

BOARD CERTIFIED BEHAVIOR ANALYST (BCBA) 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. What component is missing from the objective for Holly, who is learning to use a spoon to feed herself with applesauce?**
 - A. Condition
 - B. Standard of performance
 - C. Measurement criteria
 - D. Reinforcement strategy

- 2. What is the main purpose of conducting a functional assessment in behavior analysis?**
 - A. To identify reinforcers for specific behaviors
 - B. To obtain information for a hypothesis statement
 - C. To develop a teaching plan
 - D. To assess student progress

- 3. What is the BEST alternative behavior to teach Sally, who knocks items off the shelf while shopping?**
 - A. Waiting for her dad's instruction
 - B. Putting items on the floor
 - C. Dropping items into the cart when given
 - D. Asking for permission before touching items

- 4. What is a functional behavior assessment (FBA)?**
 - A. It is a method for randomly selecting behaviors to assess
 - B. It is a systematic process to identify the purpose of a behavior
 - C. It solely focuses on the behaviors exhibited in a classroom
 - D. It is an informal evaluation of behavior patterns

- 5. Which approach prioritizes the least harmful punishment that is still effective?**
 - A. Reinforcement with limits
 - B. Functional analysis
 - C. Least restrictive alternative
 - D. Least aversive effective punisher

- 6. Which of the following is not considered a type of function of behavior identified during functional assessment?**
- A. Control
 - B. Attention
 - C. Frustration
 - D. Access to tangibles
- 7. What is the goal of a DRI schedule designed to reduce running around the class and tapping other children on the head?**
- A. Minimizing disruptive behaviors
 - B. Arranging for the child to earn a reinforcer in the absence of these behaviors
 - C. Implementing a time-out procedure
 - D. Encouraging social interactions
- 8. When an observer records everything a client says or does along with events before and after the behavior, what method are they using?**
- A. Continuous recording
 - B. Anecdotal recording
 - C. Event sampling
 - D. ABC recording
- 9. Informed consent requires that the participants have what essential attribute?**
- A. Access to all information
 - B. Full understanding
 - C. Decision-making capacity
 - D. Time to consider options
- 10. What does the acronym BCBA stand for?**
- A. Board Certified Behavioral Advisor
 - B. Board Certified Behavior Assistant
 - C. Board Certified Behavior Analyst
 - D. Board Certified Behavioral Analyst

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What component is missing from the objective for Holly, who is learning to use a spoon to feed herself with applesauce?

- A. Condition
- B. Standard of performance**
- C. Measurement criteria
- D. Reinforcement strategy

In this context, the objective for Holly's learning to use a spoon to feed herself with applesauce is lacking a clear standard of performance. The standard of performance provides a benchmark or criterion that defines what successful behavior looks like. It specifies how well Holly should be expected to perform the task to meet the learning goal, such as the number of successful attempts or the percentage of proficiency within a specific timeframe. Having a standard of performance is crucial in behavior analysis as it allows for measurable and observable outcomes. This helps in assessing whether she has mastered the skill of using a spoon effectively. For example, stating that Holly should be able to feed herself with a spoon 4 out of 5 times without assistance would provide a clear criterion to evaluate her progress. In this scenario, the other components, such as conditions defining the context under which the skill will be performed, measurement criteria outlining how data will be collected, and reinforcement strategies indicating how Holly will be rewarded for her successes, are not mentioned as missing. However, without a clear standard of performance, the objective remains vague and unmeasurable.

2. What is the main purpose of conducting a functional assessment in behavior analysis?

- A. To identify reinforcers for specific behaviors
- B. To obtain information for a hypothesis statement**
- C. To develop a teaching plan
- D. To assess student progress

The main purpose of conducting a functional assessment in behavior analysis is to obtain information that leads to a clear and testable hypothesis regarding the function of a behavior. This involves systematically gathering data about the circumstances under which the behavior occurs, including antecedents (triggers) and consequences (results). By understanding the context and conditions surrounding the behavior, practitioners can form a hypothesis about its purpose, which can inform effective intervention strategies. Through this assessment, behavior analysts can determine whether behaviors are maintained by reinforcement, avoidance, or other factors. This understanding is critical for developing targeted interventions that address the function of the behavior, rather than just the behavior itself. Ultimately, forming a solid hypothesis based on functional assessment data leads to more informed decision-making in treatment planning and implementation.

3. What is the BEST alternative behavior to teach Sally, who knocks items off the shelf while shopping?

- A. Waiting for her dad's instruction
- B. Putting items on the floor
- C. Dropping items into the cart when given**
- D. Asking for permission before touching items

Teaching Sally to drop items into the cart when given provides a positive and functional alternative behavior that aligns well with her environment and the expectations of shopping. This option not only teaches her an acceptable way to interact with the items in the store but also reinforces the expectation of participating in a shopping activity in an appropriate manner. By focusing on this alternative behavior, Sally learns to engage with her environment in a way that is respectful and compliant with social norms. It empowers her to take actions that are rewarded—being allowed to help with the shopping—thus it can enhance her overall shopping experience and help her build self-control and understanding of task completion. In this context, the other choices might not promote the same level of positive interaction or clarity. Waiting for her dad's instruction may not actively engage Sally or empower her with a more independent behavior. Putting items on the floor can simply replicate the undesired behavior and does not teach her how to interact appropriately. Asking for permission before touching items, while a positive behavior, might lead to confusion or frustration for her and her dad if it is not clearly reinforced and could limit her engagement in the activity at hand.

4. What is a functional behavior assessment (FBA)?

- A. It is a method for randomly selecting behaviors to assess
- B. It is a systematic process to identify the purpose of a behavior**
- C. It solely focuses on the behaviors exhibited in a classroom
- D. It is an informal evaluation of behavior patterns

A functional behavior assessment (FBA) is a systematic process used to identify the purpose or function of a specific behavior exhibited by an individual. This process involves gathering information through various methods, such as observations, interviews, and reviewing records, to determine the antecedents and consequences related to the behavior. By understanding the underlying reasons for the behavior—whether it is to gain attention, escape a task, or seek sensory input—interventions can be developed that effectively address and modify the behavior in a constructive way. This approach is key in behavior analysis because it emphasizes the relationship between the behavior and the environment, rather than merely focusing on the behavior itself or attempting random assessment methods. Through a thorough understanding of the functions, practitioners can implement targeted strategies that meet the individual's needs while promoting positive behavior change.

5. Which approach prioritizes the least harmful punishment that is still effective?

- A. Reinforcement with limits
- B. Functional analysis
- C. Least restrictive alternative
- D. Least aversive effective punisher**

The approach that prioritizes the least harmful punishment that is still effective is associated with the principle of using the least aversive effective punisher. This concept focuses on minimizing the negative impact of punishment while still achieving the desired behavioral outcome. The emphasis is on identifying a punisher that can effectively reduce undesirable behavior while causing the least amount of distress or harm to the individual. This aligns with ethical considerations in behavior analysis, advocating for interventions that maintain the dignity and wellbeing of individuals. By selecting a punisher that is both effective and minimally aversive, practitioners can work to create a more positive learning environment while still addressing challenging behaviors. In contrast, other approaches mentioned do not specifically focus on minimizing harm while maintaining effectiveness. For example, reinforcement with limits emphasizes the use of reinforcement rather than punishment, while functional analysis is a methodology for understanding behavior rather than a specific approach to punishment. The least restrictive alternative approach aims to provide interventions that are the least intrusive but does not specifically highlight the harm associated with punishment. Therefore, the least aversive effective punisher directly addresses the core goal of achieving effective behavioral change with consideration of the individual's wellbeing.

6. Which of the following is not considered a type of function of behavior identified during functional assessment?

- A. Control
- B. Attention
- C. Frustration**
- D. Access to tangibles

The function of behavior in the context of functional assessment helps identify the purpose or reason behind a behavior. Common functions include gaining attention, obtaining access to tangible items or activities, and escaping or avoiding a situation. Frustration, while it may contribute to the occurrence of certain behaviors, is not categorized as a primary function of behavior in the same way as attention, control, or access to tangibles. Functions of behavior typically relate to how the behavior serves the individual in their environment, whether it be to achieve specific outcomes or to interact with their surroundings effectively. This distinction highlights that frustration does not typically serve as a direct motivator for behavior but rather as an emotional state that could lead to behaviors that fall under other functions.

7. What is the goal of a DRI schedule designed to reduce running around the class and tapping other children on the head?

- A. Minimizing disruptive behaviors
- B. Arranging for the child to earn a reinforcer in the absence of these behaviors**
- C. Implementing a time-out procedure
- D. Encouraging social interactions

The goal of a Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible behavior (DRI) schedule is to arrange for the child to earn a reinforcer in the absence of specific disruptive behaviors, in this case, running around the class and tapping other children on the head. DRI focuses on reinforcing behaviors that are incompatible with the undesired behaviors, meaning the alternative behavior cannot occur at the same time as the challenging behavior. By providing reinforcement when the child engages in appropriate, alternative behaviors instead of the disruptive actions, the likelihood of these challenging behaviors diminishes over time. This positive approach promotes skill development and encourages more acceptable forms of engagement, ultimately reducing the disruptive behaviors as reinforcement is only available when the problem behaviors are absent.

8. When an observer records everything a client says or does along with events before and after the behavior, what method are they using?

- A. Continuous recording
- B. Anecdotal recording
- C. Event sampling
- D. ABC recording**

The method being described is ABC recording, which stands for Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence recording. This approach involves not only documenting the behavior itself but also capturing the events that occur immediately before (antecedents) and after (consequences) the behavior. This contextual information is crucial because it helps in understanding the factors that may influence the behavior, thereby identifying patterns that can inform interventions. ABC recording is particularly useful in the field of behavior analysis as it allows practitioners to analyze the conditions that trigger a specific behavior and the reinforcers that may be maintaining it. This comprehensive view can lead to more effective behavior management strategies tailored to the individual client's needs. In contrast, while continuous recording tracks all occurrences of a behavior, it does not necessarily include context surrounding those behaviors. Anecdotal recording provides a descriptive narrative of behavior but may lack systematic structure. Event sampling focuses on specific events or behaviors but does not capture the full array of antecedent and consequence data. Thus, ABC recording stands out for its systematic approach to gathering context-sensitive data essential for analyzing behaviors in a meaningful way.

9. Informed consent requires that the participants have what essential attribute?

- A. Access to all information
- B. Full understanding
- C. Decision-making capacity**
- D. Time to consider options

Informed consent is a fundamental aspect of ethical practice, particularly in the field of applied behavior analysis and other research-related areas. One essential attribute that participants must possess is decision-making capacity. This means that individuals must have the ability to understand the information provided to them about the procedure, comprehend the potential consequences, and make an informed choice regarding their participation. This attribute is crucial because without decision-making capacity, the validity of the consent may be compromised. It ensures that participants can evaluate the risks and benefits, engage with the information received, and make a choice that reflects their values and preferences. Informed consent is not merely about providing information; it fundamentally requires that participants are in a position to make decisions based on that information. While access to all information, full understanding, and time to consider options are important aspects of the consent process, they rely on the participants having the necessary decision-making capacity to critically engage with this information. Thus, decision-making capacity is the key attribute that underpins the entire informed consent process, ensuring ethical standards are upheld by recognizing participants as autonomous individuals capable of making informed choices.

10. What does the acronym BCBA stand for?

- A. Board Certified Behavioral Advisor
- B. Board Certified Behavior Assistant
- C. Board Certified Behavior Analyst**
- D. Board Certified Behavioral Analyst

The acronym BCBA stands for Board Certified Behavior Analyst. This designation is given to individuals who have met specific educational and experience requirements in the field of behavior analysis and have passed the Board certification exam. BCBAs are qualified to design and implement behavior intervention plans, supervise the implementation of behavior analytic services, and provide training to others in applied behavior analysis. This certification is critical in ensuring that practitioners adhere to ethical and professional standards in their practice. The other acronyms listed, while they may sound similar, refer to different titles or roles that do not exist in the same capacity as BCBA. The focus on analysis is crucial in the clinical and educational environments where BCBAs operate, emphasizing their expertise and specialized training in understanding and changing behavior.

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://bcba.examzify.com>

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

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