Conspiracy Theories and Debunking Basics

Social Studies · Practice Test · 10 Questions

1. What is a conspiracy theory?

A) A widely accepted explanation for an event.
B) An explanation for an event that invokes a secret plot by powerful groups.
C) A scientific theory supported by extensive evidence.
D) A historical account based on primary sources.

2. Which of the following is a common characteristic of conspiracy theories?

A) Reliance on verifiable evidence.
B) Acknowledgement of alternative explanations.
C) Distrust of official accounts and authorities.
D) Focus on scientific consensus.

3. What is 'debunking' in the context of conspiracy theories?

A) Creating new conspiracy theories.
B) Presenting evidence and reasoning to disprove a conspiracy theory.
C) Spreading conspiracy theories further.
D) Agreeing with the conspiracy theory.

4. A key aspect of debunking is examining the evidence presented by a conspiracy theory. What should one look for?

A) Emotional appeals and anecdotes.
B) Sources with a clear agenda.
C) Factual accuracy and verifiable sources.
D) Unsubstantiated claims.

5. Which of the following is an example of a reliable source for factual information?

A) An anonymous blog post.
B) A peer-reviewed scientific journal.
C) A social media comment.
D) A forum discussion without citations.

6. What is confirmation bias in relation to conspiracy theories?

A) The tendency to seek out and interpret information that confirms one's existing beliefs.
B) The process of thoroughly researching all sides of an argument.
C) An objective assessment of all available evidence.
D) A willingness to change one's mind based on new information.

7. When encountering a claim that seems too extraordinary, what is a reasonable first step?

A) Share it widely on social media.
B) Accept it as truth.
C) Seek corroborating evidence from credible sources.
D) Dismiss it without investigation.

8. What does it mean to fact-check a claim?

A) To invent a new explanation.
B) To verify the accuracy of a statement using reliable sources.
C) To spread misinformation.
D) To agree with the person making the claim.

9. Why is it important to understand the difference between correlation and causation when evaluating claims?

A) Because correlation always implies causation.
B) Because many conspiracy theories wrongly assume causation from correlation.
C) Because causation is always unprovable.
D) Because correlation and causation are the same thing.

10. Which of these is a common logical fallacy found in conspiracy theories?

A) Occam's Razor (the simplest explanation is often the best).
B) Argument from ignorance (claiming something is true because it hasn't been proven false).
C) Deductive reasoning.
D) Empirical evidence.