

Approaches in Psychology AQA 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. Guilt activates which brain region according to cognitive neuroscience findings?**
 - A. Prefrontal Cortex**
 - B. Hippocampus**
 - C. Amygdala**
 - D. Cerebellum**

- 2. What term describes private mental operations such as perception and attention that mediate between stimulus and response?**
 - A. Internal mental processes**
 - B. Schema**
 - C. Inference**
 - D. Cognitive neuroscience**

- 3. Which theory emphasizes learning through observation and sees humans as active processors of information?**
 - A. Social Learning Theory**
 - B. Classical Conditioning**
 - C. Psychoanalysis**
 - D. Trait Theory**

- 4. Which is a strength of the cognitive approach?**
 - A. It rejects mental processes**
 - B. It has led to cognitive-behavioural therapy for depression**
 - C. It denies the validity of schemas**
 - D. It avoids laboratory experiments**

- 5. What is the process whereby cognitive psychologists draw conclusions about mental processes based on observed behaviour?**
 - A. Inference**
 - B. Evolution**
 - C. Genes**
 - D. Cognition**

- 6. What is a weakness of the fight-or-flight response in modern humans?**
- A. It is perfectly suited to modern life**
 - B. Repeated activation uses energy and can lead to cardiovascular problems**
 - C. It always improves digestion**
 - D. It has no long-term effects**
- 7. What does the cognitive approach focus on?**
- A. The Mind is Passive**
 - B. The Mind Actively Processes Information**
 - C. Only Genetics Determine Behaviour**
 - D. Conditioning Is The Only Mechanism**
- 8. Unconscious strategies that the ego uses to manage the conflict between the id and the superego are called what?**
- A. Defence mechanisms**
 - B. Repression**
 - C. Denial**
 - D. Projection**
- 9. Symbolic models are those who are in the media.**
- A. Live Models**
 - B. Symbolic Models**
 - C. Mediational Processes**
 - D. Imitation**
- 10. What is a common caveat when generalising animal study results to humans?**
- A. Species differences may limit applicability to humans**
 - B. Animal study results generalize perfectly to humans**
 - C. Animals are not suitable for any behavioural research**
 - D. Human behaviour is identical to animal behaviour in key aspects**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Guilt activates which brain region according to cognitive neuroscience findings?

- A. Prefrontal Cortex**
- B. Hippocampus**
- C. Amygdala**
- D. Cerebellum**

Guilt is a self-conscious moral emotion that relies on evaluating our actions against social norms, which requires reflective, higher-order thinking about ourselves and our behavior. Neuroscience findings point to the prefrontal cortex as the region underlying this kind of processing. In particular, areas like the medial prefrontal cortex and parts of the orbitofrontal cortex, along with the anterior cingulate, are involved in moral reasoning, self-monitoring, and integrating social information. When people experience guilt or engage in tasks that require judging right from wrong, these prefrontal regions show increased activity, reflecting the cognitive control and evaluative processes at work. The other regions don't fit as well with guilt. The hippocampus is mainly about forming and retrieving memories, not the immediate evaluation of moral actions. The amygdala handles basic emotional arousal and fear responses rather than the reflective, self-regulatory aspect of guilt. The cerebellum is largely involved in motor control and coordination, with some cognitive roles, but it's not central to processing guilt or moral judgment. So the prefrontal cortex best accounts for the cognitive, self-referential processing that guilt requires.

2. What term describes private mental operations such as perception and attention that mediate between stimulus and response?

- A. Internal mental processes**
- B. Schema**
- C. Inference**
- D. Cognitive neuroscience**

Private mental operations that occur between stimulus and response are described as internal mental processes. This captures the idea that perception, attention, and other mental activities transform incoming information before a behavior is produced, and these processes aren't directly observable but are inferred from behavior. The other terms refer to different ideas: a schema is a mental framework for organizing knowledge, inference is drawing conclusions from information, and cognitive neuroscience studies how brain activity supports cognition. Because the question focuses on the hidden operations mediating between sensing and acting, internal mental processes is the best fit.

3. Which theory emphasizes learning through observation and sees humans as active processors of information?

- A. Social Learning Theory**
- B. Classical Conditioning**
- C. Psychoanalysis**
- D. Trait Theory**

The concept being tested is learning through observation and active information processing. Social Learning Theory says we pick up new behaviors by watching others, then we actively think about what we've seen, store it in memory, and decide whether to imitate it based on attention, rehearsal, and the expected outcomes. It also recognizes that learning can happen without direct experience, through observing others' rewards and punishments (vicarious reinforcement), and it emphasizes cognitive steps like encoding, planning, and motivation. That combination—learning from models and using mental processes to guide whether we imitate—fits the description best. Classical conditioning involves forming automatic associations between stimuli and responses, without relying on observing others or complex thinking. Psychoanalysis centers on unconscious conflicts and motivations rather than observational learning. Trait theory focuses on stable personality characteristics rather than how we learn by watching and processing information.

4. Which is a strength of the cognitive approach?

- A. It rejects mental processes**
- B. It has led to cognitive-behavioural therapy for depression**
- C. It denies the validity of schemas**
- D. It avoids laboratory experiments**

The strength of the cognitive approach is its clear link between understanding thinking and real-world help for people. It has led to cognitive-behavioral therapy for depression, a practical treatment that targets distorted thoughts and beliefs to change emotions and behavior. By teaching people to identify automatic negative thoughts and reframe them, CBT provides structured, evidence-based techniques that have proven effective in many studies. This ability to translate ideas about mental processing into a tangible, successful treatment is what makes this approach particularly strong. It's also worth noting that the other statements don't fit: the cognitive approach does not reject mental processes, nor does it deny the role of schemas, and it relies on laboratory experiments to test ideas rather than avoiding them.

5. What is the process whereby cognitive psychologists draw conclusions about mental processes based on observed behaviour?

- A. Inference**
- B. Evolution**
- C. Genes**
- D. Cognition**

Making inferences about mental processes from observed behaviour is central to cognitive psychology. Since we can't directly see thoughts, researchers design experiments and measure observable data like reaction times, accuracy, and error patterns. By looking at these patterns, they infer what mental operations were likely happening—such as encoding, retrieval, or attention—based on how people respond. This process of drawing conclusions about internal processes from external behavior is what inference describes. The other ideas aren't about this method. Evolution is about how traits change across generations, genes concern biological heredity, and cognition refers to the mental processes themselves rather than the act of deducing them from behavior.

6. What is a weakness of the fight-or-flight response in modern humans?

- A. It is perfectly suited to modern life**
- B. Repeated activation uses energy and can lead to cardiovascular problems**
- C. It always improves digestion**
- D. It has no long-term effects**

The main idea here is that the fight-or-flight response is built for quick, short-lived bursts of danger, but in modern life it's often triggered repeatedly and stays active longer. When it fires again and again, it drains energy and places constant stress on the body, especially the heart and blood vessels. This chronic activation can contribute to cardiovascular problems over time, making repeated arousal a real weakness in our everyday environment. The other options don't fit: the system isn't perfectly suited to modern life, it doesn't improve digestion (it actually slows it), and it does have long-term effects.

7. What does the cognitive approach focus on?

- A. The Mind is Passive
- B. The Mind Actively Processes Information**
- C. Only Genetics Determine Behaviour
- D. Conditioning Is The Only Mechanism

The cognitive approach is about how the mind actively processes information, not simply reacts to what happens around us. It treats thinking as an active information-processing system, involving attention, perception, memory, language, and problem-solving. We encode inputs, transform and store them, and retrieve or apply them to guide behavior. This perspective explains why people can interpret the same situation differently, use strategies to improve memory, or solve problems by manipulating mental representations. So, saying that the mind actively processes information captures the essence of this approach. It contrasts with the idea that the mind is passive, which would align more with a strict behaviorist view that focuses only on external stimuli and responses. It also goes beyond the notion that genetics alone determine behavior or that conditioning is the sole mechanism, by emphasizing internal processing and the manipulation of information.

8. Unconscious strategies that the ego uses to manage the conflict between the id and the superego are called what?

- A. Defence mechanisms**
- B. Repression
- C. Denial
- D. Projection

Defence mechanisms are unconscious processes the ego uses to cope with the anxiety produced by the clash between the id's impulses and the superego's moral demands. They operate without awareness, bending or denying reality to protect the mind from distress. Repression, denial, and projection are specific examples of these mechanisms, but they're not the umbrella term themselves. The umbrella term that captures the whole idea is defence mechanisms.

9. Symbolic models are those who are in the media.

- A. Live Models
- B. Symbolic Models**
- C. Mediational Processes
- D. Imitation

Symbolic models are the representations we observe through symbols in the media—such as TV, films, or online figures—rather than real people present in front of us. In social learning theory, learning happens by watching models, and these can be live or symbolic. The media provides symbolic models that we can imitate even without direct contact, as we pay attention, retain what we see, reproduce the behavior, and are motivated to do so. The other options describe different ideas: a live model is someone physically present; imitation is the act of copying rather than the type of model; and mediational processes are the cognitive steps that mediate learning, not a kind of model. So the statement correctly identifies symbolic models as those seen in the media.

10. What is a common caveat when generalising animal study results to humans?

- A. Species differences may limit applicability to humans**
- B. Animal study results generalize perfectly to humans**
- C. Animals are not suitable for any behavioural research**
- D. Human behaviour is identical to animal behaviour in key aspects**

When we look at how findings from animal studies can apply to humans, the key idea is about external validity across species. Animals and humans share some basic mechanisms, but there are important differences in physiology, brain structure, cognition, lifespan, and how environments shape behavior. These species differences mean that results observed in animals may not translate perfectly to humans, so researchers must be cautious about broad generalisations and often seek corroboration from human studies or multiple methods. That's why the best choice is the one that highlights species differences as a limitation to applying animal findings to humans. Saying that generalisation is perfect ignores real biological and cognitive gaps, and claiming animals aren't suitable for any behavioral research is overstating their value. Likewise, asserting that human behavior is identical to animal behavior is simply inaccurate, since there are notable differences despite shared foundations.

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://approachesinpsychaqa.examzify.com>

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

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