

ACAT CRIMINAL JUSTICE PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



Prepare with structure. Pass with confidence



Copyright © 2026 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain accurate, complete, and timely information about this product from reliable sources.

SAMPLE

Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	15

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

- 1. In a decentralized state police model, which statement is accurate?**
 - A. State police are split into specialized units such as criminal investigations and highway patrol
 - B. State police operate as a single unified unit
 - C. Local agencies supervise all state-wide patrols
 - D. Private security handles all arrests
- 2. Which medieval title described a high-ranking official in charge of maintaining order and overseeing law enforcement, akin to a modern police chief?**
 - A. Comes Stabuli
 - B. Bow Street Runners
 - C. London Metropolitan Police
 - D. Sir Robert Peele
- 3. Name a key difference between prisons and jails.**
 - A. Prisons are run by local governments; jails are run by state or federal governments
 - B. Prisons hold shorter terms than jails
 - C. Prisons are run by state or federal governments; jails are typically run by local governments
 - D. Jails house those convicted of serious crimes
- 4. In the SARA model, which step involves designing and implementing the chosen response strategies?**
 - A. Response
 - B. Analysis
 - C. Scanning
 - D. Assessment
- 5. The concentric zone model suggests that the further from the CBD, the more likely you are to find which type of area?**
 - A. Higher-income residential areas
 - B. Industrial zones
 - C. Central business district
 - D. Transitional neighborhoods

- 6. The concept of 'The laws of imitation' is a core idea in which theorist's work?**
- A. Gabriel Tarde
 - B. Edwin Sutherland
 - C. Robert Merton
 - D. William Sheldon
- 7. Which statement accurately contrasts the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems?**
- A. Pennsylvania emphasized solitary confinement and silent labor, while Auburn emphasized congregate labor and day-night operations
 - B. Both used complete isolation
 - C. Pennsylvania used no labor; Auburn used only education
 - D. Auburn was focused on religious worship above all else
- 8. What is the name of the first prison system to use the congregate system?**
- A. Auburn Prison in New York
 - B. Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia
 - C. Elmira Reformatory in New York
 - D. Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia
- 9. Retribution is based on which concept?**
- A. Deterrence
 - B. Restitution
 - C. Rehabilitation
 - D. Revenge or moral vengeance (eye for an eye)
- 10. Which two thinkers are central to the Classical School?**
- A. Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham
 - B. Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx
 - C. Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung
 - D. Richard Dawkins and Stephen Hawking

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. In a decentralized state police model, which statement is accurate?

- A. State police are split into specialized units such as criminal investigations and highway patrol**
- B. State police operate as a single unified unit
- C. Local agencies supervise all state-wide patrols
- D. Private security handles all arrests

In a decentralized state police model, authority is distributed across specialized divisions rather than centralized into a single, unified command. The state police are organized into distinct units such as criminal investigations and highway patrol, each focusing on its own area of responsibility. This setup lets investigators build deep expertise in investigations while troopers concentrate on traffic enforcement and roadside incidents, all under the broader state-police framework. It also allows better alignment with local needs and closer coordination with local agencies, while still maintaining statewide oversight. The other descriptions don't fit this structure: a single unified unit reflects a centralized model; local agencies supervising all state-wide patrols would dilute state-level control over patrols; and private security handling all arrests is not how state law enforcement operates.

2. Which medieval title described a high-ranking official in charge of maintaining order and overseeing law enforcement, akin to a modern police chief?

- A. Comes Stabuli**
- B. Bow Street Runners
- C. London Metropolitan Police
- D. Sir Robert Peele

In medieval governance, the chief figure responsible for keeping the peace and directing local enforcement was the constable, a role tied to the Latin title Comes Stabuli. Comes Stabuli literally means "Count of the Stables," but the office functioned as the royal or regional authority in charge of maintaining order and overseeing enforcement—a clear ancestor of the modern police chief. Over time, this office evolved into what we recognize as the constable, the leader overseeing law and order. The other options come from later periods. Bow Street Runners were an 18th century London detective group, not a medieval title. The London Metropolitan Police dates to 1829, a formalized 19th century police force. Sir Robert Peel was the reformer who established the Metropolitan Police, not a medieval title.

3. Name a key difference between prisons and jails.

- A. Prisons are run by local governments; jails are run by state or federal governments
- B. Prisons hold shorter terms than jails
- C. Prisons are run by state or federal governments; jails are typically run by local governments**
- D. Jails house those convicted of serious crimes

A central difference is who runs the facility and its role in the justice process. Prisons are operated by state or federal governments and are designed to house people who have been convicted and are serving longer sentences. Jails are typically run by local governments—counties or cities—and they detain people awaiting trial or serving short sentences. That distinction explains the difference in terms of governance and purpose: long-term confinement for convicted offenders in higher-level government facilities versus short-term detention or pretrial confinement in local facilities.

4. In the SARA model, which step involves designing and implementing the chosen response strategies?

A. Response

B. Analysis

C. Scanning

D. Assessment

In this model, the sequence matters: after identifying problems and understanding their root causes, the next phase is to turn those insights into action. The step you're looking for focuses on choosing concrete actions, planning them, and putting them into practice. This is where officers and partners design targeted interventions, coordinate resources, set timelines, and carry out the chosen strategies. The goal is to translate analysis into real-world actions and begin implementing them. After this, the cycle moves to assess how well those actions work and what needs to be adjusted. So, the step that designs and implements the chosen response strategies is the Response phase.

5. The concentric zone model suggests that the further from the CBD, the more likely you are to find which type of area?

A. Higher-income residential areas

B. Industrial zones

C. Central business district

D. Transitional neighborhoods

In the concentric zone model, a city grows outward from the central business district in a series of rings, with land use and social groups changing as you move farther from the center. The outer rings are characterized by higher-income residential areas, offering more space and a quieter environment, which draws wealthier households away from the dense core. Closer to the center, you find industrial zones and transitional neighborhoods with more mixed uses and less affluent populations, followed by middle-income and then lower-income residential areas as you get nearer the core. So, as distance from the CBD increases, higher-income residential areas become more likely, which is why the correct choice points to wealthier homes in the outer rings. The other options reflect uses typically found nearer to the center or in transitional zones, not far from the core.

6. The concept of 'The laws of imitation' is a core idea in which theorist's work?

A. Gabriel Tarde

B. Edwin Sutherland

C. Robert Merton

D. William Sheldon

Laws of imitation describe how behaviors spread through society as people copy others they observe, especially those who are similar or influential and with whom they have close contact. Gabriel Tarde is the theorist most closely associated with this idea, since he framed the spread of behaviors—including crime—around imitation among individuals and groups. While Edwin Sutherland later emphasized learning crime through association in his differential association theory, and Merton and Sheldon contributed other criminological perspectives, the explicit concept of the laws of imitation is attributed to Tarde. So the best answer is Gabriel Tarde.

7. Which statement accurately contrasts the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems?

- A. Pennsylvania emphasized solitary confinement and silent labor, while Auburn emphasized congregate labor and day-night operations**
- B. Both used complete isolation
- C. Pennsylvania used no labor; Auburn used only education
- D. Auburn was focused on religious worship above all else

This contrasts two competing prison reform models: the Pennsylvania Separate System and the Auburn System. In the Pennsylvania model, prisoners were kept in solitary confinement, with strict silence and labor performed individually in their cells. The idea was reform through isolation and introspection, not through working with others. In the Auburn model, prisoners worked in groups and in close proximity, doing labor together in workshops and yards, all under strict discipline and silence, with daily routines that extended through the day and into the next activities. The key difference is solitary, private work versus shared, congregate work with a highly controlled environment. Therefore, the statement that captures this contrast is that Pennsylvania emphasized solitary confinement and silent labor, while Auburn emphasized congregate labor and day-night operations.

8. What is the name of the first prison system to use the congregate system?

- A. Auburn Prison in New York**
- B. Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia
- C. Elmira Reformatory in New York
- D. Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia

The congregate system centers on prisoners working together in groups during the day while maintaining a disciplined, quiet regime, often with dormitory-style living but separate sleeping quarters. It was first put into practice at Auburn Prison in New York in the 1820s, under reform leadership, and became known as the Auburn or congregate system. This approach contrasts with the separate system used at Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, which kept inmates in solitary confinement at all times. Elmira Reformatory came later with a focus on classification and rehabilitation, and Walnut Street Jail is an earlier institution not credited with originating the congregate system.

9. Retribution is based on which concept?

- A. Deterrence
- B. Restitution
- C. Rehabilitation
- D. Revenge or moral vengeance (eye for an eye)**

Retribution is a punishment theory grounded in the idea that punishment should be given because the offender deserves it for the wrong they committed. It treats punishment as a moral response to wrongdoing, aiming for a punishment that is proportional to the crime and restores a sense of moral balance—often described as an eye-for-an-eye justice or revenge in a moral sense. This is not about deterring future crime (that would focus on making crime costly to discourage it), nor about rehabilitating the offender (which focuses on changing the person so they won't offend again), nor about compensating or reimbursing the victim (which is the role of restitution). Instead, the centerpiece is desert: punishment deserved because of the offense itself.

10. Which two thinkers are central to the Classical School?

A. Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham

B. Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx

C. Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung

D. Richard Dawkins and Stephen Hawking

Crime is treated as the result of rational calculation by individuals, so punishment should deter by being certain, swift, and proportionate to the offense. The two thinkers who embody this approach are Cesare Beccaria, who argued for reforming punishment, proportionality, and the elimination of cruel methods to make punishment a clear and effective deterrent, and Jeremy Bentham, who framed punishment in utilitarian terms and stressed that the calculus of pleasure versus pain should guide whether a sanction discourages crime. Together they anchor the Classical School, shaping how laws are designed to prevent crime through rational choice and deterrence. The other figures listed come from different traditions—Durkheim and Marx focus on social structure and conflict, Freud and Jung on psychology, and Dawkins and Hawking on science—so they aren't central to this school of criminology.

SAMPLE

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://acatcriminaljustice.examzify.com>

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

SAMPLE