

Answers to World Aging Quiz

1. ANSWER: a
REASON: Although the world's population is aging, children still outnumber the elderly in all major nations except six: Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, and Spain
2. ANSWER: d
REASON: The estimated change in the total size of the world's elderly population between July 1999 and July 2000 was more than 9.5 million people, an average of 795,000 each month.
3. ANSWER: c
REASON: With 7.2 percent of all people aged 65 or older. Corresponding figures for other regions are: Asia (excluding Japan), 5.5%; Latin America, 5.3%; Africa, 3.1%.
4. ANSWER: c
REASON: The elderly population in China numbered nearly 88 million in 2000.
5. ANSWER: b
REASON: Although industrialized nations have higher percentages of elderly people than do most developing countries, 59% of the world's elderly now live in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Oceania.
6. ANSWER: c
REASON: Italy has 18.1% of all people aged 65 or over.
7. ANSWER: b
REASON: Although the United States will age rapidly when the Baby Boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) begin to reach age 65 after the year 2010, the percent of population aged 65 and over in the year 2050 is projected to be slightly above 20% (compared with about 13% today).
8. ANSWER: a
REASON: The oldest old are the fastest-growing component of many national populations. The world's growth rate for the 80+ population from 1999 to 2000 was 3.5%, while that of the world's elderly (65+) was 2.5%.

population as a whole was 2.3% (compared with .3% for the total (all ages) population).

9. ANSWER: b

REASON: India, China and the US are the correct answers. India has roughly 6.2 million people aged 80 and over, China has 11.5 million, and the United States 9.2 million. Taken together, these people constitute nearly 38% of the world's oldest old.

10. ANSWER: c

REASON: This is up from about 54 years in 1947.

11. ANSWER: a

REASON: In some African countries (e.g., Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is particularly devastating, average life expectancy at birth may be as much as 25 years lower than it otherwise would be in the absence of HIV/AIDS.

12. ANSWER: b

REASON: Circulatory diseases (especially heart disease and stroke). In Canada in 1995, for example, 44% of all deaths occurring to women at age 65 or above were attributed to circulatory disease. The percentage was virtually the same for elderly men.

13. ANSWER: b

REASON: Although there are more elderly women than elderly men in the vast majority of the world's countries, there are exceptions such as India, Iran, and Bangladesh.

14. ANSWER: d

REASON: All these reasons account for widows outnumbering widowers.

15. ANSWER: a

REASON: From the late 1960's until very recently, labor force participation rates of older men in developed countries were declining virtually everywhere, whereas those for women were often holding steady or increasing. But because older men work in much greater numbers than do older women, increases in female participation were more than offset by falling male participation.

16. ANSWER: b

REASON: Of the 227 countries/areas of the world with populations of at least 5000, 167 (74%) reported having some form of an old age/disability/survivors program circa 1999.

17. ANSWER: d

REASON: The share of the private sector U.S. labor force covered by private pension plans was about 60% in the mid-1990s. However, not all employees who are covered by such plans actually participate in them.

18. ANSWER: a

REASON: The percent of elderly people living alone in developing countries is usually much lower than that in developed countries; levels in the latter may exceed 40%.

19. ANSWER: b

REASON: Older women are less likely to be literate. In China in 1990, for example, only 11 percent of women aged 60 and over could read and write, compared with half of men aged 60 and over.

20. ANSWER: d

REASON: This is data according to the World Health Organization

Source: University of North Carolina Institute on Aging. This quiz was adapted from '20 Questions About Global Aging' in: Kinsella, Kevin and Victoria A. Velkoff, U.S. Census Bureau, Series P95/01-1, An Aging World: 2001, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2001.