

MAJOR FIELD TEST IN SOCIOLOGY

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The following questions illustrate the range of the test in terms of the abilities measured, the disciplines covered, and the difficulty of the questions posed. They should not, however, be considered representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. An answer key follows the questions.

1. A voluntary association can be said to be institutionalized when it
 - (A) offers seminars, workshops, and institutes
 - (B) lasts more than six months
 - (C) is recognized by the media
 - (D) receives funding from its members
 - (E) develops a formal structure
2. If a mother tells her child not to play with certain other children, fearing that her own child might learn another child's negative behavior, the mother is adhering to which of the following theories?
 - (A) Differential opportunity
 - (B) Differential association
 - (C) Differential socialization
 - (D) Middle-class measuring rod
 - (E) Labeling
3. Research has shown that a bystander is most likely to help a person in distress if
 - (A) others around them are helping
 - (B) they are in a city rather than a small town
 - (C) there are no other bystanders present
 - (D) the bystander has positive self-esteem
 - (E) the person is of a different social class than the bystander
4. The factorial design differs from the classical experimental design in which of the following characteristics?
 - (A) More than one independent variable is considered when the factorial design is used.
 - (B) There is no control group when the factorial design is used.
 - (C) The factorial design yields less valid data than does the classical experimental design.
 - (D) The factorial design requires measurement at the interval level or above.
 - (E) The factorial design can be used only in the laboratory setting.
5. If a society has a population pyramid with a large base, this indicates that the society
 - (A) has a low birth rate
 - (B) has high birth rate
 - (C) has widespread use of family planning
 - (D) has a high participation rate for women in the labor force
 - (E) is in the later stages of the demographic transition
6. Which of the following significantly increases the power of the group to influence an individual group member to conform?
 - (A) Requiring that the individual's response or behavior be private rather than public.
 - (B) Increasing the size of the group from 10 to 15 members
 - (C) Increasing the heterogeneity of the group members
 - (D) Having the group members' decisions be unanimous
 - (E) Increasing the anonymity of the group members
7. Which of the following is LEAST important in the development of neighborly relationships?
 - (A) Perceived homogeneity of social status
 - (B) Socially acceptable areas for casual interaction
 - (C) Exchange of help among those with mutual needs
 - (D) Shared social activities focused on children
 - (E) Participation in national elections

8. A neo-Marxist perspective on race relations is likely to emphasize that
- (A) conflict is a temporary stage after initial contact between different racial groups
 - (B) securing higher education is essential for a subordinate group to challenge a power imbalance between it and a dominant group
 - (C) racial oppression is linked with class oppression in society
 - (D) cultural assimilation is the result of groups living together in the same community over a long period of time
 - (E) subordinate groups can rarely find solace from oppression in religion
9. Which of the following perspectives emphasizes the idea that people learn attitudes and roles through shared language?
- (A) Psychoanalytical theory
 - (B) Differential association theory
 - (C) Structural theory
 - (D) Symbolic interactionism
 - (E) Modeling theory
10. Most structural transformations have resulted from technological innovations and a global economy that has shifted manufacturing to less expensive locations throughout the world. A specific effect of these transformations is the
- (A) deindustrialization and deskilling of occupations in developed nations
 - (B) increased out-migration of workers from more developed to less developed nations
 - (C) expansion of the working class in the United States
 - (D) increased opportunities for upward social mobility in the United States
 - (E) declining unemployment rates among urban minority teenagers in the United States
11. A senator from a Western, conservation-minded state finds that, in trying to have her conservation bill passed, she is undermining her party's program of "must legislation." Of the following, the concept that best describes the senator's dilemma is
- (A) pluralistic ignorance
 - (B) hedonistic calculus
 - (C) role conflict
 - (D) self-fulfilling prophecy
 - (E) latent function
12. A person who sells drugs in order to become wealthy best fits which of Merton's modes of adaptation to anomie?
- (A) Conformist
 - (B) Retreatist
 - (C) Rebel
 - (D) Innovator
 - (E) Ritualist
13. Which of the following Supreme Court decisions most significantly improved the legal status of African Americans in the United States?
- (A) *Dred Scott Ruling v. Sanford*
 - (B) *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*
 - (C) *Roe v. Wade*
 - (D) *Plessy v. Ferguson*
 - (E) *Endo v. United States*
14. In the late twentieth century, which of the following types of family households was increasing at the fastest rate in the United States?
- (A) Dual-parent households with only the father working outside the home
 - (B) Dual-parent households with only the mother working outside the home
 - (C) Dual-parent households with both parents working outside the home
 - (D) Single-parent households
 - (E) Extended-family households

15. A sociologist wants to study the attitudes of college students in the United States. The researcher contacts 1,000 students from colleges and universities all over the United States. These 1,000 students constitute the

- (A) population
- (B) sample
- (C) median
- (D) control variable
- (E) independent variable

ANSWER KEY

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|------|-------|
| 1. E | 9. D |
| 2. B | 10. A |
| 3. C | 11. C |
| 4. A | 12. D |
| 5. B | 13. B |
| 6. D | 14. D |
| 7. E | 15. B |
| 8. C | |



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