

Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz 1 – A

1. Define “curbstoning,” and give an example of it.

2. Awareness bias is a problem with anecdotes and qualitative data. Explain why.

3. You read a newspaper report that says “high-achieving high school students” suffer from unhealthy levels of stress. Give a conceptualization of this term that’s applicable to the article, and then give a second conceptualization that wouldn’t make sense for the article’s purpose but does make sense in general.

4. The lower the channel number in a cable line-up, the more minutes of that channel people watch (this is true). When trying to estimate the effect of a cable news channel on local political opinions, some researchers decide to look at the channel numbers of cable news stations, instead of relying on self-reported minutes watched.
 - A. This is an example of an unusual operationalization, specifically a ___ measure.

 - B. Define operationalization in general and ___ measure, specifically.

 - C. Explain why this ___ measure makes sense in this context.

 - D. Explain why they chose this operationalization.

5. Paraphrase and explain The Law of Best.

6. Give three possible proxy measures of the severity of a hurricane's impact that have nothing to do with windspeed.

1)

2)

3)

Quiz 1 – A – answer key

1. “Curbstoning” is a colloquial term for inventing data. The term came from Census takers who made up data sitting on the curbstone outside a house. An example would be Argentina’s economic figures in the 2010s, which seemed to be fictitious.
2. People who are aware of an issue tend to report it more frequently. It’s likely that many anecdotal reports are from people previously aware of the issue who see it more readily. What’s missing in anecdotal reports are the experiences of many people who are relatively unaware of the issue. The problem for qualitative data is the issues observers tend to notice are those they’re already most familiar with. Gaps occur if observers don’t even think to look for particular issues.
3. Conceptualizations that fit: above a 3.5 G.P.A., two or more extracurriculars, intention to go to a selective college. Conceptualizations that don’t fit the article: on track to graduate high school on time, attendance at any above-average school, balancing schoolwork and an outside-of-the-home job
4. Self-reported data can be unreliable. People might not be honest or might misremember how long they watched a particular channel. The number of the channel is entirely certain, even if the data are less direct and specific about exact minutes of watching.
5. The worse something is, the less there is of it. The worst-case is based on a narrow conceptualization and therefore has the smallest number; less-worse cases are based on a broader conceptualization and therefore have larger numbers.
6. Dollars of damage done, storm surge, energy contained in the storm, how long the Waffle Houses are closed