Questions for Readings

**Shulman (1997); Strobel (1998)**

**Shulman (1997)**


1. What attribute distinguishes research from mere observation and speculation?
2. Why do controversies in educational research often focus on research method?
3. How might one distinguish the work of a historian from that of a political rhetorician?
4. “The disciplined inquiry is conducted and reported in such a way that the argument can be painstakingly examined.”
5. What is important about disciplined inquiry?
6. Why do disagreements about method exist?
7. What is the implication of the statement “education is not itself a discipline”?
8. Shulman devotes several paragraphs describing how correlational, experimental, quasi-experimental, survey, and qualitative methods can be used to study reading. Be certain you can distinguish the kinds of questions appropriate for each of these approaches.
9. Describe “case study.”
10. What two kinds of generalizability does Shulman discuss?
11. What is a random sample?
12. Describe the controversy between experimental and correlational approaches.

**Strobel (1998)**


1. What distinguishes a scientific theory from a non-scientific theory? Describe the logic of the scientific method.
2. Why is it incorrect to infer causation from correlation? Why does Strobel say “we really cannot say that cigarette smoking has been *proven* to be the principal cause of lung cancer.”
3. What is the “problem of induction”? Explain.
4. What is a “paradigm”?
5. What is a representative sample?
6. Is it possible to deduce true conclusions from premises that may be false? Explain.

8. Describe “science’s way of finding the truth.” Be sure to discuss the role of empiricism and logic.

9. When theory and data disagree, which is modified?

10. What is the basic assumption of science concerning fundamental physical laws?

11. Why is it important for scientists to be aware of the assumptions they make and how those assumptions affect our understanding?