

University of Toronto (UofT) University of Toronto ANT100Y1 Introduction to Anthropology Midterm Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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Questions

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- 1. Which of the following species is often referred to as the "tool maker" of the Genus Homo?**
 - A. Homo erectus**
 - B. Homo habilis**
 - C. Homo heidelbergensis**
 - D. Homo neanderthalensis**
- 2. The analysis of human skeletal remains falls under which field?**
 - A. Medical Anthropology**
 - B. Forensic Anthropology**
 - C. Paleoanthropology**
 - D. Primatology**
- 3. What is usually the result of stabilizing selection in a population?**
 - A. Increased fitness of extreme phenotypes**
 - B. Decreased genetic diversity**
 - C. Heightened competition among average phenotypes**
 - D. No change in trait frequencies over generations**
- 4. During which epoch did the first primates appear?**
 - A. The Paleolithic**
 - B. The Eocene**
 - C. The Cretaceous**
 - D. The Miocene**
- 5. Which family includes great apes and humans?**
 - A. Hominidae**
 - B. Felidae**
 - C. Canidae**
 - D. Ursidae**

- 6. In which epoch did the first definitive primates appear?**
- A. The Paleocene**
 - B. The Eocene**
 - C. The Oligocene**
 - D. The Pleistocene**
- 7. What defines a tell site in archaeology?**
- A. An artificial mound from accumulated remains**
 - B. A natural hill formed by geological processes**
 - C. A type of settlement with circular layouts**
 - D. A burial ground in ancient cultures**
- 8. What does polygenic inheritance suggest about traits?**
- A. They are determined by a single gene**
 - B. They are influenced by multiple genes**
 - C. They are only expressed in dominant forms**
 - D. They cannot vary among individuals**
- 9. What are middens?**
- A. Mounds from human collection and disposal**
 - B. Structures used for storing grains**
 - C. Watering holes in ancient settlements**
 - D. Caves used for habitation**
- 10. Which evolutionary theory is opposed to Darwinian evolution due to its idea of perfect blending?**
- A. Macroevolution**
 - B. Lamarckian blending**
 - C. Natural selection**
 - D. Modern synthesis**

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. A
10. B

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following species is often referred to as the "tool maker" of the Genus Homo?

- A. Homo erectus**
- B. Homo habilis**
- C. Homo heidelbergensis**
- D. Homo neanderthalensis**

The designation of "tool maker" within the Genus Homo is primarily associated with Homo habilis. This species, which lived approximately 2.4 to 1.4 million years ago, is notable for its use of tools, specifically the Oldowan tool culture, which includes some of the earliest known stone tools. Homo habilis represents a significant evolutionary advancement from earlier hominins, demonstrating an increased brain size and the ability to create tools that were more refined than those of its predecessors. This association with tool-making highlights Homo habilis's important role in the evolution of hominin species, as the ability to create and use tools is seen as a critical factor in the survival and adaptation of early human ancestors. The tools allowed for more efficient food processing and may have contributed to dietary diversification, which could have implications for social structures and cognitive development. Other species within the Genus Homo, such as Homo erectus, Homo heidelbergensis, and Homo neanderthalensis, also used tools, but they are often associated with more advanced tools or different tool-making traditions developed later in human evolution. Homo habilis stands out as the species that marked the beginning of this crucial cultural development, thus earning its title as the "tool maker."

2. The analysis of human skeletal remains falls under which field?

- A. Medical Anthropology**
- B. Forensic Anthropology**
- C. Paleoanthropology**
- D. Primatology**

The analysis of human skeletal remains is primarily associated with forensic anthropology. This subfield of anthropology focuses on the application of anthropological methods and principles to legal contexts, particularly in identifying human remains and analyzing skeletal evidence in relation to criminal investigations. Forensic anthropologists apply their knowledge of human osteology, taphonomy, and bioarchaeology to assist law enforcement agencies in solving crimes involving deceased individuals. In the context of forensic anthropology, practitioners not only determine the age, sex, ancestry, and stature of the deceased but also assess trauma or pathology present on the bones, which can provide critical information about the circumstances surrounding death. This specialized approach is essential in cases where remains are decomposed, burned, or otherwise unrecognizable. The other fields mentioned, such as medical anthropology, paleoanthropology, and primatology, do not primarily focus on the analysis of human skeletal remains in relation to legal contexts. Medical anthropology is concerned with the intersection of health, illness, and culture. Paleoanthropology studies human evolution by examining fossilized remains. Primatology focuses on the study of primates, their behavior, and their biology. Thus, forensic anthropology is the most relevant field for analyzing human skeletal remains in the context of law and forensic

3. What is usually the result of stabilizing selection in a population?

- A. Increased fitness of extreme phenotypes
- B. Decreased genetic diversity**
- C. Heightened competition among average phenotypes
- D. No change in trait frequencies over generations

Stabilizing selection is a type of natural selection that favors intermediate phenotypes, leading to a reduction in variation within a population. This selection occurs when extreme traits are selected against, and individuals with average traits have a higher fitness. As a consequence, the frequency of these intermediate traits stabilizes over time, while the variations that exist at both ends of the spectrum diminish. This trend results in decreased genetic diversity as alleles for extreme traits are selectively removed from the gene pool. The emphasis on the average phenotype means that the extremes, which might have previously contributed to the genetic variation of the population, become less common, leading to a more homogenous population regarding that trait. While the other options touch on aspects of evolutionary dynamics, they do not encapsulate the primary consequence of stabilizing selection as accurately as the decrease in genetic diversity does. For example, while competition among average phenotypes may happen, it is not a direct result of stabilizing selection in the same way that reduced genetic diversity is. Similarly, the idea of increased fitness of extreme phenotypes contradicts the very nature of stabilizing selection, which works against those extremes. The focus of stabilizing selection is to maintain the status quo of traits rather than causing no change at all in

4. During which epoch did the first primates appear?

- A. The Paleolithic
- B. The Eocene**
- C. The Cretaceous
- D. The Miocene

The first primates appeared during the Eocene epoch, which lasted from about 56 to 33.9 million years ago. This period is significant in the evolutionary history of primates because it is when the earliest forms of true primates, known as euprimates, began to emerge. Fossil evidence from this epoch shows a diverse range of primate species that had adaptations suitable for a tree-dwelling lifestyle, such as grasping hands and feet, stereoscopic vision, and larger brains relative to body size. The Paleolithic epoch, primarily associated with early human stone tool usage, and the Miocene epoch, known for the rise of many modern mammal species and the diversification of apes, occurred later than the Eocene and do not represent the period when primates first appeared. The Cretaceous period is notable for the dominance of dinosaurs, with mammals being relatively small and insignificant during that time, making it an unlikely period for the emergence of primates. Thus, the Eocene stands out as the epoch in which the first true primates made their appearance in the fossil record, establishing a foundation for the primate lineage.

5. Which family includes great apes and humans?

A. Hominidae

B. Felidae

C. Canidae

D. Ursidae

The family that includes great apes and humans is Hominidae. This family, commonly referred to as the "great ape family," encompasses not only humans but also orangutans, gorillas, bonobos, and chimpanzees. Members of this family share certain biological and behavioral traits, including larger brain sizes compared to other primates and more complex social structures. In contrast, Felidae is the family that includes cats, Canidae pertains to dogs and other canines, and Ursidae consists of bears. These families represent different branches of the animal kingdom and do not have any direct association with humans or great apes. Thus, recognizing Hominidae as the family that includes great apes and humans is crucial for understanding our biological and evolutionary connections to these species.

6. In which epoch did the first definitive primates appear?

A. The Paleocene

B. The Eocene

C. The Oligocene

D. The Pleistocene

The first definitive primates emerged during the Eocene epoch, which lasted from about 56 to 33.9 million years ago. This period is characterized by significant evolutionary developments among mammals, with the appearance of early primate forms known as "euprimates." These ancestors of modern primates exhibited traits such as larger brains, forward-facing eyes, and adaptations suitable for an arboreal lifestyle, which are vital characteristics of primates. During the Paleocene epoch, preceding the Eocene, early mammalian forms were diversifying, but true primates had not yet developed. The Oligocene epoch followed the Eocene and saw significant evolution and diversification of primates, but it was in the Eocene that the foundational traits of primates first emerged. The Pleistocene epoch, much later in Earth's history, is notable for the emergence of modern human ancestors and other large mammals but is not relevant to the origin of primates.

7. What defines a tell site in archaeology?

- A. An artificial mound from accumulated remains**
- B. A natural hill formed by geological processes**
- C. A type of settlement with circular layouts**
- D. A burial ground in ancient cultures**

A tell site in archaeology is fundamentally characterized as an artificial mound created from the accumulation of human-made debris and remains over time. These mounds typically arise where settlements have been built and rebuilt over centuries or even millennia, often as populations inhabit the site continuously or repeatedly. As the inhabitants leave behind materials—like pottery, tools, and refuse—these layers accumulate, forming a notable elevation that is distinctly different from surrounding landscapes. This stratification allows archaeologists to study the site in chronological layers, revealing insights into the culture, lifestyle, and historical changes of the people who lived there. Such mounds are especially significant in the study of ancient civilizations in regions like the Near East, where many tell sites have been excavated, yielding important artifacts that contribute to our understanding of human history and development. The other options do not accurately capture the definition of a tell site. For instance, a natural hill formed by geological processes is not the result of human activity, while a settlement with circular layouts or a burial ground would not typically create the layered, artificial structure characteristic of a tell.

8. What does polygenic inheritance suggest about traits?

- A. They are determined by a single gene**
- B. They are influenced by multiple genes**
- C. They are only expressed in dominant forms**
- D. They cannot vary among individuals**

Polygenic inheritance indicates that traits are influenced by multiple genes, rather than being determined by a single gene. This means that various alleles from different genes can contribute to the phenotype, leading to a range of possibilities for trait expression. For example, traits such as height, skin color, and eye color result from the cumulative effects of several genes, each contributing a small effect. This concept is fundamental in understanding the complexity of heredity and the variations that occur within populations. It allows for a continuous spectrum of traits rather than distinct categories, explaining why certain characteristics can vary widely among individuals even within the same family or population. Understanding polygenic inheritance helps to clarify why some traits do not follow simple Mendelian patterns of inheritance and highlights the importance of genetic diversity in shaping phenotypic traits.

9. What are middens?

A. Mounds from human collection and disposal

B. Structures used for storing grains

C. Watering holes in ancient settlements

D. Caves used for habitation

Middens are indeed best defined as mounds created from human collection and disposal activities, particularly of refuse or waste. These mounds often contain a variety of materials, such as food remains, tools, and other artifacts, which provide significant archaeological insight into the daily lives, diets, and behaviors of past human populations. By studying these deposits, anthropologists can gain a deeper understanding of cultural practices, environmental conditions, and even changes in technology over time. Other options suggest different functions that do not align with the definition of a midden. For instance, structures used for storing grains focus on agricultural practices rather than the disposal of refuse, while watering holes pertain to sources of water rather than human refuse. Caves, although sometimes associated with habitation, do not serve the same function of refuse accumulation and analysis that middens do. Thus, the concept of middens is closely tied to the study of human activity and environmental interaction, making the first choice the most accurate.

10. Which evolutionary theory is opposed to Darwinian evolution due to its idea of perfect blending?

A. Macroevolution

B. Lamarckian blending

C. Natural selection

D. Modern synthesis

The correct choice reflects the concept of Lamarckian blending, which is associated with Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's early theories of evolution. Lamarck proposed that traits acquired during an organism's lifetime could be passed on to its offspring, leading to a gradual change in species. This idea promotes the notion of perfect blending, suggesting that offspring would inherit a mix of traits from their parents, resulting in a loss of distinctiveness over generations. This theory contrasts sharply with Darwinian evolution, which emphasizes natural selection as a key mechanism for evolution. Unlike Lamarck's views, Darwin argued that heritable traits that confer advantages in survival and reproduction would be favored over generations, leading to evolution through differential survival rather than blending. Therefore, Lamarckian blending is incompatible with the fundamental principles of Darwinian evolution, making this choice the correct answer. In contrast to Lamarck's blending theory, macroevolution refers to large-scale evolutionary changes that occur over extended periods, and the modern synthesis integrates genetics with natural selection, both of which greatly support Darwinian concepts rather than oppose them.