CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEET: THE PURPOSES OF RESEARCH

Part 1

There are six primary purposes for which social research is conducted. When are each of the following purposes appropriate?

1. Exploration: When we _____

   _____.

2. Description: When we _____

   _____.

3. Explanation: When we _____

   _____.

4. Community change or action: When we _____

   _____.

5. Evaluation: When we _____

   _____.

6. Evoke, provoke, or unsettle: When we _____

   _____.

Part 2

Below I offer six hypothetical research scenarios, all aimed at studying "bullying." Identify which research purpose is at play in each example.

1. If we want to determine the factors that shape people's attitudes about anti-bullying policies in the workplace, we might conduct survey research to see the extent to which race, gender, sexuality, age, socioeconomic background, physical abilities, parenthood, and personal experience with bullying impact people's viewpoints.

   Primary research purpose: _____

2. If we want to explore how teenagers perceive bullying on a brand-new social media platform, we might turn to focus group interviews in order to explore their attitudes.

   Primary research purpose: _____

(continued)

3. If in the wake of a publicized act of bullying against a nonbinary high school student we want to evoke students' perceptions of gender identity, unsettle stereotypes, and provoke new understandings, we might have high school students create poetry responding to the well-known incident.

   Primary research purpose: _____

4. If we want to describe community response to the event described above (bullying of a nonbinary student), we might conduct field and interview research at the school and other places in the community.

   Primary research purpose: _____

5. If we want to assist a school system to create change in how its anti-bullying programs are created and maintained, we might involve various stakeholders—students, teachers, administrative staff, parents/guardians, school board members, after-school programming staff, and school bus drivers—to develop a project with community goals at the center.

   Primary research purpose: _____

6. If we want to assess the effectiveness of a specific school anti-bullying program, we might conduct research analyzing documents such as incident reports.

   Primary research purpose: _____