Chapter 1: An Overview of Communication

Test Bank

# Multiple Choice

1. The perspective that “communication is interaction” is limited because it fails to \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. account for the correct timing of a message

b. account for the exchange of information between two or more individuals

c. account for the exchange of information between a sender and receiver

d. fully capture what happens when people communicate

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Interaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. The perspective of “communication as transaction” is more accurate than other perspectives because it accounts for the \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. correct timing of a message

b. exchange of information between two or more individuals

c. creation of shared meanings and understandings through communication

d. intention to send a message

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. The use of symbols in communication is complicated because they \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. have only one meaning

b. have multiple meanings

c. are not affected by culture and context

d. are not representational

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. Which of the following is true of symbols and communication?

a. Symbols have the potential for only one meaning.

b. Symbols are used to deflect meaning.

c. The meaning applied to symbols may change.

d. Symbols preclude meaning.

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Requires Meaning

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Communication is presentational because it is \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. never neutral

b. always objective

c. not always effective

d. always effective

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Frames can enhance communication by helping to \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. open up unlimited meanings

b. determine outcomes

c. draw a boundary around the conversation

d. completely terminate communication interactions

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. One characteristic of framing in communication is that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. every part of the message must be explicitly stated

b. frames pull attention toward certain things and away from others

c. every part of the message can be ignored

d. not every part of the message can be ignored

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. The means through which a message is conveyed is the \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. message

b. module

c. method

d. medium

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Meaning and the Medium

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. Communication frames are based in part on a person’s perspectives of \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. situations

b. relationships with others

c. neither situations nor relationships with others

d. both situations and relationships with others

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Perspectives

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. All of the following are examples of contexts that can affect the meaning(s) a single symbol or message can have except \_\_\_\_\_\_context.

a. physical

b. symbolic

c. relational

d. situational

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

11. One characteristic of communication is that it is cultural. Which statement is NOT true?

a. Different cultures make different assumptions.

b. Each time you talk to someone, from your culture or another, you are taking knowledge for granted.

c. Cultural expectations are only reinforced when someone violates them.

d. You perform and enact your culture through communication.

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

12. All of the following are examples of communication as interaction, except \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. you leave a message on a friend’s voice mail, and he returns the call.

b. you leave a note for your mother, and she responds by sending you a text.

c. you send a message in a bottle to a friend, and she sends you an e-mail saying she got it.

d. you send a text to your boss letting him know you’re going to be late for work.

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication as Action

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. Which statement is true of the constitutive approach to communication?

a. It is the way in which symbols take on meaning in a social context or society.

b. It is an arbitrary representation of ideas, people, relationships, cultures, genders, and so forth.

c. It brings into existence something that has not been there before.

d. It can be used to study all communicative activity.

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Hard

14. Family members using certain words or phrases that have particular shared meaning as they are used over time is an example of what concept?

a. Communication frame

b. Social construction

c. Constitutive approach to communication

d. Communication as interaction

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Social Construction of Meaning

Difficulty Level: Hard

15. All of the following are representations of a symbol, except \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. smoke

b. a place

c. ideas

d. relationships

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Hard

16. Which is NOT true of a symbol?

a. It is an arbitrary representation.

b. There is a direct causal connection between a symbol and what it represents.

c. A symbol can be either verbal or nonverbal.

d. A symbol can be different in different cultures.

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

17. Which statement is true of social construction?

a. It is an arbitrary representation of ideas, people, relationships, cultures, genders, and so forth.

b. It brings into existence something that has not been there before.

c. It can be used to study all communicative activity.

d. It is the way in which symbols take on meaning in a social context or society as they are used over time.

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Social Construction of Meaning

Difficulty Level: Hard

18. The constitutive approach to communication contends that communication does not just construct meaning, but it is through communication that \_\_\_\_\_\_ is/are created.

a. relationships

b. cultures

c. genders and ethnicities

d. realities

e. all of the above

Ans: E

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

19. Each time you talk to someone, from your culture or another, you are doing all of the following, except \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. taking knowledge for granted

b. doing what your culture expects

c. not reinforcing cultural expectations

d. doing, performing, and enacting your culture

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Communication Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

20. All of the following are one of the seven characteristics of communication studied in this chapter, except \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. communication involves frames.

b. communication is chemistry.

c. communication is cultural.

d. communication is relational.

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: What Is Communication?

Difficulty Level: Easy

21. The following may be said about relationships and communication:

a. Communication affects relationships, but relationships cannot affect communication.

b. Relationships between people most often are always openly expressed.

c. Relationships are communication interactions only between two people.

d. Relationships are assumed each time you communicate with someone.

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Medium

22. In an encounter, which of the following issues are being negotiated?

a. Gender, status, power, and politeness

b. Gender and status only

c. Power and politeness only

d. Gender and politeness only

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: What Is Communication?

Difficulty Level: Medium

23. Phrases can have different meanings depending on the time and place they are communicated. Which context below focuses on the time and/or place in which a message is communicated?

a. Physical context

b. Symbolic context

c. Relational context

d. Situational context

Ans: D

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

24. Every message indicates how the sender of a message and the receiver of that message are socially and personally related. This characteristic implies that communication is \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. symbolic

b. cultural

c. relational

d. contextual

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication is Relational

Difficulty Level: Easy

25. Communication as \_\_\_\_\_\_ is the most advanced view of communication.

a. transaction

b. action

c. interaction

d. variation

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

26. Terry sent a text message to Janice that said, “Meet me in the library at: 1:00.” However, Janice did not see or read the message that was received. This is an example of communication as \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. transaction

b. action

c. interaction

d. variation

Ans: B

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

27. When communication messages constitute something above and beyond the symbols being exchanged, this is an example of communication as \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. transaction

b. action

c. interaction

d. variation

Ans: A

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

# Multiple Response

1. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. A symbol can be a \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. word

b. mark

c. sound

d. logo

Ans: A, B, C, D

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. Cultural expectations determine when you \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. greet someone with a kiss or a handshake

b. make or maintain eye contact

c. stand at a distance from someone during a conversation

d. take turns while talking

Ans: A, B, C, D

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. What are ways in which group decision making is accomplished?

a. Groupthink

b. Agenda setting

c. Solution evaluations

d. Relationships among group members

Ans: B, C, D

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Relational

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. Most interactions between romantic partners consist of more than holding hands and gazing into one another’s eyes. Which are examples of everyday interactions that might also take place?

a. What to eat

b. What bills need paying

c. What is the source of a foul odor?

d. Coordinating schedules

Ans: A, B, C, D

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. Which medium/media will impact the meaning of a message?

a. Text

b. Social networking sites

c. A note placed on someone’s windshield

d. Smoke signals

Ans: A, B, C, D

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Meaning and the Medium

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. Which of the following includes examples of Internet activism?

a. Hacking into secure computer systems

b. Hashtagged motto at the end of a post

c. Printed pamphlets

d. Online fundraiser for a particular cause

Ans: C

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. Many conversations between close friends are “framed” by \_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. conversations

b. history

c. previous experiences

d. groupthink

Ans: A, B, C

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Easy

# True/False

1. Context has no effect on the meaning of a communicated message.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: What Is Communication?

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. Any type of communication you ever participate in has a relationship assumed underneath it.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. Communication is explained as transmitting information from Person A to Person B.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: What Is Communication?

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. The perspective of “communication as action” defines communication as occurring only if information is exchanged between two or more individuals.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication as Interaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Symbols are always constant in meaning from one cultural context to the next.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. We tend to speak differently with different people, such as with parents or our boss.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Everyday conversations create and maintain various aspects of our lives.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Gender issues are neither negotiated through nor associated with communication.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. A communicative “frame” pulls our attention toward certain things and away from others.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Medium

10. Meaning develops when groups of people use particular symbols.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Social Construction of Meaning

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. Presentational communication describes facts or conveys information, while representational communication gives one person’s particular version of the facts.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

12. Social construction involves the way in which symbols take on meaning in a social context as they are used over time.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Social Construction of Meaning

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. The representational and presentational nature of communication is limited to interactions between people.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

14. Communication is interesting and worthy of study because something magical and extra happens in the process beyond the mere exchange of messages.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Easy

15. Frames are basic forms of knowledge that provide a definition of a scenario.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Easy

16. Communication is the definitive use of symbols—influenced, guided, and understood in the context of relationships.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: What Is Communication?

Difficulty Level: Hard

17. Not all communication is characterized by the use of symbols.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

18. Communication as interaction is an exchange of information between two or more individuals.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication as Interaction

Difficulty Level: Easy

19. You could think of representation as *spin* and presentation as *facts*.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

20. Each time someone communicates, a worldview is being shared through the selection of terms, regardless of how much thought has gone into the construction of a message.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

21. Cultural expectations are reinforced when someone violates them.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Easy

22. Shared relational knowledge does not necessarily enable you and another person to assign unique meanings to certain words or symbols.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Assigning Meanings

Difficulty Level: Medium

23. Both signs and symbols are arbitrary representations of something else.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Easy

24. Some people claim that internet activism is just as meaningful as and even more effective than other forms of activism.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

25. Communicating in a manner consistent with another person’s cultural expectations will result in increased liking by that person.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: Explain how meaning is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communicating is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

26. A communication frame pulls our attention toward certain things and away from others.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communicating Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Easy

27. Using the term *illegal alien* instead of *undocumented worker* represents the presentation side of the message, not the representation.

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

28. Your message is conveying information (presentational) while providing a glimpse into your perspective and how you want your friend to view the situation (representational).

Ans: F

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

29. Communication frames are based partly on a person’s perspectives of situations and relationships with others.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communicating Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Easy

30. A shared understanding of these frames is what enables people to make sense of what is taking place to coordinate their symbolic activities.

Ans: T

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communicating Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Easy

# Short Answer

1. What is the difference between a symbol and a sign?

Ans: A symbol is an arbitrary representation of something else, such as an object, an idea, a person, a place, or a relationship. A sign is a consequence or an indicator of something specific, which can’t be changed by arbitrary actions or labels. For example, smoke is a sign of fire.

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. Give an example of how symbols can be different in different cultures.

Ans: This can happen when people speak the same language, such as English, but come from different cultures. A person coming from England to the United States, for example, might have trouble finding a bathroom in places where signs only say *restrooms*. That euphemism is not obvious to cultural outsiders as a reference to toilet facilities. Likewise, a person from the United States visiting England might not recognize that WC, meaning *water closet*, is also the symbol for a bathroom.

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Give an example of a common word or phrase that can be accompanied by verbal or nonverbal symbols that impact meaning and send different messages depending on how it is delivered.

Ans: *I love you* is a phrase that can be said in a romantic way or with a questioning tone of voice. It can also be said with a smile or with a frown.

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Verbal and Nonverbal Influence on Meaning

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. Give an example of how cultural expectations can be violated.

Ans: Touching someone during a face-to-face conversation or even making eye contact could be considered a violation of a cultural expectation if the person responds in a negative manner.

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Explain why the relational connection between the sender of a message and a receiver is sometimes less than obvious.

Ans: The relationships between people often are not openly expressed but subtly indicated or taken for granted in most communication. In such cases, the content and relational components of messages are not always easy to separate.

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Relational

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Describe how the symbolic act of waving can have multiple meanings.

Ans: Waving is a symbol, and as with many symbols, it can mean a variety of different things even in the same culture. A wave could be a greeting, a farewell gesture, or an attempt to get attention.

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Name one way in which determining meaning is more complex than it seems.

Ans: Accompanying verbal and nonverbal symbols can impact meaning; A single symbol or message can have multiple meanings when used in different contexts; The medium will affect the meaning of a message

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Verbal and Nonverbal Influence on Meaning

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Describe how group members’ relationships with one another outside the group setting affect group decision making.

Ans: The members know one another, talk informally outside the group setting, and have personal likes and dislikes for one another that will affect their discussions about certain matters. Many decisions that appear to be made during an open discussion are actually sometimes tied up before the communication begins. Words have been whispered into ears, promises made, factions formed, and relationships displayed well in advance of any discussion.

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Give an example of how communication frames help to direct/coordinate your interactions.

Ans: Examples will vary, but should represent that shared understanding of these frames is what enables people to make sense of what is taking place.

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Coordinating Interactions

Difficulty Level: Medium

10. Communication requires that symbols convey meaning, what a symbol represents. Give an example of a symbol whose meaning has changed over time? How?

Ans: Answers will vary, but should describe a symbol and how its meaning has evolved over time. Students should also provide a reason how the symbol’s meaning has changed.

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication requires Meaning

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. Why do you think knowing the unique meanings associated with symbols is so important to establishing membership or connecting with a group?

Ans: Answers will vary, but should describe how knowledge can help the group establish identity and feel comfortable with communication.

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication requires Meaning

Difficulty Level: Medium

12. The medium affects the meaning of a message. Describe an instance when the medium could be a distraction and could, potentially, alter the meaning of the message.

Ans: A medium distraction, such as poor cell phone reception or poor internet connection are good examples. The student should also describe how this distraction affected the meaning of the message.

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication requires Meaning

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. How is communication as transaction more sophisticated than communication as action and communication as interaction?

Ans: With transaction, there is a construction of shared meanings and understandings, whereas with action or interaction, the focus is on sending a message or an exchange of information.

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

# Essay

1. Explain how everyday conversations create, maintain, or challenge one of the following: culture, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, meaning, or reality.

Ans: Everyday communication is not always memorable, but it constitutes a person’s life, and it creates, maintains, challenges, and alters relationships and identities as well as culture, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, meaning, and even reality. It is through routine—seemingly mundane, everyday communication—that major portions of a person’s life take shape.

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Medium

2. Explain why it can be problematic to interpret a symbol correctly in a communicated message.

Ans: Symbols are arbitrary by nature and do not always depict what they represent (for instance, a heart symbol does not look like a real human heart). Also, symbols can have levels of meaning (for instance, a heart can reflect love, affection, or attraction). In addition, symbols can vary according to the culture and context in which they are used or according to the relationship between speaker and listener.

Learning Objective: 1.1: Explain how communication is symbolic.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Symbolic

Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Explain how communication can be both representational and presentational.

Ans: Communication is representational in that it can represent or convey facts and information in a more objective manner; however, it is also presentational in that most speakers also are giving their perspective on a particular issue. In other words, communication can strategically report information in such a way that it puts a speaker’s preferred “spin” on the subject.

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Hard

4. Explain the constitutive approach to communication.

Ans: Communication brings into existence something that has not been there before and does not just construct meanings. Relationships, cultures, genders, ethnicities, sexualities, and realities are all created through communication. These creations are also maintained, negotiated, challenged, and altered through communication.

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Hard

5. Explain why the perspective of “communication as action” is limited in its usefulness.

Ans: The perspective of “communication as action” implies that communication has taken place whenever there has been an attempt to send a message. However, this perspective does not take into account whether or not the message has been successfully received or understood.

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Communication as Action

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Explain why communication is never neutral.

Ans: Communication is never neutral because it always conveys the perspective or worldview of the person sending a message. Your communication with people presents them with a way of looking at the world that is based on how you prefer them to see it. Your message would convey information, which is representational, while at the same time providing a glimpse into your perspective and how you want people to view a particular situation, which is presentational.

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. Explain how the link between relationships and communication can be used to study all communicative activity.

Ans: The constant guide in understanding communication is the relationships we have with other people. The relationship perspective is based on the belief that communication and relationships are interconnected and intertwined. Any type of communication we’ve ever participated in has a relationship assumed underneath it. Relationships shared by people will influence what is communicated, how it is shared, and the meanings that develop.

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Everyday Communication and the Relational Perspective

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Explain why it is important to study communication, even though you have been communicating your entire life.

Ans: The drawback to previous experience is that people may not see the value in studying something that is such a common part of life. However, if communication were so easy, people would not have misunderstandings, conflicts, disputes, and disagreements. If people would study communication, they might not get embarrassed because they said something thoughtless or because they sent texts and e-mail messages that were misunderstood.

Learning Objective: 1.4: Explain how communication is relational.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: What Is Communication?

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Explain how communication frames help people understand their role in a conversation and what is expected of them.

Ans: A shared understanding of a particular communication frame—such as a job interview, giving an order to a server in a restaurant, or a conversation between a student and a professor—is what enables people to make sense of what is taking place to coordinate their symbolic activities.

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Coordinating Interactions

Difficulty Level: Hard

10. Give one example of how framing assumptions help people make decisions about what symbols are used and how these symbols should be interpreted.

Ans: Your relationship with someone and your knowledge of that person, for instance, influence what can be taken for granted or left unsaid and what must be explained. You may have a friend or relative with whom you can have a conversation that no one else in the room would understand because the symbols used have meaning unique to that particular relationship.

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Assigning Meanings

Difficulty Level: Medium

11. Explain why people do not always agree on what exactly is taking place in a particular interaction.

Ans: People’s perspective of an interaction has to do with communication frames, which are basic forms of knowledge that provide a definition of a scenario. Frames generally help people understand their role in a conversation and what is expected of them. But communication frames are also based in part on a person’s perspective of situations and relationships with others. These frames of perspective will greatly influence the coordinating of interactions and the assigning of meaning.

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Perspectives

Difficulty Level: Hard

12. Explain how relationships are literally talked into existence.

Ans: Relationships are not locations that we suddenly jump into, even though people refer to being *in* a relationship. Rather, it is through communication that relationships are brought into being, and it is through communication that the maintenance, negotiation, challenges, and alterations of relationships occur.

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. At first glance, the notion of communication being both presentational and representational is difficult to grasp. Explain the difference.

Ans: When people speak to others, they have a number of words—their entire vocabulary, in fact—that can be used to construct their message. They will choose some words and not choose other words; they will arrange the chosen words in a certain way and not in other ways—both presentational acts. However, their selection of words and the arrangement of those words are meaningful acts. Their use of words and their construction of messages do not just represent ideas and information; these acts present their view of the world to others—the representational side of communication.

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

14. Explain the difference between saying “I love you” in a relational context and in a situational context.

Ans: In a relational context, the message of “I love you” can mean something vastly different when said to you by your mother, your brother, your friend, your priest, or someone you have been dating for a while. In a situational context, consider the message said by the same person (e.g., your mother) on your birthday, after a fight with her, on her deathbed, at Thanksgiving, or at the end of a phone call.

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

15. Explain how different media systems might result in different meanings assigned to the same message.

Ans: Internet and media activism is an incredibly powerful tool. Depending on the context, messages can be interpreted in varying manners. For example, a motto can be interpreted differently if it is posted on someone’s social media, or chanted at a march, or written on a billboard.

Learning Objective: 1.2: Explain how meaning is established.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Meaning and Context

Difficulty Level: Medium

16. In some situations, people are often taught and encouraged to adjust how they normally communicate to match the expectations of the other person. However, is communicating in a manner consistent with someone else’s cultural expectations but inconsistent with your normal communication style unethical?

Ans: Accommodating another person’s communication style is a proper tactic that makes one appear to be a more effective communicator. It is not necessarily unethical to communicate in a manner that is not consistent with your normal communication style if the truth is being communicated during delivery.

Learning Objective: Explain how meaning is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communicating Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

17. Are there situations when people can agree on a single frame? If so, how might that be determined?

Ans: Yes, it is possible that a correct frame exists. However, it is also possible that no single frame could be considered correct or be more appropriate than other frames. It can be determined through open communication and agreement.

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communicating Involves Frames

Difficulty Level: Hard

18. Based on the definitions of communication as presentational and communication as representational, describe how a person might describe a movie they watched from both perspectives.

Ans: From the representational perspective, the person could describe the plot, characters, and information conveyed in the movie. From the presentational perspective, the person could describe how they liked the movie and their analysis of the movie.

Learning Objective: 1.6: Explain what it means to view communication as both representational and presentational.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Both Presentational and Representational

Difficulty Level: Medium

19. Frames provide you with additional context and information in any communication interaction. Think back to recent conversation with someone. What might have been said by you and by that other person to frame the interaction?

Ans: Answers will vary based on experience, however the answer should include an example of a communication frame and an understanding that communication frames form a boundary around a conversation.

Learning Objective: 1.5: Explain the use of communication frames.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Perspective

Difficulty Level: Medium

20. Based on the constitutive approach to communication, explain how relationships are formed.

Ans: Relationships are not locations that we suddenly jump into—even though people refer to being *in* a relationship. Instead, relationships are quite literally talked into existence. Through communication—especially words, but also nonverbal communication—relationships are brought into being, and through communication the maintenance, negotiation, challenges, and alterations of relationships occur.

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Hard

21. Chapter 1 discussed cultural challenges associated with the use of symbols. Describe a recent cultural difference in terms of communication you have personally experienced. How did you overcome it?

Ans: Answers will vary, however, students should describe a communication event where there was an obvious cultural difference between the communicators and describe how they overcame the difference.

Learning Objective: 1.3: Explain how communication is cultural.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication Is Cultural

Difficulty Level: Medium

22. Describe communication as interaction and provide one representative example.

Ans: Communication as interaction is an exchange of information between two (or more) individuals. Although this view of communication is slightly more advanced than communication as action, it remains limited in its scope and fails to capture what truly happens when people communicate.

Learning Objective: 1.7: Explain what it means to view communication as a transaction.

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Communication as Transaction

Difficulty Level: Medium