**Basic Concepts I: Life Course Perspective on Aging**

**Test Bank**

**Multiple Choice**

1. The oldest-old refers to individuals aged \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. 65+

b. 65–74

c. 75–84

d. 85–100

e. 85+

Ans: e

Answer Location: The Stages of Life

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Which research method/design is most appropriate for looking at aging from the life-course perspective?

a. longitudinal research

b. quasi-experimental design

c. experimental design

d. panel study

e. survey analysis

Ans: a

Answer Location: The Life Course and Aging

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Special events that mark the transition from one role to another—such as a bar mitzvah, confirmation, graduation ceremony, or wedding—are known as \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. social clocks

b. age grading

c. rites of passage

d. life course events

e. demographic transitions

Ans: c

Answer Location: Life Transitions

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. \_\_\_\_\_\_ depicted the life course as a series of psychosocial struggles that had to be resolved.

a. Cicero

b. William Shakespeare

c. Daniel Levinson

d. Erik Erikson

e. Sophocles

Ans: d

Answer Location: Life Transitions

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. The \_\_\_\_\_\_ theory of aging posits that the status of older people declines as the level of technology progresses.

a. disengagement

b. technology

c. modernization

d. continuity

e. activity

Ans: c

Answer Location: Modernization Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. According to the \_\_\_\_\_\_ theory of aging, old age is marked by the mutual withdrawal of older persons and society.

a. modernization

b. continuity

c. technology

d. disengagement

e. activity

Ans: d

Answer Location: Disengagement Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. The \_\_\_\_\_\_ theory of aging holds that the more engaged people are, the more likely they are to be satisfied with life.

a. disengagement

b. activity

c. technology

d. modernization

e. continuity

Ans: b

Answer Location: Activity and Continuity Theories of Aging

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Helen Gurley Brown (1993) wrote that work is “our chloroform . . . our life . . . our freedom from pain . . . supplier of esteem.” Which theory of aging does this statement best reflect?

a. continuity

b. technology

c. modernization

d. activity

e. disengagement

Ans: d

Answer Location: Activity and Continuity Theories of Aging

Difficulty Level: Hard

9. This theory of aging posits that in old age, people maintain the habits, personality, and lifestyle that they developed in their younger years.

a. modernization

b. continuity

c. technology

d. disengagement

e. activity

Ans: b

Answer Location: Activity and Continuity Theories of Aging

Difficulty Level: Medium

10. The most persistent view of aging in society reflects continuous deterioration and decline, thus forming the basis for age-based prejudice known as \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. age grading

b. age stratification

c. age norms

d. ageism

e. age differentiation

Ans: d

Answer Location: Influences on the Life Course

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. The life course can be significantly affected by which of the following?

a. social class

b. earlier life events, such as early completion of college

c. historical events

d. unpredictable life events, such as losing a job or divorce

e. all of these

Ans: e

Answer Location: Influences on the Life Course

Difficulty Level: Medium

12. Which of the following is an example of providing opportunities to increase locus of control?

a. allowing nursing home residents to choose activities

b. giving nursing home residents responsibility for taking care of plants

c. limiting meal choices

d. instituting a uniform bedtime for residents

e. a and b

Ans: e

Answer Location: Influences on the Life Course

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. The maximum human life span is approximately \_\_\_\_\_\_ years.

a. 85

b. 100

c. 120

d. 135

e. none of these

Ans: c

Answer Location: The Biology of Aging

Difficulty Level: Easy

14. A type of research design in which people of varying ages are analyzed at a single point in time is called \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. longitudinal design

b. cross-sectional design

c. survey research

d. experimental design

e. control group

Ans: b

Answer Location: The New Science of Longevity

Difficulty Level: Medium

15. A type of research design in which the same group of people is followed over a long period of time is called \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. longitudinal design

b. cross-sectional design

c. survey research

d. experimental design

e. control group

Ans: a

Answer Location: The Life Course and Aging

Difficulty Level: Medium

16. The transition out of social roles, such as into widowhood and retirement, is referred to as \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. unsuccessful aging

b. cognitive functioning

c. continuity theory

d. life events

e. role loss

Ans: e

Answer Location: Social Roles

Difficulty Level: Medium

**True/False**

1. Old age is best understood as a separate stage of life.

Ans: F

Answer Location: The Life Course and Aging

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Researchers have located groups of people in remote parts of the world (e.g., in the mountains of Peru) who live beyond the maximum human life span.

Ans: F

Answer Location: The Biology of Aging

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. People of the same chronological age can differ dramatically in their functional age.

Ans: T

Answer Location: The New Science of Longevity

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. Most people over age 65 suffer from dementia.

Ans: F

Answer Location: Cognitive Functioning

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. “Selective optimization with compensation” involves maintaining capacities one considers most useful as one grows older and letting go of those that are less useful.

Ans: T

Answer Location: Cognitive Functioning

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Both biomedical science and social behavior among older adults confirm stereotypical images of what is “right” or “appropriate” for old age.

Ans: F

Answer Location: A Life Course Perspective on Aging

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. “Excess disability” involves experiencing more disability than necessary because the environment in which one lives is either too challenging or not challenging enough.

Ans: T

Answer Location: Social Institutions and Policies

Difficulty Level: Medium

**Essay**

1. What is meant by the life-course perspective? Why is old age not fully understood “unless we understand it as part of the entire course of human life”?

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Medium

Difficulty Level: The Life Course and Aging

2. How is looking at old age from the life-course perspective different from looking at old age as a separate period of life?

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: The Life Course and Aging

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Describe the ways in which our changing perceptions of time have altered the way we think about aging and the life course.

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Time and the Life Course

Difficulty Level: Hard

4. Why is the disengagement theory of aging criticized by some contemporary gerontologists?

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Disengagement Theory

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Compare and contrast images of aging in electronic media, mythic/religious literature, and early Western literature.

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Age Identification

Difficulty Level: Hard

6. Discuss the variety of ways in which the life course has been organized over time.

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: The Stages of Life

Difficulty Level: Hard

7. The text asserts that today we no longer have a shared map for the course of life and that the timing of major life events has become less and less predictable at all levels of society. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Provide specific evidence to back up your position.

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Toward a New Map of Life

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. In the *New York Times* column “The New Old Age,” author Judith Graham asked, “What language do you think we should use to describe people who have advanced beyond the middle of their lives, and why?” What are your thoughts about how best to answer this question?

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Focus on Practice: What Should We Call Older Adults?

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Consider the traditional theories of aging—modernization, detachment, activity, and continuity theories. How relevant do you think these theories are for explaining aging, later life, and old age in the 21st century?

Ans: Varies

Answer Location: Traditional Theories of Aging

Difficulty Level: Hard