

AMSCO AP PSYCHOLOGY – COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY / COGNITION PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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. Which bias involves evaluating ourselves in an overly favorable manner?**
 - A. Self-serving bias
 - B. Mental set
 - C. Framing
 - D. Belief perseverance
- 2. Why are schemas important in understanding cognition?**
 - A. They provide random information without context
 - B. They help interpret information based on prior experiences
 - C. They limit the processing of new information
 - D. They focus solely on emotional understanding
- 3. Which psychological process involves forgetting something by pushing it into deep memory storage?**
 - A. Repression
 - B. Suppression
 - C. Amnesia
 - D. Deactivation
- 4. When new information interferes with the ability to retrieve old information, this phenomenon is known as?**
 - A. Proactive interference
 - B. Decay theory
 - C. Retroactive interference
 - D. Amnesia
- 5. Which type of memory refers to remembering to do something in the future?**
 - A. State-dependent memory
 - B. Recall
 - C. Prospective memory
 - D. Mood-dependent memory

- 6. What is the term for memorizing information by simply repeating it without further analysis?**
- A. Deep processing
 - B. Maintenance rehearsal
 - C. Shallow processing
 - D. Chunking
- 7. Which of the following statements reflects loss aversion?**
- A. Most people are willing to lose \$50 to gain \$100
 - B. Individuals often prefer to stick to safer options
 - C. Gains are perceived as more impactful than losses
 - D. People are indifferent to potential risks in investments
- 8. Which of the following terms describes the reluctance to engage in actions that could result in loss?**
- A. Risk aversion
 - B. Opportunity cost
 - C. Loss stimulation
 - D. Gain aversion
- 9. Which is an example of intrinsic motivation?**
- A. Studying for a grade
 - B. Joining a club for awards
 - C. Reading a book for pleasure
 - D. Completing tasks for parental approval
- 10. Which of the following is not a subcategory of linguistics?**
- A. Phonology
 - B. Morphology
 - C. Psychoanalysis
 - D. Syntax

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which bias involves evaluating ourselves in an overly favorable manner?

- A. Self-serving bias**
- B. Mental set
- C. Framing
- D. Belief perseverance

The self-serving bias is the tendency for individuals to attribute positive events to their own character or efforts while attributing negative events to external factors or circumstances. This bias leads people to see themselves in an overly favorable light, enhancing their self-esteem and self-worth. For example, if a student receives a high grade on a test, they might credit their intelligence or hard work, but if they receive a low grade, they may attribute it to the difficulty of the test or an unfair grading system. This cognitive bias helps individuals protect their self-image and maintain a positive internal narrative. In contrast, the other options represent different psychological phenomena: mental set refers to a fixed way of thinking that may prevent problem-solving; framing pertains to how information is presented that influences decision-making; and belief perseverance involves holding onto one's beliefs even when faced with contrary evidence. Each of these concepts operates differently from the self-serving bias, which is specific to self-evaluation and self-perception.

2. Why are schemas important in understanding cognition?

- A. They provide random information without context
- B. They help interpret information based on prior experiences**
- C. They limit the processing of new information
- D. They focus solely on emotional understanding

Schemas play a crucial role in understanding cognition because they act as cognitive frameworks that help individuals organize and interpret information based on their prior experiences. These mental structures allow people to process new information more efficiently by providing a context that enables them to connect new experiences with what they already know. When encountering new information, schemas guide attention and memory, making it easier to integrate new knowledge into existing beliefs or knowledge structures. This process saves cognitive resources and facilitates quicker understanding. For instance, if someone has a schema for what a "dog" is, they can quickly identify and understand a new dog, even if they've never seen that specific breed before, due to their prior experiences and knowledge about dogs. This essential mechanism can significantly enhance learning and comprehension, allowing for a more nuanced and immediate understanding of the world around us.

3. Which psychological process involves forgetting something by pushing it into deep memory storage?

- A. Repression**
- B. Suppression
- C. Amnesia
- D. Deactivation

Repression is a psychological process where unwanted or distressing memories are unconsciously pushed out of conscious awareness and stored in deep memory. This mechanism is often associated with traumatic experiences or feelings that the individual finds too painful or anxiety-provoking to confront. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, introduced the concept of repression to explain how individuals protect themselves from psychological harm by excluding certain thoughts or memories from consciousness. In contrast, suppression refers to the conscious decision to forget or not think about a particular thought or memory. Amnesia describes a profound loss of memory that can occur due to various reasons, such as injury or psychological trauma, rather than a mechanism of memory storage. Deactivation is not a commonly recognized psychological term related to memory processes. Thus, repression is the most fitting answer as it clearly aligns with the idea of forgetting by pushing memories into deep storage.

4. When new information interferes with the ability to retrieve old information, this phenomenon is known as?

- A. Proactive interference
- B. Decay theory
- C. Retroactive interference**
- D. Amnesia

The phenomenon where new information interferes with the ability to retrieve old information is known as retroactive interference. This occurs because the introduction of new learning can blur or overwrite the existing memories, making it difficult for a person to recall previously learned material. For example, if a person learns a new phone number, they may struggle to remember an old phone number they had memorized earlier. In this context, retroactive interference highlights the challenges in memory retrieval that can arise when incoming information disrupts stored memories. This concept is particularly significant in understanding how memories can be unstable and affected by subsequent learning experiences. The other terms, while related to memory, describe different processes: proactive interference pertains to when old information inhibits the ability to learn or retrieve new information, decay theory suggests that memories fade over time, and amnesia refers to a loss of memory due to various causes.

5. Which type of memory refers to remembering to do something in the future?

A. State-dependent memory

B. Recall

C. Prospective memory

D. Mood-dependent memory

Prospective memory refers to the ability to remember to carry out intentions or tasks in the future. It involves planning and organizing actions that will take place at a later time, such as remembering to attend an appointment or take medication. This type of memory is crucial for everyday functioning and requires the individual to hold onto the intention to act at a future point rather than recalling past information or experiences. In contrast, state-dependent memory is about retrieval of information being influenced by the individual's state at the time of learning and recall. Recall involves retrieving information that has been previously learned without the direct aid of cues. Mood-dependent memory relates to memory retrieval being influenced by the individual's mood at the time of learning and the mood during recall. Each of these alternatives addresses different aspects of memory but does not capture the specific function of remembering to perform actions in the future like prospective memory does.

6. What is the term for memorizing information by simply repeating it without further analysis?

A. Deep processing

B. Maintenance rehearsal

C. Shallow processing

D. Chunking

The term that refers to memorizing information by simply repeating it without further analysis is shallow processing. This type of cognitive processing involves focusing on superficial characteristics of the information, such as its sound or appearance, rather than its meaning or relationships to other concepts. Shallow processing typically leads to a weaker retention of the information compared to deeper processing methods, which involve more thoughtful engagement with the material. For example, while someone engaging in shallow processing might memorize a list of words by repeating them over and over, someone using deep processing would think about how the words are related to each other or how they connect to their prior knowledge. Other options like maintenance rehearsal focus specifically on the repetition aspect of memory retention but do so without evaluating the information's meaning, whereas deep processing and chunking require more cognitive effort and result in better long-term memory retention.

7. Which of the following statements reflects loss aversion?

- A. Most people are willing to lose \$50 to gain \$100
- B. Individuals often prefer to stick to safer options**
- C. Gains are perceived as more impactful than losses
- D. People are indifferent to potential risks in investments

Loss aversion is a concept from behavioral economics that describes how people tend to prefer avoiding losses rather than acquiring equivalent gains. In essence, losing something is psychologically more impactful than gaining something of equal value. The correct choice reflects that individuals often prefer to stick to safer options. This behavior arises from the desire to avoid losses; people would rather choose risk-averse options that minimize the chance of losing something important to them, even if it means forgoing potential gains. This tendency illustrates that when faced with uncertain outcomes, the fear of loss significantly influences decision-making. In contrast, the other statements do not adequately capture the essence of loss aversion. While some may think that people would generally be inclined to take risks for more significant rewards, the reality described by loss aversion highlights that the majority prefer the security of avoiding losses over the excitement of possible gains.

8. Which of the following terms describes the reluctance to engage in actions that could result in loss?

- A. Risk aversion**
- B. Opportunity cost
- C. Loss stimulation
- D. Gain aversion

Risk aversion refers to the tendency of individuals to prefer options that minimize potential losses rather than maximize potential gains. This concept is central to decision-making processes, particularly in contexts involving uncertainty and potential negative outcomes. People generally exhibit risk-averse behavior when faced with choices that involve financial decisions, health risks, or other scenarios where a loss is possible. For instance, in financial contexts, a risk-averse individual is more likely to choose a guaranteed, smaller gain over a gamble that has a chance of yielding a larger payoff but also poses a risk of losing their initial investment. This behavior is underpinned by the psychological impact of loss, often perceived as more significant than an equivalent gain, highlighting why individuals often shy away from actions that might lead to a loss. The other options do not accurately capture this specific psychological tendency. Opportunity cost refers to the potential benefits lost when one choice is made over another. Loss stimulation and gain aversion, while related, do not specifically address the reluctance to engage in potentially loss-inducing actions as directly as risk aversion does.

9. Which is an example of intrinsic motivation?

- A. Studying for a grade
- B. Joining a club for awards
- C. Reading a book for pleasure
- D. Completing tasks for parental approval

Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in activities for their own sake, driven by personal satisfaction, interest, or enjoyment, rather than for external rewards or pressures. Reading a book for pleasure exemplifies intrinsic motivation because the individual derives enjoyment and fulfillment directly from the act of reading itself, independent of any external recognition or reward. In contrast, choices that involve external validation or rewards—such as studying for a grade, joining a club for awards, or completing tasks for parental approval—characterize extrinsic motivation. These motivations are influenced by the desire for achievement, recognition, or approval from others rather than from the inherent enjoyment of the activity. Understanding the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is essential for fostering a love for learning and personal growth.

10. Which of the following is not a subcategory of linguistics?

- A. Phonology
- B. Morphology
- C. Psychoanalysis
- D. Syntax

The correct answer is C, as psychoanalysis is a branch of psychology focused on the study of the unconscious mind, mental processes, and therapeutic techniques, rather than a subcategory of linguistics. Linguistics itself encompasses various subfields that focus on different aspects of language. Phonology relates to the sounds of speech and how they are organized in particular languages. Morphology deals with the structure of words and how they are formed, including the study of prefixes, suffixes, and root words. Syntax focuses on the rules and patterns that govern sentence structure and how words combine to form grammatically correct sentences. Each of these areas is essential for understanding the complexities of language, while psychoanalysis does not pertain to the study of language structure or use.

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:

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

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