

## CHAPTER 1 - AGING TODAY

1. Which of the following is given in the text as a reason for studying aging?
  - a. to help oneself live the best old age possible
  - b. to enable people to avoid or reverse the effects of aging
  - c. to enable people to make old age as inexpensive a time of life as it can be
  - d. to learn how to work with elderly clients

*ANSWER:* d

2. As of 2011, what percentage of the population comprised older Canadians?
  - a. 5%
  - b. 15%
  - c. 25%
  - d. 40%

*ANSWER:* b

3. By 2036, approximately what percentage of the population will comprise older Canadians as predicted by Statistics Canada?
  - a. 9%
  - b. 19%
  - c. 25%
  - d. 34%

*ANSWER:* c

4. As society ages, what will change in the Canadian social structure?
  - a. Poverty will increase as more people enter old age.
  - b. The government will face economic crisis as pension costs rise.
  - c. The mass media will promote ageism.
  - d. The healthcare system will add programs to prevent illness before it occurs.

*ANSWER:* d

5. Which of the following is an example of a social structure?
  - a. the education system
  - b. the aging process
  - c. the government
  - d. the police

*ANSWER:* a

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6. What effect does an aging society have on the Canadian family?
- an increase in the number of people living in three- and four-generation families
  - a decrease in the number of people who become grandparents during their lifetime
  - an erosion of values as extended family structures fragment
  - an increase in financial responsibility placed on elder family members

*ANSWER:* a

7. How will the education system have to adapt as Canadian society ages?
- by reducing educational benefits for all students across the life span
  - by creating new kinds of schools specifically for the elderly
  - by providing more flexible schedules and different kinds of courses
  - by spending more money because older learners are more expensive to teach

*ANSWER:* c

8. How will the healthcare system have to adapt as Canadian society ages?
- by decreasing the attention given to chronic ailments such as diabetes and arthritis
  - by favouring the treatment of more acute illnesses
  - by changing public opinion about old age
  - by trying to prevent illness before it happens

*ANSWER:* d

9. Dr. Clarke is conducting a research experiment that is studying the process of aging among older Canadians. What is the name for this social science?
- tautology
  - ageism
  - gerontology
  - aeonology

*ANSWER:* c

10. What are the two points of view that gerontologists use to study aging?
- economics and social structures
  - the family and the education system
  - bioethics and economics
  - the individual and society

*ANSWER:* d

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11. What did Unwin and colleagues' (2008) research find out about perceptions of aging?
- People know little about aging.
  - Old age is seen as a time of weakness and death.
  - Some attitudes towards the elderly have possibly worsened.
  - Most people's knowledge about older people is based on myth or fear.

*ANSWER:* c

12. Which of the following accurately describes stereotypes?
- They prevent discrimination and ageism.
  - They force people to confront the truth about the elderly.
  - They often have some basis in reality.
  - They exaggerate and distort the bad, while ignoring the good qualities of a group of people.

*ANSWER:* c

13. Which of the following presents a negative stereotype of aging?
- an elderly 84 year-old gentleman who plays with his grandchildren
  - a 95-year-old woman who drives erratically
  - a 76 year-old male who lives in a nursing home but has an alert memory
  - an 82-year-old female who learns to do yoga at her recreational centre

*ANSWER:* b

14. While playing shuffleboard at the local seniors club, Mr. Jones jokes about Mr. Smith's poor eyesight after Mr. Smith misses the scoring area. Mr. Jones' derogatory comment is an example of which type of insult?
- the old goat curse
  - the black sheep effect
  - elderspeak
  - ageism

*ANSWER:* b

15. What do gerontologists call prejudice against older people?
- a negative stereotype
  - geriatrics
  - age dichotomy syndrome
  - ageism

*ANSWER:* d

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16. Which of the following describes ageism in our culture?
- It is acquired from experience with the aged.
  - It is a social component of the biological process.
  - It is learned from a variety of sources.
  - It is useful for maintaining cultural diversity.

*ANSWER:* c

17. Researchers including Henneberg (2010) and Gilbert and Ricketts (2008) have studied the treatment of older people in literature. What have these studies found?
- Overall, positive views of older people predominate.
  - Negative traits in literature outnumber those in philosophy by two to one.
  - Older people are stereotyped and children then hold negative views about them.
  - Mysteries often portray older people as devious or manipulative.

*ANSWER:* c

18. Sally has been researching mass media and the portrayal of older Canadians in the media. Her studies have generally shown that the mass media (such as television and the newspapers) tend to create which type of common image of older people?
- positive
  - negative
  - neutral
  - colourful

*ANSWER:* b

19. Which of the following is true regarding jokes about old age?
- they are just good fun and cause no harm
  - they help us to become at ease about aging
  - they perpetuate ageism and negative stereotypes about aging
  - they are beloved by older people

*ANSWER:* c

20. What is true of most humour connected to aging?
- It often has a negative view of aging.
  - It glosses over the real problems of aging in modern society.
  - It has a neutral outlook on the aged.
  - It actually reflects real problems that the aged face.

*ANSWER:* a

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21. What did George (2006) find in a review of the literature on life satisfaction in old age?
- Life satisfaction in old age increased.
  - Life satisfaction in old age decreased.
  - Life satisfaction in old age did not change.
  - Life satisfaction in old age remains high.

*ANSWER:* d

22. What did Cooke find in the observation of older workers?
- Most older workers did their work poorly.
  - Employers valued experience over strength.
  - Employers valued strong, young workers.
  - Employers try to force older workers to retire early.

*ANSWER:* d

23. Which of the following is a strategy older job hunters use to avoid ageism in the job search?
- altering their résumé, appearance, and language
  - emphasizing their experience and knowledge
  - working harder than all of the young people
  - applying for higher-level positions than younger people

*ANSWER:* a

24. You are 49 years old and you were rejected for a job. You later find out that someone 10 years younger than you received the job because the employer thought that someone younger than you “would be more suitable to handle the rapid pace of the job environment.” What term is used to describe the excuse as to why an older person is rejected for a job?
- partiality
  - bias
  - euphemism
  - favouritism

*ANSWER:* c

25. What does the research on sociological aging show about older people?
- Older people feel dissatisfied with life.
  - Older people live rich lives that contradict stereotypes.
  - Older people live a poor quality of life.
  - Older people view aging as a decline in lifestyle.

*ANSWER:* b

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26. Which of the following terms does Calasanti believe contains a more subtle form of ageism?

- a. aged
- b. elderly
- c. senior
- d. older

*ANSWER:* d

27. According to research by Baker and Gringart (2009), what method do older men use to deal with aging?

- a. They go on dates.
- b. They isolate themselves.
- c. They engage in physical fitness.
- d. They have cosmetic surgery.

*ANSWER:* c

28. What are some of the downsides to the promotion of “positive” views of aging?

- a. marketers are actively promoting products for active older people
- b. aging is viewed as a cool lifestyle, shifting focus away from elders’ responsibilities
- c. some “positive” views promote a stereotyped, one-dimensional view of later life
- d. people enter old age with distorted views of the challenges they will face

*ANSWER:* c

29. What was found in studies of portrayals of older men in mass media?

- a. that images of older men in magazines and media are few
- b. that older men were portrayed positively in popular publications
- c. that portrayals of older men do not promote any stereotypes
- d. that positive depictions of older men appear in many magazines

*ANSWER:* a

30. Your grandmother Lilley still loves to jog, to bake pies, to travel the world, and to babysit her grandchildren. Although she is 86 years old, she still possesses a vim and vigour for life, and she vehemently denies that she is aging. What term does Catherine Mayer use to describe someone like your grandmother Lilley?

- a. immoral
- b. amortal
- c. immature
- d. amoral

*ANSWER:* b

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31. In her older age, your Aunt Liz has begun to buy products that will help her to maintain a youthful appearance. She colours her hair, purchases expensive cosmetic surgeries, and reads articles about stopping the aging process. Which of the following have researchers identified as a possible reason for this approach to aging?
- she truly believes she is still young at heart and wants to maintain an outward appearance of youth to match
  - she wants to make her husband happy by maintaining a youthful appearance
  - all people wish to remain youthful, so her behaviour is perfectly normal
  - she is anxious about growing older and altering her appearance with anti-aging products is one way to gain a sense of control

*ANSWER:* d

32. What have Calasanti (2007) and others found regarding anti-aging perspectives?
- they are beneficial for older people
  - they help older people adjust to old age
  - they are another expression of age discrimination
  - they help society avoid ageism

*ANSWER:* c

33. Researchers have found that anti-aging perspectives on beauty and activity can result in which of the following?
- older people remaining healthier in old age
  - greater satisfaction for older women
  - decreased satisfaction in life for older men
  - tensions between individual beliefs about aging and societal stereotypes

*ANSWER:* d

34. What leads to a more positive view of aging?
- education
  - interaction
  - knowledge and satisfying contact
  - experience

*ANSWER:* c

35. What is the effect of greater education about aging?
- helping individuals see aging from the perspective of an older person
  - making people more anxious about aging
  - producing better legislation for the needs of the elderly
  - promoting negative views of aging

*ANSWER:* a

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36. Samantha's grandmother lives alone in a large city. She has arthritis and struggles with meal preparation and mobility issues around the city. Samantha notices that many older people are in similar situations as the Canadian population ages. Sam is experiencing a common fear that is reflected in ageism as the Canadian population focuses on population aging. What is that fear?
- a fear of an aging society
  - a concern for the elderly
  - a lack of trust in the elderly
  - a fear of old age

*ANSWER:* a

37. How is the older population stereotyped?
- independent
  - productive
  - costly
  - generous

*ANSWER:* c

38. What do changes in Canadian society suggest will happen to ageism in the future?
- It will increase.
  - It will decrease.
  - It will remain the same.
  - It will cease to exist.

*ANSWER:* b

39. What did researchers find was produced by more positive interactions between younger and older individuals?
- greater tension between the groups
  - antagonism against older people
  - better attitudes toward older people
  - no change in beliefs or attitudes toward aging

*ANSWER:* c

40. Which of the following describes a "society for all ages"?
- keeps older people in the workforce for longer
  - prevents younger people from discriminating against the elderly
  - removes the concept of ageism from its laws
  - promotes the well-being of older people and recognizes their contributions

*ANSWER:* d



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41. The textbook discusses the fact that many older people “live rich and complex lives that contradict the stereotypes.” Give examples of what this sentence actually means.

*ANSWER:* Student answers should include the following:

- people aged 50–70 have good incomes
- people aged 50–70 have little or no mortgage
- people aged 50–70 have no children to support
- people aged 50–70 have money to spend
- people aged 50–70 have a better education
- people aged 50–70 have more active lifestyles

42. Helen is a worker in a retirement home. She uses elderspeak, and her clients do not like it when she uses this type of speech with them. What is elderspeak? List examples of elderspeak, and then explain the effects of elderspeak upon older individuals.

*ANSWER:* Student answers should include the following:

“Elderspeak” is defined as a simplified speech like baby talk that some people use when they speak to older people. It stems from stereotyping older people as slow-witted.

This form of speech uses few clauses, shorter phrases, more filler phrases (e.g., “like,” “you know”), words with fewer syllables, slower speech, and longer pauses. Elderspeak also includes the use of words like “dearie,” “cutie,” and “sweetie.”

Elderspeak has a negative effect on the older person; it creates low self-esteem, it reduces a person’s ability to communicate effectively, it decreases the quality of interaction, and it reduces the older person’s sense of control.

43. If education is thought to be one antidote to ageism, what are some of the ways that younger people can learn about and develop empathy for the experiences of older people?

*ANSWER:* Answers may include the following:

- Having positive experiences with older people through volunteering
- Talking to older people about their lives to find out about their challenges
- Living with older people in a community
- Thoughtfully planned intergenerational programs

44. While growing old can present challenges to an individual, why is “anti-aging” a problematic approach to these challenges?

*ANSWER:* Answers may include the following:

- Anti-aging denies the natural course of life by suppressing changes to the body or mind
- Anti-aging presumes that youth is the only desirable condition of adult life
- Anti-aging produces dissonance between how individuals see themselves and how society sees them
- Anti-aging can create divisions between older people and their peers as they make choices to colour their hair (or not), use cosmeceuticals (or not), and engage in athletic or vigorous activities (or not)

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45. What kinds of differing messages and stereotypes do men and women hear about aging? What kinds of messages and stereotypes are promoted to all genders?

*ANSWER:* Answers may include:

- Men receive messages about youthful vigour and sexual functioning
- Women receive messages about beauty and desirability
- Both groups hear messages about appearance and physiological functions

46. What is ageism? What types of ageism do you think are present in today's society? List and discuss three examples of ageism.

*ANSWER:* Student answers will vary, but should include the following:

Ageism is defined as prejudice against older people. It is "a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young ...". Ageism can come in many forms against older people.

Examples may include the following:

- Older people are weak, sick, and dying.
- People make fun of older people.
- Older people are mostly ignored or rejected in society.
- Older people are patronized or treated with less dignity.
- Older people are treated as though they have a physical limitation.
- Older people will be stereotyped in jokes, literature, and the media.

47. Imagine that you made yourself up to be a 75-year-old person, similar to what Paul Baker did in the textbook. What kinds of challenges or obstacles would you face in your community if you went out to learn about society's reactions to an older person? Discuss specific examples that you may encounter in your community, and how you would deal with them.

*ANSWER:* Student answers will vary, but should include the following:

- Very few people go out of their way to help older people.
- Some people ignore older people.
- People offer to placate, rather than help older people.
- Older people feel like a burden to society.
- Older people can become frustrated and angry.
- Older people have to anticipate their every movement.
- "the world gets bigger and faster for an old man."
- However, some communities engage older people, by the number of people that actually reside there (Baker discusses the differences between Vancouver and old Victoria).
- There were also the examples in Chapter 1 found earlier in the text regarding Jessie Taylor, found on pages 2 and 3.

48. Arrange an interview with your parents and/or your grandparents. Do they think they are aging well? How do your parents and/or grandparents feel about growing older? What kinds of challenges and obstacles do they face as they age?

*ANSWER:* Student answers will vary, but should be related to concepts found within Chapter 1 of the text.

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49. Mass media, marketing, and advertising play a large role in individuals' perspectives on aging and the capabilities of older people. Using the Internet, television, or magazines, find three examples of advertising materials that focus on aging. In an essay, use evidence from the textbook to identify the positive and negative stereotypes involved in the materials, and analyze how these materials depict the aging process. Consider some of the following questions in your essay:

- Who is the audience for the materials (younger or older people)?
- What kinds of stereotypes are covertly or explicitly described by the materials?
- How do the materials amplify these stereotypes to make their product or service seem essential to older people?

Most importantly, your essay should tie these materials to a “big picture” issue of ageism or age discrimination, such as how older people are made to feel about themselves, or how younger people are taught to think about the process of aging.

*ANSWER:* Student answers will vary, but should be related to concepts found within Chapter 1 of the text. However, some ideas may include: 1) magazine or Internet ads that make older people seem feeble or in need of a product, 2) images or articles that make younger people afraid of the prospect of growing older, or 3) ads that present products as part of a balanced view of aging that acknowledges both physical challenges and emotional rewards.

50. Ageism can take many forms in the social world, and society communicates messages about aging in many forms. From explicit expressions such as hiring discrimination to more subtle forms such as jokes, many people encounter these negative messages about aging every day. Put yourself in the place of an older person and go about your daily routine. Where do you experience signs of ageism in this experience, and what might your current self do to reduce these messages? Examine the visual culture that you encounter (e.g., advertising or art), the words you hear (e.g., jokes and anecdotes), and also the kinds of services and built environments that you encounter (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, or businesses). As you conduct your survey of these messages in your daily life, write an essay about your experience that addresses some of the following questions:

- What messages did you encounter about aging?
- What kinds of stereotypes did you encounter, and how explicit or covert were these stereotypes?
- How do you think an older person might see themselves reflected in these messages?

Use ideas and terminology from the chapter to construct an account that connects your experience to the realities encountered by older people.

*ANSWER:* Possible answers could include:

- Accounts of branding or representations of nursing homes in the student's local community
- Signs and advertisements for services that are used by the elderly, such as dialysis or mobility assistance
- Accessibility challenges in streets and public places, and how that might affect older people's ability to engage in public life