

# Studying Social Life: Sociology Research

## CHAPTER 2

### Methods

#### MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What will a good researcher always do after formulating a general research question?
  - a. review the literature relevant to his or her topic
  - b. clearly define his or her variables
  - c. look for correlations between at least two phenomena
  - d. form a hypothesis

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 41  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Remembering

2. Survey research tends to produce quantitative data. One key advantage of this kind of data is that it
  - a. is easy to transmit to the public.
  - b. includes observations and informal interviews.
  - c. allows the researcher to review the literature.
  - d. affords easy access to the norms, values, and meanings held by members of a group.

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 41  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Remembering

3. What uses an inductive method that involves collecting data and then generating theory by looking for relationships among categories?
  - a. grounded theory
  - b. chaos theory
  - c. conflict theory
  - d. scientific theory

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 46  
OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation                      MSC: Remembering

4. A famous social scientist tells you that the most important task in her research was entering the social world of the people she was studying. What can you say about this researcher?
  - a. She worries about ethical issues in her research.
  - b. She is a qualitative researcher.
  - c. She cannot use interviews as a methodology.
  - d. She exclusively uses quantitative methods.

ANS: B                      DIF: Difficult                      REF: Page 41  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Understanding

5. You want to conduct some sociological research on whether people on social networking sites are less likely to meet in person as a result of their online community participation. What is the next step in the scientific method?
  - a. conduct a literature review
  - b. form a hypothesis
  - c. choose a research design or method
  - d. collect data

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 41  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Understanding

6. Jai is conducting a sociological research study on differences in interactions between similar and dissimilar co-workers. After reviewing the literature, he developed a hypothesis and has operationalized the variables he will study. What is the next step Jai should take in the scientific method?
  - a. identify a problem or ask a question

- b. analyze data
- c. choose a research design or method
- d. collect data

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

7. Lili is conducting a sociological research study on the underground music scene. She has just finished collecting data for the study. What is the next step Lili should take in the scientific method?

- a. share findings
- b. analyze data
- c. provide operational definitions for variables
- d. choose a research design or method

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

8. What is the scientific method?

- a. the use of statistics to analyze numerical data
- b. the appearance of causation
- c. the procedure for acquiring and collecting concrete data
- d. research that translates the social world into numbers

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 41  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Remembering

9. According to the scientific method, what are the steps in conducting research and in what order should they be completed?

- a. form a hypothesis, define variables, choose research method, collect data
- b. form a hypothesis, choose research design, define variables, analyze data
- c. define variables, form a hypothesis, choose research design, review the literature
- d. analyze data, form a hypothesis, choose research design, define variables

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Pages 41–42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Remembering

10. You are doing a research project on the effects of contemporary media. What are your variables if your hypothesis is “watching violence on television causes an increase in violent behavior”?

- a. violence on television and violent behavior
- b. watching television and violence on television
- c. watching nonviolent television
- d. causes of violent behavior

ANS: A                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

11. You are conducting research on violence in the media. In what part of the research process are you engaged if you are trying to decide whether “violence” includes words as well as actions?

- a. choosing a topic
- b. analyzing the data
- c. defining the variables
- d. reviewing the literature

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

12. What do you call broad theoretical models of the social or natural world?

- a. paradigms
- b. hypotheses
- c. interviews
- d. grounded theory

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 43  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Remembering

13. A paradigm shift is a major break in the assumptions that are used to understand the world. For social scientists, what causes a paradigm shift?
- the study of history
  - new data forcing a new way of looking at the world
  - religion and theology
  - increased awareness of the current paradigm

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 43  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Understanding

14. A graduate student is almost done with his dissertation when he is informed that twenty years ago someone did a similar project and already demonstrated what he had hoped to be the first to discover. What basic step of the scientific method should have saved him from this problem?
- developing an operational definition
  - selecting a research method
  - analyzing data
  - reviewing the literature

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 41  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

15. In the 1980s, many politicians argued that listening to heavy metal music led teenagers to die by suicide. Though you might find this belief silly, it is a(n)
- variable.
  - paradigm shift.
  - hypothesis.
  - operational definition.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

16. A social research methods class wants to study smoking. First, the professor asks how many people in the class are smokers. Two people indicate that they are. Then she asks how many people have smoked a cigarette in the past week and ten people indicate that they had. From this, the class decides, for the purposes of the survey, a smoker will be anyone who has smoked a cigarette in the past week and currently owns a pack of cigarettes. This is a(n)
- operational definition.
  - hypothesis.
  - spurious correlation.
  - ethical challenge.

ANS: A                    DIF: Difficult                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

17. A sociologist wants to study popular attitudes and perceptions about astrology among college students in California. She believes that people who have astrological signs associated with fire will have a greater knowledge of astrology because fire signs tend to have more interesting and attractive symbolism. What are the variables in this study?
- astrological signs and knowledge of astrology
  - college students and symbolism
  - popular attitudes and perceptions
  - California and college students

ANS: A                    DIF: Difficult                    REF: Page 42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Applying

18. In recent years, sociologists who study deviance have learned that they can measure the quantities of narcotics consumed by a community by testing its sewage before treatment. What part of the research process would the sociologists be carrying out when they visit the sewage treatment plant to test its sewage?

- a. analyzing data
- b. forming a hypothesis
- c. collecting data
- d. developing an operational definition

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 42  
 OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Applying

19. A study found a strong correlation between parental bonding and adolescent drug use. Children with stronger bonds to their parents were far less likely to try drugs or alcohol. However, the researchers, after examining their data more closely, discovered that parental bonding was really a predictor for teen religiosity. Consequently, high levels of religiosity prevent drug use rather than parental bonding. This means that religiosity was a(n)
- a. spurious variable.
  - b. issue of reflexivity.
  - c. paradigm shift.
  - d. intervening variable.

ANS: D                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 43  
 OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Applying

20. Charles Darwin suggested that, rather than being superior to the rest of the animal kingdom, human beings are simply one part of a larger system governed by natural laws. This radically changed how people thought about almost everything. What would we call this?
- a. a paradigm shift
  - b. an ethical issue
  - c. an example of reactivity
  - d. a research proposal

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 43  
 OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Applying

21. If changing one variable seems to lead to a change in another variable, this shows \_\_\_\_\_ but does not necessarily prove \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. a paradigm shift; causation
  - b. correlation; causation
  - c. causation; correlation
  - d. applied research; a paradigm shift

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 43  
 OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Understanding

22. Which methodology MOST closely resembles the scientific method?
- a. ethnography
  - b. survey research
  - c. experimental research
  - d. interviews

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 56  
 OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                      MSC: Understanding

23. What kind of research are you doing if you observe a group in order to determine its norms, values, rules, and meanings?
- a. comparative historical
  - b. quantitative
  - c. qualitative
  - d. applied

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 41  
 OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation                      MSC: Remembering

24. What are the goals of ethnography?
- a. to develop quantitative data sets that allow researchers to discover correlations

- b. to conduct interviews with people who have very different ways of life
- c. to understand the meanings people attach to their activities
- d. to develop ethics and standards for sociological research

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

25. Which method of social research might involve shifting between participating in a social situation and being an observer?
- a. interviews
  - b. surveys
  - c. comparative-historical research
  - d. ethnography

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

26. What does it mean if ethnographers are overt about their roles?
- a. They maintain narrow and limited definitions of appropriate research methodologies.
  - b. They spend a great deal of time reflecting on their roles in the research process.
  - c. They observe and record data without letting anyone know they are doing research.
  - d. They openly admit that they are doing sociological research.

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 46

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

27. When engaging in participant observation, researchers can study others as well as themselves. Research that focuses on one's own thoughts, feelings, and experiences is known as
- a. life history.
  - b. autoethnography.
  - c. internal investigation.
  - d. content analysis.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Remembering

28. Frances is assigned a research project in which she is to attend a celebratory family meal and analyze her experiences as she participates in the meal. She is asked to make a detailed account of the meal that includes her thoughts and feelings about the event. What type of research is Frances assigned?
- a. comparative-historical
  - b. survey
  - c. autoethnography
  - d. experiment

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Applying

29. Ethnographers using participant observation must always be aware of reflexivity, which occurs because
- a. participants may not consider their own motivations and act out of reflex.
  - b. ethnographers' conclusions may not be applicable to any larger group.
  - c. the presence of ethnographers may alter the behavior of the people they are observing.
  - d. ethnographers intervene in the lives of the people they are studying.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 46

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

30. Which of the following is an advantage of using ethnography to study social life?
- a. Ethnography is a quick and easy form of social science research.
  - b. Ethnography requires the researcher to spend little time gaining familiarity with research subjects.
  - c. Ethnography allows the researcher to gather abundant data on a small population.
  - d. Ethnography requires no training since it is something we all do as human beings.

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 47

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

31. Which of the following is a DISADVANTAGE of using ethnography as a method of social research?
- Participants are self-selected.
  - Participants are not completely honest when asked to describe their attitudes and behaviors.
  - It is difficult for another researcher to repeat or replicate any particular ethnography.
  - Ethnographies tend to have ethical problems that are of central concern to most sociologists.

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 47

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

32. What does it mean if a sample of sociological research is representative?
- The researcher has avoided any overt bias.
  - The research has been conducted systematically using the scientific method.
  - A smaller group of people studied can tell us something about a larger group.
  - The researcher avoided using any double-barreled questions.

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 46

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Remembering

33. Which of the following research techniques focuses on gaining an insider's perspective of the everyday lives of subjects under investigation, often dispelling stereotypes about the group being investigated?
- participant observation
  - surveys
  - analysis of existing data
  - experiments

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Understanding

34. The sociologist Mitch Duneier wrote his ethnography *Sidewalk* about street vendors in New York City's Greenwich Village. While writing the book, Duneier was particularly concerned that the people he was studying would alter their behavior when he was present, especially since his background was different from theirs. This caused him to think critically about his activities and role as a researcher. What do sociologists call this?
- response rate
  - reflexivity
  - validity
  - thick description

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 46

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Applying

35. In their ethnography *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood before Marriage*, Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas studied the realities of single motherhood for poor, urban women. Before beginning their research, they immersed themselves in the community. Edin moved her family to the city and they both volunteered in community programs. Immersing themselves in the community is an example of
- gaining access.
  - field notes.
  - thick description.
  - sampling.

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 46

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Applying

36. In her ethnography *Wheeling & Dealing*, Patricia Adler investigates the social and professional worlds of midlevel cocaine and marijuana smugglers. Her research started unexpectedly when she discovered that her next-door neighbor and friend was a drug smuggler. This was a huge advantage for her because it meant that she already had \_\_\_\_\_ with one of her informants.
- informed consent
  - rapport
  - sampling

d. causation

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Applying

37. Julie Bettie wrote her ethnography *Women without Class: Girls, Race, and Identity* to examine the role of race and class in the lives of girls in California's Central Valley. She did most of her work at a high school, hanging out with students and writing down her observations. What do ethnographers call her written observations?
- interviews
  - representativeness
  - nonverbal communication
  - field notes

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Applying

38. In his research, the ethnographer Richard Mitchell kept his identity a secret while studying militant survivalist groups. Sometimes he even presented himself as a believer in the survivalists' paranoid, racist ideologies, in order to establish
- reflexivity.
  - thick description.
  - rapport.
  - replicability.

ANS: C DIF: Moderate REF: Page 45

OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation

MSC: Applying

39. Sociologists who conduct interviews can only gather data from a limited number of people because
- it is impossible to find enough people through a random sample.
  - researchers are only allowed to talk to people who are eighteen and older.
  - it is extremely difficult to guarantee confidentiality to large groups.
  - interviews are too time-consuming.

ANS: D DIF: Moderate REF: Page 48

MSC: Understanding

OBJ: 2.3 Interviews

40. A researcher must identify a target population before engaging in sampling. What is the target population?
- the group of people whose behavior he or she wishes to change
  - the group of people from whom he or she will gather data
  - the group of people least often studied in the past
  - the larger group of people about whom he or she wishes to generalize

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: Page 48

MSC: Remembering

OBJ: 2.3 Interviews

41. What does it mean if a researcher has obtained informed consent from all of his or her participants?
- Participants have all agreed to participate in the study for monetary compensation.
  - Participants understand the nature of the research and are participating freely.
  - The confidentiality of all participants has been guaranteed.
  - Participants have conducted a literature review.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: Page 48

MSC: Understanding

OBJ: 2.3 Interviews

42. Maria is worried about the representativeness of her study. She is conducting interviews, but each one seems to last at least five hours. What strategy might she use to increase her sample size given that she only has one month to collect her data?
- end interviews at two hours whether or not all questions have been answered
  - conduct a focus group
  - ask only open-ended questions
  - request that respondents write out answers during interviews instead of answering verbally

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Page 48            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Evaluating

43. A closed-ended question is one that
- allows for a wide variety of responses.
  - encourages respondents to answer creatively.
  - limits the possible responses.
  - can only be answered orally.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 49            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

44. Researchers should try to avoid double-barreled questions or questions that
- ask about multiple issues.
  - use emotional language that may bias the respondent.
  - are vague or ambiguous.
  - have a hidden agenda.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 49            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

45. What kind of question usually produces a wide variety of responses by allowing respondents to answer in whatever way seems appropriate to them?
- closed-ended
  - open-ended
  - double-barreled
  - leading

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 49            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

46. A professor has been commissioned by a college to do research on its new academic system. The college has moved from a semester system to block scheduling. One of the questions asked is, "How have teachers and students responded to the new intensive block scheduling system?" What is this an example of?
- leading question
  - double-barreled question
  - closed-ended question
  - reflexivity

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Page 49            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Applying

47. What is it that interviewers seek when asking a respondent for his or her life history?
- a chronological account of the respondent's life
  - biographical information on the maternal side
  - detailed accounts of early childhood memories
  - a genealogical map of family ancestry

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 49            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

48. Researchers usually transcribe responses after they conduct a series of interviews. The transcription process is fairly time-consuming, but it is valuable, in part, because it allows researchers to
- look for patterns in their data.
  - check for bias in how they asked questions.
  - think up new questions they did not ask.
  - determine the average age of their interviewees.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 49            OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

49. Which of the following is an advantage of using interviews as a research method?



- a. They allow the researcher to maintain strict control of the data-collection process.
- b. They reveal attitudes and beliefs not accessible by any other means.
- c. They can affirm preconceptions and stereotypes.
- d. They allow researchers to analyze data statistically and draw correlations.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 49                    OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Understanding

50. In her research for *The Second Shift*, Arlie Hochschild interviewed married couples to find out how they dealt with changing family roles as more women entered the workforce. What advantages came from her decision to use interviews as a research method?
- a. It allowed her to include a large group of people in the study.
  - b. It ensured that the respondents were always honest and forthcoming about their family lives and marital roles.
  - c. It allowed her to gather direct quotations and construct an intimate portrait of married couples.
  - d. It created both a control group and an experimental group and allowed Hochschild to compare them.

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Pages 48–49                    OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Applying

51. Researchers are often worried that interviewees have not been completely honest or forthcoming, especially when asked about sensitive subjects. How did Arlie Hochschild attempt to deal with this problem?
- a. She asked each question in a different way to try to trap respondents in contradictions.
  - b. She interviewed spouses separately to see if their stories matched.
  - c. She observed some respondents as they went about their daily routines to see if their actions matched their answers.
  - d. She confronted respondents when they gave answers that seemed dubious.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Pages 48–49                    OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

52. Why do social scientists who use interviews rarely speak with large numbers of people for a project?
- a. It is hard to find people willing to be interviewed.
  - b. There are usually very few people interesting enough to be interviewed.
  - c. Face-to-face interviewing is a very time-consuming process.
  - d. The data is so rich that few interviews are typically needed.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 48                    OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

53. Arlie Hochschild was concerned that her sample of interviewees was too small to guarantee representativeness. How did Hochschild attempt to overcome this problem?
- a. by deciding that she did not need to generalize to any larger population
  - b. by asking only open-ended questions
  - c. by doing follow-up interviews with each interviewee
  - d. by comparing information about her interviewees with a national survey

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 50                    OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

54. A research team is curious about the relationship between exercise habits and academic performance among American college students. In order to get their data, the researchers randomly select seventeen colleges by pulling names out of a hat. They travel to campuses and stand in prominent public places asking for volunteers until they have ten people from each campus willing to be interviewed. What is the researchers' target population?
- a. students at the seventeen colleges they visited
  - b. the 170 students who were interviewed
  - c. young people
  - d. American college students

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 48                    OBJ: 2.3 Interviews

MSC: Applying

55. Some researchers suggest that interviews give “voice” to people who may never have been heard before and offer privileged access to authentic experience, private worlds, and true selves. How do interviews do this?
- Interviews may contribute to unfair stereotypes.
  - Interviews are relatively quick and economical and can provide a vast amount of data.
  - Interviews allow respondents to speak in their own words, which can reveal their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.
  - Respondents are not always forthcoming or truthful, are sometimes difficult to talk to, and may try too hard to be helpful.

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 49                      OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Applying

56. Every four years, when it is time to elect a new president, we pay much attention to surveys, which we usually call “polls.” Even though there are more than 300 million people in the United States, most political pollsters ask about a thousand people who they plan to vote for and use that information to predict how the election will turn out. Who is the sample for a presidential poll?
- every person who is planning on voting
  - every American
  - people who have strong political opinions
  - the 1,000 people who are asked whom they will vote for

ANS: D                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 48                      OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Applying

57. Imagine that you are trying to rewrite a survey. You find a multiple-choice question that asks, “What is your favorite recreational activity?” and gives three response options: watching television, shopping, or sports. You add a fourth response option, “other,” and invite respondents to write an activity of their choice. What kind of question have you just made?
- open-ended
  - quantitative
  - reductionist
  - closed-ended

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 49                      OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Applying

58. Survey researchers often use Likert scales to construct the possible answers when they write closed-ended questions. How do Likert scales allow respondents to answer?
- They allow respondents to answer along a continuum from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”
  - They allow respondents to answer with their own opinions.
  - They allow respondents to answer simply such as true/false or yes/no.
  - They encourage respondents to include detailed responses.

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 51                      OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

59. It is always important to ask clear and unambiguous questions regardless of the method you use. Why is it especially important to avoid confusion when conducting surveys?
- Survey research methods commonly use statistics.
  - Survey researchers are usually not present to clarify any misunderstandings.
  - Survey researchers talk to many people.
  - Survey researchers tend to look at large-scale social patterns.

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 52                      OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

60. Researchers must avoid negative questions when writing a survey, which are defined as questions that
- ask about two different topics.
  - let the respondent know how the researcher hopes he or she will answer.
  - belittle or insult a group or individual.

d. ask respondents what they do not think rather than what they think.

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

61. Why would mentioning a sensitive issue, such as divorce or infidelity, in a survey question influence how respondents answer later questions?
- Questions about sensitive issues are double-barreled.
  - The respondents may think about the sensitive issue when answering later questions.
  - Sensitive questions make the questionnaire confusing and difficult to fill out.
  - Sensitive questions spoil the representativeness of the researcher's sample.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 51                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

62. What is a pilot study?
- a smaller study used to investigate the feasibility of a larger one
  - a study designed to improve the target population of a larger study
  - a study that concerns itself with media use and popular culture
  - a study that definitively answers a question that has been bothering sociologists

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

63. Why are respondents often more comfortable addressing sensitive subjects on surveys than in other research contexts?
- They know that many other people will also answer the same questions.
  - They know that their answers will only be analyzed statistically.
  - They can answer in private and are usually assured of anonymity.
  - Surveys guarantee that their answers will be confidential, while other methods do not.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 53                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

64. A sociologist uses a survey to study the attitudes of adults in the United States concerning premarital sex among teenagers. In this study, the target population consists of all \_\_\_\_\_ and the group that is asked the survey questions is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
- teenagers in the United States; reference group
  - teenagers in the United States who have engaged in premarital sex; experimental group
  - adults in the United States; sample
  - adults in the United States who have teenage children; units of analysis

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 48                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Applying

65. Why do high schools often use surveys rather than a more direct form of communication like interviews when they ask students about sensitive subjects like drug use or sexual health?
- Surveys allow respondents to speak in their own words and can reveal respondents' thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.
  - Surveys allow researchers to ask much more complex questions than they could with any other methodology.
  - Surveys allow students to answer the questions in private and assure the confidentiality of their responses.
  - Surveys are more expensive and allow for larger staffs and budgets.

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 53                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Applying

66. A simple random sample is defined as a sample
- with only one variable.
  - that takes into account other demographic variables.
  - that weights one variable more than another.

d. that provides the same chance of being included to every member of the population.

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

67. For a survey to be considered valid, there must be a sufficiently
- large target population.
  - large number of existing sources.
  - large pilot study.
  - high response rate.

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

68. The consistency of a measurement tool, or the degree to which the same questions will produce similar answers, refers to
- reliability.
  - ground theory.
  - unobtrusive measures.
  - value-free sociology.

ANS: A                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Remembering

69. Sometimes survey researchers reject randomness and instead use weighting techniques to construct a sample. How is a weighted sample different from a random one?
- The weighted sample does not target any specific group within the population.
  - The weighted sample attempts to more closely resemble the larger population.
  - A weighted sample excludes some members of the population.
  - A weighted sample draws from a larger target population rather than a random one.

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Understanding

70. One of the key methods used to do political polling is random-digit dialing, in which every phone number in an area code has an equal chance of being selected to take part in a survey. However, researchers have noticed that young people are more likely to only use a cell phone and people with cell phones are less likely to answer a call from an unknown number. As a result, polling organizations often count responses from young people as being worth “more” than those from older people so that age, in the sample, is more accurately representative of the larger population. What is this technique called?
- weighting
  - bias
  - probability sampling
  - Likert scales

ANS: A                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 52                    OBJ: 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Applying

71. A researcher studying a particular community looks through the community’s trash and litter. What best describes this research method?
- experiment
  - content analysis
  - comparative historical research
  - unobtrusive measures

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 54                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Remembering

72. Which of the following is a DISADVANTAGE of using existing sources of data for research?
- Researchers often seek answers to questions the data does not directly address.
  - Researchers have to spend a great deal of time and money to get the data.
  - Researchers do not have access to existing sources.

- d. Existing sources are irrelevant to the contemporary world because they are from a different time and place.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 55                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Remembering

73. What are researchers doing when they use a social networking site like Facebook to obtain data?
- a. being ethically questionable
  - b. doing qualitative research
  - c. using interview data
  - d. using existing sources

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Pages 54–55                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Understanding

74. Why are social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter so exciting to sociologists who study social networks?
- a. For the first time, social networking sites offer sociologists a data set rich enough to test ideas that, until now, have only been theorized.
  - b. For the first time, sociologists do not have to spend the time and money to go talk to people and can do all their work from a computer.
  - c. For the first time, sociologists can find out what young people’s social networks look like.
  - d. For the first time, sociologists can track the spread of urban legends.

ANS: A                    DIF: Difficult                    REF: Page 58                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Remembering

75. The analysis of documents such as medical records, photographs, diaries, letters, newspapers, and song lyrics uses which of the following types of data?
- a. ethnographic field notes
  - b. interview transcripts
  - c. existing sources
  - d. experimental data

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 54                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Applying

76. What is the primary goal of comparative and historical research methods?
- a. to enhance the validity of experiments
  - b. to understand relationships between parts of society in various regions and time periods
  - c. to uncover issues that have been neglected by mainstream social research
  - d. to select participants who are very similar so that the independent variable can be isolated

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 54                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Remembering

77. The Yale sociologist Kai Erikson wrote a book called *Wayward Puritans* in which he drew on court records from colonial Massachusetts. He learned that the rate of out-of-wedlock births was much higher than it is now and that the amount of alcohol consumed per capita was higher as well. What research methodology was Erikson using?
- a. ethnography
  - b. comparative-historical research
  - c. interviews
  - d. surveys

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 54                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Applying

78. What research method is a sociologist using if he or she watches a lot of television and counts the number of times women play roles with lower status than those played by men?
- a. experimental research
  - b. content analysis

- c. ethnography
- d. interview

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 55                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Applying

79. What methodology would you use if you were to conduct a research project investigating the relationship between smoking and gender in blockbuster films?
- a. quantitative research
  - b. content analysis
  - c. comparative or historical research
  - d. interviews

ANS: B                    DIF: Difficult                    REF: Page 55                    OBJ: 2.5 Existing Sources  
MSC: Applying

80. When conducting experiments, how is the experimental group different from the control group?
- a. The experimental group includes people who are very different from those in the control group.
  - b. The experimental group is administered the dependent variable while the control group is not.
  - c. The experimental group is administered the independent variable while the control group is not.
  - d. The control group is administered the independent variable while the experimental group is not.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 56                    OBJ: 2.6 Experimental Methods  
MSC: Remembering

81. A sociologist performs an experiment designed to investigate the effect of marriage counseling on divorce. He or she divides research participants into two similar groups of troubled couples, provides only one group with counseling, and observes whether, over time, the two groups eventually divorce at different rates. What is the independent variable in this experiment?
- a. divorce
  - b. troubled couples
  - c. the overall divorce rate
  - d. marriage counseling

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 56                    OBJ: 2.6 Experimental Methods  
MSC: Applying

82. What does it mean for a sociologist to control for a variable?
- a. Research subjects are divided into two groups.
  - b. Change over time is measured in a dependent variable.
  - c. One group is allowed to understand the nature of the experiment while the other group is kept in the dark.
  - d. All factors except the independent variable are taken into account.

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 56                    OBJ: 2.6 Experimental Methods  
MSC: Remembering

83. Which of the following is an advantage of replicability in experiments?
- a. Experiments can be performed again and again over time in order to measure change.
  - b. Experiments allow research subjects to speak in their own voices.
  - c. Experiments are extremely cheap.
  - d. Each experiment is unique and illustrates something new.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 56                    OBJ: 2.6 Experimental Methods  
MSC: Remembering

84. Many kitchen tools today are made with easy-to-grip silicone handles, which are a vast improvement over old wire tools that were often painful to use. Although the advantages of silicone over wire might seem obvious, kitchenware makers were unaware of the problems with wire tools until they hired ethnographers. Ethnographers visited people at home, observed how they worked in the kitchen, and were able to determine what sorts of things could be sold to them. This ethnography is an example of
- a. a nonacademic use of research methods.

- b. reflexivity.
- c. a way to ensure validity and reliability.
- d. reactivity.

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Pages 59–60  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                      MSC: Applying

85. What is a researcher guilty of if he or she allows his or her own values and opinions to affect his or her analysis?
- a. theoretical incoherence
  - b. bias
  - c. sampling bias
  - d. failing to obtain informed consent

ANS: B                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 46  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                      MSC: Remembering

86. What is the difference between basic and applied research?
- a. Applied research is the search for knowledge for its own sake.
  - b. Applied research is gathering knowledge that can be used for social change.
  - c. Basic research is almost always done by Marxists.
  - d. Applied research is usually quantitative.

ANS: B                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Pages 60–61  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                      MSC: Remembering

87. An ideal whereby researchers identify facts without allowing their own personal beliefs or biases to interfere is known as
- a. applied research.
  - b. value-free sociology.
  - c. objectivity.
  - d. quantitative research.

ANS: B                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 60  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                      MSC: Remembering

88. What is reactivity?
- a. the way the experimental group reacts to the independent variable
  - b. when researchers react to data by overreporting the results
  - c. the tendency of research subjects to change their behavior in response to being studied
  - d. the goal of applied research, which is to create a reaction

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 62  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                      MSC: Remembering

89. When Mayo Elton did his now-classic experiment on worker productivity, he found that he could increase productivity by changing variables in a work environment, but that changing variables back also increased productivity. What did he conclude was the true cause of the increase in productivity?
- a. a decrease in sick days
  - b. his own bias
  - c. the effect of being studied
  - d. increased lighting and longer breaks

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 62  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                      MSC: Understanding

90. A researcher studying sororities pretends to be a college student and attempts to join a sorority. The researcher is operating on a high level of
- a. reactivity.
  - b. bias.
  - c. deception.
  - d. objectivity.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 63  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                    MSC: Applying

91. Why is action research controversial among more traditional social scientists, though the methodological approach is gaining popularity among students?
- It strictly adheres to ideal-type models.
  - It is aligned with values and challenges objectivity.
  - Research goals come before practical goals.
  - IRB approval is not required.

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 50  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                    MSC: Analyzing

92. Laud Humphreys wrote his dissertation on anonymous homosexual encounters in the men's rooms of public parks. To gather data, he acted as a lookout for his subjects, but he also surreptitiously noted license-plate numbers as the men left so he could get their names and addresses. The next year, he picked about fifty of the men and, claiming to be performing a health survey, interviewed them in their homes. His descriptions of the interviews made it possible for many of the men (and their families) to recognize themselves when the dissertation was published. Why do many sociologists consider this research method to be unethical?
- It used terminology that was confusing to the interview subjects.
  - It put Humphreys at risk for arrest or retaliation.
  - It harmed the reputation of the city where Humphrey's subjects lived.
  - It failed to protect the biographical anonymity of his subjects.

ANS: D                    DIF: Difficult                    REF: Pages 64–65  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                    MSC: Applying

93. What can an institutional review board do if it has reservations about the safety or ethics of a research project?
- It may appoint new researchers to complete the project.
  - It may stop the project from going forward, at least until changes have been made.
  - It may issue recommendations for future research.
  - It may provide assistance to any research subjects whose rights have been violated.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 65  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                    MSC: Remembering

## TRUE/FALSE

1. Sociologists try to follow the steps of the scientific method or approach to gather new empirical data that can change and deepen our understanding of human social life.

ANS: T                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Pages 41–42  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Remembering

2. You will still have to sacrifice some types of information in order to acquire others even if you pick your research method carefully.

ANS: T                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Page 44  
OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods                    MSC: Remembering

3. No harm can come to subjects as a result of completing a questionnaire.

ANS: F                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 64  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                    MSC: Remembering

4. Some "facts" sociologists once believed to be unambiguously true are now treated as opinions, biases, or speculation.

ANS: T                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Page 60  
OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research                    MSC: Remembering



## SHORT ANSWER

1. How does quantitative research differ from qualitative research?

ANS:

Quantitative works with numerical data using statistical analysis and qualitative works with nonnumerical data to describe cases of study in detail.

DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 41                      OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods  
MSC: Remembering

2. Even if variables are correlated, explain how a change in one variable might not be caused by a change in another variable.

ANS:

Answers will vary, but should include the following: a spurious correlation results when there is an appearance of a causation produced by an intervening variable, which is a third variable that explains the relationship between two other variables. This is evidenced by the relationship between ice cream sales and violent crime. As one increases, so does the other. However, the increase in both ice cream sales and violent crime is caused by a third variable—the weather.

DIF: Moderate                      REF: Page 43                      OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods  
MSC: Understanding

3. What does philosopher Thomas Kuhn argue about the truth?

ANS:

The truth is relative and dependent upon the paradigm with which one sees the world. Data can generate paradigm shifts, which force new ways of looking at the world.

DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 43                      OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods  
MSC: Understanding

4. In what way does a focus group differ from one-on-one interviews?

ANS:

In a focus group, a number of participants (five to ten) will be interviewed at the same time, which allows for group members to interact with one another. One-on-one interactions will not have opportunities for any interaction among group members.

DIF: Easy                      REF: Page 48                      OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Remembering

5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of asking open-ended and closed-ended questions?

ANS:

Open-ended questions allow for a wide variety of responses, whereas closed-ended questions limit possible responses. Open-ended questions provide qualitative data for an in-depth look into society, but they are time-consuming to answer and analyze. Closed-ended questions provide quantitative data that may be analyzed quickly using statistical analysis, but they lack the qualitative understanding found in open-ended questions.

DIF: Difficult                      REF: Page 49                      OBJ: 2.3 Interviews | 2.4 Surveys  
MSC: Analyzing

6. Why is it important that researchers have a representative sample when conducting survey research?

ANS:

A representative sample allows for information garnered by surveys to be utilized to make accurate inferences about the target population.

DIF: Easy      REF: Page 52      OBJ: 2.4 Surveys      MSC: Understanding

7. How might researchers generate a representative sample from a target population?

ANS:

Answers may vary, but should include the following: representative samples can be generated through probability sampling, in which the sample reflects the characteristics of the target population. This may be achieved through a simple random sample, in which everyone in a target population has an equal chance of being randomly selected or through more advanced sampling techniques of manipulating or weighting sample population responses.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Pages 48, 52      OBJ: 2.4 Surveys      MSC: Understanding

8. What difficulties does experimental research present for researchers?

ANS:

Experiments are only applicable in certain types of research, such as those that can be constructed and measured in a controlled setting. Experiments do not work in explaining complex processes and interactions. In addition, researchers cannot always eliminate factors that will have an unforeseen effect on social outcomes.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Page 57      OBJ: 2.6 Experimental Methods  
MSC: Understanding

9. In action research, what role does the population studied perform?

ANS:

Participants are active, collaborative, and equal participants; researchers are doing research with the people rather than on them.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Page 50      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Understanding

10. Explain the importance of confidentiality in social research.

ANS:

Answers may vary, but should include the following: breaching confidentiality can cause harm to research participants. For example, due to a breach of confidentiality, Muncie, Indiana, was perceived as an example of shallowness and triviality. Carolyn Ellis destroyed her relationships with participants in her research who were emotionally hurt by their misrepresented portrayals.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Page 64      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Understanding

11. What recommendations are set out in the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics?

ANS:

The ASA's Code of Ethics are a set of guidelines for researchers on how to avoid bias, adhere to professional standards, and protect respondents from harm.

DIF: Easy      REF: Page 65      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Remembering

## ESSAY

1. Why should sociologists generally follow the steps of the scientific method or approach?

ANS:

Answers to this question should address how the scientific method or approach has been accepted as a standard procedure for acquiring empirical and measurable knowledge. It gives an important structure to the research process, without which data might be thought less rigorous or compelling. Using the scientific method helps researchers avoid common mistakes such as neglecting to conduct a literature review, which might make a study pointless. Following the steps of the scientific method or approach helps researchers contribute to and build the field. For example, when their research findings are disseminated, this informs participants, other professionals, and interested parties, thus creating a research community. Finally, following Kuhn's line of thinking, we are constantly gathering data to understand what is true. However, truth is relative and depends on the paradigm, or worldview, we are using. Using the scientific method generates data that can help us see the world in different ways and can contribute to paradigm shifts and new ways of understanding what is true.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Pages 41–42      OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods  
MSC: Analyzing

2. The scientific method provides a general plan for conducting research in a systematic way. Describe the series of steps in the scientific method.

ANS:

In the first step, the researcher identifies a problem or asks a question. Next, the researcher conducts a literature review. The third step in the scientific method is forming a hypothesis, in which the variables are clearly defined (or operationalized). Fourth, the researcher chooses a research method or design to conduct the study. Fifth, data are collected, and sixth, the data are analyzed and evaluated. Finally, the researcher disseminates the findings.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Pages 41–42      OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods  
MSC: Remembering

3. In everyday life, it is assumed that science provides access to objective truths that will never change. However, the philosopher Thomas Kuhn argues that truth is relative and dependent upon the paradigm through which one sees the world. Explain what a paradigm is and how the scientific method can lead to paradigm shifts.

ANS:

Answers should begin by describing Kuhn's work, especially the idea that paradigms are broad theoretical models about how things work. A paradigm shift is a major break from the assumptions made by the previous model, which occurs when new information forces a new way of looking at the world as in the shift from an Earth-centered solar system to a heliocentric solar system. In addition, it is through the use of the scientific method that new data is generated; the scientific method demands that assumptions be tested with empirical data.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Page 43      OBJ: 2.1 An Overview of Research Methods  
MSC: Applying

4. Each method of social research comes with its own advantages and disadvantages. This means that there is not necessarily a "right" answer to the question of which method should be used for a project. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using ethnographic research.

ANS:

Ethnographic research allows researchers to tell detailed stories that contribute to understanding social life, study previously overlooked groups, challenge taken-for-granted assumptions, and develop innovative methodologies. However, ethnographic research is hard to replicate, not always representative, and easily affected by bias. Reflexivity must be taken into account when doing ethnographic research. This type of research is also time-consuming and involves many hours of fieldwork.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Page 47      OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation  
MSC: Evaluating

5. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz coined the term "thick description" to describe well-written field notes. What does he mean by this term?

ANS:

Thick description should provide both a straightforward portrait of the activities and events in a given setting and resources from which the ethnographer can identify group members' meanings in that setting. Making field notes "thick" requires more than mere photographic details; it also requires sensitivity to context and to interactional details such as facial expressions and tone of voice, which enrich what might otherwise be just a list of happenings. Thick description means all the possible meanings of a phenomenon within a cultural setting.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Page 45      OBJ: 2.2 Ethnography/Participant Observation  
MSC: Understanding

6. Both interviews and surveys require a researcher to write clear, unambiguous questions in order to generate good data. What are the pitfalls and benefits of crafting specific types of questions?

ANS:

Answers should mention leading, double-barreled, and negative questions. The text also mentions overly complex questions, ambiguous questions, and those that spark an emotional reaction on the part of the respondent. A discussion of open-ended versus closed-ended questions should include information about closed-ended questions being easier to code, but not allowing respondents to fully answer in their own words. Open-ended questions allow respondents to fully answer questions with their own ideas, but are much more time-consuming for researchers to code.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Pages 49, 52      OBJ: 2.3 Interviews  
MSC: Applying

7. As far back as Auguste Comte, the theorist who coined the term "sociology," it has been assumed by many sociologists that objectivity is important in studying society. Describe the assumptions surrounding the role objectivity plays in sociology.

ANS:

Any answer should first point out that many "facts" from the past are now seen as distortions based on racism, sexism, class privilege, and even religiosity. Second, social researchers are human and therefore understand the world through their own subjective natures. Third, some postmodern theorists have suggested that there is no such thing as objective reality.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Page 62      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Understanding

8. Given what you learned in Chapter 2, why would an interviewer's appearance, including clothing and hairstyle, make a difference in determining what he or she learns?

ANS:

Any good answer will mention reflexivity, which is the idea that a researcher's presence affects how people respond around him or her. Though the presence of anyone might change certain things about a setting, most of the important effects of reflexivity are based on the particular identity and activities of a particular researcher. The way the researcher chooses to present himself or herself to his or her research subjects will affect their responses.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Page 46      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Applying

9. In physics, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle states that to measure something is also to change it. Sociologists have observed a similar phenomenon—reactivity. Describe the classic example of reactivity, observed and explained by Elton Mayo at the Western Electric Hawthorne Plant between 1927 and 1932.

ANS:

Mayo sought to examine the effect of varying work conditions on motivation and productivity in the factory. He changed various conditions such as lighting levels, rest breaks, and even rates of pay and found that each change resulted in a rise in productivity. However, returning to the original conditions also resulted in a rise in productivity. Mayo concluded that the variables he had manipulated were not the only or dominant causes of productivity. Rather, it was the effect of being studied or what is now referred to as the Hawthorne effect that caused the increases. It was attention that had caused the improvement. The presence of researchers always affects those whom they study.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Page 62      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Understanding

10. In recent years, ethnography has expanded beyond academic and scientific disciplines and is now often used for commercial purposes. Explain how ethnographic methods can help advertisers.

ANS:

Advertisers are interested in the complex relationships between people and products; ethnographic methods help them uncover the interpretive strategies and meaning systems used by consumers. For example, Nissan used ethnographic methods to discover how American consumers defined “luxury.” “Cool hunters” have also used ethnographic methods to search for new and hip trends in popular culture by talking to trendsetters.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Pages 59–60      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Applying

11. Every discipline that does research on humans needs a code of ethics in order to protect its research subjects. Though it is easy to see that medical research could harm people if not carried out ethically, the risks associated with sociological research may seem subtler. Describe the risks of sociological research.

ANS:

This answer should mention breaches of confidentiality and issues of betrayal based on the way subjects are portrayed as well as risks of physical and legal harm to researchers.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Pages 64–65      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Understanding

12. A professor receives a grant to study local employment conditions and files the required paperwork with his or her university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Later, several graduate students who were not around when the project started are hired to take over the day-to-day management of the project. The IRB promptly cuts off the project’s funding. Explain what an IRB does and why it might revoke funding for a research project.

ANS:

The IRB is a group of scholars who review the research proposals of their colleagues at a college or university. It is the responsibility of the IRB to protect research subjects from any kind of harm. A change in researcher is not problematic in and of itself. However, the IRB could be concerned that it might signal a larger shift in the nature of the project, possibly from a research procedure that had been approved as safe and ethical to one that had not been reviewed.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Page 65      OBJ: 2.7 Issues in Sociological Research  
MSC: Applying

