Section 6–1: Labor and Birth

1. What is happening when lightening occurs? The baby settles into the lower pelvis as the time of birth nears.

2. What is the “bloody show,” and what does it mean for the pregnant woman? The few drops of blood or pinkish vaginal stain that occurs when the mucus that seals the cervix dissolves. This is an early sign that labor has begun.

3. Explain what occurs when a woman’s water breaks. The amniotic sac ruptures, and the woman feels a trickle or gush of warm amniotic fluid.

4. What are contractions? What is their purpose? The tightening and releasing of the muscles of the uterus during labor. They push the baby out of the mother’s body.

5. What is the purpose of fetal monitoring during labor? To watch the baby’s heart rate for indicators of stress.

6. When is labor considered premature? What are the warning signs? When the fetus has been developing for 37 weeks or less. Warning signs: (1) Contractions every ten minutes or less. (2) Dull backache. (3) Leaking fluid or blood.
7. How can you distinguish false labor from real contractions?

In false labor, contractions:
1. Are not regular or rhythmic,
2. Do not increase in strength over time,
3. End when the woman does light exercise, such as walking.

8. Summarize the three stages of labor by completing the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Labor</th>
<th>What Takes Place?</th>
<th>How Long Does It Last?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Contractions make the cervix dilate.</td>
<td>First child: 6–18 hours Later children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Baby is born.</td>
<td>First child: 1–2 hours Later children: 15–30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Placenta is delivered.</td>
<td>10–30 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. What is a breech presentation? Why is it a complication?

When the baby does not enter the lower pelvis with the head down. The baby may have difficulty moving through the woman's pelvis.

10. How is the hormone relaxin related to dilation?

It allows the ligaments that join the bones of the mother's pelvis to stretch like rubber bands, moving apart the pelvic bones. It also allows the walls of the birth canal to stretch so that the baby can pass through.

11. What is an episiotomy, and why is it done?

A surgical cut made to enlarge the opening in the mother's body if it is too small.

12. What are stem cells, and why are they important?

Cells in the cord blood left behind in the umbilical cord and placenta after birth. Stem cells are important because they can produce all types of blood cells and can be used to treat serious blood-related illnesses in the baby and other family members.
13. What is a cesarean birth? Why is this kind of delivery sometimes necessary? 

[Delivery through a surgical incision in the mother’s abdomen. This may be needed if:
(1) Labor is not progressing normally. (2) The baby is distressed or turned in the wrong direction. (3) There are multiple babies.]

14. What factors increase the chances of premature birth? 

[(1) If the mother has had other premature births. (2) If there are multiple babies. (3) If the mother has other medical problems. (4) If the mother is a teen.]

15. Why does a premature baby usually need an incubator? 

[A premature baby’s brain has not yet developed the ability to control all body systems. An incubator controls oxygen supply, temperature, and humidity.]

Section 6–2: The Newborn

16. What are fontanels? How do they affect the newborn’s appearance? 

[Open spaces in the skull where the bones are not yet joined. They allow the bones to move together during passage through the birth canal. This compression of bones may make the newborn’s head appear pointed or lopsided.]

17. Why does a newborn’s head appear to be very large in proportion to the rest of the body? 

[The newborn’s brain is large. After birth, the head and brain grow much less than the rest of the baby’s body.]

18. What physical adjustments do newborns’ bodies make to survive outside the uterus? 

[(1) The lungs take in oxygen. (2) The circulatory system begins to deliver blood to lungs. (3) The heart pumps harder. (4) Small openings in the heart begin to close. (5) A new type of hemoglobin develops.]
19. What is lanugo, and what happens to it? 

[Continued on next page]

20. When nurses give the newborn its first bath, what are they washing away? What is the purpose of this substance?

21. What is the purpose of the Apgar scale? What five areas does it rate?

22. Identify two other medical procedures that are performed shortly after birth and tell the purpose of each.

23. What steps are taken to record a newborn’s identity?

Section 6–3: The Postnatal Period

24. What are some things a new mother can do to begin bonding with her newborn?

25. How do bonding activities affect the baby’s brain?
26. What is colostrum? How does it help the baby?
   [A high-calorie, high-protein early breast milk. It not only satisfies the baby’s hunger, but also provides protection from illnesses.]

27. What period of time is considered the neonatal period?
   [A baby’s first month of life.]

28. A new baby’s skin and eyes appear slightly yellow. What is this condition, and what causes it? Does it require treatment?
   [Jaundice—a common condition that occurs when the liver can’t remove bilirubin quickly enough. It requires treatment to avoid damage to the nervous system.]

29. What do lactation consultants do?
   [Teach new mothers how to breast-feed.]

30. Describe two benefits of rooming-in.
   [Any two:
   (1) Fathers usually can visit anytime.
   (2) Babies have one main caregiver, so they cry less. As a result, the mother gets more rest and doesn’t worry about the baby in the nursery.
   (3) Parents start learning how to take care of their baby right away.]

31. What two legal forms should parents complete for their new baby?
   [A birth certificate and an application for a Social Security number.]

32. Identify three physical problems typical of premature babies.
   [Any three:
   (1) Lack the ability to coordinate sucking and swallowing milk.
   (2) Lack enough body fat for warmth.
   (3) Immature lungs.
   (4) Immature digestive system.]

33. Summarize the physical needs of a new mother during the postnatal period.
   [(1) Rest.
   (2) Gentle exercise.
   (3) Good nutrition, including plenty of fluids.
   (4) Medical checkup four to six weeks after giving birth.]

34. Compare and contrast “baby blues” with postpartum depression. How are they similar? How are they different?
   [Similarities: Both are feelings of sadness and often include crying and anxiety.
   Differences: Postpartum depression is more extreme. The woman may be overly anxious about the baby, have little interest in the baby, or think of harming the baby. Women with these symptoms need immediate medical help.]
Labor and Birth

Giving Advice About Labor

Directions: Imagine that you are a nurse in the hospital’s birthing center. You receive the following phone calls from pregnant women or their spouses. How might you respond to the calls? Write your responses on the spaces provided.

1. “Nurse, my wife is having contractions! I think we should get her to the hospital right away!”

2. “Nurse, I’m really worried. A gush of fluid just flowed out of me. Does that mean the baby is in danger? What should I do?”

3. “My contractions are five minutes apart. They’ve been holding steadily at about this cycle for more than an hour now. I’ve tried walking around, but the contractions continued. They’re strong but not painful. Should I go to the hospital soon?”

4. “Nurse, I’m having contractions eight minutes apart, and a little fluid is coming out. I’ve been pregnant only 35 weeks, so this is false labor, right?”
The Newborn

What You Need to Know About Newborns

Directions: The list that follows shows topics from the notes of a doctor who was scheduled to speak to a class on “The Hospital’s Role in Newborn Care.” The doctor has been called away, and can not give his talk. Your job is to take his place, assembling important topics into an organized sequence. Some of the topics the doctor listed are not relevant to the subject of the talk. Cross those out before organizing your presentation. Then, using the textbook and any other sources, write out the major points you will include about each topic.

• Government funding for research on premature babies
• First hour after birth
• Apgar test and what it means
• Other tests after birth

• Cesarean births and when they’re necessary
• Stages of labor
• Identifying the baby
• Newborn’s appearance
Brittany and Kevin are excited about being first-time parents. Brittany is bottle-feeding their three-week-old son, Joey. Brittany is sleeping only a few hours at a time because of Joey’s feeding schedule. She feels exhausted. Kevin helps out when he can, but his work schedule is demanding. He does not get home until Joey’s bedtime. Kevin just gives Joey a hug before Brittany cuddles him to sleep.

Money is tight, so they take Joey to a low-cost clinic for his regular checkups. Kevin’s mother gave Joey a mobile for his crib, but they cannot afford other toys.

Both parents had a weight problem during childhood. When Joey began to gain weight, they decided to cut back on feedings. They wanted Joey to be able to keep a healthy weight throughout life.

1. What needs does Joey have at this age? 

Bonding with parents, touching,
verbal stimulation, visual stimulation, feeding, bathing, diaper changing, medical check-ups.

2. In what ways are Brittany and Kevin meeting Joey’s needs? In what ways can they improve their care?

Ways they are meeting needs:
Brittany cuddles Joey to sleep. Kevin hugs Joey each night.
They take Joey for regular checkups in spite of their limited funds.

Ways to improve:
More stimulation, more bonding with Kevin, more food.

3. What can Kevin do in his limited time to bond more with Joey?

Possible responses:
Do some of the night-time feedings. Handle him for a longer time before bed. Spend time with Joey on weekends, including changing and bathing him.

4. How can Brittany and Kevin help Joey’s intellectual development even if they cannot afford many toys?

Possible responses:
Talk, sing, and read to him. Handle him often and give him opportunities to touch them. Use everyday objects as toys.