

A Level Psychology OCR Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

- 1. What type of model did Piliavin propose to explain the decision-making process of bystanders?**
 - A. Behavioral model**
 - B. Arousal Cost-Reward model**
 - C. Social Identity model**
 - D. Cognitive Dissonance model**
- 2. What is the primary goal of an observational study?**
 - A. To manipulate variables to see their effect**
 - B. To gather data while influencing the participants**
 - C. To observe individuals without affecting their responses**
 - D. To collect subjective thoughts and feelings**
- 3. How many times more likely are women to experience depression compared to men in the UK?**
 - A. 1.5 times**
 - B. Twice as likely**
 - C. Three times as likely**
 - D. Four times as likely**
- 4. Which concept was examined in the research by Godden and Baddeley as mentioned in Grant et al's background?**
 - A. Context-dependent memory**
 - B. Long-term memory storage**
 - C. Emotional recognition tasks**
 - D. Influence of sleep on memory**
- 5. Which of the following was NOT a rating scale used in Dixon et al's study?**
 - A. Superiority**
 - B. Empathy**
 - C. Attractiveness**
 - D. Dynamism**

- 6. What scale was used to rate attachment behaviors in Ainsworth and Bell's study?**
- A. A 5-point scale**
 - B. A 10-point scale**
 - C. A 7-point scale**
 - D. A 3-point scale**
- 7. What was the primary aim of Loftus and Palmer's 1974 experiment?**
- A. To study the influence of eyewitness testimony on court cases**
 - B. To analyze the effects of language on memory**
 - C. To evaluate the reliability of memory recall**
 - D. To research the impact of visual cues on memory retention**
- 8. What is a significant limitation in field experiments regarding reliability?**
- A. High reliability due to replication**
 - B. Less control causing weaker reliability**
 - C. Standardized conditions**
 - D. Increased external validity**
- 9. What area of psychology is primarily associated with the work of Barkley-Levenson and Galvan?**
- A. Developmental psychology**
 - B. Clinical psychology**
 - C. Biological psychology**
 - D. Social psychology**
- 10. What statistical method would you apply to infer from sample data to a broader population?**
- A. Descriptive statistics**
 - B. Inferential statistics**
 - C. Regression analysis**
 - D. Non-parametric tests**

Answers

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1. B
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. C
10. B

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Explanations

1. What type of model did Piliavin propose to explain the decision-making process of bystanders?

- A. Behavioral model**
- B. Arousal Cost-Reward model**
- C. Social Identity model**
- D. Cognitive Dissonance model**

Piliavin proposed the Arousal Cost-Reward model to explain the decision-making process of bystanders in emergency situations. This model posits that bystanders experience emotional arousal when they witness someone in distress. The level of arousal felt by the bystander influences their likelihood of intervening to help. According to the model, bystanders weigh the costs of intervening against the rewards. Costs may include the potential danger involved in helping, the possibility of embarrassment, or the time and effort required. In contrast, rewards might be the satisfaction derived from helping or social approval from others. The interaction of these emotional arousal and perceived costs and rewards ultimately determines whether a bystander decides to take action or remains passive. This model specifically focuses on the cognitive processes and emotional responses individuals go through when faced with a decision to help someone in need, providing insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying bystander behavior.

2. What is the primary goal of an observational study?

- A. To manipulate variables to see their effect**
- B. To gather data while influencing the participants**
- C. To observe individuals without affecting their responses**
- D. To collect subjective thoughts and feelings**

The primary goal of an observational study is to observe individuals without affecting their responses. This type of research design allows psychologists to gather data on behaviors, interactions, or phenomena in natural settings without intervention. By not manipulating variables, researchers can better understand how subjects behave in real-life circumstances, providing valuable insights into natural behaviors and social dynamics. In observational studies, the focus is on recording what naturally occurs, which helps avoid bias that can result from experimenter influence or manipulation. This method is particularly useful in exploratory research where the aim is to generate hypotheses rather than test them. The other options involve manipulation or influence, which are not characteristics of observational studies. For example, manipulating variables is more typical of experimental studies that seek to identify cause-and-effect relationships. Influencing participants also contradicts the goal of ensuring natural behavior, as does the collection of purely subjective thoughts and feelings, which may not directly reflect observable behaviors.

3. How many times more likely are women to experience depression compared to men in the UK?

A. 1.5 times

B. Twice as likely

C. Three times as likely

D. Four times as likely

Women are generally considered to be twice as likely to experience depression compared to men in the UK. This statistic reflects findings from various psychological studies and surveys that have examined the prevalence of depression across genders. Factors contributing to this disparity may include biological, social, and environmental influences. Research indicates that hormonal fluctuations in women, particularly related to menstrual cycles, pregnancy, and menopause, can impact mood and mental health. Furthermore, women may be more susceptible to stressors such as caregiving roles, socioeconomic factors, and experiences of trauma, which can also contribute to increased rates of depression. Understanding this statistic is crucial for developing effective support and treatment strategies targeted at populations most at risk for depression.

4. Which concept was examined in the research by Godden and Baddeley as mentioned in Grant et al's background?

A. Context-dependent memory

B. Long-term memory storage

C. Emotional recognition tasks

D. Influence of sleep on memory

The research conducted by Godden and Baddeley is pivotal in understanding context-dependent memory. Their studies illustrated how environmental cues can enhance memory retrieval. In their classic experiment, participants who learned words underwater were later better at recalling them in the same underwater context compared to those who learned the words on land. This strong connection between the learning environment and retrieval conditions supports the concept of context-dependent memory, emphasizing that the context in which information is encoded can significantly affect how well it can be recalled later. In contrast to this, long-term memory storage focuses on how information is maintained over time and the processes involved in storing memories rather than the environmental cues associated with retrieval. Emotional recognition tasks investigate how emotions affect the recognition of faces or scenarios but do not directly relate to the context of memory recall. Similarly, the influence of sleep on memory pertains to how sleep can enhance or inhibit memory consolidation, rather than the environmental context in which memories are formed and accessed. Thus, context-dependent memory is the most relevant concept from Godden and Baddeley's research as it directly illustrates the importance of context in memory retrieval processes.

5. Which of the following was NOT a rating scale used in Dixon et al's study?

- A. Superiority**
- B. Empathy**
- C. Attractiveness**
- D. Dynamism**

In the context of Dixon et al.'s study, the primary focus was on examining perceptions of various traits in relation to individuals in a certain setting. The rating scales developed for this study were designed to measure how participants viewed others based on specific characteristics relevant to the experimental context. The correct answer, which indicates that empathy was not one of the scales used in the study, is accurate because Dixon et al. specifically utilized scales such as attractiveness, dynamism, and superiority to analyze participants' perceptions. Those traits were integral to understanding the interactions and biases in the context of the research question the study aimed to address. By recognizing that empathy was not included as a scale, it highlights the particular focus of the study on traits that could have more direct implications for the interactions being measured, rather than on emotional competencies or feelings toward others, which empathy encapsulates. Therefore, the absence of empathy in the rating scales underscores the study's targeted approach in investigating specific evaluative dimensions rather than a broader emotional assessment.

6. What scale was used to rate attachment behaviors in Ainsworth and Bell's study?

- A. A 5-point scale**
- B. A 10-point scale**
- C. A 7-point scale**
- D. A 3-point scale**

Ainsworth and Bell utilized a 7-point scale to rate attachment behaviors in their study, known as the Strange Situation. This scale allowed for nuanced observations of children's behaviors in response to their mother's presence and absence, as well as their interactions with a stranger. The use of a 7-point scale provided researchers the ability to capture a range of attachment behaviors, which were critical in distinguishing between different attachment styles, such as secure, anxious-avoidant, and anxious-resistant. This specificity helped in categorizing infants' responses in a structured way, enhancing the reliability and validity of their findings regarding attachment theory.

7. What was the primary aim of Loftus and Palmer's 1974 experiment?

- A. To study the influence of eyewitness testimony on court cases**
- B. To analyze the effects of language on memory**
- C. To evaluate the reliability of memory recall**
- D. To research the impact of visual cues on memory retention**

The primary aim of Loftus and Palmer's 1974 experiment was to analyze the effects of language on memory, which is reflected in the correct answer. Their research focused specifically on how different verbs used in questions about a car accident could influence participants' memories of the event. For instance, they found that the wording of a question, such as using "smashed" versus "hit," led to differing estimates of the speed of the vehicles involved. This suggests that the ways in which questions are framed can significantly impact a witness's memory recall, highlighting the malleability of human memory and how it can be shaped by external factors like language. In contrast, while eyewitness testimony and memory reliability are relevant topics, the specific focus of Loftus and Palmer's work was on the linguistic influences on memory, rather than a broader evaluation of memory recall. Their findings contribute to our understanding of the misinformation effect and inform us about potential pitfalls in legal contexts regarding eyewitness accounts.

8. What is a significant limitation in field experiments regarding reliability?

- A. High reliability due to replication**
- B. Less control causing weaker reliability**
- C. Standardized conditions**
- D. Increased external validity**

Field experiments are conducted in natural settings rather than in controlled environments like laboratories. One significant limitation in this context is the level of control the researcher has over extraneous variables. In field experiments, researchers often have less control over the environment and the various factors that might influence the results. This can lead to variability in the findings that is not due to the independent variable being tested but rather due to uncontrolled factors. The less control experienced in field experiments can compromise reliability because it becomes more difficult to produce consistent and repeatable results across different instances. If the same experiment is conducted in different conditions or at different times, the outcomes may differ due to these uncontrolled variables. Therefore, while field experiments excel in enhancing ecological validity by being more reflective of real-world settings, this benefit comes at the cost of reliability, as results can vary significantly when the experiment is repeated.

9. What area of psychology is primarily associated with the work of Barkley-Levenson and Galvan?

- A. Developmental psychology**
- B. Clinical psychology**
- C. Biological psychology**
- D. Social psychology**

The work of Barkley-Levenson and Galvan is primarily associated with biological psychology, particularly in understanding the neurological processes that underlie decision-making and risk-taking behaviors. This area of psychology focuses on the connections between biological processes and psychological phenomena, often examining how brain structure and function influence behavior. Barkley-Levenson and Galvan's research emphasizes the role of brain systems—like the prefrontal cortex and the limbic system—in adolescent behavior and how these systems develop over time. Their investigations often utilize neuroimaging techniques to explore how various brain regions interact during tasks that involve reward processing and risk assessment, illustrating the biological basis of psychological functions. Developmental, clinical, and social psychology, while relevant to aspects of human behavior, do not primarily focus on the biological underpinnings of these behaviors in the way that the research of Barkley-Levenson and Galvan does. Developmental psychology would focus more on changes throughout the lifespan, clinical psychology would be concerned with diagnosing and treating mental disorders, and social psychology would examine how individuals interact within group contexts. Each of these areas takes a different perspective that does not align as closely with the specific insights provided by biological psychology in this context.

10. What statistical method would you apply to infer from sample data to a broader population?

- A. Descriptive statistics**
- B. Inferential statistics**
- C. Regression analysis**
- D. Non-parametric tests**

Inferential statistics is the correct choice for this question because it specifically deals with making generalizations and predictions about a population based on sample data. This method employs various techniques to draw conclusions and determine the probability of certain outcomes. By utilizing inferential statistics, researchers can estimate population parameters, test hypotheses, and make predictions while taking into account the natural variability within data. Descriptive statistics, on the other hand, focuses on summarizing and organizing sample data without making inferences about a bigger population. While regression analysis is a specific technique used to examine relationships between variables, it is a subset of inferential statistics and does not encompass the broader process of drawing general conclusions. Non-parametric tests are statistical methods that do not assume a specific distribution for the data; while they can also be used for drawing inferences, they are often applied in situations where traditional parametric tests are not suitable. Thus, inferential statistics is the overarching method that encompasses these other techniques aimed at making broader inferences.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://alevelpsychologyocr.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!