchange, in which a woman marries someone from a group and a bridegroom provides a sister for marriage to someone in his bride's group. A is not correct, because groups that practice endogamy marry within their group. Thus, Mary would marry someone from group A. B is not correct, because asymmetric exchange would be similar to parallel cousin marriage. C is not correct, because in societies that practice generalized exchange, there are no specific rules about marriage.
3. The best answer is D. Elena increased her behavior (cleaning up her room) because a negative stimulus (nagging) was removed. This is an example of negative reinforcement because Elena's behavior was increased (reinforced) by the removal of a negative stimulus.
4. The best answer is B. Harry Harlow's studies were designed to determine whether attachment was based more on feeding behavior or contact comfort. Infant monkeys that were under stress or frightened clung to the cloth monkey that did not provide food rather than the wire monkey that provided food. These studies demonstrated that infant monkeys sought "contact comfort."
5. The best answer is D. This question requires the examinee to differentiate between types of memory and memory failure. In this case the examinee must identify the type of memory failure that Harriet is experiencing. Retroactive interference occurs when new information interferes with the ability to recall old information.
6. The best answer is B. In this question, the examinee is asked to choose which Freudian or psychoanalytic therapy technique is described. A is not correct, because age regression usually occurs under hypnosis. C is not correct, because dream analysis involves analyzing the content of dreams. D is not correct, because transference deals specifically with the interaction between the client and the therapist.
7. The best answer is B. In this question, the examinee is asked to differentiate between roles, status, values, and culture. B is correct, because roles are culturally defined rules for proper behavior associated with every status. A is not correct, because values are a culture's general orientation toward life. C is not correct, because culture refers to all that human beings learn to do, to use, to produce, to know, and to believe as they grow to maturity and live out their lives in the social groups to which they belong. D is not correct, because status refers to culturally and socially defined positions occupied by individuals throughout their lifetime.
8. The best answer is A. A is correct because cults are religious movements that often introduce totally new religious ideas and principles and involve an intense sense of mission. This question is definitional, requiring the examinee to define cults.
9. The best answer is A. This question requires familiarity with how society was changing across the twentieth century. There was a movement toward a legitimate authority based on achievement as opposed to authority based on ascribed status.
10. The best answer is C. Structural mobility is mobility occurring as a result of a change in the distribution of occupations, such as that which occurred in the United States in the latter part of the twentieth century. This question is applied and requires the examinee to understand the concept of social mobility and then apply the concept in the proper context. The examinee must differentiate between structural and other types of mobility in each of the scenarios presented in options A–D.
11. The best answer is B. In small-scale societies, sanctions tend to be informal. Positive sanctions include smiles, hugs, handshakes, and other similar actions. Negative sanctions include restricted access to certain goods and services, gossip, frowns, public shaming, impolite treatment, ridicule, and sometimes ostracism in extreme cases.
12. The best answer is B. Correlations range from -1.0 to 1.0. The higher the absolute value of the correlation, or the closer to 1.0 or -1.0, the stronger the association between the two variables. A correlation of 0 indicates that there is no relationship at all between the variables.
13. The correct answer is D. Generalized reciprocity occurs when someone shares goods or labor without the expectation of receiving anything in return. The interaction is reciprocal because the giver obtains a sense of satisfaction as a result of it. A is not correct, because when items are bought and sold, currency is given or received. B and C are not correct. Generalized reciprocity could occur among extended family members or in public settings, but these options do not define the term.

**14.** The correct answer is C. In one type of sympathetic magic, also known as imitative magic, a person does something to an image of another with the goal of causing real harm to the person represented. The other options are different types of processes.

**15.** The best answer is C. Out-migration refers to a population mobility pattern out of the urban area. A is not correct, because there is no mention of regeneration of urban neighborhoods. B is not correct, because the problem does not refer to urban expansion. D is incorrect, because the question is not describing a legend or story.

**16.** The best answer is A. The terms represent ethnicity because they include a cultural tradition of history, language, common ancestry, and in some cases, shared religious beliefs. The other terms do not include all of those characteristics, though they may include or be related to some of them.

**17.** The correct answer is D. The fundamental attribution error occurs when a person overestimates dispositional factors and underestimates situational factors in the attribution of another's behavior. Here the teacher assumes that Tina's lateness is due to a personality trait (laziness) rather than possible extenuating circumstances, such as illness or other responsibilities.

**18.** The best answer is D. A manic episode is a symptom of bipolar disorder. It is not a symptom of dissociative identity disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or major depressive disorder, although bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder do have some other symptoms in common.



*Listening. Learning. Leading.®*

*[www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)*