

Academic Decathlon Literature Practice Test (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

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- 1. What is the primary color of the illustration on the first edition cover of *The Great Gatsby*?**
 - A. Blue**
 - B. Red**
 - C. Green**
 - D. Yellow**

- 2. *The Weary Blues* depicts a performer using which instrument?**
 - A. Piano**
 - B. Saxophone**
 - C. Guitar**
 - D. Flute**

- 3. Which golfer MOST inspired Fitzgerald's portrayal of Jordan?**
 - A. Edith Cummings**
 - B. Babe Didrikson Zaharias**
 - C. Helen Wills Moody**
 - D. Glenna Collett-Vare**

- 4. In *Salutamus*, the searing brand serves as a central metaphor for which concept?**
 - A. Racial Oppression**
 - B. Civil Rights Progress**
 - C. Cultural Heritage**
 - D. White Supremacy**

- 5. What sonnet form does the poem 'I, being born a woman and distressed' follow?**
 - A. Shakespearean**
 - B. Spenserian**
 - C. Italian Sonnet**
 - D. Petrarchan**

- 6. Which group helped spread jazz across the United States?**
- A. Original Dixieland Jazz Band**
 - B. Count Basie's Orchestra**
 - C. The Preservation Hall Jazz Band**
 - D. The Glenn Miller Orchestra**
- 7. The term 'merchants of cool' primarily refers to which group?**
- A. Advertising executives marketing youth culture**
 - B. Fashion designers creating vintage styles**
 - C. Politicians appealing to the youth vote**
 - D. Newspaper editors shaping fashion trends**
- 8. In which city did Crane see Charlie Chaplin's film The Kid?**
- A. Boston**
 - B. Cleveland**
 - C. Chicago**
 - D. Los Angeles**
- 9. Which surname is least associated with West Egg?**
- A. Abrams**
 - B. Gatsby**
 - C. Carraway**
 - D. Whitlow**
- 10. The Great Gatsby's treatment of memory MOST emphasizes**
- A. the inevitability of forgetting**
 - B. the malleability of memory**
 - C. the inability to reclaim lost experiences**
 - D. memory as a source of consolation**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the primary color of the illustration on the first edition cover of *The Great Gatsby*?

- A. Blue**
- B. Red**
- C. Green**
- D. Yellow**

The main idea here is recognizing the dominant color of the iconic original dust jacket for *The Great Gatsby*. The illustration designed by Francis Cugat is characterized by deep blue tones—the night sky, the veil around the woman, and the overall blue mood dominate the image. Yellow accents and some greenish hues appear, but they act as secondary contrasts to the prevailing blue. So, blue is the best answer.

2. The *Weary Blues* depicts a performer using which instrument?

- A. Piano**
- B. Saxophone**
- C. Guitar**
- D. Flute**

The scene centers on a pianist in a blues club who sits at a keyboard, his hands moving over the keys and the instrument carrying the mood of the piece. The imagery and setting focus on the piano as the vehicle for the performer's weary blues, not on horns or strings. In this poem, the performer's music and emotion are conveyed through the piano's distinctive sound and the act of playing it, so the instrument depicted is the piano.

3. Which golfer MOST inspired Fitzgerald's portrayal of Jordan?

- A. Edith Cummings**
- B. Babe Didrikson Zaharias**
- C. Helen Wills Moody**
- D. Glenna Collett-Vare**

Fitzgerald shapes Jordan Baker by drawing on a real Jazz Age image of a fashionable, accomplished woman athlete who moves confidently in elite social circles. Edith Cummings was a famous golfer of that era and symbolized the blend of athletic skill, poise, and social polish that *Gatsby*'s world celebrated. That combination—sportiness paired with a cool, self-assured presence in high society—fits Jordan's portrayal most closely, making Edith Cummings the strongest model for this character. The other names don't align as neatly with that same image. One is another top golfer, but not tied as directly to the socialite-golfer persona Fitzgerald captures; another is a tennis star, not a golfer, and thus not as relevant to Jordan's sport-specific facet. A later multi-sport athlete does not fit the Jazz Age social milieu as tightly as Edith Cummings.

4. In *Salutamus*, the searing brand serves as a central metaphor for which concept?

- A. Racial Oppression**
- B. Civil Rights Progress**
- C. Cultural Heritage**
- D. White Supremacy**

The searing brand is used to show how racial power is imposed and maintained through violence and permanent social marks. In *Salutamus*, the burn mark stands in for white supremacy—the idea that whiteness legitimizes domination and that bodies are literally branded as belonging to a racial hierarchy. The heat and permanence of a brand imply not just hurt, but a lasting, inheritable status that shapes identity, social status, and access to power. This metaphor highlights how the system of white supremacy embeds oppression into the body and into everyday life, making the mark enduring across generations. Think of it as more than just oppression in general: the brand encapsulates the ideology and practice that justify and enforce racial dominance. The other options miss that sharper focus—the metaphor isn't about progress, or about culture or heritage being celebrated—but about how the power structure itself operates and endures through violent, legitimizing symbols.

5. What sonnet form does the poem 'I, being born a woman and distressed' follow?

- A. Shakespearean**
- B. Spenserian**
- C. Italian Sonnet**
- D. Petrarchan**

This poem is in the Petrarchan (Italian) sonnet form. The defining feature is its two-part structure: an octave (the first eight lines) that sets up a problem or situation, followed by a sestet (the last six lines) that offers a response, reflection, or resolution. The turn, or volta, typically appears after the octave, signaling a shift in thought from distress or complaint to contemplation or acceptance. This division into octave and sestet, along with the sonnet's overall 14-line length, distinguishes it from other forms like the Shakespearean, which relies on three quatrains plus a final couplet, or the Spenserian, which interlocks rhymes. The line about being born a woman and distressed signals the setup of a Petrarchan speaker and scene, making the form a natural fit.

6. Which group helped spread jazz across the United States?

- A. Original Dixieland Jazz Band**
- B. Count Basie's Orchestra**
- C. The Preservation Hall Jazz Band**
- D. The Glenn Miller Orchestra**

When jazz began spreading across the United States, recorded music played a crucial role in reaching listeners far beyond New Orleans. The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, recording in 1917, released some of the first jazz records, introducing the New Orleans style to audiences nationwide. Those early records sparked curiosity, led to more performances, and helped establish a national audience for jazz, fueling its growth across the country. While the other groups were influential in their own right—shaping swing, revivals, and ongoing performances—their impact came after that initial wave of exposure created by those pioneer recordings.

7. The term 'merchants of cool' primarily refers to which group?

- A. Advertising executives marketing youth culture**
- B. Fashion designers creating vintage styles**
- C. Politicians appealing to the youth vote**
- D. Newspaper editors shaping fashion trends**

The idea here is that “cool” is something markets manufacture and profit from. The term points to advertising executives who study teen culture and shape campaigns to sell products by projecting certain styles, attitudes, and identities as desirable. They translate what teens are into a branded message, using media, endorsements, and product ties to keep demand flowing. That focus on selling and monetizing youth trends is why this group is the best fit. While fashion designers may create trends, and media outlets can amplify them, the phrase centers on the people who actively market and monetize the concept of cool to young consumers. Politicians aiming for youth votes or editors shaping fashion trends do not capture that marketing-and-profit angle as directly.

8. In which city did Crane see Charlie Chaplin's film The Kid?

- A. Boston**
- B. Cleveland**
- C. Chicago**
- D. Los Angeles**

The question hinges on tracking a specific setting in the narrative. The text places Crane seeing Charlie Chaplin’s *The Kid* in Cleveland, so that city is the exact setting the question is asking about. Pinpointing the location grounds the moment in a real place and helps you picture the scene and its cultural context—what Crane might have experienced and why that moment mattered in the story. The other cities—Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles—aren’t described as the place where this viewing occurs, so they don’t fit.

9. Which surname is least associated with West Egg?

- A. Abrams**
- B. Gatsby**
- C. Carraway**
- D. Whitlow**

Understanding which surname is least associated with West Egg comes from knowing who lives there in the story. West Egg is the newer-money side of Long Island, home to Jay Gatsby and, as narrator, Nick Carraway who rents a house nearby. Those two names are explicitly tied to West Egg in the narrative. The other surnames don't have a strong, recognizable connection to that locale. Among the options, Abrams has no notable presence linked to West Egg, whereas Gatsby and Carraway are central West Egg figures. Whitlow isn't a prominent West Egg figure either, but Abrams is the one least connected in the text, making it the best answer.

10. The Great Gatsby's treatment of memory MOST emphasizes

- A. the inevitability of forgetting**
- B. the malleability of memory**
- C. the inability to reclaim lost experiences**
- D. memory as a source of consolation**

Memory in *The Great Gatsby* drives action while revealing a persistent fragility: you can long for the past, but you cannot actually reclaim it. Gatsby builds his entire life around a memory of his romance with Daisy, convinced that wealth and status can recreate the moment they shared. The famous line about repeating the past shows the trap: memory motivates him to pursue a future that can't be identical to what once was. The green light on Daisy's dock embodies that unreachable horizon—an alluring symbol that never becomes a real possession. Because memory here functions more as a siren that channels desire into action and ends in disappointment, the emphasis is on the impossibility of recapturing lost experiences. Other ways memory is treated—its malleability or its potential as consolation—appear, but they're subordinate to the central truth that the past cannot be truly reclaimed.

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://academicdecathlonliterature.examzify.com>

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

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