

Study Questions for Becker's "How I Learned What a 'Crock' Was"

1. Would you describe Becker's approach to understanding life at the University of Kansas Medical School as more *inductive* or *deductive*? Explain.
2. A first critical moment came when one of the students said that s/he was going to examine a patient. Why did Becker think it important to join the student during the examination?
3. A second critical moment came when, after examining a patient, one of the students came out of the room and said, "Boy, she's really a crock." Now that you have read the whole article, what is it that made "crock" such a useful concept for Becker to focus on?
4. Why do you want to be paying particular attention to the vocabulary that people are using when you interview them in your own research project? What do their evaluative phrases, in particular, reveal to you?
5. Becker's final line is, "Intuitions are great but they don't do much for us unless we follow them up with the detailed work that shows us what they really mean, what they can really account for." Explain in your own words what he means by that.